

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. letter	To Melanne Verveer from Mary Brigid Barrett (partial, DOB, SSN) (1 page)	02/14/1997	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 20027

FOLDER TITLE:

Children's Book & Literacy Alliance

2013-0534-S

rv1777

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

File

~~National~~

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Children's Book +
Literary Alliance

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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MARY BRIGID BARRETT 12 Pine Street Franklin Massachusetts 02038

February 14, 1997

Melanne Verveer
Assistant to the Chief of Staff
Mrs. Clinton's Office
The White House

3:00 pm
Thurs.

Dear Ms. Verveer,

Sr. Catherine Pinkerton C.S.J. suggested I contact you because she thought there may be considerable White House interest on a project I have originated. I am a children's book author and illustrator, an instructor at the Rhode Island School of Design, and an educator who frequently guest lectures on children's literature and writing at various universities (Tufts, Stonehill, Leslie, Wheaton etc.). I am also an educator, who as a children's book author, spends a great deal of time working in elementary schools teaching kids to write. I am working with David Macaulay, Katherine Paterson, and Natalie Babbitt, all multiple award winning authors on developing the Children's Book and Literacy Alliance, whose objectives and goals I have enclosed with this letter. Sr. Catherine thought both President and Mrs. Clinton should be apprised of our work, most especially the symposium we are planning for Fall of 1998.

We have received very positive feedback from a number of sources including Mr. Bill Gates at Microsoft. The Pediatric community, represented by Dr. Perry Klass at Boston City Hospital has not only agreed to participate in our symposium, but will become active partners in our efforts. We, of course, are already supported by the Rhode Island School of Design, where Mr. Macaulay is on the Board of Trustees. It is our hope that President and Mrs. Clinton will support our efforts and consider speaking at our symposium.

[OOD]

David Macaulay, Katherine Paterson, and I will be in Washington on February 20th to discuss our proposal with a number of people. Should you or any other staff members be interested in meeting with us on the 20th or possibly Wednesday, February 19th, please let me know.

Best wishes,

Mary Brigid Barrett *Groth*

(b)(6)

David Macaulay

(b)(6)

*Nov. 20th 1998
Children's Book Week
Lib. of Congress
500 people*

*-boys stop reading after
4th grade*

Mary Brigid Barrett
12 Pine Street
Franklin, MA 02038
508.533.5851
mbbarrett@aol.com

THE CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND LITERACY ALLIANCE

An alliance established to promote children's books and literacy as the logical gateway to the worlds of learning and culture. The alliance will bring together already established groups from within the children's book community (authors, artists, editors, publishers, educators, and librarians, and their organizations), with the greater community at large (literacy advocates, children's activists, educators, arts activists, government, business, the medical community, the media, and interested citizens), to form an active partnership. This partnership will *support and promote* established programs and their activities, create an interactive Internet national information site, and act as a *united force* to make issues concerning children's literature and literacy a part of our national agenda.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Literacy is not just about the ability to read. It is also about comprehension and creative thinking. Literacy and children's literature are essentials which must be promoted equally in order to build a thinking, literate, articulate society. Although organizations within the children's book community and literacy movement have long acted as advocates for literature and literacy, and have established many wonderful programs dealing with these issues, there is no umbrella alliance in which these organizations can work in concert. As President Clinton succinctly articulated in his State of the Union Address, education and literacy are national priority issues. It is time for the challenges and needs surrounding the issues of children's books and literacy to be addressed in the broadest context from the broadest perspective in order to reach out and connect with children, their parents, and communities across the United States. THE CHILDREN'S BOOK AND LITERACY ALLIANCE, will establish, for the first time, an active partnership between the children's book community and the community at large, to promote children's literature and literacy.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Immediate Goals

To create an interactive Internet site which will assemble a broad spectrum of information relating to children's books and literacy. The information center will post both a national and a state by state calendar, listing, by month, children's book and literacy events taking place throughout the year. It will list and define all children's book and literacy organizations, along with their services and activities. It will provide information and reference resources on issues related to children's books and literacy. It will list state by state, educational opportunities, courses of study, workshops, and seminars where teachers can increase their knowledge of children's literature and its use in the classroom. The magazine segment will serve as a literature, arts, and literacy education source for children, parents, teachers, pediatricians, etc. providing everything from on-line art galleries of children's book illustrations, to articles helping parents to get non-readers reading, to features spotlighting the various established children's book and literacy organizations, informing the public of their function and services. It can also provide information on, and conduct interviews with, the artists and writers who create children's books. It will provide inter-active opportunities for

children and adults to ask questions and voice opinions and concerns, and a special kid's corner will be created where children can express their own feelings about books with words and pictures.

To host a symposium entitled **Children and Books at a Crossroads**, which will introduce THE CHILDREN'S BOOK AND LITERACY ALLIANCE to the public. The symposium will be held in the early fall of 1998. The symposium will bring together a broad base of professionals from the arts, business, education, government, and the children's book community in order to educate and inform the public of both the needs and challenges involved in getting quality books into children's hands in an increasingly market driven culture. The symposium will act as a catalyst to initiate effective problem solving and will introduce its interactive Internet national information center.

To sponsor a television broadcast, or series of broadcasts, in conjunction with the symposium, which will promote children's books and reading, specifically identifying books and reading as gateways to culture and learning. The program will be designed for family viewing, so that children and parents will want to watch together and will explore various aspects of the world of children's books and reading. Possible segments may feature: animated or dramatic interpretations of specific children's books, a family tour of the Library of Congress, Robin Williams teaching older siblings how to read aloud to their younger brothers and sisters. There may be a segment with a pediatrician demonstrating the importance of reading aloud to infants and babies, specifically aimed at new parents. Other featured segments may include: a guide for kids on how they can get their parents reading, kids teaching their parents how to use the new electronic services in their public library, kids in classrooms conducting poetry slams. Celebrities, book authors, and illustrators can get families participating together by conducting on-air writing and drawing exercises, experiments and games which the family can participate in while watching the program, and continue later on their own. There are endless possibilities. At the end of the program, substantive resource information corresponding to each segment can be listed for both children and parents.

Long Range Objectives

To actively promote children's books and literacy and develop a strategy for bringing these issues to the public attention.

To act as advocates to build on the already established *Children's Book Week*, held annually, extending an invitation to business, the media, and the arts establishment to join forces, and for one week a year, focus our national attention on children, books and literacy. Both public and commercial television could develop informational programming related to children's books and/or literacy for airing during the week. Popular television sitcoms could reference reading and/or books or perhaps develop plots related to these issues, just for that week. Newspapers could promote reading on both the front page and the comic section, the real kid page, just for that week. There are many kids who are not reading books, but there are not many who do not read the back of cereal boxes. Food corporations could promote books and reading on the backs of their cereal boxes, just for that week. Business and advertisers who sponsor Saturday morning cartoons could develop informational spots highlighting books and reading, just for that week. Sports figures, celebrities, authors, artists, politicians, etc., could read aloud in America's schools to America's children and share stories about how books changed their lives. There are so many possibilities for just one week a year. We give more than one week's worth of national attention to the Super Bowl. Our children deserve no less.

To continuously identify and confront challenges to literacy and book access for children, especially those challenges which would be best addressed by a united force.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND LITERARY ALLIANCE

Content Proposal for Symposium

CHILDREN AND BOOKS AT A CROSSROADS

An interdisciplinary symposium designed to address ways of getting effective books into the hands of children in an increasingly market driven culture.

Objectives

This symposium will bring together groups within the children's publishing community, (published authors, illustrators, academics, editors, art directors, publishers, librarians, and reviewers), together with arts advocates, government officials, the members of the media, the medical community, and members of the business community, along with child and literacy advocates from all fields, to educate and inform the media, and the greater community at large, of both the need and challenges involved in getting effective books into children's hands. It will publicly announce the creation of the CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND LITERACY ALLIANCE, a collaborative partnership between the children's publishing community, parents, educators, the medical community, children's activists, literacy advocates, the media, government, business, and interested citizens, which will act as a conduit for information and as a task force to make issues concerning children's literature and literacy a part of our national agenda.

Proposed Topic Schedule

1. **Introduction-** Five to seven minute introduction and slide presentation showing a sampling of the creative work currently being done in the world of children's books to give the audience a taste of the rich banquet of art and literature currently available to children, establishing books as the logical gateway for children into the world of culture and information.
2. **Keynote speaker:** *The speech should give a historical perspective on the aforementioned problem and give an overview of the current dilemma.*
3. **Establish the Need-Panel discussion to establish why children need books-** Stated needs to include: **literacy, information and education**, an introduction to the world of **visual arts**, an introduction to all aspects of **culture**, a catalyst for **imaginative thinking and problem solving**, a foundation for building competent **writing skills**, and books as a vehicle for emotional **growth and expression**.
4. **Break.** *Informal discussion*
5. **Cite the Problems-Panel discussion on pragmatic reasons why books are not getting into kids' hands-** Current Problems: absence of funding for libraries and schools, printing and marketing considerations, nostalgic consumer market, inadequate teacher knowledge concerning children's literature, inadequate parental knowledge of choices available in children's literature, business predisposition to market to lowest common denominator, warehousing costs which inhibit the growth of new talent in the field and limit market accessibility, etc.
6. **Lunch- lunch speaker?**
7. **Effective problem solving-** *Panel discussion introducing innovative people and programs in various disciplines to discuss what is successfully being done to get books into kid's hands.* Pediatricians at Boston City Hospital, public TV and Nickelodeon, classroom teachers (art and reading), teacher educators (art and literature), newspapers, Children's Book Council, Reading is Fundamental, American Library Association, American

Booksellers Association, etc.

8. **Future problem solving-** *Panel discussion to address how we can build on successful problem solving and build a national awareness.* The Children's Books and Literary Alliance will be introduced and its goals and objectives will be delineated. The Alliance will introduce its Board of Trustees and Action Council. The Children's Books and Literacy Internet site will be introduced as an up and running functional program, and the Alliance will outline its future projects.
9. **Afternoon break, coffee, and informal discussion.**
10. **Dinner- Speakers?**

MARY BRIGID BARRETT 12 Pine Street Franklin Massachusetts 02038

February 18, 1997

Katey Button
Assistant to Melanne Verveer
Office of the First Lady
The White House
FAX 202.456.6244

Dear Katey,

I have enclosed the material you requested along with my letter to Ms. Verveer. David Macaulay, Katherine Paterson, and I will be in Washington the next two days and would be available to meet with you and/or Ms Verveer after 3:00 PM on Wednesday the 19th. Or, we have appointments scheduled from 10:00 AM until 2:30 on Thursday February 20th and would be available before or after those times. As I mentioned to you on the phone we are working to create a quality symposium that will not only launch both the Children's Book and Literacy Alliance and its Internet site, but we hope to achieve the quality level of discourse exemplified at the White House summit concerning children and television. I spoke with my liaison at Microsoft this morning who said we could very definitely say with confidence that Mr. Bill Gates is very interested in our proposal. In fact his personal calendar is free September of 1998, when we propose to hold the symposium. We also have a number of people in Hollywood interested and we have also spoken with a few of the Senators offices, all of whom are not only interested but excited about our project. The two questions which keep arising are - Does the White House know about this? And what is the White House level of interest?

I hope we can meet with someone on staff while we are in Washington. It would not be Mr. Macaulay's first trip to the White House. He has been there to receive a National Arts and Humanities Award.

I will be available at 508-533-5851 until this evening. Tomorrow I will be staying in Washington and can be reached at 202-544-3654. I will check in with your office when I arrive, and again Thursday morning if you like. I hope we can work something out.

Thank you and best wishes,

Mary Brigid Barrett

Mary Brigid Barrett
12 Pine Street
Franklin, MA 02038
508.533.5851
mbbarrett@aol.com

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Assistant to the Chief of Staff
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Mary Brigid