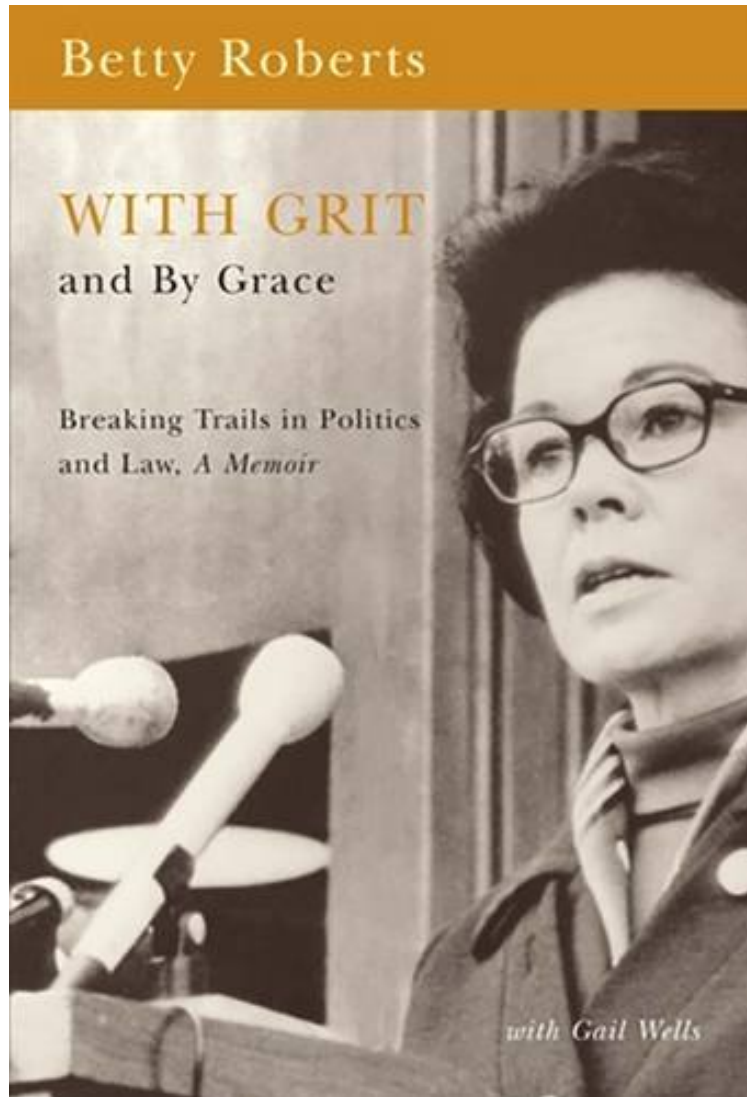


[Download] With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Law and Politics - A Memoir

With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Law and Politics - A Memoir

Betty Roberts

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Betty Roberts : With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Law and Politics - A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Law and Politics - A Memoir:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful book about an amazing womanBy Irene CThis book brings home the struggles women have gone through to gain equality. Justice Roberts has paved the way for many of us. Her book is very readable and entertaining. She is a woman of many, many accomplishments; all done "with grit

and by grace". 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Oregon Pioneer By Grant Schott Although her campaigns for Governor and U.S. Senate were unsuccessful, by running, and serving as the first Oregon Supreme Court Justice, Judge Betty Roberts helped pave the way for other women in Oregon politics. Betty Roberts is clearly a survivor and a great success story. Growing up during the Depression in Texas was hard enough, but became even more challenging when her father was disabled by tainted moonshine, leaving the family impoverished. Roberts found her way to Oregon and, as a young mother, decided to take college courses at Eastern Oregon College in the small timber town of LaGrande. Although she failed her first history final, the history professor, Lee Johnson (not the future OR Attorney General of the same name) urged her to keep going, and she improved and stayed in school. (I mention this in part because Lee Johnson was a beloved professor who married my Grandad's cousin, Betty Jo Schott.) Roberts finished her education in Eugene and Portland and decided to enter politics, elected to the Oregon House in 1964 and the Senate in 1968, at the time the only woman in that body. In her book, Roberts recalls not only the uphill battle of fighting for gender equality, but of being taken seriously by numerous chauvinistic male colleagues. It wasn't just the big issues like abortion and birth control that were controversial, but seemingly trivial ones by today's standards, such as allowing women to change their name after a divorce. That issue was defeated in the name of family values, with some Democrat men lecturing Roberts and other supporters of the bill. Roberts' lonely fights in her first legislative session were soon aided by other legislative women, including stars like the future Portland Mayor Vera Katz and Secretary of State Norma Paulus. As a candidate for Governor in 1974, Roberts impressed the political world by just narrowly losing to former State Treasurer and prior nominee Bob Straub, while running ahead of Treasurer Jim Redden. When former Senator Wayne Morse won the '74 U.S. Senate Democratic primary but died in July, Roberts was appointed as the nominee, losing to Senator Bob Packwood. Roberts speaks of the expected hurdles and sometimes exhaustion of running for statewide office, at one point being told that she shouldn't be cooking dinner when she should be campaigning. Roberts recalls with irony that she turned down the offer of a campaign appearance by the little known Georgia Governor, Jimmy Carter. Two years later, Roberts was the co-chair of Carter's Oregon campaign committee, while her husband, Keith Skelton, supported the winner of the Oregon primary, Idaho Senator Frank Church. A year later, Roberts was appointed to the Oregon Court of Appeals and later to the Oregon Supreme Court and was the first woman to serve on either court. Those interested in law might find her examination of various decisions interesting. Roberts resigned from the high court in 1986, after serving four years, and I found her still struggling to explain just why. She mentions wanting to spend more time with her family and tiring of the Salem to Portland commute. One chapter missing from this book is Roberts's prominent role in helping to organize former employees of her old opponent Bob Packwood in coming out in 1992-95 to tell their stories of sexual harassment and calling for his ultimate resignation. Had she chosen to run for Governor or Senator again, or had she had more time to campaign against Packwood in '74, Roberts might have won and become a more famous politician. She still remains a pioneer in Oregon politics, though, and tells a story that is an important part of Oregon's political history.

In the 1950s, Betty Roberts did what most of her contemporaries considered audacious and inappropriate when she returned to college as a 32-year-old wife and mother. This was only the start of Roberts lifetime commitment to overcoming obstacles to womens equality. With *Grit and By Grace* follows Betty Roberts rise from a Depressionera childhood on the Texas plains to become a teacher, lawyer, state legislator, candidate for governor, and eventually Oregons first woman Supreme Court Justice. In this memoir, Justice Roberts reflects on her role as a mother, wife, and political trailblazer. Her story is important to the history of womens struggles to challenge prevailing stereotypes, but it is also a deeply personal story of a life sometimes stark, sometimes humorous, often exhausting, and always brightened with friendships and family. Her story is a vivid reminder of times too quickly forgotten, when a woman could not keep her own name or stay at a motel alone. Justice Roberts began her career during a politically complex time the Civil Rights Movement was in full swing, sentiment against the Vietnam War was growing, and the nascent womens movement would soon burst on the scene. During her 13 years as a legislator, she was instrumental in the passage of Oregons first legalized right to abortion and the states ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, as well as pathbreaking environmental and land-use legislation. Roberts tells her engrossing story with honesty and warmth. *With Grit and By Grace* is about lifes disappointments and promises, its rejections and rewards, and its demand for the determination and commitment that bring success. Politicians, civic leaders, feminists, and anyone interested in Oregons twentieth-century political history will be fascinated by this recounting of events that influenced the political and social landscape of Oregon and beyond.

About the Author After her retirement from the Oregon Supreme Court in 1986, Betty Roberts began a new career in mediation and arbitration, and made international headlines in March 2004 when she performed the states first same-sex marriage ceremonies in Multnomah County. She lives in Portland, Oregon. Gail Wells is the author of several books, including *The Little Lucky: A Family Geography* and *The Tillamook: A Created Forest Comes of Age* (both OSU Press).