



# Thinking about Leadership

*Nannerl O. Keohane*

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## **Thinking about Leadership** Nannerl O. Keohane

Leadership is essential to collective human endeavor, from setting and accomplishing goals for a neighborhood block association, to running a Fortune 500 company, to mobilizing the energies of a nation. Political philosophers have focused largely on how to prevent leaders from abusing their power, yet little attention has been paid to what it actually feels like to hold power, how leaders go about their work, and how they relate to the people they lead. In *Thinking about Leadership*, Nannerl Keohane draws on her experience as the first woman president of Duke University and former president of Wellesley College, as well as her expertise as a leading political theorist, to deepen our understanding of what leaders do, how and why they do it, and the pitfalls and challenges they face.

Keohane engages readers in a series of questions that shed light on every facet of leadership. She considers the traits that make a good leader, including sound judgment, decisiveness, integrity, social skill, and intelligence; the role that gender plays in one's ability to attain and wield power; ethics and morality; the complex relationship between leaders and their followers; and the unique challenges of democratic leadership. Rich with lessons and insights from leaders and political thinkers down through the ages, including Aristotle, Queen Elizabeth I, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Nelson Mandela, *Thinking about Leadership* is a must-read for current and future leaders, and for anyone concerned about our prospects for good governance.

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