

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
GUEST EDITORIAL
OCTOBER 11, 1996

A few months ago, my daughter Chelsea and I went on a college tour. As we visited dormitories, libraries, and lecture halls, and looked over flyers advertising plays, clubs, and special speakers on campuses, I was reminded of the great opportunities college can offer to those lucky enough to go.

I began my own college career more than thirty years ago this fall. I remember the excitement -- and uncertainty -- of moving far from home, of leaving my parents, brothers, and best friends back in Illinois. I remember feeling anxious about which courses to select from a catalog of hundreds and about finding time for all the clubs I wanted to join. (One of those was the Republican Club!). I remember worrying about how I would balance all of these new commitments with time for friends, much less time for sleep and meals.

I was just beginning then -- as many of you are today -- the neverending process of searching for the right balance in my life, of filling my days in ways that were true to my own interests and to my responsibilities to the larger community.

In these four years, you will have unprecedented opportunities to pursue your true interests, to nurture your own intellect, to express your own ideas. But, college is also a place to discover how much more you can achieve when you work as part of a larger community. It's a place where people of different tastes, attitudes, and aspirations learn to live together, to share care packages and problem sets, and to respect each other. College, with the friends you make, the teams you cheer for, the clubs you join, is a place to learn the importance of community, and of civic responsibility.

You will live the bulk of your life in the 21st century. You are already living in a time of great change and transition. Your challenge as an adult will be to lead the next generation of Americans safely into a 21st century that continues to honor the ideals of democracy that have made our country the strongest and the freest in the world. I believe you must do that by taking responsibility, creating opportunities, and strengthening our communities. Each of us has a role to play in making sure that every American has an opportunity fulfill his or her own God-given potential. We can begin by working to provide everyone with a chance for a sound start in life, a good education, affordable health care, decent housing, and acceptable work. Above all, we must listen to one another; we must learn to understand and respect our differences; and we must unite around shared goals.

Few colleges will claim that each of their newly-minted graduates is fully prepared to meet the challenges of the real world. But if each of you leaves campus with a greater sense of what it means to be and act responsibly as a part of a larger community, then you will have gained the most important tool you will need as you chart your own -- and our country's course to the future.

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Joyce K. Hart

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In these four years, you will have unprecedented opportunities to pursue your true interests, to nurture your own intellect, to express your own ideas. ~~And, far from the supervision of mom and dad, you could, quite easily, spend your whole time navel-gazing.~~ But, college is also a place to discover how much more you can achieve ~~when you work~~ as part of a larger community. It's a place where people of different tastes, attitudes, and aspirations learn to live together, to share care packages and problem sets, and hopefully, to respect each other. College, with the friends you make, the teams you cheer for, the clubs you join, is a place to learn the importance of community, and of civic responsibility.

^{most} You will live the bulk of your life in the 21st century. ^{Today} You are already living in a time of great change and transition. Your challenge as an adult will be to lead the next generation of Americans safely into a 21st century that continues to honor ideals of democracy ^{help} and opportunity for all. I believe you must do that with a firm commitment ^{by taking responsibility} to strengthening our communities and with a healthy respect for civic responsibility. Each of us has a role to play in making sure that every American has an opportunity fulfill his or her own God-given potential. We can begin by working to provide everyone with a chance for a sound start in life, a good education, affordable health care, decent housing, and acceptable work. Above all, we must listen to one another; we must learn to understand and respect our differences; and we must ^{unite} rally around shared goals.

Few colleges will claim that each of their newly-minted graduates is fully prepared to meet the challenges of the Real World. But if each of you leaves campus with a greater sense of what it means to be and act responsibly as a part of a larger community, then you will have gained the most important tool you will need as you chart your own -- and our country's -- course into the future.

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TO: Marsha Berry
Attn: Karen
a pages



College Democrats
OF AMERICA

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 18, 1996
TO: Chris Lavery, C/G '96
CC: Craig Smith, C/G '96
FROM: Mark Nevins, College Democrats of America - 202 479-5178
RE: Op-Eds from Principals

The Celebrity Op-Ed Project is currently in full swing. We have sent out op-eds from Congressman Cleo Fields (D-LA) and Chairman Fowler already. In the next two weeks we will submit op-eds from Matthew Broderick and Sarah Jessica Parker and Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Each op-ed is submitted to a list of more than 700 college newspapers.

The original plan called for op-eds from the principals to be submitted as part of the project. I still want to make sure that that happens. Anything you can do to help is appreciated.

This is what I would like to see:

Author: Mrs. Gore

For Submission On: Monday, October 7, 1996

Suggested Subject Matter: Students and their families. How young people, by voting Clinton/Gore, can create a better future for the family they are a part of today and the family they will start tomorrow.

Author: First Lady

For Submission On: Monday, October 14, 1996

Suggested Subject Matter: "It takes a village" material. The importance of community in creating a safer and more secure future for students. Consider the campus-as-a-village metaphor.

Author: Vice President Gore

For Submission On: Monday, October 28, 1996

Suggested Subject Matter: Big picture vision stuff for the future and young people. Also get out the vote.

Between 400-500 words

As college students most of you are experiencing your first real taste of independence. It is a great time and you should and will enjoy it. Your parents have sought to assure themselves and you that the schools you are attending offer not only the proper learning environment, but that they will also serve as substitute homes. All concerned want to be sure you have as positive an experience as possible. The key is to remember you are not alone. While your parents and extended families will always be there for you, now you can transfer some of the reliance on them to your campus community. For in reality our nation's college campuses provide a temporary foundation for you. They are in fact the substitute village.

The adults you have looked to for advice and support are now stepping back and relinquishing their grip on you. You will be looking to others to be the catalyst for change and guidance. With this experience comes a new found sense of strength, that will most likely be balanced with a feeling of dread. Neither of these feelings is uncommon or unmanageable. This is a transition of sorts and anxiety is to be expected. But keep in mind this is an unique time of growth and opportunity.

Foremost, everyone wants you to succeed. There are support systems in place for you and many tools at your disposal. To start with, some of you are attending school with the help of scholarships and financial aid. This is the best investment any state or country can make. That assistance will give you a leg up as you make your way in the world. But the support systems do not stop there. Once you get on campus, it is a priority of your school to ensure that all your physical and emotional needs are met. In doing this, they provide not only the basics, like room and board, but also health care facilities, support groups, community outreach organizations, career counselling, a secure environment, and on and on. It is in deed the extended community that reaches out to you to help you along the way. It is the campus "village" that fills in those voids you will inevitably feel.

This structure is in place so that you can focus the majority of your energies on education and make the most of this investment of your time. This experience will serve you well as you learn to solve problems and adapt to new circumstances. This is your first real chance to make the most of the foundation your family has laid for you and what the rest of life offers you. As I say in my book It Takes A Village, we all have a stake in ensuring every person is given the tools to become a productive and responsible member of society. Make the most of this opportunity and confront the challenges before you. The support of the "village" is there to help ensure your success.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY

phone 202-456-6266
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TO

Joyce Kravitz

FROM

June Shih

FAX #

530-2159

PHONE #

OF PAGES (including cover)

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COMMENTS

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A few months ago, my daughter Chelsea ^{looked over} and I went on a college tour. As we visited dormitories, libraries, and lecture halls, and inspected the various flyers advertising plays, clubs, and special speakers on campus ~~boards~~, I was reminded of what an unique and intense experience college can be. ^{opportunity that college affords to those lucky enough to go.}

I began my own college career more than thirty years ago this fall. I remember the excitement ~~and sheer terror~~ of moving far from home, of leaving my parents, brothers, and best friends back in Illinois. I remember making friends who came from places I'd only heard of on in geography class and feeling slightly intimidated by their accomplishments. I remember feeling anxious about which four courses to select from a catalog of hundreds. ^{And} About which clubs to join (I eventually joined the Republican Club!) and how I would balance all of those commitments with my coursework and new friends.

I was just beginning then -- as many of you are today -- the neverending process of searching for the right balance in my life, of filling my days in ways that were true to my own interests and to my responsibilities to the ~~greater college~~ ^{larger} community.

In these four years, you will have unprecedented opportunities to pursue your true interests, to nurture your own intellects, to express your own ideas. ^{And} And in your dormroom far from the supervision of mom and dad, you could, quite easily, spend your whole time navel-gazing. But ^{college} college is also a place to discover how much more you can achieve when you work as part of a larger community. It's a place where people of different tastes, attitudes, and aspirations learn to live together, to share care packages and problem sets, and ^{hopefully} hopefully, to respect each other. College, with the friends you make, the teams you cheer for, the clubs you join, is a place to learn the importance of community, and of civic responsibility.

^{As the Mark 6 you will live the best 6 you life is the last c. you're now}
Your challenge as adults will be to lead us safely into the 21st century. ^{at} And I believe you must do that with a firm commitment to strengthening our communities and with a healthy respect for civic responsibility. Each of us has a role to play in making sure that every American has an opportunity to fulfill their individual God-given potentials, ^{But they can all do that} -- opportunities for a sound start in life, a good education, affordable health care, decent housing, and acceptable work. Above all, we must listen to one another; we must learn to understand and respect our differences; and we must rally around shared goals. On the eve of a new millennium, we must unite, not divide.

Few colleges will claim that each of their newly-minted graduates is fully prepared to meet the challenges of the Real World. But if each of you leaves campus with a greater sense of what it means to be and act responsibly as a part of a larger community, then you will have gained the most important tool any ~~American will~~ ^{you} need for your own and our country's success.

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<sup>as you chart your --
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country's --
successful
future.</sup>

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I was just beginning then -- as many of you are today -- the neverending process of searching for the right balance in my life, of filling my days in ways that were true to my own interests and to my responsibilities to the greater college community.

In these four years, you will have unprecedented opportunities to discover your true interests, to nurture your own intellects, to express your own ideas. And in your dormroom far from the supervision of mom and dad, you could, quite easily, spend your whole time navel-gazing. But college is also a place where you can realize that you are just one person in a large and diverse community. It's a place where people of different tastes, attitudes, and aspirations learn to live together, to share care packages and problem sets, and hopefully, to respect each other. College, with the friends you make, the teams you cheer for, the clubs you join, is a place to learn the importance of community, and of civic responsibility.

Your challenge as adults will be to lead us safely into the 21st century. And I believe you must do that with a firm commitment to our communities and with a healthy respect for civic responsibility. Each of us has a role to play in making sure that everyone has an opportunity to fulfill their individual God-given potentials: opportunities for a sound start in life, a good education, affordable health care, decent housing, and acceptable work. Most of all, we must listen to one another; we must learn to understand and respect our differences; we must rally around shared goals. We must unite, not divide.

Few colleges will claim that each of their newly-minted graduates is fully prepared to meet the challenges of the Real World. But if you can leave campus with a greater sense of what it means to be and act responsibly as a part of a larger community, then you will have absorbed the greatest lesson college can offer.

President Duderstadt, distinguished Regents, honorary degree recipients, faculty, alumni, students, parents, friends and, most of all, honored graduates of the Class of 1993.

It is indeed a privilege to speak to you today--to be your guest at a university so steeped in tradition and history. To those of us who grew up in the Midwest, Michigan has always been a symbol of bedrock American spirit and promise. Few public institutions can boast of such a diverse, talented faculty and student body. Few are built on such a profound sense of community. And fewer still know the pride that comes from having a team like the Wolverines perform its magic on this football field. Or, better still, the joy that comes from watching that fabulous fivesome of Webber, Rose, Howard, King and Jackson play basketball in Crisler Arena. For the record: I think Chris Webber is just great!

It is somewhat daunting to look out at this large gathering and to ponder the vast array of experiences and ambitions you represent. A year ago, I gave a commencement address at my alma mater, Wellesley College, and I dare say the entire town could have fit into Michigan stadium!

I graduated from college 24 years ago, before MTV, before rap--before Bo Jackson even knew baseball or football! We had never heard of ATM cards, CDs, cellular phones or Air Jordans. Back then, if you said "10,000 Maniacs," you were perhaps referring to hippies in Haight-Ashbury, but certainly not a rock group.

Not that the 1960s were the Dark Ages. Quite the contrary. The '60s were a time of momentous change for our country. A time of great hope--and great dislocation. A time of faith and optimism founded on the civil rights movement, the Peace Corps, the space program.

But our ambitions for a better world were scarred by deep societal wounds: President Kennedy's assassination in 1963, the murders of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy in 1968, the ugly tensions of the Vietnam War, and that combustible mixture of poverty and racism that exploded into deadly riots in many of our inner cities.

When I graduated in 1969, I was full of idealism about how to change the world. In a commencement speech then on behalf of my class, I talked about politics as "the art of making what appears to be

impossible, possible." And I think I reflected the sentiments of my classmates when I referred to our futures as "the struggle for an integrated life...in an atmosphere of trust and respect."

At 21 years old, I was perhaps unable to appreciate the political and social constraints one faces. But I still subscribe to the same central beliefs--beliefs that have shaped much of my adult life.

Today, the world is a far different place. Better in some ways, worse in others. We have outlived the specter of the Cold War. We have achieved greater rights for minorities and women. We remain the most powerful nation on earth.

And yet despite these triumphs, we are still menaced by growing gaps between rich and poor, inadequate educational opportunities for too many of our citizens, an environment suffocating from pollutants, accelerating health care costs that undermine our economy and hatreds that spring from racial and ethnic intolerance.

The world is not getting simpler. The obstacles to progress and peace are many. Overseas, we must worry about nuclear proliferation, the savagery of ethnic cleansing, starvation, political instability and terrorism. At home we are confronted with drugs, violence, AIDS, poverty and intolerance--wicked scourges that threaten civility and social order.

In the midst of such tumult, such change, your challenge as adults will be to lead us safely into the 21st century.

Like generations of Americans before you, you must do so by searching for the right balance in your lives. A balance between family, work and service. A balance between your rights as individuals and your obligations as members of a larger, national community.

Perhaps your experiences here at Michigan can serve as a guide. For me, and I hope for you, college--with the friends you made, the teams you cheered for, the clubs you joined--was a place to learn the importance of community, of civic responsibility. Universities are also, however, training grounds for individual freedom. They are incubators of ideas; they are repositories of free speech and free thought. And, ultimately, they are a collective meeting point for individuals of different tastes, attitudes, interests and aspirations. In that sense, universities, perhaps more than any other institutions, provide an intersection for the two concepts I spoke of a moment ago: individualism and commu-

nity.

In America, we have always struggled to find the proper balance between the rights and needs of individuals and those of the larger community. American history, indeed much of Western history, has been based on a dynamic relationship between the two.

Regrettably, over the past 12 years, that balance has been thrown out of kilter. Throughout the 1980s, our political leaders stressed individual gain over the common good. A greater emphasis on "me"--not "we"--accentuated the economic disparities between the rich and the poor. Individual profit at the expense of community well-being allowed for a breakdown of ethics in business, an epidemic of callous racial and ethnic prejudice, and a deterioration in the functions of government. Unfortunately, the last decade will be remembered as a time when the ideal of shared prosperity was supplanted by the impulses of naked greed.

Our leaders seemed to forget economist John Kenneth Galbraith's cautionary warning, first issued in 1958: "Just as there must be balance in what a community produces," Galbraith said, "so there must also be balance in what the community consumes."

The task ahead of us now--whether we are politicians, academics, businessmen or, like most of you, college graduates full of dreams and potential--is to resurrect the ideal of the common good. Together we must restore the balance between "me" and "we"; we must listen to one another; we must learn to understand and respect our differences; but above all, we must rally around shared goals. We must unite, not divide.

Promoting the common good does not mean sacrificing the rights and privileges of individuals. As we all know from recent events in Waco, Texas, a community that allows no individual freedoms is a dangerous and frightening place.

But promoting the common good does mean this: That in our democratic system, we together seek for individuals certain rights and opportunities, such as a sound start in life, a good education, affordable health care, decent housing and acceptable work. In return, individuals must be responsible and accountable not only to themselves, but to their surrounding communities and to the nation as a whole.

As students in the '60s, we argued endlessly over what constituted an individual's responsibility

to society. The most eloquent explanation I have ever found is from Vaclav Havel, the playwright and now president of the Czech Republic. In a letter from prison to his wife, Olga, he wrote: "Everything meaningful in life is distinguished by a certain transcendence of individual human existence--beyond the limits of mere 'self-care' toward other people, toward society, toward the world....Only by looking outward, by caring for things that, in terms of pure survival, you needn't bother with at all...and by throwing yourself over and over again into the tumult of the world, with the intention of making your voice count--only thus will you really become a person."

I am not the first speaker to come to Michigan to talk about the importance of community. More than three decades ago, at a rally on this campus, Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy unveiled his idea for the Peace Corps. In the middle of the night, on the steps of the student union, he asked how many students were willing to contribute to their country, how many were willing to use their skills and their intelligence to help the underprivileged around the world, how many were willing to sacrifice personal financial gain for "a greater purpose" in life.

A free society's ability to compete, Kennedy said, depends on the willingness of its citizens to help others. Today, in a world of drugs, guns, shattered families, overburdened schools and children growing up socially and spiritually deprived, the need for public service is greater than ever.

Just yesterday, my husband offered his own National Service plan. This program will enable college graduates to repay college loans by working in their communities--as teachers, police officers, social workers and so on. We hope that, in a larger sense, this program will serve as a modern-day, domestic Peace Corps and contribute to a restoration of our collective American spirit.

The Clinton administration is committed to a government in which responsible citizens are given the chance to make their lives better. In keeping with this ideal, President Clinton is determined to reduce the national deficit, to find jobs for those eager to work and to ensure that every American has access to adequate medical care.

Later this month, a task force that I chair will recommend a fundamental overhaul of our health care system. I will not review the details now, except to say that our program will make Americans secure in the knowledge that they will have health coverage even if they switch jobs or have a pre-existing condition, such as cancer, AIDS or epilepsy. Our plan will still allow patients to choose their doc-

tor and receive high-quality care. It will reduce burdensome paperwork for doctors, insurers and patients. And, finally, it will provide coverage for 35 million Americans who are now uninsured.

These are the sorts of actions that you must demand from your government. You, who elect that government, owe yourselves as much. But you cannot rely on government alone to solve every social problem. You must act, too. You must participate. You must hold up your end of the social contract.

Now, at the end of one century--and one millenium--and at the dawn of another is not a time for indifference. It is not a time to shrug off responsibilities to ourselves, our families or our country. It is not a time to be contemptuous of those who are different or less fortunate. We must build from our differences--make them our strengths instead of our weaknesses.

If, as I say this, you are thinking, "I'm too busy to help other people," or "Those people don't deserve my help," remember what my friend, Marian Wright Edelman, is fond of saying: "Service is the rent we pay for living."

Make your voice heard. Make your ideas count. Make your dreams matter.

This is an important day for all of you. You are to be congratulated for your accomplishments--and encouraged to fulfill the promise you hold.

This is your time. This is your chance. So be daring. Be bold. Embrace the challenges ahead. Make your life, along with your nation's, that much richer.

Thank you. And Godspeed.