

**Excerpt from Bella Abzug Interview with Global Education Motivators,
April 24, 1997**

When I went to represent my law firm anywhere -- I was a young kid just out of college -- I said, "How do you do? I'm Bella Abzug from the law firm of such and such," and people would say, "Yes, fine, fine, sit down." So I'd wait and nothing much would happen, so finally I'd clear my throat and say, "I'm Bella Abzug from the law firm of such and such," and they'd say, "Yes, we know, but we're waiting." I'd say, "What are we waiting for?" And they'd say, "We're waiting for the lawyer." They thought I was the secretary. So I had this identity crisis.

I went home and discussed it with my husband, Martin. In those days professional women wore hats -- and gloves, so I put on gloves and a hat. And every time I went anywhere for business, with the hat and gloves, they knew I was there for business. And I jokingly often say, as you can see, I've taken off the gloves. But I like wearing hats and I continue to wear it. When I ran for Congress and got to Washington, they made such a fuss about the hat instead of what was under it that I didn't know whether they wanted me to take it off or keep it on. I decided that they wanted me to take it off, which made me determined to keep it on.

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