

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Internal Use Only

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AN INTERVIEW OF THE FIRST LADY
CONDUCTED BY PAT O'BRIEN OF "WORKING WOMAN"
THE WHITE HOUSE

Q I'm just -- honestly, I'm thrilled to see you.

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, thank you.

Q I'm very -- this is not going to sound terribly journalistic, but I'm very proud.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, it's been quite an experience, quite a challenge.

Q I'll bet it has been, and that's what I would love to talk to you about. Now, I know that the primary thing on your agenda is health care. And you really -- in this last year, you have spearheaded what is probably going to be the first really major social reform in this country in at least a generation.

And I want to know what you've learned about yourself, about the media, about politics, about special interest groups. You've gone through an extremely intense time, learning experience. I'd just love to get your thoughts on that.

MRS. CLINTON: Right. Where to start.

Q How about with the effect on yourself?

MRS. CLINTON: I think one thing that I've learned, which came as something of a surprise, was how adverse to change Washington is. And despite the fact that it seemed obvious to my husband and to those of us who worked with him in the campaign that people really did want to change a lot of the institutional ways of Washington, it's just very hard.

And there is such a disconnect in my experience between what I see and watch in Washington and what I

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experience outside of Washington that trying to draw those together so that I could be effective speaking on behalf of the people that I feel like I'm representing in a town with a culture that is not as mindful as I think it should be about what really goes on in people's lives is very hard.

You know, I've taken members of Congress with me on trips, and I remember being in one place and meeting a woman who didn't have any health insurance. And she had worked in the same place for 15 years. And she tried to take good care of herself so she would go for a physical every year.

And she went for a physical last year, and they found a lump in her breast. And her doctor referred her to a surgeon. And he examined her, and when he found out she had no insurance, he said, well, if you had insurance, we would have biopsied it, but since you don't, we'll just watch it.

Q Oh, that happens --

MRS. CLINTON: And, you know, I sat there and I was with these members of Congress, and I looked at them and I realized that they had never met or talked to anybody like this before.

Q Sometimes I think that some people, all they really need to do is to talk to people.

MRS. CLINTON: I know it.

Q And you would find out stories that you just would be ashamed to realize that they're happening, (inaudible) in their own home.

MRS. CLINTON: I know it, and I just -- I have even more conviction about what we need to do to help each other and to support people than I had before my husband became President, but I have a higher level of frustration because it is so hard to break through the kind of privileged, protected lifestyle that too many people in the press and in the Congress and in the permanent government and in the business community surround themselves with, so that they don't see and feel the human dimension of this.

You know, that was at the very beginning of my effort, but then just a short time ago, I was in Las Vegas and I met a couple who the husband works every day, they have four kids, the wife stays home. And everybody has all this pro-family rhetoric, and we want people to take better care

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of their children, which we do need to have happen.

But here is this family, they're doing what they're supposed to do. The wife is doing full-time homemaking. She gets pregnant again. The husband didn't make enough money to insure both his children and his wife, so they chose to insure the children. So when the wife gets pregnant, she's not insured, so she has to skimp on her prenatal care.

And when I met her, she was a month away from delivery, and she and her husband had talked, that she would try to forgo having any anesthesia during delivery because an epidural costs \$1200. And she had big babies, and the last time she had a baby, she had to have two. So that would be more than they could afford to pay.

And I thought to myself, there is not one person that I see at a Washington dinner party who --

Q Has ever had that choice.

MRS. CLINTON: -- who has ever had to make that choice. And even if they came from a family that had to have made that choice, somehow they have forgotten it. You know, they may have been raised poor, they may have come from, you know, a family without any income, or whatever happened to them, but somehow when they got into the privileged class of America, they forgot that every day there are millions and millions of people like the two women that I met.

Q What happened with the members of Congress you brought on that trip when they heard what they heard? Do you feel that it made any impact or did it just go right by them?

MRS. CLINTON: I think it made some impact, but I think it's outweighed by the daily, relentless pressure they face from special interests and from constituents at home who are much more narrow in their demands on the political system.

Q As far as the special interest groups are concerned, what were the big surprises there? Or were there? Were there things you were braced for? You said already that you -- the essential thing seems to be that you came here with a commitment that was clearly shared by an enormous number of people, but you came into a culture that resists change enormously.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that the unaccountable

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power of the lobbyists and the press in setting an agenda and determining what is or is not important is troubling to me because when you're as well organized and well financed as a lot of groups are, they seem to be able to exercise their influence with very little scrutiny so that if they, for example, say that the President's health plan will destroy your right to choose your doctor and they run millions of dollars' worth of TV ads, and we try and --

Q Harry and Louise.

MRS. CLINTON: Yeah, and we try -- the conventional wisdom in Washington is, well, we've got to make a deal with these people so don't go out there criticizing them or saying that what they're doing is wrong, because you're going to have to deal with them because they are really powerful because they represent all these interests.

Well, we know that, but the press is not doing its job. It will have like one story about the inaccuracies, and they expect us to carry the whole load. And the members of Congress who are influenced to take the money of these kinds of groups, their attitude basically is, well, you know, you've got to come up with even more of a counterbalance so that I can find the middle somewhere.

Well, I want people to do what's right. I mean I don't think it's right that in America in 1994, we have millions of Americans who have no health insurance, and we have all of us one paycheck away, one job away, one illness away from having any health insurance. I think that's wrong. And I don't care what the lobbyists say or what TV ads they run, I think it's wrong.

And I want a little bit of, you know, conviction and some advocacy and a little bit of passion instead of this, well, you know, business as usual, we're going to have to cut to the lowest common denominator.

Q So how -- as you find that and experience this frustration, how then -- how does that affect your strategy and how you do what you do?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, you have to take into account. I mean it's reality. You've got to deal with the system that you've got, but I think you have to keep pushing it as hard as possible because it does need to change and people do need to be more sensitive to what goes on in the lives of most Americans.

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And we have to come up with a better way of explaining what we're trying to do.

Q So, for example, you've got something in mind now that influenced where you've had to change your approach?

MRS. CLINTON: No, I think -- well, not change the approach so much, but recognize that the forces arrayed against change are formidable and are basically unaccountable. I mean I've really been surprised at how you can get away with saying nearly anything. And, you know, that has just astonished me.

I've never been in a circumstance where people can both on a personal and a political level say things about you that are totally untrue, and you say they're untrue and people think that's a (inaudible). I mean, you know, I've just never been in that kind of a situation.

So I'm just having to learn how this operates. I'm trying to figure out how to keep reaching out to most Americans because I think that the President is going to do what they want. I mean he is going to keep working to kind of break through it.

Q But how much frustrating it must be in all ways. I mean, how has it changed you? How are you different?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I'm trying not to let it change me too much because I can see how you could either become very captured by the system so that you live or die, figuratively, by what people say about you or, you know, what the headlines in the paper are and all of that. And I'm trying to avoid that.

I've read enough and seen enough to realize that that's happened to a lot of people who lived here before. I mean a lot of people who lived here before would get up early in the morning, they would read five papers, they would watch, you know, every TV news broadcast, and they would start their day screaming at people because they didn't like what was said about them.

Well, I'm not interested in that. I don't think that's any way to live your life. So I want to work very hard to avoid being captured by the culture of the place.

I also, though, don't want to have all this effort not produce results for the people that we're trying to help.

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I mean my husband ran for president because he thought America needed some changes if we were going to keep being strong and taking care of ourselves and giving a good life to people. And I think his first year has been remarkable because he and all of us just basically said we're going to keep going. And yeah, we have to understand how this system works and we have to get as much as we possibly can for people and then keep building on that.

So on the one hand, I don't want to get captured; on the other, I don't want to get embittered and kind of react against it. I just want to learn how it operates and then figure out how I can make a contribution to helping people, which is all that I really am interested in.

You know, I don't want to live in a country where women with lumps in their breasts are told they can't have a biopsy, or you can't have anesthesia if you need it when you're in child labor. I mean that just doesn't strike me as the kind of country I want to live in, just like I don't want to live in a country where I can't walk safely on the streets or my daughter can't go play in a park if she chooses to, or people who work hard can't make a decent living at jobs that pay a decent wage.

Q You know, sort of connected to this, but something else that has struck me as I've watched your progress through this year, one of the things I think as I get older, I've noticed that we all have several selves. Did we talk about this? I don't know if we did or not, but I've always felt that that's an expression that's very important to me. I try and talk to my own children about keeping in mind with people as you take a look at them, judge them, layer them in your own mind, keep that in mind always.

And, however, it seems to me that you are not allowed to have several selves at all. You were expected to be one thing and one thing only, and if you are this, then you are --

MRS. CLINTON: You can't be that.

Q If you are helping your husband, you're sacrificing yourself. If you're focused on health care, then you aren't focused on anything else -- or whatever the dichotomy. And so therefore, I read story after story that ends up saying she's an enigma. And I'm just curious what you feel about that.

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MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think you're absolutely right, and I don't remember if we talked about this before, but I think you're absolutely right because -- but that's the nature of the way journalism works today.

And it's what Deborah Tannen, who wrote that wonderful book, you know, "You Don't Understand," calls the "culture of critique." You have to be either-or. You cannot be a complex, rounded person, which most of us are. I mean we have different roles in our lives, and as we age and go through different stages, we acquire different roles. I mean, I'm a different person today than I was before I was a mother. I'm a different person today than I will probably be when I'm a grandmother.

I mean, you know, we are different, evolving people, if you take your life seriously and keep trying to learn and don't remain static. But in our present "culture of critique," to use Deborah's phrase, you've got to be pigeon-holed, and you have to fit into some stereotype because then something has to be played off against you because there has to be this dialectic in order for there to be any newsworthiness into whatever the subject is.

And I think it's a great loss because, you know, if you look at any individual's life, it is filled with all kinds of different responsibilities and roles. You know, most of us are different at work than we are at home.

Q Right, and for you, I'm sure, too, that you must get to a point where when you know it's going to be (inaudible) anyway, that there is a great part of you, why should you ever even let it show?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, you know, and certainly why let it show to people who will only put yet a different label or stereotype on it and try to push me into a different corner; pull me out of one corner, push me into another corner.

And, you know, all during the campaign, I kept saying over and over again, I mean what I want to see happen is to rid ourselves of these stereotypes about women and for each woman to have the opportunity to be whomever God meant her to be, to live up to whatever her God-given potential is, and to recognize that for all of us, that is an evolving challenge.

But how exciting and more interesting to lead a

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life in which you are constantly questioning what the next stage will bring and you're balancing all sorts of demands than to try to fit into some little box.

So I've been alternately bemused and amused by what I see as this tendency to try to capture me or anybody in a very one-sided, one-dimensional kind of description. And I don't know that there is any way to deal with it since it seems to be the way of describing people these days. So I think it's a great loss and it does a disservice to anyone who is (inaudible) that way. That seems to be the pattern.

Q You see, I feel I have the luxury now, really, to be out of journalism full-time. And in fact, one of the things I'm doing this year, I'm on the selection committee for the Newman Fellowship --

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, great.

Q -- which I consider an enormous privilege because it changed my life 20 years ago when I got that fellowship. But I also think it's something that really takes you just right down into you see the aspirations and the thoughts and the process of a hundred young journalists, about 104. And I find myself looking through -- looking at what they write and looking at what they're thinking about, and I'm struck by a couple of things.

I'm struck by how the younger ones seem torn as they know exactly what you're saying is happening, and yet they are moving deeper into a culture that seems to demand it. Even the best still are caught up in it. Did you see David Broder's column this morning?

MRS. CLINTON: No.

Q He said, and it's the first reporter at least who said this, that the press is doing a lousy job analyzing the ads, particularly the insurance industry ads, the Harry and Louise ads.

MRS. CLINTON: Good for him.

Q Because he said it should be done in the way -- after all, we're still searching after the -- the ads are part of it and should be treated the way they were in the campaign. They should be analyzed. They shouldn't be just on the one hand, on the other hand. And it's not being done. At least he said it. He can be very --

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MRS. CLINTON: That was the spirit of Kathleen Jamison's (inaudible).

Q Really, yes.

MRS. CLINTON: Because as he says, he starts the column out by saying, I got a phone call from Kathleen Jamison, you know, and talking about it. And she is terrific. Do you know her?

Q I have, yes, I have met her.

MRS. CLINTON: She's neat. (Inaudible.) She is really good at trying to help journalism see itself.

Q Yeah, and for him to pick up on it is not usually what happens. Anyway, I find myself with all of these applications looking for that kind of soul-searching. So maybe it doesn't have to be forever the way it is right now.

MRS. CLINTON: I want to stop you for one second because I'm noticing your tape recorder is stopping and starting, but just -- I have a backup. I just wanted you to know.

Q Do you? Okay.

MRS. CLINTON: So I'll give you a transcript.

Q Would you?

MRS. CLINTON: I'm watching it starting and stopping.

Q This is supposed to be voice-activated, but it's not one I've used before so -- I hate them.

MRS. CLINTON: I'm not fond of any (inaudible). I don't like typewriters, I don't like word processors.

Q I don't like VCRs.

MRS. CLINTON: VCRs drive me crazy. I just can't - - I finally learned how to do a CD. That was my major accomplishment.

Q We have two VCRs under the bed, so our kids tried to show us how they operated, and we could not get them

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to, so rather than telling them to -- (laughter) -- there are now two under the bed. One of my daughters found them at Christmas and she went looking for the table and now it's a joke. (Laughter.) Anybody (inaudible) VCR?

Anyway -- well, thanks, I appreciate that, because I was listening to this and thinking it wasn't working. I never trust them anyway.

So, let's see, where were we? Talking about journalism. And we said we don't know if there is a way of dealing with it. And it's the principal thing I think about now that I'm on the outside, and I think I'll probably eventually write on it. Right now I'm having fun with fiction.

But as you deal with it, how does it affect what you think you will do next? I mean what are the lessons learned? What are the things that, if you could just give me a couple of examples of things happening that have prompted you to change your way of dealing with whatever (inaudible) for yourself.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, a recent example doesn't pop into my mind, but during the campaign, and tied in with what we were talking about, I had a real dilemma level because I learned, you know, by about June or July of the campaign that a lot of people didn't even think we had a child because I tried to be so protective of our daughter. I want her to have as much of a life as she can.

So I was torn because, on the one hand, that's a huge part of my life. I mean it's the most important thing to me. So I didn't want people wrongly concluding that I didn't have a child or that I didn't care about my child.

On the other hand, I didn't want to get put into a position where I was doing what I had seen others do, which I didn't think was good for the child, which is exploiting the child. So I really had to learn how to draw some lines about how to, you know, let the world see some of our relationship and some of what she does, but still draw a very firm line that I didn't want crossed over, what she would be exposed to.

And I think actually we worked that out fairly well. It has been a struggle all year long. But I'll never forget last spring, we had one of the TV networks doing an hour about the President, and they just pushed and pushed to

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get Chelsea in somehow, you know, Chelsea at home with her dad in which they do a picture of him seeing her off to school, something like that.

We just kept saying no. You know, that is where we draw the line. We don't want her to be used in that way. And they just were relentless. Then finally when they realized no meant no, the correspondent doing it said, "Well, you've made the right decision. I wouldn't have done it with my children."

And I said, "Why did you put us through that?" "Well, that's my job." I said, "Well, why didn't you take no for an answer?" The first time, they had people calling Lisa, they had people calling me, they were just, you know, "You don't understand how wonderful this will be." You know, "You've got to show America that side of you," blah-blah-blah.

And we kept saying, you know, "That's not fair, we're not going to do it," and then when we finally got through to them we weren't going to do it, they said, "Well, as a father, I want to tell you, you made the right decision."

Q Isn't it amazing, because I think sometimes that there is -- part of what's wrong right now in journalism is this ability to separate the two selves like that without seeing that it's hypocritical. You want people to do what you wouldn't do.

MRS. CLINTON: That's a wonderful way of putting it. That's exactly right.

Q It happens all the time. And in fact, I certainly hear reporters say, Boy, I sure wouldn't do it; and yet their job is to convince other people to do it. To get anybody to really look at that straightforwardly is very hard. So that must have been quite a lesson.

MRS. CLINTON: That was a real lesson.

Q That was a real lesson. It must be tough with Chelsea at her age to keep that, not just that, but also, I would think, when I know how hard it was for me with my four daughters, being divorced and supporting them and trying to be a good mother and get bread on the table, it's got to be really hard here. So how do you then develop pockets of time (inaudible)? How do you do that?

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MRS. CLINTON: We really -- we work hard on that. And most evenings we have dinner together. Most weekends we spend together. We're now accommodating more to her social schedule than she is accommodating to ours. You know (inaudible). But it has actually worked out well for us because, you know, we're in this very unusual situation. The fact that her father works down where we live and can be home for dinner, or she can run over and talk to him in the Oval Office or just see him makes a big difference.

So I think we have captured a lot of time. And we -- at night, you know, we help her with her homework. If she doesn't have a lot of homework or gets it done, we might play cards together or work on a puzzle together or watch TV together. So I'm really satisfied with the amount of time we've got. It's better than I thought it was going to be.

Q What TV do you like to watch?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, we've been obsessed by the Olympics. (Laughter.)

Q I think Torvil and Dean were robbed.

MRS. CLINTON: I do, too. (Laughter.)

Q Did you watch?

MRS. CLINTON: I watched. I was outraged. I couldn't go to sleep, I was so outraged.

Q Me, too. So was Craig. We just -- it's -- they were really robbed.

MRS. CLINTON: I thought so, too. You know, it was so funny because Bill woke up -- we woke up the next morning, I guess yesterday morning, and he said, "I'm still mad about that." I said, "I am, too." (Laughter.) That's the way I felt, but we have really enjoyed that.

And we watch a lot of sports on TV because Bill loves to watch basketball at night when he isn't working. And so we watch every Arkansas game and we watch a lot of the other games of teams we're interested in because we know the coach or the -- you know, like one of my college friends is Janet Hill, and her son has a grant and plays on Duke. And so, you know, we have a lot of interest in watching the games on TV.

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Q You know, by the way, you really -- my husband, did you ever make him happy at the Kennedy -- Ethel Kennedy's -- I wasn't there because I was off with one of the grandchildren. And you said to him about the time you and I met that I said all these nice things that a husband would always hope that his wife would be saying when he wasn't around.

MRS. CLINTON: (Laughter.) Yes.

Q Oh, he just came home floating, he was so pleased at that. (Laughter.) That was very nice of you.

All the things of real life, you just have to find ways to anchor into them and you have to be able to keep them real.

There isn't something I would like to ask you, but I'll do it absolutely off the record, and it just involves Chelsea. One of the things I would be worried about would be that in her collection of friendships, the people who would be friendly to her, a child is vulnerable.

How do you keep a kid from being exploited by people maybe who aren't really friends? I mean, I don't know if there is an answer to that, and please don't feel that's -- I'm just curious about how you deal with it.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that's always the case if you have any --

Q Do you want this off the record? I mean I --

MRS. CLINTON: Yes, yes. (Inaudible) any notoriety, but I give her school a lot of credit. They have been terrific. I mean before she came -- we knew she was going there, but before she actually got there, they had groups of kids talking with people saying to them, think how you would feel if you were coming into this situation. And they've really been wonderful in making her life as normal as possible.

And then I have a great story. I was at some big banquet and the grandfather of one of Chelsea's classmates said -- he was laughing, he said, "I have to tell you this story." He said, "It's so great." He said, "We were over visiting with our grandson, and my wife, his grandmother, said, 'Chelsea Clinton is in your class, tell me about her.'"

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"And our grandson rose up and said, 'She's a private person who deserves to be treated like one.'" (Laughter.)

Q Oh, that's nice. Now, can I use that or would you rather --

MRS. CLINTON: Yeah, you can use that anecdote.

Q Is that okay?

MRS. CLINTON: Yes.

Q All right. I may not, but --

MRS. CLINTON: Which I thought was wonderful. He immediately came to her -- she's a private person and deserves to be treated like one, you know, and wouldn't talk about her.

She's got a great group of friends. I am very pleased. And she has kept her friends from Arkansas, which is important, two of her very close friends. They talk on the phone a lot, they come up and visit her here, she goes to visit them. So she's got great friends in both the places that matter to her.

Q How do you get a chance to break free of public image?

MRS. CLINTON: It's hard, but, you know, when we go upstairs, we're pretty much on our own. And you know, that's one of the reasons why we wanted to put in a little kitchen upstairs because we couldn't believe that every meal would be served and would be in a formal dining room, which is what had always happened in years past.

And like yesterday, Chelsea was not feeling good, and I used to make her applesauce all the time, so I made her some applesauce. And I could do that because I have this little kitchen that now is ours, and it's where we have breakfast and most dinners and where I have lunch with her when she's home, and where we have things in our refrigerator, like apples that I can peel and, you know, make applesauce with.

So we try very hard to make private space up there on the second floor. And I feel good about that. I mean it has so far been a refuge. We do go to Camp David, which we

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really enjoy when we get to go. It's hard to go because of her activities plus the President's schedule.

And we have had a lot of our friends come to visit us, and that has been a real godsend because, you know, we just sit back and laugh and tell stories. And then I have wonderful people who work for me. My personal staff are terrifically supportive, fun to be with, and honest with me. You know, they don't pull any punches. They tell me what they think. And I appreciate that, and I appreciate their personal support so that we can just kind of be ourselves.

So those things all together have given me a real good base to have some time and space apart from the public pressures.

Q Now, you're moving into what is probably going to be a pretty intense public time here. So in the light of your experience this year, how do you -- what do you think about when you get up in the morning about how you're going to handle these coming months?

MRS. CLINTON: You know, I really do take each day at a time. I don't really think all that far ahead. And we've got a lot of good help, people who are working hard to help the President. And I'm happy to do my part, but I don't expect to know everything that's going on. I don't expect to be consulted about everything.

I mean you could drive yourself crazy if you were somebody who couldn't delegate or let go of responsibilities around here because there's more than you could ever get done or know about.

And I just have a lot of confidence in what my husband is trying to do and I have a lot of faith in him. I think he really understands what needs to be done. And he gets up every day, and he has the most resilient spirit. Despite all of the incredible attacks and burdens that he has to bear, he is a remarkably optimistic and caring person, and so he keeps me going, too. I mean it's not just what I do, it's the way he responds to what happens and how he never gets down and how he keeps going.

Q Another area -- and I know -- tell me how our time is doing. Are we okay?

MRS. CLINTON: About another five minutes.

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Q Okay, good. Again, in tracking this year, first I'm very sorry about your father dying. I almost wrote you a note, and then I thought, well, you would be inundated with 19,000 of them, because I remember very much what it was when my father died under somewhat similar circumstances.

And I think that at that time you gave a speech where you talked about the politics of meaning, and then you got a very skeptical response out of the media, which I would think would have been one of the more hurtful things of the year.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, you know, it wasn't because I got such tremendous from people.

Q So it didn't -- you were able to --

MRS. CLINTON: You know, and I think that it is -- when my husband and I read this book by Stephen Carter called "The Culture of Disbelief," which the President has talked about a lot, it really helped to explain why some of the sort of elite media reacted. You know, they don't know what to do with religion or faith. They don't know what to do with spirituality. And so they try to denigrate it or poke fun at it because they're scared of it. And I think you have to feel sorry for people like that.

But most people, again in their private selves, whatever their public work roles might require of them, knew what I was talking about. And I wasn't trying to be a theologian or a moral philosopher. I admitted, you know, this is something I'm not very articulate about, it's not something that I have, you know, tried to sit down and write a coherent thesis about.

But it's something that I feel very deeply in my own life and in the lives of my friends, that maybe it's in part age, but that both on a personal level and on a social one, there has been a turning away from some of the deeper values that are part of human experience in our culture.

And people have in different ways, whether it's the religious right or the philanthropic concerns of people that I've worked with in the past, and everything in between, people know that there's something more to life than, you know, just the relentless striving for financial or social position, and that in our public lives together, that is the case as well.

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And we talked -- I mean that wasn't the first time we talked about that. I mean we've talked a lot over the years, I have given lots of speeches about values and about what children needed, which I think is often (inaudible).

Q Have you read James Wilson's book on morality?

MRS. CLINTON: No.

Q It's interesting. He was a professor mine at Harvard during that year, and he's very conservative in many ways. But he wrote an interesting book on morality, that morality has to come from a general sense, that you don't have public morality without it coming from within the individual, and that it's not something you learn, but there is something intrinsic, and we have -- that we deny that.

Now, of course, you always -- I find myself cautious whenever I'm reading people who have spoken out in the (inaudible) political as well as religious, but I thought he had some interesting ideas. I just want to say it's an interesting book to look at.

MRS. CLINTON: But going back to something you said earlier, one of the things that I was kind of ridiculed for was saying in an article that was printed later that, you know, I was talking about great, giant themes and theories. I was talking about being kind to the woman who cleans your office building, inquiring about how she is, seeing her as a human being. So there is something that --

Q You mean in this speech or --

MRS. CLINTON: Yeah, that there is something about basic values that at least are at the root of most religious traditions and that I'm most familiar with as a Christian, about loving one's neighbor and doing the things that lead to a more meaningful society in classic terms, and recognizing that we all are imperfect, we all, in my religious vernacular, are sinners. I mean we all are. But it's what you do with your life, it's how you love and how you forgive and how you reach out and how you care.

And those are not fashionable things to talk about. They're viewed on the one hand as being kind of soft and gushy, and on the other as being meaningless and empty. So we've got to create a conversation again in our country where we're not afraid to talk about how we treat each other and how our politics can't be abstract and away from our

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individual responsibilities toward each other.

You know, we all know the stories about people who go out and make great speeches about saving the world, but don't pay attention to their own children.

Q How will you know -- it's interesting when you talk about the cynicism of the press and the public interests and the Congress and (inaudible) get things changed here. And as you are (inaudible), you are always consistent in how you present yourself as a mom, every time I have ever read anything that you say and certainly what you're saying now. How do you yourself keep from getting cynical about the way you're treated?

MRS. CLINTON: It's really a struggle. It is really hard. I mean this year has taxed every -- (laughs) -- you know, every fiber of my being because I do not want to be a cynical person. I do not want to be an embittered and angry person. I do not want to even spend time thinking about the people who I know spend their entire day thinking about how to destroy my husband and me. I don't want to get drawn into that. I see that as extremely self-destructive.

So I just have to keep rising above it the best way I know how and not letting it affect how I feel about myself or other people. But it is very hard.

Q Mrs. Clinton, I hope to be able to see you again.

MRS. CLINTON: I would like that.

Q I would love to, whether in an interview context or otherwise.

MRS. CLINTON: I would love that. Thank you very much.

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