

BELLE MOSKOWITZ

Campaign Manager and Advisor to Governor Alfred E. Smith



Belle Moskowitz exercised a level of power in the political realm unprecedented for women in her time. When Al Smith ran for President in 1928, she was by far the most powerful woman in the national Democratic Party. (The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH.)

Belle Moskowitz was an important political figure and social justice reformer during New York's Progressive Period. She began her public career as a social worker, a relatively new field at the time. Moskowitz focused her efforts on social and educational reforms for young women. Once the garment strikes began, she shifted her focus to labor issues, specifically

workplace safety and wages. After the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire, she worked with Assemblymember Al Smith to investigate the tragedy and understand why so many workers died. After the investigation, she helped Smith craft the reform legislation that resulted from the tragedy. Moskowitz's association with him would continue for the rest of her life. She managed all of Smith's gubernatorial campaigns and was his close advisor during his time in office. When Smith decided to run for President, Moskowitz was his Campaign Manager and oversaw his campaign in 1928. Her premature death came after accidentally falling down the stairs outside her home.