

08/02/94
FIVE LADIES @ HOME
JOURNAL READERS

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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August 2, 1994

INTERVIEW OF THE FIRST LADY
WITH FIVE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL READERS

Q What is the best thing about being the First Lady, and what has been your biggest disappointment?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, I think the best thing is being able to feel that I'm trying to help people and that I'm trying to help my husband. It's the first time in many, many years that I haven't worked outside the home, so I'm (inaudible) full-time volunteer. I have always done lots of volunteer activities so I have gotten lots of (inaudible.)

But this is at a whole different level and it is very exciting to meet people and share their lives in a way that I could not have if I were your neighbor. And so that, I think, is the most gratifying part of it. And then to see the way you actually can do things that change women's lives.

I mean, everything from responding to the mail that I get and especially when people are asking for help and being able to help them to working on projects that do everything from making the student loan system in our country more accessible to people whose parents stop me on the street or at the (inaudible) and say, "Tell your husband that now my daughter can afford college who couldn't before. Those are the kinds of things that are very exciting to me.

Probably the most disappointing is how much attention is given to things that don't make any difference in anybody's life. And how easy it is in -- like today in our country -- for people to basically lie to us. (Inaudible.) So that you find yourself being characterized or described in ways that are totally untrue and there's no way to really ever get ahead of it. So that has been very disappointing.

I feel that it's such a privilege to be in public life and I'm so proud of my husband. And it's so difficult

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when, you know, day after day the kinds of attacks (inaudible). But unfortunately those (inaudible).

Q When you were a child thinking about what you wanted to do, did it ever cross your mind that you would be in the White House?

MRS. CLINTON: No, no. And I don't think it's anything that I have thought even about. You know, it's not anything I thought about and said, oh, no, I'm not -- that's not for me. It never crossed my mind at all. I always knew that I wanted to do something interesting. And from a very early age, mostly because of my church, I felt like I had (inaudible) do something that would make a difference for other people because I was so lucky. I mean, I had a wonderful family, and I was healthy, and I had a great public school education. So I always wanted to do something that was a challenge, but I hoped also (inaudible).

Q (Inaudible.) I also wanted to ask you about stress. How do you deal with it? How do you deal with stress? Are you using meditation or long baths (inaudible)? How do you cope with stress?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think all of us have a lot of stress in our lives today. And I think it's endemic in our society. There's just too much going on that is just at us all the time. And what I find is a great deal of support and good times with my husband and my daughter.

We do a lot together. We play cards together and lots of times when we're in the middle of a card game we'll be, you know, yelling at each other and (inaudible) what one is doing, you know. (Laughter.) We watch a lot of sporting events together and, as a rule, we, especially me and my husband, we watch a lot of movies. Probably the best thing we do in the White House is rent a movie. (Laughter.) The President and I watched a movie last night. So we do a lot together.

Q What did you see?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, well, I thought it was pretty good. It was The Client, John Grisham's (inaudible).

Q (Inaudible).

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MRS. CLINTON: They are. They are, you know, they're real page-turners, I mean, (inaudible), you know? And this little boy they found to play the part was just extraordinary. So we do a lot of that together.

And then, on my own, I do, you know, I read a lot. I pray a lot. I spend time by myself and, really, sometimes just a hot bath but sometimes a long walk or a bicycle ride, sometimes just calling up a friend of mine, somebody who I trust 100 percent and I can just talk to, you know, that she's there for me and I try to be there for my friends. Actually I find it really distressful for me to be able to help my friends because (inaudible).

Q (Inaudible.)

MRS. CLINTON: Yeah. Yeah, I mean, because so many of my friends are like you. I mean, there are all kinds of things going on in their lives, that if I can be of help to them, I, you know, just doing little things. And I have had so many of my friends come to visit me here. That's another thing, another benefit, that we've got a lot of space here (inaudible). (Laughter.) So they come. I've had friends from high school and friends from college and just -- and great friends from Arkansas, just great people. When they come, then we stay up late (inaudible).

Q Is it like (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: Yeah. (Laughter.)

Q I can imagine that since you maintain this contact with these friends, that that's helping you to stay in touch with the ordinary woman and what her concerns are.

MRS. CLINTON: Yeah. Well, it is because the work -- all the years my husband was governor, people didn't drive me around, people didn't garden. You know, I'd take my car and I'd go to work and I'd, you know, go downtown for lunch or I'd go run over to my daughter's school for something. Then I'd run errands and then I'd load her in the car and we'd make the rounds that, you know, we'd have to make because we did a lot of our shopping ourselves. I never felt like I was isolated, and I had no idea what it would be like coming here.

And the first time I really felt it was last

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spring. Chelsea had a science project that her class had displayed at the National Zoo. It was about (inaudible). And I just decided that I was going to walk there because we wanted to go and see the project. So I told the Secret Service that I was going to walk and I didn't want a whole bunch of people. I mean, I really wanted to walk. So they arranged it and they just had, you know, one person following me and a car following me. I walked out that gate and, honestly, I felt like a weight had been lifted off my chest. (Inaudible) a physical sensation.

And so for me, trying to constantly stay in touch with people and make sure that I do know what's going on in their lives and what is happening when they go shopping or deal with the problems (inaudible) very important to me as a person.

Q You mean you never get to go shopping (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: I can go shopping but it is a really, really big thing (inaudible). My husband cannot do anything. I mean, he has to take an entourage of people with him, and it is very hard on him because he is a real people person and he loves, you know, talking to people and finding out what has happened to them.

He went back to his high school reunion a week ago, and it just made him so happy because these are people he has known all his life. But now he always is, you know, surrounded (inaudible). I don't have quite that kind of burden, thank goodness. So, you know, Chelsea and I'll go shopping, but unfortunately it is just very difficult, once we go somewhere, to kind of keep it normal. So (inaudible).

Q Can you and your husband ever get away, the two of you, without the press following you for (inaudible) spontaneous, you know, intimate moment or not (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: Only at Camp David. We can go to Camp David, yeah. But for reasons I really don't fully understand, the press feels it has to go everywhere. So that we have good friends here in town that we've had for years and, you know, we occasionally have tried to spontaneously to go see them. They'll call and say, "Why don't you come over for dinner, come over and, you know. So and so, another friend is here.

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And it just turns into this huge ordeal so that by the time you get all the cars lined up and the press is ready to go and all of that, what had been a great idea turned into another event.

Q How does that affect your marriage?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, it doesn't affect our marriage so much because it is something that together we're able to talk about and, you know, kind of share our feelings about. But it affects our ability to really have our relationships with other people be as normal as possible.

That's what is hard and, you know, it is something I thought a lot about because, you know, I read about other Presidents in the past, not in the so recent past but, you know, going back to Roosevelt and Truman, and, you know, they used to go out for walks. They could go over and visit with people. They could take trips with their friends.

Q They had a lot of (inaudible).

MRS. CLINTON: I know. And without it turning into some huge deal. And I don't think the individual who is elected to this position should have absolutely no private space. Because the person is who he became, in part, because of his relationships and the fact that people got to know the person and the fact that people cared about him and liked him and worked with him. And then, all of a sudden, he's put into this glass box and I think it really takes away from any President's ability to stay in touch.

And my husband works at it really hard. You know, he goes jogging. He sits and talks with people. He, you know, makes spontaneous stops because he knows that in today's world it's even more important that your President has a feeling about what people are going through.

Q We had two joggers looking for him this morning. (Laughter.) (Inaudible.)

Q How do you help him destress? I know you (inaudible) as much as you do things like this, and (inaudible) do you help him destress or do you --

MRS. CLINTON: You have to. You know, I mean, I don't know how he bears all that he bears day in and day out.

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And he does it in such -- he has zillions of options. I mean, I -- one of the things about my husband that I both love and admire is what a great spiritual reservoir he has. He just can reach down deep and he's so forgiving of people, of a lot of people I'd never forgive. (Laughter.) (Inaudible.)

Q (Inaudible.)

MRS. CLINTON: (Inaudible.) That's right. And so I take it more personally, in some respects, than he does. So like last night, for example, I knew that, you know, he was very tired. He had had a long weekend of activity and then he had a day trip yesterday. So that is why I got this movie and I called him around 5:30 and I said, "How would you like to go to the movies?" And he said, "Oh, what did you get?" And I said, "The Client." And he loves Grisham. And I said, "Do you know what? We'll eat in front of the movie and so (inaudible). (Laughter.)

Q (Inaudible.)

MRS. CLINTON: Exactly. So we had our dinner in front of the movie and, you know, we sat there while we ate dinner and he kind of, you know, told me what's going on. And then we watched the movie and it was just great. So we do a lot of that.

Q So you can be spontaneous at times within the White House.

MRS. CLINTON: Yeah.

Q Molly has a teenaged daughter and you've mentioned Chelsea a couple of times. And I have a 14-year-old daughter who will turn 15 soon and, of course, I adore her, but there are some highs and lows to raising, you know, a young woman, a teenager. And I've often wondered what that's like for you in your position and here in the White House, raising a girl, a young woman, that age.

MRS. CLINTON: That is probably the question I have thought more about and worried over more than anything else. And all the rest of the stuff you read about is not as nearly important to me. And both my husband and I made a decision early on that since he was going to be in public life, even back in Arkansas, we would do everything we could to keep her

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life as normal as possible. And that meant saying no to a lot of things. And it meant protecting her and not subjecting her to, you know, the kind of interest that the President gets.

Q You don't see her a lot (inaudible). You don't hear much and I think that's good.

MRS. CLINTON: That's right. Well, I work very hard on that. Now there are some people who will say, "Well, you never hear or see her. They must not care about her or they don't, you know, (inaudible). You have to know, in this kind of life, you can never please people, and what you have to keep doing is you've got to keep doing what you think is right. And what we know is right is protecting her so that she can have her own life to make her own decisions.

And I had an experience last spring that brought that home. One of the networks was doing an interview with my husband, and they were just relentless in requesting some kind of film footage or time around Chelsea. And they made all the arguments. They said, you know, "A lot of people in America want to know that you're a good father. A lot of people want to see you with your daughter. This will give us a chance to do that."

And we kept saying, "No. No. No. We know he's a good father and we don't care whether other people see that. That's what is important to us." So after we kept saying no about a million times, they finally accepted it.

And then the interviewer said to me, "Well, you made the right decision. I wouldn't let my daughter be interviewed either." And I said, "Why did you put me in such a position where I had to keep saying no?" And he said, "Well, because, you know, we thought maybe you would eventually give in and it would make for good television." And I said, "But not for good parenting." He said, "That's right."

Q How do you stop from losing your temper when you encounter things like that? One of the things that I'm struggling with now at work is that I have a very hard time hiding anything on my face so that if somebody says something (inaudible) and I get really aggravated, everybody knows it or everybody runs over and says, "Are you okay?" And I can't imagine -- a lot of times I have to stand up in a group of

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people and speak and ask questions and I get irritated. How do you control yourself in that type of situation?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, this has been hard for me because I'm someone who likes to say what I think, and I think that's the, you know, the fairest way to be with people. But, on the other hand, I know that you have to be very careful about how you do that. So it's a balancing act all of the time.

It is very difficult, when someone says something very hurtful to me or about me or about my husband or someone else who I'm close to, not to react like a human being. You know, I mean, I was just never raised this way. I mean, if somebody says something hurtful, you want to say, "How can you say that? You don't even know the facts."

Well, what I have unfortunately learned is that it's very, very hard to, in the public eye, act in a way that you would act normally in your personal life because people then draw all sorts of other conclusions. So maintaining as calm an appearance is very important, and I work on that all of the time. And it is not easy. (Laughter.) (Inaudible.)

Q You changed your hairstyle a lot and I loved this one. It's very soft and very pretty, but is there a reason why you've changed it so many times? I know your hairdresser probably loves it. (Laughter.) (Inaudible.)

MRS. CLINTON: Well, that is part of it, is that ever since I was, probably, a teenager, I have experimented with my hair because I get bored with it, you know. And I really do and, also, I'm not very good at it. I desperately need friends (inaudible). (Laughter.)

And so I always am doing something different with it, and it's much easier for me if I just kind of keep it this length or little bit longer. But then after I go for a while, I say, "Well, you know, I really like so-and-so's hair. Maybe I'll try that." So off I go and I do things over and over again which I swear I'll never do, you know? Like I swear that I will never get another permanent (inaudible) I will never cut my hair again. Then I go off and cut my hair.

It's been fun for me and I have been so struck by how funny all this talk about my hair is and people running

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contests about it, you know. (Laughter.) But I'm, you know, it's the one part of your body that you can change easily. I mean, everything else is so hard, you know (inaudible). (Laughter.)

Q You can look different and even if everybody loves to write a big column about it, I think it's (inaudible).

Q But is it (inaudible) all the appearance attached to the White House: the suits, the shoes, the traveling. I mean, I really wonder -- we all wonder if, you know, you're, like, not wearing any makeup. (Laughter) (Inaudible.)

MRS. CLINTON: Well, in fact, you know, one of the things -- to go back to the stress question -- is I know my limits pretty well. And so what I try to do is if I have a really busy week, then I just say to everybody, "We just need to slow down and do nothing, this Saturday or something or maybe even in the middle of the week." We just have to have a break and we just have to, you know, not really run around so much." And then, you know, I just might, you know, put on a pair of sweats and go for a walk and not do anything just because it's so nice to just relax and let down.

The clothes are also fun for me because it's not anything I've ever been particularly good at or concerned with in my earlier life. And so I've gotten great help. Again it's not anything you can please people with. I mean, you know, you can say, "Well, this is what you can do with it. Oh, no. (Inaudible)." And what's so much --

Q I loved your hat at the Inauguration.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. Thank you. I got into hats partly because they're great for bad hair days. (Laughter.) They are. They cover everything up. And I have found that I cannot take the sun on my skin anymore. I don't know if that has happened to all of you but (inaudible).

I was in the sun all the time growing up. I played lots of sports. I was, you know, one of these teenagers that would lie in the sun, you know, and I realized about, oh, five or six years ago I could really see the sun damage. Well, it's probably too late to reverse it, but I don't know if I want to make it any worse.

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Q Once you get used to wearing one, too, and the sun not beating down on you, when it does it just drives you crazy.

Q To get back to Chelsea, one question I would like to ask (inaudible). Remember I talked to you about sleaze and violence and things. We got 150,000 people to sign that petition, though some of it, frankly, was organizational in input. But do you control some of Chelsea's television watching or not, or, you know, her relationship with the culture. I mean, the fact that we have to protect our children against the culture is a little strange, but do you protect?

MRS. CLINTON: Yes. Well, we did all during the time she was growing up. We were very strict about how much television she could watch and what kind of television she could watch. And one of the reasons why we, you know, early got cable was because I liked the Disney channel and I liked Nickelodeon. And so we would really, you know, almost monitor it on a daily basis, and there were some things that we wouldn't let her watch regularly but usually with my husband or me.

So that my husband loves Saturday morning cartoons, and that would be one of their times together. You know, he'd get up and they'd fix a little breakfast together, and then they'd, you know, lie around. And lots of times he'd be on the phone doing work, but they'd be together watching the cartoons and talking about them and having their favorite cartoons. And so we always try to do that and we're also very careful about movies. We just wouldn't let her go to movies. Now, as she's gotten older --

Q (Inaudible) 12-year-old. (Inaudible) two years younger than Chelsea, and I find, as she gets older, it's harder.

MRS. CLINTON: It is. But do you know -- one of the things that I have really worked hard at is talking to her about why I don't like what is on television. And so occasionally if we watch something together that I don't think is appropriate, you know, and this has happened ever since she was much younger, we'd say, "You know, why do they want to do that to people? They don't need to do that. That's not necessary." Or "Why do they need to show that?"

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They don't have to show that."

And so now, as she's older, even though she sees things with her friends or at friends' houses that I wouldn't personally approve of, she sees it with the whole background of our values, our attitudes.

Q You can use it as a springboard, really to (inaudible).

MRS. CLINTON: That's right. It's impossible to shield your children like I felt that we were shielded. And I feel that we were so lucky growing up in the time that we did because we didn't have to contend with so much violence and (inaudible).

Q Would you please (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: Yes, I will. And she has talked about that a lot because, you know, both of us feel so strongly about what needs to be done to protect our children. And it's so hard to break through in the culture and figure out how to do that because people, you know, people are oftentimes intimidated and don't want to make a stand and, you know, the old thing, "Well, everybody's doing it so why can't I?"

You know, a lot of the parents, especially in today's world where everybody is having to work hard, you know, they kind of take the path of least resistance, which is very risky. You know, and so we have to be supporting each other. So I will pass that on because she and I really try to think of new ways we can get this message across.

Q Let me show you something else. When you're talking about how times have changed, back in the 1940s my parents used to live in Washington, D.C. And my dad was a driver for the Navy and he used to make deliveries to the White House through the back door. So this is really a kicker for my parents, that 50 years later his daughter is coming as an invited guest through the front door. (Laughter.)

MRS. CLINTON: But, you know, even back in the -- well, until World War II, I guess, you could cut across the back lawn of the White House, and people used to go to work by cutting across the lawn. There were no fences or security

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like there is now. So, I mean, times have really dramatically changed.

Q Do you ever worry about your husband's safety or your own?

MRS. CLINTON: I never used to worry about it, but I am very disturbed by what I see as the real increase in not only violence, which I think is bothering all of us, and I hope, with some of the changes we're making, Washington will begin to get that under control.

So I'm really troubled by the sort of meanness (inaudible) but the kind of, oh, just mean-spirited things people are saying, you know. And I don't know that they -- I think that they are doing it -- you know, on the radio talk shows and some of the other arenas, they're doing it to be sensational, and they're doing it to get attention, and they're doing it to make money.

I mean, I understand their motivation, but I don't know that they understand how that often can unhinge people, who are themselves not very stable. And that troubles me because I have seen just in the last several months, you know, an upsurge in this kind of nastiness out there among people.

And even if you disagree with somebody, I was always taught to believe that you could disagree but do it agreeably. And you could have honest differences with people even over (inaudible). But we're kind of falling into the trap of dehumanizing people who don't agree with us about various matters. And I don't think that is good for the country, and I think it feeds into a kind of pattern of being violent and doing things that we should try to prevent.

Q (Inaudible), well, actually not so much about prevention, but you're talking about the things that you want to do. We're fortunate enough to have a place in history being created (inaudible) decade. What do you see -- what would you like history to say about you? What is your (inaudible)?

MRS. CLINTON: I don't have any idea. I'm -- you know, I was always hopeful that whatever I did all during my life, I could feel that I had made a contribution to help other people. I mean, that is the most important thing for

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me. And so I hope that history will say that I tried to do that, and I tried to speak for people who often don't get heard and whose needs are often overlooked, and that I have tried in some ways to make our country more sensitive and caring about people and to bring people together even though they disagree with each other. I mean, that's what I really believe is so important right now.

We're at a funny point in history, and it is in our personal lives as well as in our public life. Because all of the time I was growing up, you know, the world seemed, I suppose, frightening in a way but also stable. We had the United States versus communism, and it was pretty easy to explain and you could kind of know where you stood, and you didn't have to really worry too much about that.

The world is totally changing and in some ways that are very, very good. I mean, our relationships with Russia are a godsend in the fact that they are no longer pointing their nuclear missiles at our country. And the freedom that has come to eastern Europe and places like that, I mean, is just a real triumph of the human spirit. So, I mean, we have to celebrate that. But it does mean that there are no more easy ways of looking at the world and so we are pushed into a new era.

And that's what my husband is struggling with -- where we're trying to define ourselves when the old rules no longer apply. And to some extent that is what happened to us personally. You know, that everyone around this table, I am sure, has not had her life turn out exactly as she would have expected and has had changes in her life even in the last several years that were never expected.

And so all of us are being really challenged as to how do we maintain our values, our faith, our relationships, while we're being pushed into a very different world. And I think as a result of that there is a lot of confusion and anxiety and insecurity that gets both acted out between people on their personal levels and then gets projected out against the President or people in public life. So it's a very difficult time (inaudible).

Q That's very interesting. And at the moment, politically -- last time we were talking about health care, which I'm sure you are thinking about and you've devoted so much time. It would be interesting that every single person

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here is somehow affected by health care, from Molly and Collette, who both were married to doctors and Collette is now concerned about her own health plan as a divorced woman. (Inaudible.) Diane has had a long term chronic illness --

Q (Inaudible.) And I'm one of those people that they -- are uninsurable, which is one of the primary reasons why I work.

Q And who is depending on her husband, a freelance worker, her husband's health -- and we were all (inaudible).

Q What are your goals now for health care? What do you think is going to happen?" Are you -- do you feel that the work you've done is going to be rewarded in some way so that you -- I don't mean rewarded, but I mean -- come to some kind of fulfillment? I think we're all interested in that.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I really hope so because I am even more convinced now than I was when I started how important this is for every family because no family is secure. That is the great lesson to me, is that here we are in the richest country in the world with, by far, the finest medical facilities and personnel and yet we don't make all of our people as secure as the very richest among us or the poorest. We take care of the poorest, and the rich can afford their own, but everybody in the middle --

And, you know, I was just stunned by how many people have told me what you all have just told me around the table. And, you know, like Diane being uninsurable -- she is just so fortunate to be a woman who has skills that are needed in a workplace that does provide insurance because there are so many uninsurable people who stay uninsurable because the jobs that they have don't provide insurance.

Or to be -- you know, I often say to people, "I don't know what anyone's insurance is right now, but I would argue that nearly every one of us is one job, one layoff or one divorce away from being insecure with our health care.

Q Or even one illness, because it is not covered when you change. I have a niece who graduated from college -- I think it was last year or the year before-- came home and (inaudible) where she was and found out she was diabetic. Now she has not -- she does not qualify for her parent's

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health insurance because she's not a student, and she's getting beyond the age where she won't be covered anyway. And she can't get her own. You know?

I mean, and she's only in her early twenties, my gosh, diabetes is a lifetime condition. And should she ever decide to be married and have a family, she's going to need medical care. It's, you know, it's scary.

MRS. CLINTON: You see, that's a perfect example also of how backwards our system is because if your niece were insured and were insured for what I believe she should be, which is preventive care, she would get the checkups she would need, she would be monitored the way a diabetic needs to be monitored at a reasonable cost and, hopefully, she would be able to maintain her disease all the way through her life without very much difficulty.

But what so often happens is once someone has an illness like diabetes and they become uninsurable by necessity, they postpone getting the preventive care. So the disease then becomes worse and more expensive for the rest of us than it would have been -- and I trust this will not ever happen to your niece. But I have been to so many hospitals with people who had diabetes or some other chronic condition, and they just kept postponing getting help because they couldn't afford it.

Finally something happens where they cannot ignore it any longer. So they go to the emergency room. And the emergency room is becoming the family physician for people who don't have insurance or don't have enough insurance that covers what they need. And then very often they are taken care of, thankfully, and all too often it's more expensive than it would have been and then we all pay the cost.

Q So why do people -- (inaudible) I don't understand is that people are saying, the (inaudible), well, something -- and it's going to cost us an arm and a leg. Well, it already costs us an arm and leg, and the costs are not going down and that -- regardless, even if they do nothing.

And when they talk about reducing the welfare rolls -- the reason a lot of people are on welfare is because they

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have children. And if they go out and get a job, they are not going to have health care for their children. And quite frankly, I wouldn't make the choice. If I had children and my choice was they could see a doctor if they had those inevitable ear aches, sore throats, whatever -- broken bones -- or I would have to go and get a job where I wouldn't have health care, I'd stay home although (inaudible).
(Laughter.)

I mean -- you can understand -- I can't understand breeding, you know, like one after the other, but I can understand the position of concern that a lot of people have. And I think if they would reform health care, they would take a big chunk out of the welfare rolls.

Q Well, what about the (inaudible) health care in terms of mental health and what that will cost us later on? What is it that you are proposing (inaudible) mental health care as opposed to physical health care?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, in our original proposal we proposed covering mental health and drug and alcohol and substance abuse treatment because, again, we know that the right kind of treatment can help a lot of people deal with, you know, depression before it gets really serious. Sometimes it is just as simple as talking to somebody and then they feel better.

But oftentimes people don't know where to go and they don't have any insurance coverage that will point them in the right direction. And we know that if we can help on some of these mental health problems before they get serious, we save ourselves money.

Then for serious mental health problems, you know, like schizophrenia, for example, we need a system that enables people to afford medication so that they can be stabilized and we don't then pay the cost we pay in violence or crime or homelessness.

The thing that always is so surprising to me -- which goes back to your point -- is that people don't realize we pay one way or the other. And if we do not give security as much as we can or health care for families early on, we pay.

The pregnant woman who doesn't get prenatal care,

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all too often, has a premature infant, low birth weight, maybe with a preventable complication. We pay. The child who is not immunized, doesn't have well-child care, the mother postpones taking him to the doctor because they don't have insurance, and so the ear ache turns into something much more serious. We pay. And there is a welfare example. We go down the line.

And one of the great challenges in this whole health care reform discussion has been to help people understand that we are currently paying more money than we should pay to get everybody good health care.

Q Now how will this affect -- health care reform affect, for instance, someone like me who has a small business or my husband who is self-employed and maybe hires someone in the spring in planting season or in the fall in harvesting season or, you know, all the small businesses. About 80 percent of the businesses are 10 employees or less. How will that affect us?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, it will depend upon what the Congress finally does. What we have proposed is that, for self-employed people, you could join very large buying groups which would give you very low rates, which you can't get now. I mean, even if you --

Q Say if one professional group bands together --

MRS. CLINTON: Or even bigger than that. I mean, it could be a professional group or it could be, as what's happening in some states, like California and Florida, it would just be a buying group open to any person, any small business or any self-employed person. So you would begin to get the discounted rates that now only big business and government get.

In addition, we wanted to give both you and your husband 100 percent tax deductibility for your insurance. I don't understand -- you know, self-employed people have never been given that.

Q Yeah. You can deduct any employee's, but you can't deduct your own. I think it's ridiculous.

MRS. CLINTON: I thought it was wrong, and we've argued very strongly for that. I don't know if the Congress

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will do it, but I think it is a very important part of this. And then if you have an employee for a certain period of time, you would make a small contribution into the pool of the big discount buying group.

You know, you're familiar because of your husband's work with, you know, co-ops. And you use co-ops or you go to a discount store because you can get lower prices. And the way the insurance companies have worked is to try to isolate individuals and small groups so that they can be charged more. And we wanted to change that.

Q (Inaudible) in any group who are so eminently sensible and the people reacting -- always react positively. You know, between the idea and the reality (inaudible), called The Shadow, T.S. Eliot said, "The Shadow gets deeper and deeper." Why? How does it make you feel, and is it an ultimate frustration?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, it has been a real learning experience because what has happened is that groups that profit from the existing system are extremely well-financed and powerful. And they have launched a very effective campaign over the last year and a half to confuse people, to make people afraid. And this is nothing new.

When we went to Independence, Missouri, on Saturday, we did so because President Truman proposed a very similar plan three times: in 1945, in 1947, and 1949. And it was the same kind of opposition that we've faced, where the opponents say, "You're trying to get the government to take over the medical system."

It is totally untrue, but it scares people. And every time we say it, you know, maybe we'll get in the newspaper. But when they run ads day after day or when they send mailings to you, that just gets people very concerned. Or we're going to take away your choice of doctor. Totally untrue, gets people scared, they don't know who to believe.

And, you know, if you're sitting at home, and you see, you know, an eight-second television news story where somebody in the administration says, "We're going to preserve your choice of doctor," then you see very well produced ads that run around the news, and then you get a mailing from a group that claims to be all for your health care and they all say the same thing, which is we're trying to take your doctor

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away and all of that, how do you know what to believe?

And unfortunately we're living in a time where it is increasingly difficult, if you're in public life, to get your side of the facts out because unless it is sensationalistic or about conflict it isn't considered very newsworthy.

So that's been the frustrating thing for me because I've made literally hundreds of speeches and I always feel very connected with the people that I speak with because they ask me real questions about their lives. But then, you know, I just watch the barrage of opposition come in behind me, and I realize that without the news media saying, "Well, let's find out what the truth really is," how does the average person know?

And so what has happened is people say, "I want health reform. I want everybody insured. I want my health insurance to be secure, and I want to have it at an affordable price, and I want to be able to choose my doctor." That's what most people tell me that they want. That's what they want. That's what we're trying to give them, but how do they know what to believe in today's world?

And that gets me back to the era that we're in. I worry very much about how we keep a democracy going when people don't know who to believe. When they think everybody is in it for themselves and they don't think there's any objective facts out there. And all they see coming out of Washington are people arguing and bickering over things that have very little to do with their own lives.

So it is frustrating but I have -- you know, I guess I have to believe Harry Truman was right, that eventually, you know, if you keep fighting for the right thing, you will eventually get it. And that's what we believe every day we get up.

Q (Inaudible.) What's the issue you're going to work on next after health care? What's the thing to do -- that vision that you have. What (inaudible) to see it work out and then (inaudible).

MRS. CLINTON: I'm going to get back to all the work I've done over the years on behalf of children and families. And I think -- I mean, part of the reason I was

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happy to work on health care, which was something my husband asked me to do, is because I've been on the board of Children's Hospital. I've spent lots of time around families. I know what the stresses of illnesses, particularly children's illnesses, do to families. And so I saw health care as a way of making families more secure and independent so they can take better care of themselves.

My belief is that a family is a result of both their own values and experiences and the society in which they live, and that both have to work hard to support families. And I believe in the last couple of decades we have not done as good a job on either the personal family part or on our society's obligations.

And I think one of the ways to focus that is around this whole issue of violence and what it does when it renders people so insecure that they cannot even let their children go out to play and they cannot feel comfortable in their own homes. So I'm going to get back to the concern that I care most about, and that is, what we are doing with and for our children and how we can help families to be stronger and to take care of their own children (inaudible).

Q I'm really happy to hear you say that because (inaudible) I think parenting is the biggest thing we need to deal with. (Inaudible.) I think it's really important to give children -- to even the playing field (inaudible) because they are so -- I think the kids in this country are (inaudible).

Q Janet Reno talks a lot about that, and I've always been very impressed with the fact that she talks about intervening (inaudible). She always stresses that. My father is a physician as well. He's done a lot of work in (inaudible) mental health and working with families --

(End of side 1.)

Q -- really uplifting.

MRS. CLINTON: You know, and that's one of the reasons why I believe health care was such an important piece of that because how do you get to the -- you know, it's very hard to think of ways, but if you have universal health care coverage, they get to you. And then you've got doctors and nurses and social workers who can begin to help, starting

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with pregnancy.

You know, I have friends who are Americans but who have been with their husbands abroad and who have lived in, oh, England or France or Germany or Canada, where they do have universal health care. And I know many Americans are, you know, a little bit put off by what they think they know about those systems.

But based on the personal experience of friends of mine, one of the things that my friends have told me is that when they became pregnant, they were eligible for their health care coverage. And what that meant was that, starting in their earliest months, they were able to get checkups and they were able to get good advice.

But more than that, there was a public health nurse who would visit their home and for one of my friends -- she was so funny she said it was her first baby and they were living in England and the public health nurse was assigned to a neighborhood, so she would make the rounds of all the pregnant women. And so when my friend was like three months pregnant, the woman came and my friend said, "Oh, thank you very much, but I don't need your help." You know, when she came back at six months, "Thank you very much. I don't need your help."

But my friend thought her mother was going to come. Well, then her mother got sick and couldn't make the trip. So my friend has her baby and she comes home. And the day she gets home, the public health nurse is knocking on the door. And my friend said, "I opened that door and I pulled that woman in and (inaudible)." (Laughter.)

And I felt the same way (inaudible) daughter, you know, because you need that. And so when you -- how do you -- how we can get people to give them the support that they need so that they can be good parents means that we need to understand where the points of intervention are. And I think it starts -- it should start even before someone is pregnant, but, certainly, it has to start no later than that.

Q Anne has a final question that anyone who has ever met you wants to ask.

Q Oh, the question is (inaudible). (Laughter.)
In what ways do you feel that the American woman has benefited from you being the First Lady?

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MRS. CLINTON: Well, I don't -- I can't really speak to that, but I hope that one of the ideas that I believe very strongly in is being communicative. And that is that women should be respected for the choices that they make and not be criticized or put down or undercut.

Because given the fact that we are all living so much longer, which is wonderful, women are going to have many stages in their lives. And they may, at various points in their lives, be full-time homemakers and mothers, and they may be full-time in the world of work outside of the home. And for most women it will be a balancing act between home and work.

And what I really regret is the way that some groups try to pit women and their choices against each other instead of celebrating the fact that women now have a much greater range of choices. Now, in some ways that's scary because it probably was easier when there weren't so many choices, so many different roles to play, and so many different expectations. But the fact that there are means that women are able to make the choices that are right for them, and that's what I always try to do in my own life, and it's what I really respect about my friends.

I have friends who -- one of my best friends from grammar school, who I'm very close to, has never worked outside the home, is raising three children, and is living a life very much like the lives of her mother and my mother in the 1950s and '60s. And she is just one of the funniest, smartest people you will ever meet, and she is happy with her choice and committed to it.

And another friend, who worked all the way through her 20s and 30s, had her first child when she was 45. You know, and so you've got huge differences in experience but both of them, because they made the choices that were right for them, they have felt very fulfilled.

And I would like women to put aside what I see as the false argument about choices and instead support each other in the choices we make, particularly because I think it is essential if we're going to help support us in our primary roles as parents and help support the raising of children. We need to understand that women in the home need support, women in the workplace need support, and women should start providing it.

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Q May I present you with this book (inaudible) educating the new majority, which addresses what you are talking about, a lot of women who are going back to school later in life. Those are -- they make up the new majority now on campus and our president (inaudible) and talks about those changes. (Inaudible.)

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much.

Q Have you ever given any thought to, or do you have any desire whatsoever to hold the office to the Presidency?

MRS. CLINTON: No. (Laughter.) (Inaudible.)

Q I have a gift, too. I have some (inaudible) and I made these, and they're for you and for the President and for Chelsea. And they are dandelions so I want you, when you view that, to remember to look for the beauty in unexpected places. (Laughter.) (Inaudible) help you deal with some of what you have to go through.

MRS. CLINTON: Remember those days, years and years ago, when we were children and we would go out and find a dandelion and we would blow (inaudible). I loved that. (Inaudible.)

(End of tape.)

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