1973

Teachers Guides to Television - 'A Career in Public Service?'

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Teachers Guides to Television

Vol. 5 No. 2  SPRING 1973

MARCH 28

Peary’s Dash to the North Pole

APRIL 12

Bushmen of the Kalahari

APRIL 17

The Cricket in Times Square

APRIL 25

Strange and Terrible Times
A Career in Public Service? [Career Guidance, Social Studies]

Aim To explore the possibility of a career in public service. To evaluate our abilities and aspirations, and compare them with the personalities, background and training of those who have found fulfillment in elective office. To discover the many possible ways of preparing for a political career.

Teaching Suggestions
Senator Bob Packwood (R. Oregon), describing his job, has said: "I enjoy the opportunity to be in a position where my actions, my personal activities, can make a difference in whether or not this nation and this world survive." Congressman George Mahon (D. Texas) has said: "If you're doing something for the people, there's a certain thrill that comes out of the work. People are not necessarily thrilled by a lot of things. The great thing in life that brings people happiness is achievement." Congressman Orval Hansen (R. Idaho) has said: "I think the one thing that the people would ask themselves, looking at a candidate, is whether that's a man I can trust!"

Compare the talents, personalities, and abilities of the twenty Congressmen and Senators profiled by TEACHERS GUIDES TO TELEVISION with your own.

"I believe it was Socrates who stated that if a person could be aware of himself he would be guided by the principle of 'know thyself.'" Senator Mike Mansfield (D. Montana) has said. "If you know yourself, and then you recognize things for what they are . . . I think you develop an understanding of your fellow men, and on the basis of a better understanding you have the ability to become a reasonably good politician."

Do you know who you are? Who you want to be? Do you have the ability to work hard? (Senators and Congressmen are often at their desks before 7:00 A.M.) Can you take defeat in your stride? Overcome it? Do you understand your fellow men?

"What I really enjoy most about being in the Senate," Senator Alan Cranston (D. California) has said, "is the opportunity it gives you to come to grips with really big issues like war and peace, or poverty or something better, justice and injustice—the chance you have to shape how these issues are dealt with and open up opportunities for people by the decisions you make and the programs and laws you work on."

Do you enjoy coming to grips with "really big issues"?
Follow the issues on your local and national news broadcasts and specials. How are they being dealt with in Congress? How are they being dealt with in your state and local legislatures? Would you like to participate?

"This world is only going to be changed by leadership," Senator Packwood has said, "and I hope that too many people don't become so fatalistic as to think there's no use in participating, the system's no good, it won't work. It will work, but it won't work much better than those who live in it and want it to work. And if they choose instead to withdraw, to do nothing about it, what they get in response may be about what they give."

What are you willing to give?
Senator Cranston has said: "I'd simply like to encourage any young American who's interested in leaving the world, his community, his country better than he found it to get into government, get into politics because I think there you can shape decisions more than in almost any other way.

"You certainly can on more fronts and in more areas than if you get into some other field. So, get to it, try politics, try government."

Do you want to try? Read the excerpts from the interviews that follow. How many different ways are there for you to get started? Which of them will you choose?
Which early experiences helped prepare you for your future career? Who were the people who shaped or influenced you most?

Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm (D. New York)

I must be very honest and say that I was very fortunate to have had loving parents and loving grandparents. My mother left us with a doting grandmother, a grandmother who disciplined us. I believe that part of what I am today is attributable to the discipline that I received at a very early age. The discipline which has to do with the organization of one's work for an entire day. The discipline that had to do with the fact that even though the family unit is divided during the course of the day, that family comes together at breakfast, lunch and dinnertime to sit down and talk with each other. That togetherness gives to the individual the strength that is necessary to carry on, in the face of outside obstacles.

SHIRLEY ST. HILL
Brooklyn College
Senior Arist, Pan-American Club, Knitting Club, Literary Strollers, Vice-Pres. French Club, Blue and Gold Rep., Class Sec'y, Record Rep., Tutor, Teachers' Aid, French Play.

"Shorty"

From The Blue and the Gold, Girls High School, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1941.

I learned at a very early age that I was somebody. . . . I've always known that black is beautiful.

I learned at a very early age that I was somebody. I didn't have to wait until today to know that black is beautiful. I've always known that black is beautiful. Because it has absolutely nothing to do with one's skin color. It has to do with what's inside the soul and the mind and what you can make of yourself in this world.

That is also very responsible for the confidence that I have in myself. I'm an individual that has tremendous self-confidence, and that self-confidence came also from my religious upbringing. Today, you know, people don't like to talk about God, or if one talks about God, people think you are half crazy. But I'm not afraid to speak about God. I believe that my upbringing in a Quaker brotherly home (I remember I had to go to church three or four times on Sundays. I know that, when I became older, I didn't go to church for a while, because I had so much of it when I was growing up)—that upbringing in the Church helped to give me that additional strength.

What I'm trying to say, actually, is that Shirley Chisholm is not what she is today because of the fact that she just wanted to be it. She is what she is as a result of the sum total of the love in her family and the discipline and the religious upbringing that gives one the needed strength through very troubling times.

Congressman Albert Quie (R. Minnesota)

There was a teacher that I had when I moved to a four-room school—where the eight grades were in four rooms, instead of a one-room school. I was behind the other students very badly, and she said to me, during the noon hour, "If you will stay in for me to give you some tutoring instead of going out and playing with the other students, I'll eat my lunch here and help you." That tutoring caught me up with the other students so I didn't have any problem in high school. I was bashful, that's probably why I did it, but as I think back on it, I now really wish I could find that teacher to thank her and tell her what a great thing she did for me. Because if she hadn't given that special attention to me, I don't believe I would have been able to go on to get a college education and go ahead.

There was another teacher who was tremendous. She was Celeste Magner. I had it stuck in my mind that I didn't like history, as many students think they don't like some subject. Miss Magner sat down beside me in home room and said, "Albert, I notice you don't like history very well." I had to think fast, as to why I didn't like it! I said, "Well, there are all those dates and things you have to memorize." She said, "Well, I'm not having you memorize dates just so you have your head full of dates and events.

The future Congressman is on the right.

. . . . these teachers cared about us as we were; we were important to them.

Everything that's going to happen tomorrow, and what is happening now, is dependent on what happened before, and what you're trying to learn is this flow of history so that you can make some good judgments about what you do and make some plans for the future."

That really struck me. About fifteen minutes was all she spent with me. But I learned to like history from her, liked it all through college, and I can point back to her. Both of these teachers cared about us as we were; we were important to them.

And, you know, now planning for the future is what I'm doing in legislation; developing policy for the national
government. If it hadn't been for Celeste Magner, I wonder if I could have done that. Those are individuals who had an impact on my life.

Senator Hugh Scott (R. Pennsylvania)

I first decided I wanted a career in Congress when I was 13. I had a teacher who believed in me—wasn't but one of them. The others certainly didn't. But I had a teacher named Miss Mary Vivien Conway who later moved to San Diego. She believed in me, she thought I could do anything, get anywhere. I had the kind of mother who never deprecated her son. She believed that there was nothing that I couldn't do. And I had a grandfather, a bearded old gentleman. He was a veteran of the Confederate Army, and he used to say, "That boy is going to be President." And I must admit I never believed that. I never shot for it, but I had that kind of family who believed in me—so did my father.

Speaker Carl Albert (D. Oklahoma)

My dad was a farmer. My mother encouraged me. She was proud of me; she never spoiled me. Mrs. Ross was my first teacher, and she encouraged me from the beginning and told my family that I needed to stay in school; that I would make it and make it well, because she had taught a long time and I was the best student she'd had up to that time. In the sixth grade I had a teacher named Mr. Craig. He taught me English grammar and got me really interested in the fundamentals of mathematics.

I had a speech teacher in high school—Terrellmuche Brown—all through high school she was almost a sidekick of mine. She went to the university the same year I did and became a member of the Speech Department.

Carl Albert

Valedictorian: Student Body Pres. '27; Home Room President '27; Golden M Club President '27; Poetry Club President '27; Debate '26, '27; Constitutional Oration Contest '25, '26, '27; Original Oration Contest '26, '27; Declamation Contest '27; Golden M Club '26, '27, Poetry Club '26, '27; Romani Novi '25, '26; Dramatic Club '25, '26, '27; Honor Society. A little giant.

From The Dancing Rabbit, McAlester High School Annual, 1927. My first teacher told my family that I needed to stay in school... I was the best student she'd had up to that time.

The one teacher I had most and liked best in Oklahoma University was Dr. Cortez Ewing. He was a political science teacher. I took everything he taught.

Congressman Orval Hansen (R. Idaho)

Growing up on a farm encouraged me to learn to take responsibility at an early age.

My father could not be there all the time—he had a business to run in addition to the farm. That made it even more important to accept responsibility. I was operating a team of horses at eleven or twelve; operating various kinds of equipment, a mowing machine, rake, wagon, harrow. At the time I thought it was a kind of hard life. All the others who were my age were able to participate more in school activities. Until my senior year in high school, for example, I couldn't play football. I did some boxing for three years, but that was during the middle of winter and didn't involve the same demands on the farm as far as field work. I'm sure I felt then that I was missing out on things having to work on the farm... I've long since felt it was a great blessing... I'd had experience in having to accept responsibility, to think for myself...
I won a statewide public speaking contest when I was still a freshman. That did a great deal for my self-confidence. I was elected a chapter president for my junior and senior years, and won a corrugator for our farm when I received the Idaho Star Farmer Award.

I learned to overcome obstacles working on Future Farmer projects, striving to show I could build from a smaller start to a larger operation. This was one of my first opportunities for associations outside our immediate community and my horizons were broadened by the many new friends I made.

I joined the Navy at 17, but returned two years later and picked up my Future Farmer activities again. I was elected state president from Idaho during my freshman year at college, and during my sophomore year received the American Farmer Degree—the highest degree that the national organization can award. Thus my Future Farmer experience extended over a period of years and not only provided a very strong stimulus to achievement but taught me a great deal about leadership. I learned to understand other people as individuals, to appreciate their goals and aspirations, to deal with them as human beings. It taught me a lot about myself as well, that I had an ability to organize, to accept responsibility, to work hard, and to get things done.

I am responsible now for 365,000 constituents and I feel that obligation very strongly. Those early years working on the farm were a great help by way of preparation for accepting responsibility.

Young people will discover that responsibility gives you a chance to find out who you are. It gives you a purpose in life. Life would be very empty without that.

How can young people evaluate themselves and discover whether or not they have the capacity to do the job?

Senator Jacob Javits (R. New York)
The first consideration is the will. I think that if you have the will to deal in your best line of service—public service, then with training and equipment I think it's possible to make it. Charisma doesn't come because you have regular features or a lot of hair on your head, but from what's coming out from inside that pours into the outside. Winston Churchill was no beauty, but he was the most charismatic man that served in public life in modern times.

Congressman John Brademas (D. Indiana)
For one thing, you need to have some sort of strong moral commitment. You ought to have some conviction that you want to help the country move ahead in the directions that your moral convictions drive you. Second, I think you have to have a capacity for very hard work, because this is a hard-working place, and that means you had better have good physical stamina. And you had better have a degree of emotional stability because there's a good deal of cut and thrust in electoral politics or what my old employer, Adlai Stevenson, used to call combat politics. You'd better have a very thick hide, because people strongly criticize you and inquire into your personal life as well as your public position on issues, and it can be very rough. Third, I think you had better have a good educational background, because increasingly the kinds of problems with which we in Congress deal are complicated, subtle, and range across a wide spectrum of life.

Senator Robert Taft, Jr. (R. Ohio)
I'd say that you need a considerable degree of competitive attitude. I think you also need to like people and be interested in people as such. It also helps to be analytical and to have some legal, or analytical training of some kind, as well as, of course, a broad, large, historical background and, as important as anything else, articulation. If you can't express to others what you yourself think, they can't very well decide whether or not they're in agreement with you.

Senator Harrison Williams, Jr. (D. New Jersey)
You've got to have a great interest in the subject matter of national guidelines, law. If you have that, then you can evaluate yourself in terms of whether you really like to do what is required. You've got to come to an understanding of yourself with relation to people. If you rather not be associated with people, you'd better not be in this business.

Senator Bob Packwood (R. Oregon)
A very good test, early, I suppose, is how well you do in high school or college in getting along with your fellow classmates. Are they likely to elect you to a class office? If you are successful, I think it's a good indication that you have the knack for getting along with people that may be helpful in running for office. Go ahead.
You have to test yourself. Many people started out running for class offices, or student body offices, and going into debating to learn how to present issues and deal back and forth on the points involved. The training you get there is certainly useful and you also find out whether you do have the abilities. Don’t worry if you lose the first election. Many people have lost many elections before they finelly got an office. I think Franklin Roosevelt lost the first two or three he ran in, and there are many Senators here who wouldn’t be here if they quit when they lost the first, second, or third race.

Senator Hugh Scott (R. Pennsylvania)

There has to be the desire to do it. There has to be the belief that you can do it. There has to be the will to try and keep trying and to face early setbacks or defeats. It helps immensely if there are some others who believe in you; they can be a small minority just so long as they are around. It takes a great deal of patience, a great deal of hard work. It’s worth doing if you are doing it because you think you can contribute something toward moving the great wheel of government ahead, whether the government is local or state or national. I think all human effort is basically a balancing of personal interest against less selfish considerations. I have a sort of rule of thumb that if your decisions are made more than 50% for your own interest you are not really doing a very good job as a human being. But if your decisions are composed partly of your interest, which is inevitable in any form of effort, and if more than half of what you’re doing is for the betterment or benefit of others than yourself, then what you’re doing is creditable to yourself and probably worth doing.

How did you go about preparing for a career in public service? How do you believe a young person might go about getting the kind of experience that would help him?

Senator Hugh Scott (R. Pennsylvania)

I was following national politics when I was eight or nine years old. I understood then about the electoral college and Presidential campaigning.

When I was thirteen, I went to the session of the House of Delegates at Richmond (I was living in Fredericksburg, Virginia) and I followed the discussion of the prohibition statutes. I was appalled to see Bishop Canon dominate the drafting of the legislation.

Legislators sat there in slavish obedience while the Bishop told them exactly what had to go into the prohibition laws and they wrote it down. This to me didn’t seem to be quite the way to legislate, but I dutifully wrote down all I saw. And then one of the newspapermen came up to me. I was sitting in the press box in the committee room. He asked me if I represented a newspaper and I said I did. Then he asked me what paper. I said my Sunday school paper. It seemed to satisfy him.

I studied political science in college. I did not follow the usual route of being president of your class every year. I was not popular enough. Also, I was four or five years younger than the other members of my class,* which is a great social debility. However, when I moved to Philadelphia to practice law with an uncle of mine, after a few years I became an appointed Assistant District Attorney. I tried a lot of cases, and two or three years after that I became a worker at the polls—we called them division committeemen (precinct captains in other states) and I had to run against the incumbent division committeeman. I didn’t beat him, but there were two slots and I made the second position.

* "I went to high school when I was 9 years and 9 months."

I worked as committeeman for a number of years. And then a Congressman who was in his eighties decided to retire. Various people announced [their plans to run for his seat] before he had made his retirement announcement. I waited until he had made his announcement and then went to see him. He was so pleased that I had the decency to wait, when others hadn’t, that he endorsed me, and eventually I came to Congress at the age of 39.

I served sixteen years in the House, then I was out two years in the Navy, and this is my fourteenth year in the Senate. So it can be done.

The point is it’s hard work. There’s no royal road to politics, to political success. You can enter at the top if you are wealthy enough, well connected enough, or if somebody pushes you there, but it’s a little more precarious. You’re liable to get dizzy, if you haven’t climbed up more slowly. Generally, people enter by working at the polls or fund raising or as volunteer distributors of literature or helping to organize rallies and all the things that are going on now. And then if they attract attention—and they do if they are original or innovative or attractive or often just plain sheer willing to knock themselves out—somebody will suggest you for appointive office—or you suggest yourself, which happens more often, and then you run for elective office.

Senator Mike Mansfield (D. Montana)

None of us gets back here because of our good looks, although perhaps TV is changing that somewhat, or intelligence, because there are far more intelligent people in our home states than most of us who serve in the Senate. But they don’t take the chance to get out and meet people, to sell themselves, to acquire a certain degree of confidence...
on their part and a certain degree of trust and merit, trust and faith on the part of the people with whom they come in contact.

Register and vote. Participate in precinct, county, and state politics. In school, participate in school politics. No matter what kind of school you’re in anymore, it seems they have candidates running for elective office. Well, that’s how you get into politics, real politics. But the schools and precincts and counties and cities and states can give you the know-how, can lay a foundation. Perhaps most important of all in doing these things which I’ve mentioned, you’ve got to achieve the trust and the confidence of people in your own organization and people who are on the other side of the fence from you. And in that way you build up a feeling of mutual respect and understanding, which any politician has to have to become a member of a state legislature, a county council, or the Congress of the United States.

**Congressman George Mahon (D. Texas)**

I think it’s a mistake for a young person to say I want to be President, or I want to do everything I can to be President, or I want to be county judge, or I want to be the mayor. I think that’s a mistake because he tends to lead himself into pitfalls. If he wants to have a political career, then he wants to achieve that which is attainable at the time by way of an opportunity for public service.

I was first elected as county attorney, after I got out of law school, and I didn’t know much about the job and I felt very inadequate. But I learned about it. Then I was appointed district attorney, and I didn’t know much about that. I thought, “My heavens—what will I do with this job?” But I learned about that. I approached it with a great deal of fear and trembling and then I ran for Congress, feeling that I didn’t know if I had any great qualifications for Congress—and when I came to Congress I was uncertain about what I would be able to do. I hoped that I would not be defeated in the next election and be considered a political fluke. I’m now serving my 20th term, and I feel more comfortable.

A freshman Congressman.

*I approached it with a great deal of fear and trembling. . . . I’m now serving my 20th term, and I feel more comfortable.*

Senator Jacob Javits (R. New York)

I first considered a career in Congress and the Senate when I came back from the war in 1945. I had operated as a staff officer. I didn’t suffer great personal danger beyond a crash or something like that, but I saw that men died in war and I determined that I could no longer spend my time with cases and making money as a lawyer. I had to make the world safer for peace and materially improve the life of people everywhere. Hence, the only way was politics.

As a young boy, I didn’t know that I would have a political career, but I was interested in public speaking. I was on my N.Y.U. Law School debating team. I had some early experiences going around the political clubhouses, both on the lower East Side and in Brownsville in Brooklyn, including Socialist Party clubhouses.

I think that you’ve got to have an enormous fund of information. You’ve got to know enough about many, many things: atomic power production, the economics of exports and imports, the international balance of payments, the world’s monetary system, the weapons systems, and relations between countries to really qualify. More and more an enormous amount of information and knowledge is required, and these are your working tools and I’d advise the young person to be an absolute bear on acquiring information. Not just the rarefied esoteric kind on some subject of science but the generality of information upon which the world operates.

**Congressman John Brademas (D. Indiana)**

I suppose a good educational background is as important as any aspect of my own background in terms of service in Congress. In terms of the kinds of legislative issues with which we have to deal, we go all the way from problems of education and unemployment, health and narcotics and inflation, the human problems that people in our districts may have to which we have to be able to respond at the same time.

I think that one of the challenges, one of the excitement of service in Congress, so far as I’m concerned, is that, in an age of specialization, Congress is one of the remaining areas of life where you can be a generalist. You touch upon a wide variety of subjects, and it’s a perfect place, therefore, for somebody who is easily bored.

Senator Robert Taft, Jr. (R. Ohio)

I majored in English. Debating, I think, is extremely important. I was a member of the debating team in my college. I think many, many members of the Senate have done likewise. The ability to get your ideas through is as important as anything else. And as to the ideas themselves—economics are important. History is important because much can be learned from it. Not to repeat the mistakes that have been made, as the famous quotation goes. Also, I
think, a degree of technical expertise for some people has
been extremely important.

One other thing that I think is very important in polit-
cics; many young people coming into politics ought to
understand this and some of them don't. I think one of my
characteristics is persistence. It's easy to get brushed off
in politics, as you find out when you first get into them.
Those who are knowledgeable aren't always anxious to
welcome any assistance. They should be, generally, but
they aren't always; and they tend to enjoy the position of
power that they have and sometimes view anybody coming
in as a threat to that power or position. And very often,
too, they're not too well organized to use the help.
So that the thing to do under those circumstances is simply to wade
in and keep coming back and coming back if you really want to get into politics.

Senator Alan Cranston (D. California)
I thought journalism was a good background because it taught me how to express myself and to be concise about
it, and taught me to try to learn carefully what was going on and understand what was happening and interpret it.
I think it's important to get a very good education. It's important to travel, so you know about the world of which
America is only one part, and why we have to relate to so many other people. I think probably it's good not to be a
specialist if you're going to be in government. You have to be a generalist because you have to know about all sorts
of things and vote and decide about all sorts of things. And if you're too narrow in your education or background, you
may be very good in one field and very weak in another.

Congressman Albert Quie (R. Minnesota)
The way I went about it was to become a political science
major, to get all the courses I could on political science so
that I would understand it better. I realized afterward it
isn't necessary in order to be a good Congressman.
I looked at the Congressmen from Minnesota, and I
noted that there were usually at least half or probably
more farmers out of the whole delegation, and having
come from a farm background myself, I decided to go back
to the farm and try and prepare myself for the day when
I might be able to be elected to Congress.

Four years after I graduated from college I went to
the State Senate, and four years after that went to the
Congress, so, you know, it didn't take too long.

Congressman Herman Badillo (D. New York)
Most of us have talents which could be applied in any
number of fields, and the choice really depends upon
people you may meet or some chance that may bring you
in contact with a particular field that you might otherwise
have not gone into.

When I was practicing law I was one of the few
lawyers in New York City who spoke Spanish, since I am
Puerto Rican. The judges found out that I was in law
practice, and I was assigned cases of Puerto Ricans who
were in trouble with the law—who had been in jail await-
ing trial for a long time, sometimes over a year, and who
didn't have any lawyers. I took the cases, and it was logical,
I knew I wasn’t going to be a steelworker; by that time I was planning to go to law school. It came just naturally, I had no other talents.

Business was not for me—I made that decision after four years of newspaper reporting, radio; getting out of that and trying to get into something else.

I went over to the United Press and got a job typing and taking dictation. You sit there and the reporters call in their stories and the dictation guy takes it. And I couldn’t type! I was there for about two weeks and getting increasingly close to a crack-up. There was a guy by the name of Sandy Klein and oh, did he give it to me when he would read in the paper what I had typed, because I had gotten everything screwed up.

HARRISON ARLINGTON WILLIAMS, JR.

Classical Cornell
Home Room Chairman 1: 2; Baseball 2; Assembly Program Committee 3: 4; Christmas Carol 4; Senior Play 4; Junior Roast Committee 4; Junior Leader 1: 3: 4; H-Y 1: 2.

Pete is a jolles’ man and a good sport. He is a lot of fun and has done much for the class of 37. We’re sure he will go places at Cornell.

From Milestone, Plainfield High School, Plainfield, N.J., 1937.

You're in a business that deals with human beings.

I went over to the Washington Post and got a job there. I was working down here [D.C.] in the newspaper business and I could see that wasn’t for me. You know, I just couldn’t get excited about what was very important to the people who manage a newspaper. Deadlines are unimportant stuff, you know. [I thought] “Who cares whether it gets into print today or tomorrow; who needs it?”

I didn’t go into the Navy with any appreciation that I was going to end up in law school. You know, in the war years, I was fighting the fight for the guys aboard the ship—they called me “The Sea Lawyer.” I had thought about going into the ministry. I went to law school.

When I came back to New Jersey I started getting into politics in a local community way. One day, I was trying a case down in Red Bank and finished right after lunch. I figured, well now, it’s a beautiful afternoon: should I just take off or go back to Newark where the office was? And I debated with myself, and conscience took over. I figured I’d better not play hookey for the rest of the afternoon. Better go back to the office. I walked into the office and the county chairman called. He said, “We want you to run for Congress.” I couldn’t believe it! We knew, of course, that six weeks for campaigning would be tough. And I said, “How long have I got to think this one over, Bill?” And he said, “Twenty minutes.” So, I made a call back home. My mother and my wife, everybody, said they didn’t recommend it. I talked it over with the guys in the office and twenty minutes later I called him and said, “Okay, Bill, but let me say, I don’t see how we could win this thing.”

If people ask my advice, I advise them to get deeply into literature and history if they’re interested in this business. I think that’s better than calling it political science. You get it all in a good comprehensive understanding of history. And in literature you get a depth of understanding. You’re in a business that deals with human beings. It’s non-scientific in that sense, and it’s unpredictable.

Senator Bob Packwood (R. Oregon)

I’m not convinced that luck doesn’t play a major part. But you’re never going to be in a position to take advantage of your luck if you’re not disciplined and prepared.

So often you will think to yourself, “Gee, why couldn’t that have happened to me?” So often an opportunity comes along, a job that requires some kind of high school or college education, a chance to accept a position. And, if you had only been ready to do it when the opportunity came, call it luck if you want, you would have obtained it. But because you weren’t ready, the chance passes you by, and this so often happens in politics.

In retrospect, if there’s anything I would want to know in terms of preparing myself for politics, it would be first a knowledge of history and what has gone before. History does repeat itself, and although the problems we face in the world today are greater in magnitude, they’re often not greater in difference from what has been faced fifty or five hundred years before. And then, you would like to be able to develop your mind in such a way that it is agile enough to meet new problems and new situations and to be able to think up solutions to them. And so what you want is a mind that is a searching, questioning mind, and the best courses I would find for that would be both mathematics and philosophy. If you can combine thinking in the scope of philosophy with the directness of mathematics, I think your mind is perfectly attuned to facing the problems you run up against.

Congressman John Dellenback (R. Oregon)

I had not seriously considered Congress until I ran. We were married when I was in law school: I taught a while. We looked the whole country over and chose the city in which we wanted to live. I went there and dug in. I wanted to play a part in the community; I did that through community service. But that wasn’t enough, so I ran for the state legislature. I did that for six years, and I came to the conclusion that the really fundamental decisions, so far as government was concerned, were being made in the federal government.

Graduating high school at age 15.

Variety and experience open up your chances to learn.
The then incumbent decided not to run for this office again and that catapulted me into the race suddenly. So, you see, it was a growth.

Variety and experience open up your chances to learn. Instead of feeling, “I’m here in my little shell; I don’t know how to handle this particular thing and I can’t dare step out of the shell,” before they firm up a decision I really would urge young people to try the smorgasbord table.

I’ve urged young people not to fall into the very understandable trap of working at the same job each summer. I suggest to the bright ones who really want to go on, don’t take it; move on to something else. But, while you’re there that year, don’t just do the job. Learn all you can about it, learn what the other fellows are doing that you’re not even doing. Do the thing that you are doing to the best of your capacity, whether or not you think it’s going to lead into another job in that same field. You can’t run away from your shadow, and you will find that what you have built, in the way of building your wall a brick at a time, affects both you and your potential in the future. And you build into yourself, with the way you handle those jobs that you don’t like (as well as the jobs that you do like)—you build into yourself attitudes that will live with you the rest of your life like your shadow.

What helped you to overcome defeat and not be defeated by it?

**Senator Mike Mansfield (D. Montana)**

I didn’t find it too difficult, losing the first time, although I was disappointed. But what I did was to go around and thank all these people who had voted for me and those who hadn’t voted for me to assure them that I would be in the race the next time around.

You have to learn to take things in life as they come, and nothing in life comes free. You have to earn what you get, and you have to pay a price along the way. You might suffer failure. Sometimes that’s good for you, because it builds an inner stamina, an inner faith in yourself. Of course, you can’t keep on having failures. But one or two are helpful along the way because they keep your feet on the ground, and they keep you looking at yourself and seeing yourself in the mirror as you really are, not as you think you might be.

Do your best, to the very best of your ability. If your ability isn’t good enough, try, and, if you fail, then you’ve learned something.

**Congressman Jerry Pettis (R. California)**

I was going to divide my life into three parts. After college, the first 10 years to see the world, the next to make money, and the rest to serve my fellow man.

The war broke out. As an airplane pilot, I saw all the world. Between 30 and 40 I discovered that if you want to make money all you have to do is find a need that isn’t supplied and supply it. I founded four companies: I invented the technique by which you transfer sound to magnetic tape at high speeds; I started a publishing venture digesting significant information in medical journals and putting it on tape; I started a farm. My oranges are picked in August, when everyone else’s are all through.

I found the answer to the problems of the doctor who couldn’t read his journals, or the people who can’t buy grapefruit in the summertime, or the person who wants to get more out of the phonograph record than 8,000 frequency responses. One Christmas week I decided I was going to run for Congress—and here I am. I was fortunate in not having an easy road in my youth.

I never lose hope, because when you lose hope you become hopeless.

**Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm (D. New York)**

I’ve lost hope sometimes. I have been functioning in the political arena and having to fight so much racism and sexism, at times I’ve lost hope, but I quickly overcome that and go on. I’m broad-minded enough to recognize that people are the result of their own experiences. I don’t let it get hold of me. Like any decent person, it momentarily concerns me, and then I say, “Well, I have to carry on,” and I get up and carry on.

I had the opportunity to be the first black woman in this country to be elected to the United States Congress, besides the fact that I had the energy and the strength and the guts and the stamina and the audacity to make a bid for the highest office in our land. I was able to carry it right through to the end, in spite of everything. Those are two things I’m proud of.

I would tell young people, get that education. And then go on and fight for all you’re worth.

**Congressman Orval Hansen (R. Idaho)**

I learned more about people and the importance of campaigning in a way that tends to minimize rather than aggravate differences. I had to go through difficult primary
campaigns in each of my first two Congressional elections; one that I lost, and the first one that I won. And in each case I took great pains to avoid making statements that would generate feelings of bitterness and hostility, even though I was the target of those kinds of attacks. You learn to take it, and smile and say nice things about your opponents, and this paid off.

It is important to have beliefs that you can hold to strongly and strive to live by. Beliefs are like stars—you choose them as your guides. In following them, you reach your destiny. It is my strong conviction that a man needs to believe deeply and to strive for something beyond purely selfish purpose, beyond physical survival, or material comforts. Following a deep belief, you will find the strength to overcome defeat.

**Senator Bob Packwood** (R. Oregon)

Churchill, of course, had been defeated at so many things so often in his lifetime and really he was at an advanced age when he finally became Prime Minister. It was almost as if fate had passed him by. And then Hitler happened upon the scene, unfortunately for the world, but fortunately for Churchill, and placed him in a position of leadership. I think in terms of adversity and defeat probably Abraham Lincoln is a greater example of a man who—almost until the time he was elected as President—had nothing but a series of financial reverses, political defeats. He served one term in Congress and was defeated for reelection. Served in the state legislature and was subsequently defeated. Ran for the United States Senate in 1858 and was defeated by Stephen Douglas of Illinois, and finally ran for President in 1860 and was elected. And I think anybody can take heart from the fact that if anybody had a record which would have been pessimistic and pointed to downfall, it was Abraham Lincoln.

**Senator Alan Cranston** (D. California)

I won my first race. I won my second, and then I lost two in a row like Richard Nixon did, and then I came back by a victory that brought me to the Senate.

When I decided I was going to enter the rough game of politics, or the rough occupation of politics, I knew that you don’t win all the time. I’d been an athlete and I found out there you can’t win all the time in races and in football, and I just said, “Well, I’ll win some and lose some and I won’t let it upset me too much if I lose some I don’t want to lose, which I knew would happen and did.” I said, “Well, that’s that,” and went on to the next one.

**How did you feel the first time you took your seat in Congress?**

**Senator Bob Packwood** (R. Oregon)

I think when I first stepped into the Senate has to be the most thrilling day of my life. When you realize that there have been only approximately 1, 650 Senators in the whole history of the United States and you think of yourself, “I am one of that group, standing in the same place where Daniel Webster and John Calhoun and Henry Clay stood,” you can’t help but have a great sense of immensity and a great feeling of humility and a great appreciation of the luck that has placed you in that position.

**Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm** (D. New York)

I felt a little strange because everyone was looking at me and whispering and nudging each other. You must remember it was the first time in this country that a black woman was seated on the floor of Congress. So in the beginning—although that wore off eventually—in the beginning I felt like a curio; people just looking and whispering. But I realized it was because they never had a black woman in the United States Congress functioning on the same level as all those gentlemen. That wore off very quickly.

**Congressman Albert Quie** (R. Minnesota)

Well, it was about as awesome as when I went to high school. You know, all the corridors.

Having a butch haircut and all, I do look younger than my years, all the time. The second day I came in a rush, which I usually am, came to the door and was stopped by the doorman, who thought I was a page boy. He asked me to show my page boy credentials because he didn’t recognize me as one of those already there. I said, “I’m a member of Congress.” And he really did a double-take.

Now that I am one of the instructors of the new Congressmen, I realize how little I knew even at the end of that first session.

**Speaker Carl Albert** (D. Oklahoma)

Well, I was tremendously impressed by the fact that there I was. And then I was so delighted with it that I did some
things that might be good advice to other Congressmen.

I attended every session all day long my first two or three years in Congress. I never missed a session, I never missed a speech, I never missed a vote unless I was sick or something. I was there from the prayer to adjournment.

Do you know what that did for me? It enabled me to learn the procedures of the House. More important, it enabled me to learn the members. Sometimes issues are politically difficult, sometimes they're morally difficult, and you watch people and you learn about people when they react to something that's very important either to themselves or to their constituents or to their country. I could almost tell you in advance how a member was going to vote after I'd been there a few years. When I first ran for majority leader, I had a very good man who was a prospective opponent who decided to run. But I knew exactly whom to call, and I had enough commitments by sundown on the first day to win.

Congressman Jerry Pettis (R. California)

I think every member is overwhelmed and a little bit tingly about it. It's a great experience and one that you never forget. And I hope I never forget it, because I'm still very conscious of the responsibility that I have. And I realize that I'm one of 535 men who make the laws for the greatest nation on the face of the earth and I never want to forget that that's not a large group—535 people representing 205,000,000 people. And even though I'm only one, I'm still one. And I shouldn't forget that, I was conscious of it the day I was sworn into office, and I am conscious of it today and this morning as I talk to you.

At age 21

Even though I'm only one, I'm still one. . . . And I shouldn't forget that.

What are the responsibilities of a representative of the people?

Congressman John Brademas (D. Indiana)

A Congressman is a counsel for the people whom he represents in their dealings with the executive agencies of the government. If somebody doesn't get a social security check or a veterans' pension check on time or has a problem getting postal service or wants to get a cousin from Europe into the country, then he turns to his Congressman and hopefully the Congressman can help cut the red tape. It's essential that the man on the street feels that he can somehow get at his government, and his Congressman is his link.

Second, a Congressman ought to be a kind of ambassador from his district to Washington, fighting for some of the benefits of federal programs for the people whom he represents in the form of government contracts and poverty programs, and science programs and education programs and housing programs. Jobs and business may in large measure depend on how effective the Congressman is in championing the needs of his district.

Third, I think a Representative ought to be an educator speaking out to the people whom he represents on issues where he thinks he has some special knowledge or experience.

He also is expected to be, if he has any time left, a legislator, and in my own case I'm chairman of one of the education subcommittees that touches on a wide variety of legislation from child day care programs to the National Arts and Humanities Foundation, libraries, educational technology, educational research, environmental education, drug abuse education, education of the handicapped, older Americans programs, vocational rehabilitation. I sit as well on the higher education subcommittee and I also am a member of other subcommittees. And I am also one of two House Majority Floor Whips, which makes me, with the Speaker and the Majority Leader and Whip, part of the official leadership of the House.

Senator John Pastore (D. Rhode Island)

You're doing something for people. People have problems and many, many times those problems are out of the sphere and out of the domain of my senatorial duties. But you...
Once he has been elected, is it always a Congressman’s duty to vote as his constituents believe?

Senator Mike Mansfield (D. Montana)

I think integrity and honesty are the names of the game. I would think that principle, if it’s overriding, should be first and foremost. On the Crime Control Bill, about four years ago, I differed from many of my constituents. I came from a State which is very gun conscious. But, I felt that in view of the rise in crime rate which had occurred in the cities especially, not in Montana, which has an extremely low crime rate, that this was a national problem which had to be faced. I had hoped that the States themselves would live up to the facts of life in regard to the increase in crime. But they didn’t, except in a few rare instances. So I voted for a Gun Crime Control Bill which did not infringe upon the Second Amendment of the Constitution, which did not call for the confiscation of guns and which, as a matter of fact, had fewer features of registration, for example, than did the previous law.

It was quite an issue in the campaign. Many people differed with me honestly, but many of them resolved their differences, gave me the benefit of the doubt and the result was that they sent me back to serve another term in the Senate.

Congressman John Brademas (D. Indiana)

I had come to Congress the first time with a strong commitment to voting for effective labor reform legislation. While I was determined to oppose punitive or anti-labor legislation, I nonetheless was bound that I was going to vote for labor reform legislation that would prevent corruption in trade unions. In doing so, I found that I met opposition to my position from some of the labor leaders who had most strongly supported me in running for Congress. We had very intense table-pounding arguments about it, and strong words were spoken.

I voted my convictions, however, and I’m glad to say that some of the labor leaders who were critical of me fourteen years ago are now among my most vigorous supporters. One of the reasons they support me is that they proudly say that I am not in their pocket, that I vote my convictions. They are citizens of the country as well as being leaders of their trade unions, and I think that they, in their hearts, really prefer that their Congressman be somebody who, while he may not agree with them on a particular issue, is willing to stand up for his views.

I think you have to be prepared to lose the election on issues where your own conscience tells you you cannot do otherwise. I don’t think that getting elected is the only goal in politics.

Senator Alan Cranston (D. California)

Going against what your constituents appear to want and risking gaining their wrath and perhaps defeat may work the other way—you win respect because they like somebody that has the guts and determination and conviction to do what he thinks is best even if it may not be best for his political career.
Congressman Orval Hansen (R. Idaho)

I've tried to follow the rule of voting for what I thought best served the overall interests of the country. Sometimes that involves a position that's directly contradictory to strongly expressed and almost unanimous views of your constituents.

The temptation to join the crowd, to win popular acclaim, can be well-nigh irresistible. It is a lonely feeling to stand by yourself when you believe deeply in a cause that is at the moment unpopular—to be willing to say to yourself, "If this is the ballgame, then so be it."

It helps, at times like those, to remember the men of courage who have gone before you, and who were willing to risk their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor for a cause in which they deeply believed.

They were not always rewarded at once. Sam Houston, for example, first a Congressman from Tennessee, believed with all his heart that his beloved Texas should not leave the Union. But Texas voted to secede, and the day came when all her elected officials were asked to step forward and take the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. Sam Houston was there. Four times his name was called: "Sam Houston, Governor." But Sam Houston could not step forward. The name of the elected Lieutenant Governor was then called. An eager young man stepped forward. He was sworn in as Governor to take the place of a weary and heartbroken old man who went home to die, forgotten.

Is there anyone today who does not know of the courage of Sam Houston? But how many know the name of the young Lieutenant Governor who took his place?

Senator Bob Packwood (R. Oregon)

You've got to stick with your conscience and you've got to put principle above party, because every one of us—I can't speak for every one of us, I can speak for me—I cannot go home at night and talk to my wife or talk to my children and know in my heart or in my conscience I have done something that I regard as unprincipled.

And so when my conscience and my heart simply say, "Bob, you've got to do what you know is right," that's the way I'll vote, and let the devil take the hindmost and the problems fall where they may.

What I am is a United States Senator and what I hope to remain is a United States Senator. I like the office. I want to run for reelection and I hope to be reelected. If I'm by chance defeated, civilization will not falter and mankind will get along without me.

I would return to Oregon and practice law. But at least I would return with my head high and my conscience clear and the feeling that I had not compromised my principles just for the sake of being reelected.