
Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

PRESCRIPTION FOR READING

3/2/98

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
PRESCRIPTION FOR READING EVENT
LEARNING IDEAS
DISTRICT HEIGHTS, MARYLAND
MARCH 2, 1998

- It's a pleasure to be here at Learning Ideas, and to join Representative Stenny Hoyer; Barbara Bonds Thomas (American Booksellers Association); Bob Chase (National Education Association) and all of you, to celebrate the joy -- and importance -- of reading to children. Thank you for coming.
- We're gathered here today to mark the culmination of the Prescription for Reading Partnership's *Read to Your Bunny* Campaign -- a unique effort to bring the book industry and the health care industry together to ensure good reading habits -- along with good health habits -- for our nation's children. Since last November, doctors have given "prescriptions" redeemable at participating bookstores for a copy of *Read to Your Bunny* to about 200,000 children. Over 1500 bookstores have participated. And today, we're announcing that at least 5,000 remaining books will be donated to local hospitals in this area, health centers across the country, and to Prescription for Reading partners Reach Out and Read and First Book.
- We are also here to join children and parents in communities nationwide who are participating in the National Education Association's "Read Across America" project, as a way to celebrate the birthday today of Dr. Seuss, one of the world's most beloved children's authors.
- The Prescription for Reading Partnership grew out of a simple idea: Nearly every new parent has contact with a pediatrician or a health care provider during those first critical years of a child's life. If that doctor or nurse were to prescribe reading -- and take it a step further by handing that new parent or caregiver a book -- parents are likely to follow the doctor's advice. And what a difference that simple prescription for reading will make in a child's life.
- We learned at last year's White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning that science proves what we've always known instinctively -- that time spent sharing a favorite book with a child, even a newborn, not only strengthens the bond between a parent and child. It also helps a baby's brain to grow, and prepares him or her for a lifetime of reading and learning.
- I believe that few things will make a more dramatic difference over the next ten years in this country than to persuade young parents -- of all educational and economic levels -- to take seriously this mission of reading to and talking with their young babies. So a year ago, I challenged booksellers, publishers, libraries, hospitals, pediatricians, health centers and others to work together to make this simple idea a reality.

- The result was the formation of the Prescription for Reading Partnership -- a national coalition of health care organizations, booksellers, libraries, publishers and foundations, who have spearheaded wonderful programs like this *Read to Your Bunny* campaign.
- The success of the *Read to Your Bunny* campaign is due in large part to the strong commitment of the American Bookseller's Association; in partnership with the Association of Booksellers for Children; Scholastic Publishing and First Book; the Ingram Book Company, and local bookstores and educational centers like this across the country. Thank you all for your valuable contributions. Special thanks also to Rosemary Wells, author of *Read to Your Bunny* -- whom I will join in a moment to read her wonderful book.
- As America moves into the Information Age and the global economy, our children will be presented with boundless opportunities and unprecedented challenges. It's up to us to ensure that every one of them has the skills and confidence to seize those opportunities, and meet those challenges. All of these reading initiatives that we're talking about today are bringing us closer to fulfilling the President's America Reads challenge for the nation: to make sure that every child -- of every background and income -- can read independently by the end of third grade.
- I'm very excited to announce that in a moment, we will be joined by some very special guests -- 15 children from the John Howard Elementary School Head Start Program. Accompanying them will be a very special friend to all children -- the Cat in the Hat. The Cat is wonderful reminder of how many children over the years have fallen in love with reading and books because of zany Dr. Seuss characters like him.
- Dr. Seuss once said: "A person's a person, no matter how small." Today, let's renew our commitment to ensure that every child in America -- no matter how young or how small -- gets the love and attention and stimulation they need to grow and flourish. And one of the best ways to give them those building blocks for the future is to do what Rosemary Wells and I are going to do right now: read to our children.

Copyright 1998 PR Newswire Association, Inc.
PR Newswire

March 2, 1998, Monday

SECTION: Domestic News

DISTRIBUTION: TO NATIONAL AND FEATURES EDITORS

LENGTH: 513 words

HEADLINE: First Lady **Hillary Clinton** Today Joined Renowned Children's Book Author Rosemary Wells For Reading of Well's 'Read To Your Bunny,' An Invitation to the World of Reading; Mrs. Clinton Announces Donation of 5,000 Copies of 'Read to Your Bunny' to **Prescription for Reading** During March 2 Read Across America Day Event

DATELINE: NEW YORK, March 2

BODY:

READ ACROSS AMERICA -- Earlier today, First Lady **Hillary Rodham Clinton** joined renowned children's book author and illustrator Rosemary Wells, for a reading of Scholastic's READ TO YOUR BUNNY, to mark the importance of reading to children at an early age. A group of pre-schoolers, parents and teachers at Learning Ideas bookstore in District Heights, Maryland met the First Lady and Ms. Wells, at an event held in conjunction with the "Read Across America" day-long event, part of the National Educational Association's on-going national effort to motivate children to read.

In addition to the reading of Ms. Wells's book, Mrs. Clinton symbolically redeemed a "**prescription for reading**" coupon in exchange for a copy of READ TO YOUR BUNNY, and announced that the American Bookseller's Association would donate 5,000 copies of the book to **Prescription for Reading** Partnership, which encourages businesses, community organizations, and others to work with health-care providers to prescribe reading during "well-baby" checkups. The books will be distributed by First Book, a national literacy organization.

"It's up to us to make sure that we give children the tools to meet the unprecedented challenge of today," commented Mrs. Clinton. "Few things can make as dramatic a difference as reading to youngster," who praised READ TO YOUR BUNNY for conveying this vital message.

"Not many people see that their work can have such a great and profound effect on so many people," commented Ms. Wells. "I'm enormously grateful and inspired that READ TO YOUR BUNNY has helped to further communicate the importance of reading to children at an early age."

Since the launch of the national "Twenty Minutes a Day" literacy campaign in 1994, acclaimed author and illustrator Rosemary Wells has become one of the initiative's most eloquent speakers. In READ TO YOUR BUNNY (Scholastic Press: March 1998; \$7.95; All Ages), she has created an intimate poem that children will want to hear again and again, that conveys the simple yet vital message -- read to your child often, and your child will soon read to you.

Scholastic is donating a portion of the proceeds from READ TO YOUR BUNNY to Reach Out and Read, a Boston-based organization which corroborates that reading to very young children enhances the child's overall intellectual, emotional and physical development.

From August 1997 through March 1998, the ABA, in partnership with Scholastic, Inc. and the Association of Booksellers for Children (ABC), distributed approximately two-hundred thousand free copies of a special paperback edition of READ TO YOUR BUNNY, at participating bookstores to parents and guardians of young children through the **Prescription for Reading** Partnership, an integral component of the America Reads Challenge. The goal of the Challenge, to be met by the year 2,000, is to ensure that all children learn to read well and independently by the time they enter third

grade. SOURCE Scholastic, Inc. CONTACT: Kris Moran of Scholastic, 212-343-7710

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 3, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;prescription for reading and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

[About LEXIS-NEXIS](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#) | [What's New](#)
Copyright © 2000 LEXIS-NEXIS Group. All rights reserved.

Copyright 1998 Associated Press
AP Online

March 02, 1998; Monday 13:22 Eastern Time

SECTION: Washington - general news

LENGTH: 165 words

HEADLINE: First Lady Salutes Dr. Seuss

DATELINE: DISTRICT HEIGHTS, Md.

BODY:

First Lady **Hillary** Rodham **Clinton** celebrated the anniversary of the late Dr. Seuss' birth by reading to a group of children and encouraging reading at a young age.

Mrs. Clinton and children's author, Rosemary Wells, read "Read to Your Bunny," a children's book written and illustrated by Wells, to 15 schoolchildren from John Hancock Elementary in District Heights, a Maryland suburb of Washington.

"We're here to celebrate the wonder and joys of reading to children," Mrs. Clinton told 50 people gathered at Learning Ideas, a school supply store.

In addition to celebrating the birth of Theodore Geisel, who would have been 94 and is better known as Dr. Seuss, Mrs. Clinton was on hand as part of a drive by a group called **Prescription for Reading** Partnership to distribute more than 200,000 free copies of the book to bookstores throughout the country.

The event, in which parents, teachers and others were encouraged to read to children was called Read America Day.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 02, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;prescription for reading and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

About LEXIS-NEXIS | Terms and Conditions | What's New
Copyright © 2000 LEXIS-NEXIS Group. All rights reserved.

Copyright 1998 Chattanooga News-Free Press Company
Chattanooga Free Press

March 8, 1998, Sunday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE; Pg. 13

LENGTH: 790 words

HEADLINE: TALKING IT OVER;
Celebrate Reading With Your Child Each Day

BYLINE: HILLARY R. CLINTON

BODY:

I met the Cat in the Hat this week. On Monday, the Cat and I celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday with children's author Rosemary Wells and some tiny Head Start students in District Heights, Md.

Dr. Seuss was a beloved author and illustrator who brought joy to and instilled a love of reading in generations of children and their parents. I can still recite from memory the lines of some favorite Dr. Seuss books that Bill and I read to Chelsea -- over and over again. Remember this? "The sun did not shine. It was too wet to play. So we sat in the house all that cold, cold, wet day." And what about "People are people no matter how small"? Here's my personal favorite: "You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose."

On March 2, the National Education Association organized "Read Across America" to honor Dr. Seuss and to spark a love of reading in a new generation of American children. All across the country, millions of teachers, parents and volunteers participated in events designed to encourage reading aloud to children.

We know that students who read for enjoyment outside of school do better in school. Unfortunately, we also know that the number of older children who read for pleasure outside of the classroom is gradually decreasing and that 40 percent of this country's 8-year-olds cannot read even at the basic level.

Last year, in an effort to reverse this trend, the President launched the America Reads Challenge to make sure that all children can read on their own by the end of the third grade. In response, tens of thousands of volunteer tutors are already at work giving our children the intensive reading help they need. More than 900 colleges are committed to granting work-study credit for tutoring children. And this year, 3,000 new AmeriCorps members and thousands of new senior volunteers will recruit more than 100,000 volunteer reading tutors for our children.

With the help of dedicated volunteers like these, we can teach our children to read. But learning to read must start even earlier -- as soon as a child is born.

Instinctively, we know that reading aloud strengthens the bond between a parent and child. Last April at the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning, new scientific research proved our instincts correct.

Not only does reading aloud strengthen emotional bonds, it also helps a baby's brain develop and grow by stimulating the neural connections that are the basis for language and learning.

When I talk to young parents about the importance of reading and talking to their infants, many ask why they should be talking or reading to a child who can't talk back. Some parents worry that they're not good readers themselves. Some confide that they can't read at all.

It doesn't matter.

Reading and talking are as important to children's brains as car seats and immunizations are to their health. Parents who can't read or don't think they're good readers should just hold open a book, point to the pictures and make up a story.

Because new parents are generally inclined to follow the advice of their pediatricians, last January, I issued a challenge to hospitals, pediatricians, health centers, booksellers, publishers, libraries and others to make sure that every child who sees a doctor has access to books. As a result, several groups joined forces to launch the **Prescription for Reading Partnership**.

During the past year, the **Prescription for Reading Partnership** has distributed 2 million books to over a million children through hospitals, pediatrician's offices and health centers around the country.

One of the Partnership's most successful endeavors has been the Read to Your Bunny Campaign. Supported by the American Booksellers Association, the campaign contacted doctors and asked them to give reading "prescriptions" to their young patients. The prescriptions could be redeemed at over 1,500 participating bookstores for copies of Rosemary Wells' new book Read to Your Bunny. I'm pleased to report that over 200,000 prescriptions have been filled, placing copies of this delightful poem in the hands of children all over the country.

The Partnership can help put a book in a child's hand, but it's you -- the parents and grandparents, older sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, friends and neighbors -- who must take the next step. It takes only 20 minutes a day.

One of my favorite Dr. Seuss books is Oh, the Places You'll Go! Let me share the first lines with you:

Congratulations!

Today is your day.

You're off to Great Places!

You're off and away!

Celebrate reading with your child every day, and you'll both be off to Great Places, too.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 10, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;prescription for reading and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

EVENING OF DANCE AT WH
3/9/98

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR WETA-TV
AN EVENING OF DANCE IN PERFORMANCE AT THE WHITE HOUSE
MARCH 9, 1998

Good evening and welcome to "In Performance at the White House." Agnes de Mille once said that "The truest expression of a people is in its dances and its music." As we approach the Millennium, we are joining with WETA, Ameritech and other organizations to celebrate the unique American culture that has inspired us as individuals and defined us as a nation over the last century.

This is the first of many Millennium Evenings at the White House, in which we will showcase the moves and rhythms, the artists and teachers that have made American dance -- and other forms of American expression -- a treasure throughout the world. Our theme for all our Millennium activities is "honor the past, imagine the future." And that's exactly what this evening's extraordinary performers will do. With the magic of tap, Irish step dancing, the Lindy Hop, and jazz dancing, we will look back at the old masters who have made us laugh cry and sing for generations...and look forward to the new masters who will bring American culture into the next century.

And now, as always, it is my great honor to introduce my favorite dance partner, President Clinton.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**BRAZELTON FOUNDATION
AWARD - 3/17/98**

Divider Title: _____

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEO REMARKS IN ACCEPTANCE OF BRAZELTON FOUNDATION AWARD
MARCH 17, 1998**

Dr. Brazelton:

As First Lady of the United States, I am awed by your courageous commitment to families who are besieged in our present society. You have played a pivotal role in bringing the critical issues facing families to the forefront of public attention. For your exemplary leadership, I am pleased to recognize you as the Honorary Inaugural Recipient of the T. Berry Brazelton Leadership Award.

Mrs. Clinton:

Thank you, Dr. Brazelton, not only for this award, but for your tireless efforts to improve the lives of children and families everywhere. All children think their parents worry too much. What they don't realize is how much more worrying we would do if it weren't for Dr. Brazelton's books and columns.

I am honored to be able to play a part, even if from afar, in the inaugural festivities for the Brazelton Foundation. Recent research has confirmed what parents have known instinctively all along: the care and attention our children receive during their early years has an enormous impact on how they grow and learn later on in life. That's why I'm so proud that the President has worked hard to make sure that more parents have quality child care, more children have health insurance, and more mothers get the prenatal care they need. But government cannot and should not do it alone. Whether we're health care professionals or day-care providers ... children's advocates or business leaders, all of us must do our part.

And that's why this foundation is so important. You are helping to ensure that more parents have peace of mind and more children have the opportunity to grow up healthy and reach their God-given promise.

Once again, thank you for this award. I hope you have a wonderful evening.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**VIDEO REMARKS FOR THOMAS
KENNEALLY - 3/17/98**

Divider Title: _____

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEO REMARKS FOR THOMAS KENNEALLY
MARCH 17, 1998**

Tom, I pleased to be able to join so many of your friends today as we pay tribute to your life and remarkable career.

I remember meeting you at the Washington premiere of "Schindler's List"; it was a powerful story about the ability of the human spirit to transcend even the greatest evil, a story that would have gone untold had it not been for your hard work.

I've also read several of your other books, and I told you when we met that, "Woman of the Inner Sea," would make a great movie. I hope to see it on the silver screen sometime soon.

Tom, you are a magnificent writer. Good luck in all your future projects, I look forward to reading them all. I hope you have a wonderful evening.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**CBS TRIBUTE TO ELEANOR
ROOSEVELT - 3/17/98**

Divider Title: _____

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEO SCRIPT FOR CBS TRIBUTE TO ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
MARCH 17, 1998**

Eleanor Roosevelt used to say, "the thing always to remember is to do the thing you think you cannot do."

Where others saw problems, Mrs. Roosevelt saw solutions. When people were silenced, she spoke for them. Whether it was civil rights for African-Americans, the plight of the Japanese-Americans detained during WWII, or the living and working conditions of everyone from miners to migrant workers, her compassion became their voice.

By putting her values and beliefs into action, she touched millions of lives and enabled our country to live closer to its ideals. Instead of cursing the darkness, Eleanor Roosevelt lit a candle, and for that we owe her a debt of gratitude.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**NAT'L HEALTH MUSEUM RECEP.
3/18/98**

Divider Title: _____

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR NATIONAL HEALTH MUSEUM RECEPTION
RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC
MARCH 18, 1998**

- I am extremely pleased to be able to join you today as you lay the 'foundation' for the National Health Museum. Under Dr. Koop's leadership, I'm sure that this museum will be a great success.
- Dr. Koop has worked tirelessly and courageously to improve the public health of every American. This museum is but one example of how his extraordinary vision is helping to bring health information and better health care to the citizens of our country, whether they live in the biggest cities or in the most remote towns. I'm extremely pleased that the National Health Museum will not only have a hands-on, high tech home here in Washington, but will also reach into the living rooms and offices of millions of Americans by having a presence on the internet.
- Few issues affect Americans -- especially children -- the way health care does. Parents fret constantly about their children's slightest cough, their smallest hiccup. Better access to information about how to take care of the health of our children is desperately needed by millions of American parents. This museum will not only be a repository of information about the health field, but hopefully it will also contain information that parents can readily access that will help them in addressing the concerns they have about their child's health.
- Once again, I would like to thank Dr. Koop for his leadership and vision, and I want to wish the museum the best of luck in the coming years.

Copyright 1998 PR Newswire Association, Inc.
PR Newswire

March 18, 1998, Wednesday

SECTION: State and Regional News

DISTRIBUTION: TO CITY EDITOR

LENGTH: 1035 words

HEADLINE: First Lady **Hillary** Rodham **Clinton** To Join C. Everett Koop, Members of Congress, and Bill Nye 'The Science Guy' Tonight At Hill Event For The **National Health Museum**

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, March 18

BODY:

First Lady **Hillary** Rodham **Clinton** will join former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, MD, Members of the House and Senate, and popular public television science educator Bill Nye "The Science Guy" at an event to celebrate The **National Health Museum** tonight from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the Senate Caucus Room, 325 Russell Senate Office Building. Mrs. Clinton will attend and make brief remarks at the Capitol Hill event designed to launch the vision for a state-of-the-art health museum.

The evening will feature an array of exhibits highlighting the Museum's future impact on children's health, the health information needs of Americans, and advances in health and medical research. Nye will lead guests -- expected to include political and corporate leaders in the fields of health, education and technology -- in an experiment involving the human body. Guests will also have the opportunity to learn more about their own health through a variety of health assessment tools and a remarkable demonstration that will allow them to view their own DNA.

The **National Health Museum** will be the newest museum in the nation's capital -- focused on the subject of health, new medical science discoveries and promoting healthy lifestyles for all. As the world's most personal museum, it will serve as a resource for children, families, and adults as they take greater responsibility for their own health. Moving beyond the boundaries of its Washington, D.C. facility, the Museum will utilize current and emerging communications technologies such as the Internet and World Wide Web to bring exhibits, programs and health information to schools and homes across the nation.

The Museum is led by the Chair of its Board, Dr. Koop, and its President, Jennifer L. Dorn. In November 1997, Congress and the President enacted legislation that grants the Museum a site "on or near the (national) Mall" and creates a bipartisan commission to recommend to Congress and the President an appropriate Federal role in the project. The Act provided \$500,000 to support the Commission's activities. It is expected that significant private sector investment will support the Museum.

Reception Exhibits and Experiences
5:30 - 7:30, March 18, 1998
325 Russell Senate Office Building

Kids for Health!

Bill Nye "The Science Guy" The famous science educator, whose popular
LIVE! program "Bill Nye The Science Guy" appears
nationally on PBS stations, will be on
hand to conduct a breathtaking experiment
involving one of your most important body
systems.

Healthy Competition Kids of all ages can challenge one

another's knowledge of key health issues
in a series of Super Nintendo games
designed to build health literacy.

What's It To Me?

Viva la Difference High tech visuals and computerized graphics take the viewer on an incredible exploration of gender-based health differences and cutting-edge medical research.

Assess Yourself Apply modern health technologies to assess your health and learn more about possible risks.

Internet 101: For Your Health Using the Internet and World Wide Web to find reliable health information is easier than you think. Visit the best web sites and learn how to surf for health.

Frontiers in Health Science

DNA Checkpoint A simple, quick experiment will allow you to actually view the most basic of human elements: your own DNA.

What's Next? Look into the future to witness the medical advances and trends that will revolutionize the way we live and stay healthy in the coming millennium.

Our Museum

Here's What the Kids Think Will The **National Health Museum** be cool enough for the kids? Hear what they want to experience at the nation's most personal museum in this engaging media presentation.

Tell Us What You Think Share your vision and receive a personal stress management device compliments of **The National Health Museum.**

SOURCE National Health Museum

CONTACT: Mark Dunham of The **National Health Museum**, 202-737-2673

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 19, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;national health museum and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**FIRST NAT'L WOMEN'S MUSEUM
3/18/98**

Divider Title: _____

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
ANNOUNCEMENT FOR FIRST NATIONAL WOMEN'S MUSEUM
THE DECATUR HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 18, 1998

Welcome to this historic announcement. I'm honored to join Cathy Bonner, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson, Ed Whitacre, and all of you who have been such role models and leaders on behalf of women in America -- as you make this commitment to create the first museum dedicated to the achievements of women. Today is a day to celebrate what many of us have known for a long time -- that women's ability to influence every aspect of our lives has come of age.

It is quite fitting that we gather here today during Women's History Month, a time to recognize women's contributions to the birth and evolution of this great nation -- and to celebrate their achievements in the arts, in business, in public service, in academia, in science, and in sports. It's impossible to imagine our lives today without thinking about the pioneering women who every generation have shaken off the constraints of their times to help shape a better future. Abigail Adams. Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Sojourner Truth. Margaret Sanger. Eleanor Roosevelt. Rosa Parks. Sally Ride. Ruth Bader Ginsberg. Maya Angelou. And so many more.

Throughout our history, women have expanded the very definition of freedom; demanded an ever widening circle of opportunity for our citizens; and furthered the explorations of our world and our universe. Yet too often, their stories have not been included. Their contributions have not been celebrated. Their voices have not been heard.

Today, we take an historic step forward -- to give voice to those stories, and to build on those accomplishments -- by establishing the Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future.

As some of you may know, I've been engaged in promoting plans for our nation's celebration of the Millennium. It's an exciting opportunity for conversation and collaboration -- a time to take stock of who we are, and what values, history and culture we want to carry into the next century. Over the next three years, we hope to inspire all Americans to come together across the lines that separate us -- to mark this milestone in our history. The theme we've chosen for the Millennium is "Honor the Past: Imagine the Future."

And that is exactly what this new Women's Museum is being created to accomplish. This will be a museum that not only looks back to honor and celebrate the women who have helped forge and lead this great nation -- but also looks forward, to help the present and future generation of women to imagine the extraordinary possibilities to come.

I am proud that this Administration has been so committed to bringing the concerns of women to the forefront of our nation's agenda. From the family medical leave act to historic investments in child care and health care to last week's White House announcements on international women's rights, this Administration has worked hard to improve the lives of women, families, and children. And as a result of that commitment, and those investments, our daughters and their daughters will have greater opportunities to pursue their dreams, shape their world, and fulfill their God-given potential.

The Women's Museum is for them, as well as for us. But a museum of this significance does not happen by dreams alone. It becomes a living and breathing museum thanks to the work and support of many people and organizations, from both the public and private sectors. And here, I want to recognize SBC Communications for coming to the table early on -- and providing such an historic gift to salute women everywhere. I hope that their example will encourage other companies and organizations to step forward and contribute in similarly generous ways.

This year, we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the women's rights movement in Seneca Falls. One of its leaders -- Elizabeth Cady Stanton -- made the then revolutionary statement that "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men and women are created equal." Much of our nation's history since then has been the struggle to make that simple statement a reality -- not only for women, but for all citizens denied the opportunity to fully participate in the life of this country.

We know that this struggle is far from over. But today's announcement to establish The Women's Museum will help ensure that the history of that struggle will be told. Such a place, I believe, will also help inspire all of us -- men and women, boys and girls -- to better meet the extraordinary challenges and opportunities that we will face in the next Millennium.

Copyright 1998 Associated Press
AP Online

March 18, 1998; Wednesday 16:51 Eastern Time

SECTION: Washington - general news

LENGTH: 248 words

HEADLINE: First Lady Announces Women's Museum

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

First Lady **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, announcing plans for a **national women's museum**, said Wednesday that women have made significant contributions to history despite the daunting challenges they have faced.

Mrs. Clinton unveiled plans for The Women's Museum in Dallas, the first national museum to highlight the achievements of women. She likened the struggle of women to a statue of a woman coming out of a cactus, which graces the facade of the historical building where the museum will be housed.

"The woman coming out of a cactus ... I think somehow sums up a woman's life to me," Mrs. Clinton said to applause and laughter. "There will be lots of stories of lots of women who may have stepped on a few or had a few thrust at them, but kept on going time and time again."

Mrs. Clinton said it is important to highlight a history of women's achievements that has received short shrift in American schools.

"I hope that all of us know that the struggle is far from over" to ensure that men and women have an equal opportunity to pursue their goals, Mrs. Clinton said, adding that the museum will "help ensure that the struggle and the history of the struggle is told and continues."

The \$25 million, 70,000-square-foot museum is scheduled to open in October 2000 in Dallas' Fair Park. SBC Communications announced it will contribute \$10 million toward The Women's Museum, the largest corporate contribution in history to any women's organization, fund or program.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 18, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;national women's museum and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

Copyright 1998 San Antonio Express-News
San Antonio Express-News

March 19, 1998, Thursday, METRO

SECTION: METRO; Pg. 3, Part B

LENGTH: 411 words

HEADLINE: Past is recalled at new museum

BYLINE: Susan Yerkes; Express-News Staff Writer

BODY: WASHINGTON - When **Hillary Clinton** saw the statue of a woman rising from a cactus in front of the old opera house in Dallas' Fair Park, she was struck by the aptness of the symbolism.

When SBC Chairman Ed Whitacre saw the building, he remembered the livestock exhibitions he saw there. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison remembered the operas.

On Wednesday, all three, along with Foundation for Women's Resources founder Cathy Bonner, hailed the building's next tenant - the **national Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future** - as a great step forward in chronicling the past and predicting the future of American women.

The group also accepted the SBC Foundation's \$10 million gift to the project at a packed news conference in Washington's historic Decatur House, which was attended by the first lady, Whitacre, a corps of SBC executives and representatives of the Austin-based women's foundation building the museum.

SBC's contribution is the largest gift the San Antonio-based telecommunications giant has ever donated to any entity. It is also the largest donation to a women's project of any kind in U.S. history, foundation officials said.

The gift is a challenge grant to leverage more funds for the \$25 million museum, scheduled to open in October 2000.

Earlier this week, Bonner said: "I can see the other \$10 million in view."

In Dallas today, Texas Instruments is scheduled to announce a half-million-dollar contribution of its own.

Clinton saluted the project as exemplary reuse of a historic site, a demonstration of the power of public/private partnerships and "an important step in showcasing the vital role women have played in the past and will in the future."

Bonner, Clinton, Whitacre and Hutchison together unveiled a model of the futuristic project designed by architect Wendy Evans Joseph, senior designer for the U.S. Holocaust Museum.

Whitacre called the project "a great idea that is way overdue.

"We know what a big contribution women have made to our country and to this industry. We're in a business of using technology to help people communicate. This museum will use technology to help people and ideas communicate."

Former Texas Gov. Ann Richards and former Texas Rep. Karyne Connelly, now an SBC executive in Washington, attended the event. San Antonians in the audience included SBC executives Cassandra Carr, Patricia Diaz Dennis, Janet Kendall and Gloria Delgado.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**VH-1 SAVE THE MUSIC CONCERT
4/18/98**

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS FOR VH-1 SAVE THE MUSIC CONCERT
THE WHITE HOUSE
APRIL 13, 1998

Good evening everyone -- I hope you're enjoying tonight's concert. I am honored to join my husband, John Sykes, tonight's performers, and all of you to "Save the Music" in our nation's schools. From the very first nursery rhymes we hear, music makes us laugh, cry, stomp our feet -- and despite the protests of our friends and family, even sing along. With every note and chorus, our favorite songs often express our deepest aspirations -- both as individuals and as a nation.

For many of us, our first real introduction to music and the arts took place in school. When Bill and I were growing up, our classrooms were places to discover not only math and science -- but also painting and poetry, theater and music. As many of you know, school was where Bill first started playing the Saxophone. And I began playing the flute and piano. [For those of you who might be wondering whether I'm going to play something tonight, keep in mind that the Grammy I won had absolutely nothing to do with music. It was for reading my book, "It takes a village."]

While most of us will never sing like Celine Dion or play like [fill in], arts education can help all of us reach our individual dreams. Research now shows that music education not only lifts our children's hearts, but also dramatically increases their abstract reasoning, spatial skills, and their scores on math and verbal exams. At a time when too many arts education programs are the first to be cut and the last to be added, all of us must send a clear message. When it comes to igniting our children's ability to learn and imagine, the arts must be just as central to their education as the 3 Rs. I want to thank VH-1 and all of you for working so hard to make that possible. I hope you have a wonderful evening.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**CD-ROM EVENT - MLK LIBRARY
4/13/98**

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR CD-ROM EVENT
MARTIN LUTHER KING LIBRARY
APRIL 13, 1998

- Thank you, Stephan Knoblock (KENOBLOCK), for giving us that preview of this wonderful new CD ROM: "The White House is Our House." And yes, I've had a wonderful time redecorating the Blue Room -- which is one of my most favorite rooms in the White House.
- It's a pleasure to be here at the Martin Luther King Public Library, and to join General Julius Becton -- who has been such a powerful voice on behalf of improving the District's public schools; Neil Horstman, executive director of the White House Historical Association; Norman Koonce, president, and Alan Sandler, senior director, of the American Architectural Foundation; and the many educational leaders who have joined us today for this special event. A very special welcome to the teachers and students from Thomson Elementary School and the children who participate in the computer program here at the Library. Thank you to librarian Mary Raphael for hosting us.
- I'm pleased to be able to join you today because this my neighborhood library as well. I live right down the street, so while Washington DC is our nation's capital -- it's also my hometown. And over the years, I've visited many libraries like this one, and schools and community centers throughout the District. These are the educational hubs of the community, where people come together to learn, and explore, and imagine the future. Our highest priority, as a community and as a nation, must be to invest in these educational institutions, so that our young people have the tools that prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow.
- We're here today to showcase one of those tools for learning -- the new CD-ROM called "The White House is Our House" that we just had a chance to see a few moments ago. The White House is the nation's most historic residence -- and the place where the President and I have had the privilege to live for the past five years. But more importantly, it's your home, the people's house. It's a living expression of our national character -- who we were, who we are, and who we want to become. And thanks to this CD-ROM, the White House and all of its history, art, architecture, and treasures will now be truly at your fingertips.
- This CD-ROM has been developed at a particularly exciting time in our history. In the year 2000 -- we enter not only a new century, but a new Millennium. That historic year also coincides with the 200th anniversary of the White House, giving us a unique opportunity to reexamine and celebrate the history of this great nation. This CD-ROM gives us a unique glimpse into the history of America, and brings that history to life.

- I'm particularly pleased that this CD-ROM offers so many interactive activities, which will help young people get more engaged in learning about the White House and the lives of the people who have lived and worked there. I want young people here in the District to understand that the White House is part of their community -- as well as perhaps the most famous house in the world.
- Appreciation to the unique partnership that has produced this CD-ROM: the White House Historical Association, who with the American Architectural Foundation, has helped create this "living tour" of the White House; and the people at Autodesk, who produced the technology. Thank you also to the Office of the Chief Usher and the Office of the Curator of the White House who have helped make this project possible.
- I am very pleased that the Association is making this CD-ROM available to schools across the country, at a discount, so that millions of young people have the opportunity to see "their house" -- the White House -- as a living, breathing institution.
- I am also happy to announce that the White House Historical Association is donating this state-of-the-art computer to this library, and has pledged to donate four other computers to libraries around the District. These computers, and CD-ROMS like this one, are the gateways to an extraordinary wealth of knowledge and information on every subject in the world. They are the tools of the future that enable us to explore the world while sitting in this library, or in our living rooms. I'm pleased that our young people here today can use these computers to pursue their interests and expand their horizons.
- I know General Beckon values these contributions to the City's libraries. He knows, as do the many educational leaders and historians here today, how critical education is to the future of these young people -- and to the future of this City. We are all deeply grateful for his efforts over the past few years to strengthen our city schools, to raise the standards of excellence, and to lift up the spirits and hopes of our children. He knows our common mission is to prepare this generation to meet the challenges of the 21st Century -- and that all of us have a role to play in fulfilling that all important task.
- I want to thank everyone for coming. And I hope that everyone here, particularly the young people, will not only visit the White House on this CD-ROM, but will walk down the street and come and visit me and the President at the White House in the near future.

The Associated Press

View Related Topics

The materials in the AP file were compiled by The Associated Press. These materials may not be republished without the express written consent of The Associated Press.

April 13, 1998, Monday, AM cycle

SECTION: Washington Dateline

LENGTH: 224 words

HEADLINE: Kids test new White House CD-ROM

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Anyone who wants to tour the White House but can't travel to Washington can turn to a computer instead.

A new educational **CD-ROM**, introduced Monday by **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, takes people on a virtual, interactive tour of the White House.

"I think this in some respects is even a better tour than the actual tour," Mrs. Clinton said at the announcement event at Martin Luther King Jr. library here. Virtual tourists can take as long as they like examining the White House and can go places that are off-limits on the regular public tour, she said.

About 1 million people visit the White House every year, "yet there is no way that all of the people who would be interested in seeing the White House firsthand will ever find their way to an actual tour, so they can take a virtual tour," Mrs. Clinton said.

A group of children from Thomson Elementary School in Washington tested the new software as the first lady wandered around pointing out subjects of interest.

Nine-year-old Benam Gebru said he liked the program because "you can go anywhere you want." The Blue Room was his favorite part of the tour, he said, "because it has nice chandeliers."

The program, "The White House is Our House," was developed by the White House Historical Association and the American Architectural Foundation and was designed by Autodesk, Inc.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 13, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;CD-ROM and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

POETRY MILLIENNIUM EVENING

4/22/98

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR POETRY MILLENNIUM EVENING

THE EAST ROOM

APRIL 22, 1998

"Who can remember back to the first poets
The greatest ones, greater even than Orpheus?
No one has remembered that far back
Or now considers, among the artifacts
And bones and cantilevered inference
The past is made of, those first and greatest poets,
So lofty and disdainful of renown
They left us not a name to know them by.

They were the ones that in whatever tongue
Worded the world, that were the first to say
Star, water, stone, that said the visible
And made it bring invisibles to view
In wind and time and change, and in the mind
Itself that minded the hitherto idiot world
And spoke the speechless world and sang the towers
Of the city into the astonished sky.

They were the first great listeners, attuned
To interval, relationship, and scale,
The first to say above, beneath, beyond,
Conjurors with love, death, sleep, with bread and wine,
Who having uttered vanished from the world
Leaving no memory but the marvelous
Magical elements, the breathing shapes
And stops of breath we build our babels of. [pause]

To you who speak "the speechless world," and the "great listeners" who hear it, we are honored to welcome you to The White House. Just like Howard Nemerov in "The Makers," we are here on this Millennium Evening to celebrate the timeless power of poetry and poets...as our American memory. Our purveyors of insight and culture. Our eyes and ears who silence the white noise around us and express the very heart of what connects us, plagues us, and makes us fully human.

I want to thank everyone who has made this celebration possible, especially: Ellen Lovell, the director of the White House Millennium Council. Our Poets Laureate: Robert Pinsky, Rita Dove, Bob Hass, Anthony Hecht, and William Meredith. Could you please stand? What better way to commemorate National Poetry Month than by gathering our nation's poetry and poets in our nation's home. I hope all of you get a chance to visit the foyer and see some of the extraordinary works that capture America's role in poetry and poetry's role in America. For that exhibit and so much more, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dr. James Billington, the Center for the Book, the Curators, and the entire Library of Congress.

Let me also thank Bill Ferris and The National Endowment for the Humanities, State Humanities Councils; the Howard Gilman Foundation; Phi Theta Kappa; the Department of Veterans Affairs; and Sun Microsystems for bringing this event to people throughout our nation and world. First, via satellite, to more than 200 sites in 44 states. And also via the Internet on the White House Web Site and the SunMicrosystems site.

This is the third of many Millennium Evenings we will be holding with scholars, artists, scientists, and other creative individuals to help our nation explore who we are and who we want to be as we enter the next century. The goal of all our White House Millennium activities is to "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future." And, that is what we are doing tonight -- with both poetry and prose, with cutting-edge technology and the torn pages of old books.

Like many of you, my first real introduction to poetry took place in a classroom. I remember standing before a sea of other children and reciting poems that I'd memorized by saying them out loud at the kitchen table. On the way to school. Before going to sleep. Over and over again. That's how we learn to feel the music and rhythm and inspiration of poetry. To understand its window onto our experiences as Americans, communities, and individuals.

In school, when we sang the Star Spangled Banner and read Emma Lazarus' words inscribed on the Statue of Liberty: "Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,"...we learned about the birth and meaning of America. When we asked Langston Hughes' haunting question, "What happens to a dream deferred," we learned about the struggles of African Americans and those too long denied our nation's promise of justice and opportunity.

When we fall in love or see loved ones die. When our hopes are realized or dashed. When we tuck our children into bed or walk through a garden. In every moment of our lives, the poems we read or write speak to us, transform us, comfort us. And our love for them must be passed down to every generation, to every American. Not just touching the intellectual life of a few, but the everyday life of us all.

That's what the Poet Laureate Joseph Brodsky was talking about when he said that "an anthology of American poetry should be found in the drawer in every room in every motel in the land." Seven years later, we see his dream being fulfilled in truck stops, supermarkets, and train stations where thousands of copies of "101 Great Poems" are being handed out by his American Poetry and Literacy Project every April. We see his dream being fulfilled in the refrigerator magnets that people are transforming into poetry in between meals. In the poetry readings that increasingly grace the weekend sections of our newspapers and the book stores and coffee houses of America.

This afternoon, we saw his dream being fulfilled in the confident young people we met at Johnson Junior High School in Southeast Washington. I wish you could have seen these students. They were rehearsing for a poetry slam taking place tonight. For those of you who have never seen a slam, it's not to be missed. It's a high-speed, high-spirit competition where students face off against each other by reading their own poems and receiving scores by a group of judges. Sort of like a cross between Olympic gymnastics and old Vaudeville.

Using their voice as an instrument and their soul as a library, the students read poems about the beauty of their names, the plight of a homeless man, the contributions of Duke Ellington, their pride and pain. And they talked about how poetry had helped them put their anger "on paper instead of acting it out." How it had opened up thoughts they never knew existed. How it had given them confidence. Every child in America should have that opportunity. In a poem one boy read, he said "I'm so musical that when I write a song, you sing it for the rest of your life."

No one has worked harder to ensure that all of us sing poetry for the rest of our lives than our two former and current Poets Laureate. Whether by promoting literacy and celebrating our environment, as Robert Haas has done. By bringing poetry to everyone and putting everyday life into poetry, as Rita Dove has done. Or, by creating a record for the future of the poems that moved us as individuals and defined us as a nation, as Robert Pinsky is doing. Just this morning, I was pleased to announce that the National Endowment for the Arts is awarding \$500,000 to support the Favorite Poem Project.

So tonight it is my great honor to introduce three of Nemekov's "Makers," who will "speak the speechless world" and bring it to all of us. In other words, their own version of the poetry slam. Our Poets Laureate: Bob Hass, Rita Dove, and Robert Pinsky, who will start things off with a few comments. Please welcome them.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 22, 1998

REMARKS AT
MILLENNIUM LECTURE SERIES

The East Room

7:30 P.M. EDT

MS. LOVELL: Welcome to the third Millennium Evening at the White House. We are glad to know that outside this room, so full of anticipation, are thousands of Americans who are watching, listening and having your own discussion.

We begin this evening with a short film in which our Librarian of Congress tells us about the Poet Laureate Consultant Program, and the three most recent Poets Laureate speak about their work as writers, but also as voices of poetry.

At the same time, we are here to honor all of you, poets of the world, listeners, readers, you whose curiosity and love of language is alive. Where the voice that is in us makes a true response; where the voice that is great within us rises up.

(A film is shown.)

MRS. CLINTON: Who can remember back to the first poets, the greatest ones, greater even than Orpheus? No one has remembered that far back, or now considers among the artifacts and bones and cantilevered inference the past is made of, those first and greatest poets, so lofty and disdainful of renown, they left us not a name to know them by.

They were the ones that, in whatever tongue worded the world, that were the first to say, star, water, stone; that said the visible and made it bring invisibles to view in wind and time and change. And in the mind itself, that mind of the hitherto idiot world, and spoke the speechless world, and sang the towers of the city into the astonished sky.

They were the first great listeners, attuned to interval relationship and scale; the first to say, above, beneath, beyond. Congerers with love, death, sleep, with bread and wine; who, having uttered, vanished from the world leaving no memory but the marvelous, magical elements -- the breathing shapes and stops of breaths we build our babbles of.

To you, who speak the speechless world, and to the great listeners who hear it, we are honored to welcome you to the White House.

Just like Howard Nemerov in "The Makers," we are here on this Millennium Evening to celebrate the timeless power of poetry and poets as our American memory, our purveyors of insight and culture, our eyes and ears who silence the white noise around us and express the very heart of what connects us, plagues us, and makes us fully human.

I want to thank everyone who has made this celebration possible --

especially Ellen Lovell, the Director of the White House Millennium Council; our Poets Laureate, Robert Pinsky, Rita Dove, Bob Hass, Anthony Hecht, and William Meredith. What better way to commemorate National Poetry Month than by gathering our nation's poetry and poets in our nation's home.

When Stephen Hawking gave the second Millennium Lecture here, I'd said that there had never been more physicists in the White House. I don't believe there have ever been more poets in the White House than this evening. (Laughter.) I hope you will also get a chance to visit the foyer and see some of the extraordinary works that capture America's role in poetry and poetry's role in America. For that exhibit and so much more, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dr. James Billington, the center for the book, the curators, and the entire Library of Congress.

Let me also thank Bill Ferris and the National Endowment for the Humanities, state humanities councils, the Howard Gilman Foundation, Phi Theta Kappa, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Sun Microsystems for bringing this event to people throughout our nation and the world, first via satellite to more than 200 sites in 44 states, and also via the Internet on the White House web site and the Sun Microsystems site.

This is the third of many Millennium Evenings we will be holding with scholars, artists, scientists, and other creative individuals to help our nation explore who we are, who we want to be as we enter the next century. The goal of all of our White House Millennium activities is to honor the past and imagine the future, and that is what we are doing tonight, with both poetry and prose, with cutting-edge technology and the torn pages of old books.

Like many of you, I suppose my first real introduction to poetry took place in a classroom. I remember standing before what looked to be a sea of other children and reciting poems I'd memorized by saying them out loud at the kitchen table on the way to school before going to sleep, over and over again. That is how I and so many learned to feel the music and rhythm and inspiration of poetry, to understand its window onto our experiences as Americans, individuals and communities. Whether we sang the Star-Spangled Banner or recited in Emma Lazarus' words inscribed in the Statue of Liberty, or asked Langston Hughes' haunting question, what happens to a dream deferred, we were being influenced by poetry.

We know that happens every day, not just while we're still in school -- when we fall in love or see loved ones die, when our hopes are realized or dashed; we tuck our children into bed, perhaps to a favorite rhyme or walk through a garden. In every moment of our lives the poems we read or write or remember speak to us, often transforming us, comforting us. And we pass that love for them down from generation to generation.

It's important that we touch not just the lives of the few through poetry, but the everyday life of all of us. That's what the Poet Laureate Joseph Brodsky was talking about when he said that, an anthology of American poetry should be found in the drawer in every room in every motel in the land. Seven years later, we see that dream being fulfilled in truck stops, supermarkets and train stations, where thousands of copies of 101 Great Poems are being handed out by his American Poetry and Literacy Project every April.

This afternoon, we saw poetry in action at Johnson Junior High School in Southeast Washington. We saw students who were practicing for a poetry slam taking place tonight. Now, for those of you who have never seen a slam, it's a high-speed, high-spirited competition where students face off against each other, reading their own poems and receiving scores like at the Olympics from a group of judges.

Using their voices as an instrument and their souls as a library, these students read poems about the beauty of their names, the plight of a homeless man, the contributions of Duke Ellington, their pride, and their pains. And they talked about how poetry had helped put their anger on paper, instead of acting it out; how it had opened up thoughts they never knew existed and given them confidence. One young man stood up and said as part of his poem, I'm so musical that when I write a song you sing it for the rest of your life. (Laughter.)

No one has worked harder to ensure that children and young people and all of us throughout America sing poetry for the rest of our lives than our two former and current Poets Laureate. Whether by promoting literacy and celebrating our environment, or by bringing poetry to everyone and putting everyday life into poetry, they have been on the front lines.

We are also very grateful that Robert Pinsky has created a program for recording poems, the poems that help define us as individuals and as a nation. And just this morning I was pleased to announce that the National Endowment for the Arts is awarding \$500,000 to support the Favorite Poem Project.

So tonight it is my great honor to introduce three of Howard Nemerov's "makers" who will speak the speechless world and bring it to all of us -- in other words, their own version of the poetry slam -- our Poets Laureate, Bob Hass, Rita Dove and Robert Pinsky, who will start things off with a few comments.

Please welcome them. (Applause.)

MR. PINSKY: We're here to honor our ancestors -- not our literal ancestors, but our ancestors in poetry -- and to imagine ways that we can give the gift that they gave to us to the young.

I'll start with just a few lines from Harriet Converse's 19th century translation of an Iroquois Thanksgiving Song:

We give thanks that the voice of the
Great Spirit can still be heard through
the words of ganay-oh-day-ho. We thank
the Great Spirit that we have the
privilege of this pleasant occasion.
We give thanks for the persons who can
sing the Great Spirit's music and hope
that they will be privileged to
continue in his faith. We thank the
Great Spirit for all the persons who
perform the ceremonies on this
occasion.

We're going to try to give a fast, representative reading from the great heritage of American poetry. And the place to begin seems to be with the poet who embodies the sweep and embrace and cultural appetite of American art and American life at its best. I'll read a few lines from the opening from "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," by Walt Whitman, and then my friends will continue in that vein.

Crowds of men and women attired in the
usual costumes, how curious you are to
me. On the ferry boats, the hundreds
and hundreds that cross, returning
home, are more curious to me than you
suppose. And you that shall cross from

shore to shore years hence are more to
me, and more in my meditation than you
might suppose.

The others that are to follow me, the
ties between me and them, the certainty
of others, the life, love, sight,
hearing of others.

Others will enter the gates of the
ferry and cross from shore to shore.
Others will watch the run of the flood
tide. Others will see the shipping of
Manhattan, north and west, and the
heights of Brooklyn to the south and
east. Others will see the islands
large and small;

Fifty years hence, others will see them
as they cross, the sun half an hour
high. A hundred years hence, or ever
so many hundred years hence, others
will see them, will enjoy the sunset,
the pouring in of the flood tide, the
falling back to the sea of the ebb
tide.

It avails not, time nor place; distance
avails not. I am with you, men and
women of a generation, or ever so many
generations hence.

Just as you feel when you look on the
river and sky, so I felt. Just as any
of you who is one of a living crowd, I
was one of a crowd. Just as you are
refreshed by the gladness of the river
and the bright flow, I was refreshed.
Just as you stand and lean on the rail,
yet hurry with the swift current, I
stood, yet was hurried. Just as you
look on the numberless masts of ships
and the thick-stemmed pipes of
steamboats, I looked.

MS. DOVE: From Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself."

A child said, What is the grass?
fetching it to me with full hands;
How could I answer the child? I do not
know what it is any more than he.
I guess it must be the flag of my
disposition, out of hopeful green stuff
woven.

Or I guess it is the handkerchief of
the Lord,

A scented gift and remembrancer
designedly dropped,
Bearing the owner's name some way in
the corners, that we may see and remark
and say, Whose?

Or I guess the grass is itself a child,
the produced babe of the vegetation.

Or I guess it is a uniform
hieroglyphic,
And it means, Sprouting alike in broad
zones and narrow zones,
Growing among black folks as among
white, Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman,

Cuff, I give them the same. I receive
them the same. And now it seems to me
the beautiful uncut hair of graves.

And Langston Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of Rivers."

I've known rivers. I've known rivers
ancient as the world and older than the
flow of human blood in human veins.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns
were young. I built my hut near the
Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the
pyramids above it. I heard the singing
of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln
went down to New Orleans, and I've seen
its muddy bosom turn all golden in the
sunset.
I've known rivers, ancient, dusky
rivers. My soul hath grown deep like
the river.

MR. HASS: We move from Walt Whitman's Atlantic to Langston
Hughes' Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean of Robinson Jeffers. I'm
going to read a poem written after the death of his wife, in the late
1950s, and it's called "Vulture."

I had walked since dawn and laid down
to rest on a bare hillside above the
ocean. I saw through half-shut eyelids
a vulture wheeling up in heaven. And
presently it passed again, but nearer
and lower, its orbit narrowing.

I understood then that I was under
inspection. I laid death-still and
heard the flight feathers whistle above
me and make their circle and come
nearer. I could see the naked red head
between the great wings bear downward,
staring.

I said, 'My dear bird, we are wasting
time here. These old bones still work.
They are not for you.' But how
beautiful he looked gliding down on
those great sails. How beautiful he
looked veering away in the sea light
over the precipice. I tell you
solemnly that I was sorry to have
disappointed him. To be eaten by that
beak and become part of him, to share
those wings and those eyes, what a
sublime end of one's body, one an
enskyment, what a life after death."

MR. PINSKY: I hope you all noticed how artfully we went from the
east coast to the midwest to the Pacific. (Laughter.) I hope it's not
a complete bromide to say that if Whitman embodies an audacious sweep
and cultural appetite and cultural omnivorousness, Emily Dickinson
embodies other characteristics of American art, an audacious
individuality and boldness and concentration. And we thought it would
be appropriate to do some of those.

Further in summer than the birds,
pathetic from the grass
A minor nation celebrates its unobtrusive mass.
No ordinance be seen
So gradual the grace a pensive custom
it becomes, enlarging loneliness.
Antiquiest felt at noon
When August burning low
Arise this spectral canticle,
Repose to typify.
Remit as yet no grace,
No furrow on the glow
Yet a Druidic difference
Enhances nature now.

(MR. HASS:)

Much madness is the vinest sense to the
discerning eye. Much sense the starkest
madness. Tis the majority prevails; tis
the majority in this as all prevails.
Assent and you are sane; demure, you're
straight way dangerous and handled with a
chain.

(MS. DOVE:)

I heard a fly buzz when I died;
The stillness in the room was like the
stillness in the air between the heavens
of storm.
The eyes around had wrung them dry, and
breaths were gathering firm for that
last onset, when the king be witnessed
in the room.
I willed my keepsakes, signed away what
portion of me be assignable. And then
it was there interposed a fly,
With blue, uncertain, stumbling buzz,
between the light and me.
And then the windows failed, and then I
could not see to see.

(MR. PINSKY:)

After great pain, a formal feeling comes.
The nerves sit ceremonious, like tombs.
The stiff heart questions, was it He that
bore, and yesterday, or centuries before?
The feet, mechanical, go round of ground or
air or ought. A wooden way, regardless
grown. A quartz contentment, like a stone.
This is the hour of lead,
Remembered, if outlived, as freezing
persons recollect the snow.
First chill, then stupor, then the letting
go.

We could be all Dickinson, couldn't we? (Laughter.) I said that
these are poems of the past, but we are imagining them for future
generations. So we thought we'd read a group of poems to do with
children and families and the passing on of culture. I think this is
the only commissioned poem that will be read tonight. This is a poem by
William Carlos Williams that his grandson asked him to write.
(Laughter.)

The Turtle (For My Grandson.)

Not because of his eyes, the eyes of a bird
but because he is beaked, bird-like, to do
an injury, has the turtle attracted you.
He is your only pet. When we are together
you talk of nothing else, ascribing all
sorts of murderous motives to his least
action.

You ask me to write a poem, should I have
poems to write about a turtle. The turtle
lives in the mud, but is not mud-like.

You can tell it by his eyes, which are
clear. When he shall escape his present
confinement he will stride about the world
destroying all with his sharp beak.

Whatever opposes him in the streets of the
city shall go down. Cars will be
overturned. And upon his back shall ride
to his conquests my lord, you. You shall
be master.

In the beginning there was a great tortoise
who supported the world. Upon him all
ultimately rests. Without him, nothing
will stand. He is all wise and can outrun
the hare. In the night, his eyes carry him
to unknown places. He is your friend.

MR. HASS: Anne Bradstreet was, I guess, the first American poet. She was the first English colonist to publish a book of poems. She came to New England on the ship *Arabella*, the first ship that brought the Puritans to New England, in 1630. And her book was published in 1650, but the poem I'm going to read was not in that book. She thought it was too personal to be printed, and it wasn't, in fact, printed until 1865. It was a poem that she wrote to her husband in the ninth month of a pregnancy.

Giving birth in that wilderness in those years was a risky business, and she feared she wouldn't survive it, and she wrote this poem to speak to him. It begins, as Puritan poems often did, in adages and platitudes, but listen to what happens. The Victorian editor gave it the title "Before the Birth of One of Her Children."

All things within the fading world hath
end. Adversity doth still our joys attend.
No ties so strong, no friend so dear and
sweet,
But with death's parting blow is sure to
meet.

The sentence passed is most irrevocable, a
common thing, yet, oh, inevitable.
How soon, my dear, death may my steps attend.
How soon't may be thy lot to lose thy friend.
We're both ignorant, yet love bids me these farewell
lines to recommend to thee,
That when that knot's untied that made us one,
I may seem thine, who in effect am none.
And if I see not half my days that's due,
What nature would, God grant to yours and you.
The many faults that well you know I have
Let be interred in my oblivious grave.
If any worth or virtue were in me,
Let that live freshly in thy memory.
And when thou feelst no grief as I no harms,
Yet love they dead who lay long in thine arms.
And when thy loss shall be repaid with gains,
Look to my little babes, my dear remains.

And if thou loves thyself or lovest me,
These, oh, protect from stepdame's injury.
And if chance to thine eyes shall bring this verse,
With some sad sighs, honor my absent hearse.
And kiss this paper, for thy love's dear sake,
Who, with salt tears, this last farewell did take.

MR. PINSKY: I'll read a poem by one of our predecessors as consultant in poetry to the Library of Congress, Robert Hayden. The poem is a memory of his childhood.

Those Winter Sundays

Sundays, too, my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blue-black cold,
then with cracked hands that ached from labor
in the weekday weather made banked fires blaze.
No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm he'd call
and slowly I would rise and dress, fearing
the chronic angers of that house,
speaking indifferently to him who had driven out the
cold and polished my good shoes as well.

What did I know, what did I know of
love's austere and lonely offices?

MS. DOVE: Many of us know Sylvia Plath as a writer of wonderful and troubled poems. And what some people do not realize is that she wrote some of the most beautiful love poems to her children, poems about being a mother, all of that joy, and that anguish.

"Child"

Your clear eye is the one absolutely
beautiful thing.
I want to fill it with color and ducks,
The zoo of the new
Whose names you meditate,
April snowdrop, Indian pipe,
little stalk without wrinkle,
Pool in which images
Should be grand and classical
Not this troublous wringing of hands,
this dark ceiling without a star.

MR. PINSKY: One of the things that Americans should perhaps be most patriotic about is our impurity. Cultural blendings, collidings, crazy mixes and improvisations are behind our distinctive works -- such as jazz and the American feature film and, indeed, American poetry as well as American music, of country music, things. And we thought we'd try to read a few poems that suggest some of that genius for unexpected and impure cultural mixes and ways that we're related to the cultures of other continents in ways that are unexpected.

MS. DOVE: I'll start with a poem by County Cullin, who was a great proponent of the Harlem Renaissance, that magnificent explosion of music, of poetry, art and just plain good fun in the '20s. In this poem, though, County Cullin, who's an African American poet, writes to another poet, to John Keats, the English poet.

To John Keats, poet, at springtime. I
cannot hold my peace, John Keats.

There never was a spring like this. It is an echo that repeats my last year's song and next year's bliss. I know, in spite of all men say of beauty, you have felt her most. Yea, even in your grave, her way is laid. Poor, troubled, lyric ghost, spring never was so fair and dear as beauty makes her seem this year.

I cannot hold my peace, John Keats. I am as helpless in the toil of spring as any lamb that bleats, the field of solid earth recoil beneath his puny legs. Spring beats her toxin call to those who love her and, lo, the dogwood petals cover her breast with drifts of snow and sleek white gulls fly screaming to her and hover about her shoulders and kiss her cheek, while white and purple lilacs muster a strength that bears them to a cluster of color and odor. For her sake, all things that slept are now awake.

And you and I, shall we lie still, John Keats, while beauty summons us? Somehow I feel your sensitive will is pulsing up some tremulous sap road of a maple tree, whose leaves grow music as they grow, since your wild voice is in them -- a harp that grieves for life, that opens death's dark door. Though dust, your fingers still can push the vision splendid to a birth. Though now they work as grass in the hush of the night on the broad, sweet page of the earth.

John Keats is dead, they say. But I, who hear your full, insistent cry in bud and blossom, leaf and tree, know John Keats still writes poetry.

And while my head is earthward bowed to read new life sprung from your shroud, folks seeing me must think it's strange that merely spring should so derange my mind. They do not know that you, John Keats, keep rebel with me, too.

MR. PINSKY: A whole tremendous weight of European thought and religion and philosophical questioning is dealt with in a very irreverent and saucy way in this poem by Wallace Stevens.

"The Pleasures of Merely Circulating."

The garden flew round with the angel.
The angel flew round with the clouds.
And the clouds flew round and the
clouds flew round and the clouds flew
round with the clouds.

Is there any secret in skulls, the
cattle skulls in the woods? Do the

drummers and black hoods rumble
anything out of their drums?

Mrs. Anderson's Swedish baby might well
have been German or Spanish
But the things go round and again go
round Has rather a classical sound.

MR. HASS: Since Rita read County Cullin's tribute to John Keats, I thought that I'd read the tribute of an Irish American poet to a great black American artist. It's Frank O'Hara's elegy for Billie Holiday, called, "The Day Lady Died." And you should probably know that Billie Holiday used to sing at the Five Spot and that her accompanist was named Mal Waldron. This is the saucy, circumstantial American poetry of the New York art scene in the 1950s.

"The Day Lady Died"

It is 12:20 in New York, a Friday,
three days after Bastille Day. Yes,
it's 1959 and I go get a shoe shine
because I will get off the 419 in
Easthampton at 7:15 and then go
straight to dinner and I don't know the
people who will feed me.

I walk up the muggy street beginning to
sun and have a hamburger and a malted
and buy an ugly New World Writing to
see what the poets in Ghana are doing
these days.
I go to the bank and Mrs. Stillwagon
(first name Linda, I once heard)
doesn't even look at my balance for
once in her life. And in the Golden
Griffin Bookstore I get a little
Verlaine for Patsy with drawings by
Bonnard although I do think of Hesiod
translator Richmond Lattimore or
Brendan Behan's new play or Le Balcon
or Les Negres of Genet,
But I don't, I stick with Verlaine after practically
going to sleep with quandariness.

And for Mike I just stroll into the
Park Lane Liquor Store and ask for a
bottle of Strega and then I go back
where I came from, to 6th Avenue and
the tobacconist in the Ziegfeld
Theatre, and casually ask for a carton
of Gauloises and a carton of Picayunes
and a New York Post with her face on
it.

And I am sweating a lot now and thinking of
leaning on the john door in the 5 Spot
while she whispered a song along the
keyboard to Mal Waldron and everyone and I
stopped breathing.

MR. PINSKY: We'll read a series of poems that have to do with
imagination, I think in an American context. The poem I'm going to
read to you has a lot in common in American country music. It's
basically kind of a "somebody done somebody wrong" narrative in which
the extraordinary nature of the woman who chooses very badly in love

becomes part of the pride of a town. And the relationship between the gossip, or the preoccupation of the town and her heroism makes something of the story that's a little more significant to the imagination than the story would be in itself, for her, or than the town would be.

And the rhymes -- it's Edwin Arlington's "Eros Turannos" -- Love the Tyrant. The rhymes in the poem are like a somewhat, somewhat longing notion of a ballad, but it's like a hyper-ballad. It's a ballad straining to be a ballad in a community that is partly too lonely to be the adequate community.

"Eros Turannos"

She fears him, and will always ask
What fated her to choose him;
She meets in his engaging mask
All reasons to refuse him;
But what she meets and what she fears
Are less than are the downward years
Drawn slowly to the foamless weirs
Of age, were she to lose him.

Between a blurred sagacity
That once had power to sound him,
And love that will not let him be
The Judas that she found him,
Her pride assuages her almost,
As if it were alone the cost.
He sees that he will not be lost
And waits and looks around him.
A sense of ocean and old trees
Envelops and allures him;
Tradition touching all he sees
Beguiles and reassures him;
And all her doubts of what he says
Are dimmed with what she knows of days --
Ill even in prejudice delays
And fades, and she secures him.

The falling leaf inaugurates
The reign of her confusion;
The pounding wave reverberates
The dirge of her illusion;
And home, where passion lived and died,
Becomes a place where she can hide
While all the town harbor side
Vibrate with her seclusion.

We tell you, tapping on our brows,
The story as it should be,
As if the story of a house
Were told, or ever could be;
We'll have no kindly veil between
Her visions and those we have seen,
As if we guessed what hers have been,
Or what they are or would be.

Meanwhile we do no harm; for they
That with a God have striven,
Not hearing much of what we say,
Take what the god has given;
Though like waves breaking it may be,
Or like a changed familiar tree,
Or like a stairway to the sea

Where down the blind are driven.

MS. DOVE: Elizabeth Bishop wrote one of the most amazing sestinas I think of the English language. The sestina is a lot like a household as seen by a child. Words keep popping up, objects, and you try to make sense of them. And just as a sestina uses those six words over and over again, a child will find a way to piece together the puzzle of its existence and its place in the world.

This is Elizabeth Bishop's "Sestina."

September rain falls on the house.
In the failing light, the old
grandmother sits in the kitchen with
the child
beside the Little Marvel Stove,
reading the jokes from the almanac,
laughing and talking to hide her tears.

She thinks that her equinoctial tears
and the rain that beats on the roof of
the house
were both foretold by the almanac,
but only known to a grandmother.
The iron kettle sings on the stove.
She cuts some bread and says to the
child, It's time for tea now; but the
child is watching the teakettle's small
hard tears dance like mad on the hot
black stove,
the way the rain must dance on the
house.
Tidying up, the old grandmother hangs
up the clever almanac on its string.
Birdlike, the almanac hovers half open
above the child, hovers above the old
grandmother and her teacup full of dark
brown tears.
She shivers and says she thinks the
house feels chilly, and puts more wood
in the stove.

It was to be, says the Marvel Stove.
I know what I know, says the almanac.
With crayons, the child draws a rigid
house and a winding pathway. Then the
child puts in a man with buttons like
tears and shows it proudly to the
grandmother.
But secretly, while the grandmother
busies herself about the stove, the
little moons fall down like tears from
between the pages of the almanac into
the flower bed the child has carefully
placed in the front of the house.

Time to plant tears, says the almanac.
The grandmother sings to the marvelous
stove and the child draws another
inscrutable house.

MR. HASS: Wallace Stevens probably thought longer and more directly about imagination, about the American imagination, about the relationship of the imagination to reality than any other American poet. And this is his last -- possibly his second to last, poem on the

subject. It's either the last poem he wrote, or very near it -- this man who spent 30 years walking from his house to his job as an executive vice president of the Hartford Insurance Company, musing on his own mind. And this last poem he called, "Of Mere Being."

I should say that it's a man who lived through hard winters
Floridian imagination of mere being. (Laughter.)

The pond at the end of the mine, beyond
the last thought rises in the bronze
decor. A gold feathered bird sings in
the pond without human feeling, without
human meaning, a foreign song. It is
then you know it is not the reasons
that make us happy or unhappy.

The tree stands at the edge of space.
The wind moves slowly through the
branches. The birds' fire-fangled
feathers dangle down."

MR. PINSKY: What we've been doing is seeking inspiration and sustenance and comfort from our past, from the ancestors. The last poem that we're going to read for this part of the evening is a poem about that journey, how mysterious and difficult and stressful and challenging and, the end, restorative, that search into the past is. And we'll share the reading of the poem amongst the three of us.

So the final poem, this part of the evening, is Robert Frost's poem, "Directive."

Back out of all this now too much for
us. Back in a time made simple by the
loss
Of detail, burned, dissolved and broken
off Like graveyard marble sculpture in
the weather.
There is a house that is no more a
house, Upon a farm that is no more a
farm,
And in a town that is no more a town.
The road there, if you'll let a guide
direct you
Who only has at heart your getting
lost, May seem as if it should have
been a quarry,
Great monolithic knees the former town
Long since gave up pretense of keeping
covered.

And there's a story in a book about it;
Besides the wear of iron wagon wheels
The ledges show lines ruled southeast,
northwest,
The chisel work of an enormous glacier
That braced his feet against the Arctic
Pole.
You must not mind a certain coolness
from him
Still said to haunt this side of
Panther Mountain.
Nor need you mind the serial ordeal of
being watched from forty cellar holes
As if by eye pairs out of forty
firkins.

(MS. DOVE:)

As for the woods excitement over
you that sends light russell rushes to
their leaves, charge that to upstart
inexperience. Where were they all not
twenty years ago. They think too much of
having shaded out a few old pecker-fretted
apple trees.

Make yourself up a cheering song of how
someone's road home from work this once
was, who may be just ahead of you on
foot or creaking with a buggy-load of
grain. The height of the adventure is
the height of country where two village
cultures faded into each other. Both
of them are lost.

And if you're lost enough to find
yourself by now, pull in your ladder
road behind you and put a sign up:
Closed to all but me. Then make
yourself at home. The only field now
left no bigger than a harness gall.

First there is the children's house of
make-believe, some shattered dishes
underneath a pine, the playthings in
the playhouse of the children. Weep
for what little things could make them
glad.

(MR. HASS:)

Then for the house that is no
more a house but only a bililacked cellar
hole now slowly closing like a dent in
dought. This was no playhouse but a house
in earnest. Your destination and your
destinies, a brook that was the water of
the house, cool as a spring as yet so near
its source, too lofty and original to rage.

We know the valley streams that when
aroused will leave their tatters hung
on barb and thorn. I have kept hidden
in the instep arch of an old cedar at
the waterside a broken drinking goblet
like the grail, under a spell so the
wrong one's can't find it, so can't get
saved, as St. Mark says they mustn't.
I stole the goblet from the children's
playhouse.

Here are your waters and your watering
place. Drink and be whole again,
beyond confusion.

(Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't mean to be heretical, but I was
transported by Robert and Robert and Rita. And I was thinking, this
really is an historic moment: first, there were the three tenors
--(laughter) -- then there were three sopranos, but nobody ever had
three such poets before. and we thank them. (Applause.)

A few years ago there was an interesting article in the Atlantic Monthly, which asked whether poetry could matter in the 21st century. I reread it a few moments before coming down tonight. You know, in this crazy world we're living in, everything's running around so fast. If it could matter, how could we revive the human value of poetry -- its importance to our culture, to our sense of who we are and who we are becoming as individuals and as a people?

Well, tonight there is a poet who was not an American, but was very much of the Americas, and I think we would be remiss not to acknowledge. Here's what Octavio Paz said about his craft: "Between what I see and what I say, between what I say and what I keep silent, between what I keep silent and what I dream, between what I dream and what I forget, poetry."

That is what we celebrate here tonight. Does it have any value? Of course, it does. It made us happy. It made us nostalgic. It made us sad. It made us wiser tonight.

When I was a boy in high school I was once required to memorize 100 lines from MacBeth -- hardly designed to entice me to a public career. (Laughter.) But then again, I learned about the dangers of blind ambitions -- (laughter) -- the fleeting nature of fame -- (laughter) -- the ultimate emptiness of power disconnected from higher purpose. Mr. Shakespeare made me a better President. (Applause.)

Something quite a lot to be said for all this, and I welcome you here tonight. Tonight, we have honored the poetry of our nation's past. Now, I'd like for you to see some of the poets of our future, people whom Hillary and our Poets Laureate visited with today at Johnson Junior High School.

(A video is shown.)

THE PRESIDENT: Now I'd like to turn the discussion over to the Director of our White House Millennium Project, Ellen Lovell.

MS. LOVELL: Thank you, Mr. President. We invited some other Americans who love poetry to come here and read us their favorite poems. And the first is Barry Norkin from the Veterans Nursing Home program in Silver Spring, Maryland.

MR. NORKIN: Hello, I am Barry Norkin, and I would like to share with you Robert Frost's beautiful poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
to watch his woods fill up with
snow.
My little horse must think it queer
to stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
this darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
to ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
of easy wind on downy flake.
Ah, the woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
but I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
and miles to go before I sleep.

(Applause.)

MS. LOVELL: Thank you, Mr. Norkin. I know that poem means a lot to you.

We have Internet questions now from all over the world, Mrs. Clinton, from Germany and Australia, Saudi Arabia, England, and India, but let's take the first one from the United States.

MRS. CLINTON: This question is from Rebecca Sue Olson from Chapin, South Carolina. And it's for any of the poets. "As we become more and more of a sound-bite society and rely upon technology for communication, will poetry even be relevant in the new millennium?"

Robert, Bob, Rita?

MR. HASS: Someone asked me that the other day. In fact, poets often get asked that in interviews, and I always think it's such a curious question. Technologies are media. They have content. I was with the grand old Nobel Laureate, Czeslaw Milosz, a couple of weeks ago on a spring afternoon in Portland. And we walked into a restaurant, and a very fresh-faced young waitress came toward us with a tray full of fruit. And he turned to me and said, you know, life is so pleasant it's a pity one has to die. (Laughter.)

One needs a language in which to say those things whatever the technologies are. I don't understand how human beings will have any less need to think strange thoughts and feel their way into the strangest and funniest and happiest and weirdest feelings because they're using some other media. (Applause.)

MS. LOVELL: Reverend Michael Haynes from the Twelfth Baptist Church in Boston, I know that poetry is intertwined with your life and work.

REVEREND HAYNES: My parents immigrated to the United States from the island country of Barbados around 1920. I was born around 1927 in the heart of Boston, on the edge of the Great Depression, which had its terrible impact upon our family. I went to the Boston Public Schools, and in the 9th grade in junior high school a very, very caring, insightful teacher kept quoting phrases that said something like this, "Be not like dumb, driven cattle; be a hero in the strife." That was the first seed in my life of one whom I came to know as the New England poet by the name of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

When I got to Boston English High School, our English teacher made us learn the poem and recite the poem, gave us a little of the background. I didn't realize that I was receiving a seed in my life that was going to help me psychologically, sociologically and even, eventually, theologically.

When I got to theological school all of the pieces of Longfellow began to make an awful lot of sense. His Psalm of Life became mine:

Tell me not in mournful numbers, life
is but an empty dream, for the soul is
dead that slumbers and things are not
what they seem. Life is real. Life is
earnest. And the grave is not its
goal. Dust thou art, to dust returnest
was not spoken of the soul. Not
enjoyment and not sorrow is our
destined end away, but to act, that
each tomorrow finds us farther than
today.

Art is long and time is fleeting and
our hearts, though stout and brave,
sill like muffled drums are beating
funeral marches to the grave. In the
world's broad field of battle, in the
bivouac of life, be not like the dumb,
driven cattle, be a hero in the strife.
Trust no future, how ever pleasant.
Let the dead past bury its dead. Act.
Act in living present. Heart within
and God or head.

Lives of great men all remind us we can
make our lives sublime and departing
leave behind us footprints on the sands
of time. Footprints that perhaps
another sailing on life's solemn main,
a forlorn and a shipwrecked brother
seeing shall take heart again.

Let us then be up and doing, with a
heart for any fate still achieving,
still pursuing, learn to labor and
learn to wait."

(Applause.)

MRS. CLINTON: This next question from the Internet is from
Everett C. Albers from Bismark, North Dakota: "Suppose that in the
next millennium poetry becomes the medium of shared vision and American
community; there's a reading beginning at midnight, 2099. What lines
from American poetry of the 20th century might be recited 1,000 years
or so hence? (Laughter.)

MR. HASS: Probably someone would get up and sing Bob Dylan's "The
Times They Are A-Changing." (Laughter.)

MS. DOVE: And that would be very appropriate.

MR. PINSKY: We started to try to answer that question in what we
did for half an hour. We were partly thinking of the occasion. But I
would say that Williams, Stevens, Bishop, Frost, O'Hara, Hughes, Hayden,
the poets that we read represent not only our sense of what would be
good to read on this occasion, but also things that live in our hearts
and we think are likely to be living 100 years from now -- things by
those authors. So it's not a very original answer, but it is from the
heart.

MS. DOVE: And we can see that, I mean, if you think of -- we read
Dickinson, and we wanted to stay there -- she will also be read in the
year 2999. (Laughter.)

MS. LOVELL: When I spoke with Rich Wormeli, a middle school
teacher from Herndon, Virginia, and the 1996 Disney English Teacher of
the Year, his deep feeling for words really came through. He's here
with his students. Rick?

MR. WORMELI: Thank you. Thank you very much. We took your
charge at heart. We have 11- and 12-year-olds, not just 13-year-olds,
Ms. Dove -- some of Virginia's finest with us here tonight. But I have
to tell you that in our classroom, we try to make poetry so compelling
that the students can only escape by feeling the poet's passion,
understanding the context. And with each poem we somehow plant a seed,
I hope, of developed thought, developed maturation, and understanding.

But it is through poetry that we're finally able to express those things that are unspeakable, unbridled joy, and tragic sorrow.

It is the latter of the two that I share with you tonight in effort to make poetry alive and lasting for my students. I read you "The Ballad of Birmingham," by Dudley Randall, which expresses what was going on in this poet's mind at the bombing of the churches in 1993 Birmingham, Alabama.

Mother dear, may I go downtown instead
of out to play, and march the streets of
Birmingham in a freedom march today?

No, baby, no, you may not go. For the
dogs are fierce and wild, and clubs and
hoses, guns and jail are not good for a
little child.

But mother, I won't be alone. Other
children will go with me, and march the
streets of Birmingham to make our
country free.

No, baby, no, you may not go. For I
fear those guns will fire. But you may
go to church instead and sing in the
children's choir.

She has combed and brushed her
night-dark hair and bathed rose-petal
sweet, and drawn white gloves on her
small brown hands and white shoes on
her feet.

The mother smiled to know her child was
in this sacred place. That smile was
the last smile to come upon her face.
For when she heard the explosion, her
eyes grew wet and wild. She raced
through the streets of Birmingham
calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and
brick and lifted out a shoe. Oh,
here's the shoe my baby wore, but,
baby, where are you?

(Applause.)

MRS. CLINTON: This is an appropriate question to follow your poem. It's from Alice George in Evanston, Illinois. "Please identify one activity to be enacted in our country's public schools which you believe best inspires children to welcome the power of poetry, reading, and writing into their lives.

MR. PINSKY: A very simple answer: To read aloud. The teacher should read aloud to the kids. The kids should read aloud. And people should follow their tastes. The most stringent assignment a teacher can give to students is find something that you think is worth memorizing. Find something you think is worth reading aloud to other people.

To return to the previous question, it's the young poets and the passionate young people who decide what lives. It's not curricula or critics or anthologies. It's what gets under people's skin and what gives them the pleasure of reading aloud.

Knowledge is good. Analysis is good. Discussion is good. Learning is good. But all these things in art must begin with a physical encounter. And the physical encounter with the poem is saying it aloud and feeling that emotion people feel when they say a poem aloud. And my advice for anyone who wants to learn more about poetry is the same as my advice to myself -- read it aloud and see what happens between the mind and the body as you read it aloud.

MS. LOVELL: I think we have time for one last Internet question, Mrs. Clinton.

MRS. CLINTON: This is from Louis Farrell of Las Altas Hills, California. "Technology is leading us into the new millennium with such things as new DNA research, faster computers, Internet, et cetera. What value will poetry add to our quality of living that compares to these new marvels?"

MS. DOVE: The key word there of course is "quality." And I would say that all of those new computer things have to have something to talk about and to write about, and poetry allows us to imagine the future. I don't believe that poets have any kind of monopoly on imagination, but what poetry can do is awaken the imagination, and through that imagination you can have the DNA research, the computers and all of these marvels. So it's all connected, it's all wrapped up together.

MR. HASS: I'll say that I love my computer. (Laughter.) I have a great time with it. I love my CD player. I like my television set very much. (Laughter.) And all of those things, the human appetite for art in the human being is bottomless, there's no end to it. And the very speed and the technological magnificence and vividness and the highly duplicable quality of those media I think already, as I perceive it in the country, create in reaction -- I'm not rejecting those things, but in reaction -- love for and need for the kind of excitement and comfort that comes from an art where the medium is one person's body. Not necessarily the artist's body, not Rita reading Rita's poems or me reading mine, but the body of the audience.

When I say a poem by Robert Hayden or Dickinson or Whitman with my voice, that voice -- my breath, is the artist's medium. And that's in a highly individual, personal scale that I think we crave, along with our craving for spectacular gadgets and massive film on a video disk of the Earth from space. It's wonderful, but it doesn't fill up my appetite for pizza. (Laughter.)

MS. LOVELL: Our next to last reading. Jessica Rawls is a 7th grader from Charles Hart Middle School in D.C., she was with us today. She's a star in her poetry slam team. Jessica has so many poems that I know it was hard for her to choose just one to read, but she did.

MS. RAWLS: "Life Is Fine," by Langston Hughes.

I went down to the river. I sat down
on the bank. I tried to think, but
couldn't, so I jumped in and sank. I
came up once and hollered. I came up
twice and cried. If that water hadn't
been so cold I might have sunk and
died. But it was cold, cold that
water. It was cold.

I took the elevator 16 floors above the
ground. I thought about my baby and
thought I would jump. I stood there
and hollered. I stood there and cried.

If it hadn't been so high I might have
jumped and died. But it was high, high
up there. It was high.

So since I'm still here living, I guess
will live on. I could die for love,
but for living I was born.

Though you may hear me holler and you
may hear me cry, I'll be dogged, sweet
baby, if you're going to see me die.
Life is fine, fine as wine. Life is
fine.

Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. LOVELL: Mr. President, I know you have some words to give us.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me say, first of all, I thought the people who
were in the audience who read their poems were absolutely fabulous and
I'd like to thank you all. You were great. Thank you. (Applause.)

Well, I'm supposed to end. I suppose the first thing I should say
is that poets help me get over MacBeth. (Laughter.) When I was about
21 and despairing I came across those wonderful lines from Carl
Sandburg, "A tough will counts; so does desire. So does a rich, soft,
wanting. Without rich wanting, nothing arrives."

We want these children to have ambition. We just want it to be
well-connected.

A lot of Presidents have wanted to be poets. (Laughter.) George
Washington actually tried his hand at poetry, writing that "true
happiness depends upon a quiet soul" -- as I told our Poets Laureate on
the way out. And John Quincy Adams actually wanted to be a poet, he
wanted to do that, but he just couldn't quite get there. (Laughter.)
So he settled for a lesser path. (Laughter.)

But still he composed verses all his life. Even when he was an
old man in Congress, waiting to vote, he would write out little verses.
He once wrote in the Congress, "We must seize the moments as they pass,
and snatch the retrieveless sunbeam as it flies."

Lucky for you, I haven't written any poetry in over 20 years.
(Laughter.) And the poems I wrote to Hillary so long ago I would still
be a little embarrassed to read today. (Laughter.)

But I would like to close with a particularly American poem about
love of country, sacrifice, the conflict between mortality and the
timeless value of a deed well done. It is Ralph Waldo Emerson's
"Concorde Hymn," written to honor the completion of the Battle Monument,
commemorating the battles of Lexington and Concorde in the Revolutionary
War.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard 'round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
alike the conqueror in silence sleeps.
In time the ruined bridge has swept
down the dark stream which seaward
creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft
stream, we set today a votive stone,
that memory may their deed redeem when,
like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit that made those heroes dare to
die and leave their children free bid
time and nature gently spare. The
shaft we raise to them and thee.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

8:55 P.M. EDT

Copyright 1998 Associated Press
AP Online

April 23, 1998; Thursday 04:29 Eastern Time

SECTION: Washington - general news

LENGTH: 508 words

HEADLINE: White House Devotes Night to Poetry

BYLINE: SONYA ROSS

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

After filling his ears with the lyric words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Langston Hughes and Robert Frost, President Clinton concluded that the art of poetry will endure in the coming millennium.

During a White House event Wednesday night devoted to poetry, the president said having to memorize 100 lines from William Shakespeare's "Macbeth" as a high school student helped prepared him for his future and jokingly quoted from the literary classic to prove it.

"I learned about the dangers of blind ambitions, the fleeting nature of fame, the ultimate emptiness of power disconnected from higher purpose," Clinton said. "Mr. Shakespeare made me a better president."

The president, along with first lady **Hillary** Rodham **Clinton** and poet laureates Robert Pinsky, Robert Hass and Rita Dove, read aloud some favorite poems as part of an effort to mark what Americans think and appreciate in verse at the end of the 20th century.

"Does it have any value? Of course it does," Clinton said. "It made us happy, it made us nostalgic, it made us sad, it made us wiser tonight."

The event was the third of the the Clintons' "**Millennium Evenings**," which bring together leading creative thinkers to discuss the future. They were joined by 200 invited guests and others connected via the Internet.

Clinton read two poems: Emerson's "Concord Hymn" and a verse by Mexican poet Octavio Paz, who died this week. Such works, he said, are important to "our culture, our sense of who we are and who we are becoming as individuals and as a people."

He also threw in poetic lines penned by two predecessors, George Washington and John Quincy Adams. He noted that Adams wanted to be a poet "but he just couldn't quite get there, so he settled for a lesser path."

"Lucky for you I haven't written any poetry in over 20 years," Clinton said. "The poems I wrote to Hillary so long ago I would still be a little embarrassed to read."

Mrs. Clinton read an excerpt from "The Makers" by Howard Nemerov, an earlier poet laureate who died in 1991.

Seventh-grader Jessica Rawls read Hughes' "Life is Fine," and Barry Morgan, an elderly, wheelchair-bound veteran, read Frost's "Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening."

Pinsky, the country's current poet laureate, is using a \$500,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to get 1,400 people from all walks of life to read their favorite poems 1,300 for an audio record

and 200 for video and to explain their choice.

He said he expects to complete it by July 4, 2000. The collection will go to the Library of Congress so that future generations can get a better idea of what people felt and thought at the end of the 20th century.

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had that for 1900?" he asked. "Or 1500?"

The Clintons have promised to take part.

"We'll probably be the last ones," Mrs. Clinton told Pinsky and two other previous poet laureates at a small meeting. Because poetry is so important to them, she said, they were having trouble selecting favorites.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 23, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;millennium evening and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

[About LEXIS-NEXIS](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#) | [What's New](#)
Copyright © 2000 LEXIS-NEXIS Group. All rights reserved.

Copyright 1998 Star Tribune
Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

April 25, 1998, Metro Edition

SECTION: Pg. 5E

LENGTH: 400 words

HEADLINE: First Lady blasts state of pop culture;
Millennium Project to encourage thoughtful debate, preservation

SOURCE: Cox News Service

BYLINE: Dan Hulbert

DATELINE: Washington, D.C.

BODY:

Hillary Rodham Clinton blasted violent movies and TV shows Wednesday - comparing some less responsible TV programmers to tobacco company executives - and vowed to use the White House "as a bully pulpit" in raising the visibility of America's cultural riches.

Just as remarkably, perhaps, she quoted "Seinfeld" to bemoan the lack of intelligent discourse on TV, saying, "There's an awful lot of yadda yadda yadda out there."

In what may have been the most philosophic, informed defense of culture by a First Lady since Jacqueline Kennedy, Rodham Clinton held a White House press briefing in which she described for the first time the full scope of the Millennium Project, a cluster of cultural, scientific and historical initiatives designed to "honor the past and imagine the future" on the brink of a new millennium. The project is a public-private partnership cosponsored by the White House and the Department of the Interior with the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. It includes restoration of national monuments and documents and **Millennium Evenings** at the White House - lectures and performances that will be cybercast over the Internet and studied in the nation's classrooms.

When asked where the idea for the project was born, the First Lady - who until now has kept her political support of arts projects mostly behind the scenes - was clearly delighted to step forward and share credit with the president.

"This grew out of conversations that the president and I have had for years," said Clinton. The president will ask Congress for \$ 50 million for each of the next two years to help fund Millennium. The First Lady also announced that Millennium has received a \$ 500,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and gifts totaling \$ 5.8 million from Pew Charitable Trusts, much of which will go toward preserving and re-encasing such artifacts as the Bill of Rights.

It did not appear that a denunciation of pop-culture violence was part of **Hillary Clinton's** agenda, but when former poet laureate Robert Haas decried the poor estate of culture in American media, it clearly struck a nerve in the First Lady.

"I don't want to sound like a curmudgeon, but I'm very troubled by a lot of what I see on TV. . . . I don't know that we've come to grips with what it does to people and the effect it has on people."

GRAPHIC: Photograph; Photograph; Photograph; Cartoon; Cartoon

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

POETRY SLAM - JOHNSON JHS
4/22/98

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR POETRY SLAM
JOHNSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
APRIL 22, 1998

- As I watched the students from Johnson and Kramer Schools prepare to face off at Borders Books tonight, I couldn't help but think: Poetry slamming may have begun in my home town of Chicago more than 10 years ago, but it is being perfected by all of you right here in Southeast Washington.
- I want to thank all the students from the East of the River Inter-Scholastic Slam league -- Hart Middle School, Kramer Middle School, Evans Middle School, and Johnson Junior High School.
- Your success is a product not only of your heart, mind, and hard work. It is also a product of the people who have stood beside you and taught you that you can go as far as your dreams and abilities take you. I want to thank Nancy Schwalb, a WritersCorps instructor who founded this Slam League and works tirelessly to nurture and guide it.
- Kenneth Carroll, who not only moderated today's Slam, but coordinates the WritersCorps program in D.C. [Beginning 4 years ago, WritersCorps brings professional writers into underserved communities to help people improve their reading, writing, and other forms of expression]
- Mrs. Barbara Lois Fullard, the coach and inspiration of Johnson's team and the key to making the program work here. And Principal Robert Gill, for inviting us here and supporting Johnson's participation in the Slam League.
- April is National Poetry Month. And tonight at the White House, we will be hosting a celebration of the past and future of poetry. You are that future.
- Like many of you, I was first introduced to poetry in school. I remember being asked to recite some of my favorite poems in class. To prepare, I would say them over and over again. That's how we become inspired and challenged by the music of poetry. We must make sure that every student in Washington and America has that opportunity...that the arts are as central to our education as the 3 Rs.
- I brought along with me three people who have a lot in common. Robert Pinsky, Robert Haas, and Rita Dove have all worked tirelessly to ensure that poetry reaches every young person, indeed every American. They are three of our nation's most extraordinary, influential, and well-known poets. And they have all served as our nation's Poet Laureate. Now what does that mean? It is my great honor to introduce the current Poet Laureate, Robert Pinsky. He will explain what he does; and kick-off a poetry reading that all of us will enjoy and a discussion that all of us can take part in. Mr. Pinsky...

Copyright 1998 The Washington Post
The Washington Post

View Related Topics

April 23, 1998, Thursday, Final Edition

SECTION: STYLE; Pg. B01

LENGTH: 1009 words

HEADLINE: Mrs. Clinton's Poetry Lesson; At Johnson Junior High, a Two-Way Learning Experience

BYLINE: Elizabeth Kastor, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

As the room got stuffier and the TV lights hotter and the visiting dignitaries were still on their way, on their way, the kids' bodies slumped and their faces took on a uniform, stunned look.

White House staffers, glossy of hair and officious of manner, rearranged the children and the chairs.

Within a classroom at J. Hayden Johnson Junior High School in Southeast Washington, a score of poetry-writing kids and their edgily proud teachers were waiting yesterday afternoon for the arrival of **Hillary Rodham Clinton** and three famous adult poets scheduled to read at the White House last night. If you listened carefully, you could hear the approaching rumble of their massive public relations machine.

Then, at last, the glossy-of-hair grew even more officious, and she was there!

"Remember!" whispered teacher Nancy Schwab. "You cannot read too slowly!"

They were nervous, but they managed to read slowly. They introduced themselves with downcast eyes and practiced solemnity. In this school in the middle of a public housing project, a dozen children read their poems, bathed in the smiles of Clinton, Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, former laureates Robert Hass and Rita Dove and outgoing D.C. schools chief Julius Becton.

"I am the best there ever was," read ninth-grader Tyrone Freeman.

You might not think I am. One minute you see me. Then the next, I'm not there. Bam!!! I'm gone again. . .

I am so perfect, so perfect that when you look at me, I make you proud of yourself.

I am so full of joy that when I put up my Christmas lights, they embarrass the sun.

But I am still normal, so normal that if I told you my name a thousand times, you still wouldn't know who I am.

"In a way, you know, it's a photo opportunity for the first lady," Schwab said later. "It's National Poetry Month and she needed a backdrop of kids. But it's more than that. These kids have things to say, and she needs to hear them more than anyone."

Their poems are about love and violence, the cosmic questions of adolescence and urban life.

India Hemsley is in seventh grade. She read "In My Dream."

I fall into paradise. . . .

Everything is perfect

And time doesn't exist --

No killing, no smoking, no alcoholics:

In my dream,

Everybody lives for eternity.

"I thought poetry was boring at first," one girl explained. "But it's okay once you get the hang of it."

Later in the day, the kids were scheduled to go to Borders Books downtown and participate in a **poetry slam**, a popular form of public performance in which poems are read and then judged Olympics-style, the judges raising cards with ratings from 1 to 10. They were, purportedly, just "practicing" for the slam when Clinton and the PR machine happened to drop by.

"A lot of our kids, when they read at Borders, it's the first time they've been to a bookstore, first time they've bought a book -- and for some, believe it or not, it's the first time they've been on L Street," said Washington poet Kenneth Carroll, who runs the Humanities Council of the District's City Lights program, which sponsors writing and library programs in middle schools and public housing.

The goal of the program is not necessarily to make great writers but rather to help kids gain a bit more sense of control over written language, verbal expression and their lives.

"I grew up poor," Carroll said, "and the real danger of it is you begin to accept the isolation and the ethics and the values of the four blocks in which you live. The isolation, to me, is one of the most dangerous aspects of living in public housing."

Carroll took six kids to a national **poetry slam** in Connecticut last weekend. He wanted them to see other places, meet other people, realize that there are other ways. Yesterday, some of the citizens of those other places came to their world.

(And wasn't it interesting that some precariously hinged doors around the school were miraculously fixed for the visit, Carroll remarked with a smile. The drug dealers, too -- the regulars across the street -- were nowhere to be seen.)

Quinten February, a slight seventh-grader from Kramer Middle School in a crisp white shirt, stood and read:

When I die

I will be rain throwing water on plants,

And I will throw like a ball on fire,

And I will be famous,

And when I dance, people will dance too,

And when I draw, people will draw too.

And I will dance, with the remains

Of my mother's love in my pocket.

It will be a good night

And I will be in a white suit.

When the reading was done, Clinton and the laureates came out of the audience (after a good deal of fussing and chair-moving by the glossy-of-hair).

"I assure you I will not forget this," Pinsky told the students. "What you are doing today encourages us and cheers us on. It is important because it contributes to the great enterprise of memory."

Skilled emcee that she is, Clinton got the poets to talk about how they began to write, how they started their careers. And then she asked the kids to talk about the City Lights program. "How has doing this changed you, changed your life?" she asked.

What could they say? Of course it had changed their lives: Several boys in succession said that they found writing poetry helped them channel their anger, control their temper and attitude. Asked by Clinton if **poetry slams** gave them experience with public speaking, they said yes, of course.

Carroll and Schwab have been asked repeatedly over the years to explain the purpose of what they are doing, to quantify the results.

"You say you're improving their reading, writing and spelling skills, but you can improve reading, writing and spelling skills a lot of different ways," Schwab said after Clinton and the grown-up poets left. She is after something else, for both the kids and the rest of the world. She wants them to hear their own voices, and for others to hear them, too.

She and Carroll know it matters. Are lives changed? Are kids "saved" by poetry? Carroll laughed at the thought.

It matters.

GRAPHIC: Photo, frank johnston, Poets laureate Robert Pinsky and Rita Dove with the first lady and a student at a reading of students' poems. Poet Robert Hass and student Antoine Wade at the reading yesterday, which was part of the District's City Lights program.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 23, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;poetry slam and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**U OF MICHIGAN - YEAR OF
HUMANITIES & ARTS - 4/28/98**

Divider Title: _____

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
"YEAR OF HUMANITIES AND ARTS"
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
APRIL 28, 1998

President bollinger, Provost Cantor, administrators, faculty, students, alumni and members of the larger ann Arbor community.

It's a pleasure to be back in Ann Arbor, back on the campus, back in this concert hall. Not only have many great American artists performed on this stage. This building is a testament to the creative expression of one of our nation's finest architects, Louis Kahn. So I am pleased that in this venue, we gather today to continue a very important discussion about the humanities and the arts and what they have meant to each one of us and to our country.

Let me start by thanking Lee Bollinger for his many contributions -- as a legal scholar, as a president of this university, and perhaps most important, as an advocate for the principles and tradition of American public higher education. Through his dedication, and that of Provost Cantor and many others here, the University of Michigan has delivered on its promise of offering a world-class education to an extraordinarily broad range of American citizens. It is the classrooms and laboratories in this campus that we are reminded of the value of a diverse student body and faculty, and the benefits they bring to a university community.

Finally, I would like to thank Associate vice Provost Julie Ellison, the director of the Year of the Humanities and Arts, and David Scobey, the director of the "Arts and Citizenship" program, for sharing with students and faculty here and throughout Ann Arbor their vision of the dynamic relationship between the arts and humanities and a democratic society.

The year of Humanities and Arts comes at a propitious time. We are at the twilight of a century, and the dawn of a millennium. And it is precisely at moments such as these that demand self examination -- reflections on the past as well as forecasts about the future.

Looking back 1,000 years, we are reminded of the dire predictions of an apocalyptic end of the world that accompanied that period. But we're also learning that at the same time, citizens around the world -- from the Cahokia people who lived here in Illinois and throughout the midwest -- to the people of Islam across Europe -- believed that the future was rich in possibilities. They were engaged in creating new forms of art and new kinds of societies, writing world histories, remapping their worlds, and developing the first cities. And it was during this extraordinary time of upheaval and transformation 1000 years ago, that the very idea of citizenship took hold.

Each one of us here is living proof that the naysayers of 1000 years ago were outmatched by the power of a more optimistic, forward looking vision of the future. The next ten centuries could embrace astonishing advances in the history of human civilization. Yes, there have been -- and continue to be -- plagues, and genocides and unbearable human suffering. But there have

also been the discoveries of Galileo and, the arts of Da Vinci and, the poetry of England's William Shakespeare, of Chile's Pablo Neruda, and India's Tagore, the ideas of Lock and

In this century alone, we've seen a moonwalk and a computer talk.

Fueling all of these scientific, intellectual and artistic advances was, of course, the human imagination. An imagination rooted in a knowledge and understanding of the past. And imagination that allowed men and women throughout time to envision and create a better future.

Today, as we find ourselves on the threshold of another century, and another millennium, we find ourselves again trying to imagine what the future will hold, for us personally, and for our children and grandchildren, for our communities, and for society as a whole.

Will human civilization in the 21st century yield the cure for cancer, another Beethoven, an end of poverty, or lasting world peace? Or will it give rise to more ethnic hatred, a wider chasm between rich and poor, the use of nuclear or biological warfare, or the horrors of genetic engineering?

I'm an optimist. And I'm married to the most optimistic man in the world. But I have to confess that I'm worried about the trends I see around me every day that so undermine our conceptions of ourselves and of our common future.

A consumer culture that, in the eyes of Czech president and playwright Vaclav Havel, has so homogenized our tastes and desires that instead of uniting us in a common enterprise, produces a yearning for conformity and identity that results in even deeper divisions, misunderstandings and hostilities among us.

Why are more American teenagers smoking? Why are more American children driven to violence? Why are more American kids spending hours staring blankly into the television screen?

Is it because we live in a consumer culture that seduces us with apocalyptic visions of the future -- of post-nuclear explosion scenarios, extra terrestrial invasions, and countless violence and killing?

A consumer culture that, in Oscar Wilde's words, knows the price of everything and the value of nothing?

A consumer culture that has traded knowledge for information, compassion for contempt, generosity for greed?

If our shared vision is apocalyptic rather than auspicious, information-based rather than knowledge based, driven by material rather than human concerns, fueled by divisions rather than common purpose, then chances are such a future is what ours will become.

But there is an alternative scenario. One in which the humanities and arts -- the greatest nurturers of the human imagination -- guide us as we navigate the world into the next millennium.

It is through history, philosophy, literature, painting, music, sculpture, poetry, photography, dance, architecture and design that we can reclaim the popular imagination, rekindle the spirit of citizenship, and exercise the power of our idea, experiences and feelings to promote a brighter vision of the future.

In our country, there is too often assumption that the arts and humanities are an exclusive preserve of the rich, or the best educated, or some cultural elite. Yet from our own personal experiences, we know otherwise. How many of us have felt our hearts stir as we listen to a favorite song, read a haunting passage in a novel, watch a dancer's elegant leap?

I know that all of us can remember a moment, hidden deep in our memories of childhood or experienced just yesterday, when a work of art or the strains of a song transformed our lives. Like many of us, my first exposure to art came as a child. I had the chance to see Picasso's Guernica when I was in high school. Standing before this large canvas, I suddenly appreciated that art was more than aesthetic. It was a way of community, of taking people beyond the boundaries of their own experience and giving them a greater understanding of the world around them. Guernica told me about the human condition; about war. About people in a place thousands of miles from me, who, nonetheless, I felt were connected to me.

You might say that my love of things cultural was cemented in 1970, when I was a student at Yale Law School. One day, I met a young man in the line for class registration. We struck up a conversation. He was very voluble and we continued to talk long after we had finished signing up for classes. He suggested we go to the university art museum, which, it turned out, was closed. But the young man, determined to show me his favorite sculpture, persuaded a janitor to let us in -- on condition that we help collect trash that had piled up in the building. So we dutifully collected the trash, and had a wonderful time looking at sculptures all by ourselves.

That was my first date with Bill Clinton.

Last week, I visited a junior high school in inner city Washington, with our nation's three most recent poet laureates. I wish every member of congress who has ever voted to cut off funding for the National Endowment for the Arts or the National Endowment for the Humanities could have been with us.

The students were competing in a poetry "slam." If you've never seen a slam, it's a high speed, high spirit competition in which students face off against each other by reading their own poems and receiving scores from a group of judges. They recited poems about the beauty of their names, the plight of a homeless man, the contributions of Duke Ellington, their pride and joys and pain. These poems were getting these kids engaged in the world around them. But what I was most aware of was the immediacy and the power of their emotions, and how these poems

helped tame and shape those emotions into meter and rhyme.

Every child deserves that same opportunity not only to be exposed to the arts and humanities, but also to have the chance to explore ways of expressing themselves creatively. Whether a child grows up in a ghetto, on a farm, in a city or a suburb, the arts are a vehicle for self expression, and for building self esteem. They offer opportunities for children from all backgrounds to develop their individuality and contribute positively to the larger mosaic of American culture.

Later that evening at the White House, the President and I hosted the poets laureate in a celebration of American poetry. They read works by everyone from Emily Dickinson to Wallace Stevens to William Carlos Williams. But we also asked some non poets to read their favorite poems. A veteran from a veteran's home, with a wonderful gravelly voice read ... A Jesuit priest from Boston read A high school teacher from the suburbs read ... A seventh grader from the DC read Langston Hughes.

Most of us came away from that evening with a greater sense of pride in our nation's rich tradition of poetry -- but also with a keener understanding of how creative expression enables us to transcend differences and find our common roots as Americans and as human beings.

The strengthening and perpetuation of our nation's culture is essential to us as individual citizens. It is essential to America's leaders. It is essential to our democracy. Because, as you at the University of Michigan are showing us, there is an art to citizenship. And the arts and citizenship go hand in hand.

We now know from countless studies and research, that children exposed to the world of art and ideas score far higher academically than those who aren't. I have seen for myself in Pittsburgh, in Chicago, in San Francisco how the arts and humanities offer safe havens for children desperately seeking positive outlets for their energy and creativity. I have seen children hopeless about their futures suddenly transformed when they put their eyes behind a camera, or their fingers to a keyboard.

We also know that the best way to learn about the world -- and all of its complexities -- is not by looking in the mirror.

At a time when our nation is still dogged by racial insensitivities and unfounded stereotypes, what better way to come to terms with our multi ethnic, multi racial way of life than to share in each other's ideas, emotions, tastes and attitudes. What better way for young people to learn to respect their differences -- and appreciate their similarities -- than by contributing to the larger mosaic of American culture.

And what better way to instill a sense of community and belonging than to celebrate our shared history and explore together our common future.

Let me commend you here at the University of Michigan, at Community High School,

and at the Mack Elementary school -- along with members of the city government, the school system, the downtown development authority -- who are collaborating on the Students on site project.

The Braodway Bridge reconstruction effots, which I understand is still in its infancy, will unite students, teachers, elected officials and members of the ocommunity in an exploration of local culyture through history, writing, photography, design, environmetnal educaiton and other disciplines. This is a wonderful example of how the arts and humanities can provoke the imaginations of people in an entire community; engage citizens in an effor to preserve and promote their shared culture, and in this ccase, literally build a bridge to the future. (As you know, my husband and I are particl to bridge metaphors. Here in Ann Arbor, you are proof that "it takes a village to build a bridge.")

tein once said that "When I examine myself and my method of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than my talent for absorbing knowledge."

So when we allow courses in art and theater and dance to be the first to be canceled -- or the last to be funded -- in our public schools, we are doing more than depriving children of the opportunity to be more self confident and accepting of each other. We are depriving them of the capacity to imagine a new way to explore the universe, or a more positive life for themselves and their families. The arts and humanities are not expendable frills. They are essential building blocks for lifelong learning and exploration, and for a deeper appreciation and understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

The arts and humanities also act as catalysts to create a more vibrant democratic society. [Talk about how they create opportunities for people to express their own unique cultures/traditions/ but also invite us to walk in other people's shoes, and deepen our understanding of our those who are different from ourselves. As we enter a new century when, in a few years, there will be no majority race in America. Even today, in a city like Chicago, the kids in that city's school system already represent over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. Yet when we sit in a theater, or visit a museum, as different as we are, we are drawn together in the common task of interpreting what we see and feel. Also, the role of the arts and humanities in strengthening civic institutions and community life -- creating trust between strangers, and broadening the public space/ debate, challenging the status quo -- all so vital to a democratic society.]

So the question that faces us today -- two years shy of a new millennium -- is: How do we reclaim this area of imagination, and get people to consider positive scenarios for the future?

First, we look to how we can apply the arts and humanities more broadly -- and more creatively-- in our everyday lives to bolster civil society and civic engagement. [Talk about the catalytic role that the University of Michigan is playing, as part of YOHA, to bring together the academic disciplines, going beyond the traditional "town and gown" efforts and joining forces with the private sector and the community to create a new school curriculum, develop local

history projects, redesign an urban area. Talk about the Broadway Bridge project. This could be a model for institutions around the country to take bolder steps to integrate the arts and humanities into the civic life of the community.]

Fight against the tools of mass culture that keep separating us/isolating us, i.e. turn off your children's TV set.

— Enlarge public/private support for the arts -- and get arts, dance and theater back into the public schools. The arts must remain the public domain, accessible to all, firing the imaginations of all.

Expand participation in the Millennium project in cities and communities across the country. Honor the past; preserve our treasures. Give a gift to the future.

In 1962, when President Kennedy asked for public support of the arts, he reminded his audience that during the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln ordered work to go forward on the completion of the dome of the Capitol. And that in 1941, when the world was engulfed in war, that Franklin Roosevelt dedicated the National Gallery in Washington. "These leaders," Kennedy, said, "understood that the life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction, in the life of the nation, is very close to the center of a nation's purpose, and is a test of the quality of a nation's civilization."

Today, on the brink of a new millennium, we are being tested once again. I'm optimistic that we will choose to unleash the power of the imagination that has always fueled progress in our nation. America has flourished over 200 years because of our willingness to cultivate the human spirit. If we fully embrace the arts and humanities in every aspect of our lives, we will not only be able to imagine the extraordinary possibilities of the future. We will have the tools to fulfill those possibilities in the 21st century.

Copyright 1998 The Detroit News, Inc.
The Detroit News

View Related Topics

April 29, 1998, Wednesday

SECTION: Metro; Pg. Pg. C1

LENGTH: 406 words

HEADLINE: First lady wins fans at U-M: Young reporters find **Hillary Clinton** 'pretty cool' as she talks about arts, humanities

BYLINE: By Rusty Hoover / The Detroit News

BODY:

ANN ARBOR -- First Lady **Hillary Clinton** received strong praise from an unexpected source Tuesday during a **University of Michigan** visit.

Two of the youngest press corps members -- Hadas Corey and Rachel Webster, both almost 8, were approving, despite being stood up for an interview.

"She is pretty cool," Rachel said. "She is cool," Hadas emphasized. They videotaped her talk for Kidwitness News, a newscast produced by second graders at Pierce Elementary School in Birmingham and aired on local-access television.

"I liked what she said about putting music and art back into the schools," Hadas said. The girls take turns as reporters, anchors and videographers.

Clinton's talk was the last event in U-M's Year of Humanities and the Arts. She stressed the connection among the arts, citizenship and human achievement.

"I would argue that the arts and humanities give us the best guide we will ever have to thinking through the problems of today and tomorrow," she said.

She also praised the **University of Michigan's** support of diversity, without actually mentioning the two lawsuits that challenge U-M's use of race in admissions.

Clinton described her upbringing in an all-white suburb of Chicago and how she discovered the value of diversity when she attended Wellesley and became friends with African-American students, learning about their experiences.

"I was impressed," said Elizabeth Agunloye, 20, a women's health major from Chicago. "When she admitted to being from a white community and having no interaction with minorities, she became more real to me."

Meanwhile, rookie reporters Rachel and Hadas spent much of the day being interviewed by grizzled media types who wanted to know what questions they planned to ask the first lady. The two young reporters had hoped to have a two-minute interview with Clinton to ask her about the schools she attended and life in the White House. They also wanted to ask about first pets Socks and Buddy.

But Clinton didn't grant interviews and she didn't take any questions on any topic -- not even her appearance over the weekend before the Whitewater grand jury.

But Rachel and Hadas were still pleased. "I felt famous," Hadas said giggling.

When asked whom they liked covering better, Olympic gold medal skater Tara Lipinski of Bloomfield Hills, who gave them an interview, or the first lady, they only hesitated an instant: "Tara Lipinski."

GRAPHIC: Hillary Rodham Clinton and English Language and Literature Professor Julie Ellison share the stage at U-M on Tuesday. Pablo Martinez Monsivais / The Detroit News

LOAD-DATE: April 29, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;university of michigan and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

[About LEXIS-NEXIS](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#) | [What's New](#)
Copyright © 2000 LEXIS-NEXIS Group. All rights reserved.

Copyright 1998 State News via U-Wire
University Wire

April 29, 1998

LENGTH: 607 words

HEADLINE: First lady calls for support of humanities

BYLINE: By JOSEPH SWAVY, State News

SOURCE: Michigan State U.

DATELINE: Ann Arbor, Mich.

BODY:

Stressing the importance of maintaining funding and support for **arts** and humanities, first lady **Hillary Rodham Clinton** spoke at U-M's Hill Auditorium Tuesday.

"The **arts** and humanities give us the best guide we will ever have to thinking through the problems we have of today and tomorrow," she said to a crowd of more than 3,000 supporters.

"It is hard for the **arts** and humanities to flourish when there is very little space left in popular culture. That is why we must do all we can to support them and to make it clear that they are not an option, they are essential."

The event was part of U-M's **Year of Humanities and Arts** program. The yearlong program examines the role of **arts** and humanities in American society and stressed community involvement in the **arts**.

Highlights of the program included the premiere of a PBS documentary "Porgy and Bess: An American Voice" and lectures by U.S. poets laureate Robert Haas and Dwight Pitcaithley, chief historian for the National Park Service. Clinton's speech marked the culmination of the program.

In his introduction for Rodham Clinton, U-M President Lee Bollinger applauded the first lady as "Washington's leading advocate for public support of the **arts**."

Rodham Clinton praised U-M for its program and said it is a model for other communities to follow.

"It is essential that we continue to celebrate the **arts** and humanities and you at this university are showing us how to do it," she said.

Rodham Clinton also indicated support for U-M's fight against anti-affirmative action lawsuits.

"The classrooms and laboratories remind us of the importance of diverse student and faculty bodies and the benefits they bring to society," she said receiving an overwhelming round of applause. "I think it is very important that this university pursue its particular goal in having a diverse campus."

Most of the crowd was comprised of supporters of the first lady.

"I went to the convention, and I've gone to lots of events where she has spoken," said Nancy McKinney, an Ann Arbor resident, who was waving an "I am a fan of **Hillary Clinton**" sign outside the auditorium. "I think she is the greatest."

Erin Jensen, an English and French junior at U-M, said she attended the event because Rodham Clinton was speaking about her curriculum.

"I just wanted to come because she is speaking on the **arts** and humanities and that is what I am

interested in," she said. "It is an exciting thing for the whole Ann Arbor community to have the first lady here."

The excitement of Rodham Clinton's visit also influenced people to attend the event to support the program.

Larnetta Gully-Abza, who works in U-M's Institute for Social Research, said the first lady's visit motivated her to attend the event, but she also wanted to express support for the university's **arts** and humanities program.

"This is the climax of the program," she said. "I think the program opens more possibilities for students to major in the **arts** and humanities. There are nice opportunities to be had if students major in them and these programs remind students that there are avenues for success. They might not be as lucrative, but money is not the same thing as happiness."

Rodham Clinton said the nation's universities play a vital role in supporting the **arts** and humanities because they serve as a testing ground for new ideas.

"In America, we support the **arts** because they fuel the imagination and 'American dream' in the lives of countless men and women," she said. "Universities have a specific role in making sure we are all conscious of the roles of **arts** and humanities."

(C) 1999 State News via U-WIRE

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: February 2, 1999

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;year of humanities and arts and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

TREASURES PROGRAM EVENT
5/4/98

Divider Title: _____

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 4, 1998

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
AT THE TREASURES PROGRAM EVENT

The East Room

11:35 A.M. EDT

It is a great pleasure to welcome all of you to the White House this morning. I know some of you had some difficulties traveling, and some of our guests from Boston have not been able to get here. But we are delighted all of you are able to be here with us.

We come together, here near the end of the 20th century and the dawn of a new millennium, which we know will arrive whether we do anything about it or not, but all over the United States, and indeed, the world, people are expressing their excitement in their own ways about being alive at this time. They're seeking meaningful ways to celebrate their times and to leave a lasting legacy.

We're here today to talk about a national initiative, an act of history to save America's past. I hope all of you will join me in this urgent project to preserve the artifacts, documents, monuments and historic sites that embody not only our nation's memories, but our dreams of the future as well.

Last fall the President and I created the White House Millennium Council to develop ways to engage all Americans in marking this milestone in human history -- to work with elected officials on state and local celebrations, to involve the federal agencies in national millennium projects, and to cooperate with our country's non-profit organizations, corporate and foundation partners as well.

The overall theme of the White House Millennium Program is to honor the past, imagine the future. The President and I are inviting all Americans to participate and to think about what gifts each of us has that we can give to enhance life for future generations. Here at the White House we've already begun a series of Millennium Evenings in which scholars, scientists and creative individuals will help us honor the past and imagine our future.

We've listened to a renowned historian talk about the democratic ideals upon which we forged our nation. We've heard from a world famous physicist who helped us envision the

scientific breakthroughs of the next century. A few weeks ago we had perhaps the greatest gathering of poets ever held at the White House, reading their favorite poems and celebrating America's enduring creative spirit.

One of the most powerful ways for us to imagine America's future is to preserve what we truly value of our past -- our monuments, our art and documents and historic sites will tell the story of this nation to future generations. Yet these very symbols of our heritage, from the Star-Spangled Banner to the monuments at Gettysburg to the buildings on the south side of Ellis Island, are literally deteriorating before our eyes, or will be at risk if we don't act now.

That's why I'm so pleased that all of you are here today to hear about our plan to save America's treasures. As many of you may know, the President, in his State of the Union address, proposed a public-private partnership to save our treasures. As he said then, I ask all Americans to support our project to restore all our treasures, so that the generations of the 21st century can see for themselves the images and the words that are the old and continuing glory of America.

The President, in his budget, has called on Congress to appropriate \$50 million additional in each of the next two years to stimulate a national effort for the purpose of saving our treasures. But this is just the beginning, and just represents the federal commitment.

Throughout our history, in a way that is uniquely American, we have always provided both public and private resources to pass on something of value to the future. Today, we need your leadership and involvement to help preserve America's treasures, and to ensure that this is a true public-private commitment and partnership.

We want to be able to reach out and involve millions of Americans -- from schoolchildren, to community leaders, to corporate executives -- who can contribute to these preservation efforts in a variety of ways. I'm so pleased that the National Trust for Historic Preservation has agreed to head up the private part of this partnership.

Today, the National Trust, under Dick Moe's leadership, is announcing the beginning of a new national advisory committee to save America's treasures. I'm thrilled that so many distinguished individuals and corporate leaders have agreed to participate on that committee. We are pleased that all of you could be here with us at the White House today, and you will be joined by others who could not be here -- others including Jeffrey Katzenberg, Dick Jenrette, and Agnes Gund. I want to say a special word of thanks to Agnes, who has already pledged very generous support. And I want, in particular, to thank Veronica Hearst for the important gift that will support this committee's efforts.

All of you are taking on what I believe will be an extraordinarily exciting and challenging mission to help raise public awareness and support for preserving America's treasures into the next millennium. I look forward to the opportunity to work with each of you over the next few years as the honorary chair of this committee. It's very exciting to me

because I didn't realize until the last several years how so many of our most special places and artifacts around our country were at such risk. And because of problems with the federal budget, many of our national park sites were also deteriorating. As someone who believes that our country has, even though a short, but glorious history, it struck me that we needed to do a better job.

I'm pleased, therefore, that the National Trust will work closely with two other nonprofit partners: the Heritage Preservation, Inc. and the National Park Foundation. I'm grateful that they're being joined by our federal partners, including the National Park Service, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Archives, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the Smithsonian Institution. Together, all of us will work to help widen the circle of individuals, foundations, agencies, and corporations who will join with our government to care for our nation's heritage.

Our mission here today must not be left to either the public or private sector alone, but must be a truly inclusive partnership that is a national effort. And it is also a totally nonpartisan effort. No matter what our political differences might be on a day-to-day basis, we will all stand together with pride as we review a repaired Star-Spangled Banner, or walk through one of America's most treasured prehistoric sites in New Mexico, or help preserve the Louis Armstrong archives of rare musical recordings at Queens College in New York, or visit the newly restored tent which George Washington used as his headquarters in the Revolutionary War, or know that we have helped save our precious founding documents at the National Archives.

Before I introduce our first speaker, I want to say a few words about my own plans to highlight America's national treasures in the next few months, and to serve with you on this committee. In July I intend to travel around our country to visit some of our most endangered historic and cultural sites that are so much a part of the American experience. I intend to do this by bus, because I think that will be a lot of fun, and to pick up any of you along the way who want to come for all or part of it, to travel around and highlight what it is we are trying to do; to create public awareness in communities and states where many of these sites are located but where, because of time and failure to continue to pay attention to our national heritage, even people who live within a few miles of a historic site may themselves not realize its significance.

As I've said so many times, the enduring worth of our nation lies in our shared values and soaring spirit as Americans. We are such a unique and blessed people. Certainly in today's economy, we have more blessings, perhaps, than we can keep track of or country. But it is at a time like this that we have an opportunity to make some commitments and investments for the future.

Unfortunately, it is often at a time, though, when we're doing so well that we don't pay attention to what we want to leave and preserve for the next generation. So I'm hoping to take this moment in time, with all that we have to be grateful for, and to use some of that energy to do what we will be very proud we have participated in doing -- and that is making it clear that we will pass on to our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren the gifts of liberty and

creativity that made us who we are.

Now I would like to introduce our primary partner in this effort, Richard Moe, the president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, who will give us some specifics about the urgent task ahead of us of saving America's historic and cultural treasures.

Dick Moe.

END

11:45 A.M. EDT

Copyright 1998 Associated Press
AP Online

May 04, 1998; Monday 16:57 Eastern Time

SECTION: Washington - general news

LENGTH: 521 words

HEADLINE: Mrs. Clinton Wants Treasures Saved

BYLINE: SONYA ROSS

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Suggesting Americans are becoming "a little out of touch with our past," **Hillary Rodham Clinton** convened a new committee to work on saving national treasures at risk of being lost through neglect or deterioration.

The first lady met Monday with the Millennium Committee to Save **America's Treasures**, a public-private collaboration created to address preservation of artifacts, documents or structures that symbolize the American experience. She is serving as honorary chair.

Mrs. Clinton said she will take a two-day tour by bus of some historic sites in the mid-Atlantic region this summer, to see for herself how pressing the need for preservation is. Without preservation, she said, it will be hard to erase the bleak image of the future that young people now get through popular culture.

"You have road-warrior movies, you have apocalyptic visions, you have people living under bubbles because the environment has been so degraded," Mrs. Clinton said. "There's not an image of the kind of optimistic, positive future that certainly we were raised with and that I believe in to this day.

"Part of that is because we may have gotten a little out of touch with our past," she said. "We've got some hard decisions to make ourselves on whether we will continue to honor our past, or whether we'll get so caught up in cyberspace and the global economy that being American seems somehow less significant."

President Clinton's proposed budget for fiscal 1999 contains \$50 million for historic preservation, and the committee hopes to stimulate private contributions to go along with that money. Rebecca Rimel, president of the Pew Charitable Trusts, said Monday her organization was committing \$5 million toward restoring the original Star-Spangled Banner, ravaged by exposure to air and dust.

"For us, we're tithing," Ms. Rimel said. "We hope every American will find it in their hearts to tithe as well."

Thomas G. Williams, an Air Force master sergeant, said any American, not just those with money, can get involved in preservation. Williams mobilized more than 1,000 fellow soldiers last September to clean up Washington's Congressional Cemetery, where FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and Marine bandmaster John Philip Sousa are buried.

Mrs. Clinton listened attentively as trust president Richard Moe discussed other historic sites in need of long-denied attention, such as the Henderson Cottage on the grounds of the Soldier's and Airmen's Home in Washington.

Dating back to 1843, the house was the summer residence of presidents from Buchanan to Arthur, and was the place where President Lincoln wrote the Emancipation Proclamation.

"This was the Camp David of the 1800s," Moe said. "It deserves to be restored. Saving these treasures isn't someone else's job."

Some items, such as the papers of founding fathers, will obviously draw preservation support, Moe said. But the need is great for documents such as the Civil War service records of 180,000 black Union soldiers or structures such as the adobe churches of New Mexico and Thomas Edison's invention factory in New Jersey.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: May 04, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;America's treasures and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

[About LEXIS-NEXIS](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#) | [What's New](#)
Copyright © 2000 LEXIS-NEXIS Group. All rights reserved.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

NAT'L FIRST LADIES ' LIBRARY
5/5/98

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEO REMARKS FOR NATIONAL FIRST LADIES' LIBRARY
MAY 5, 1998

As honorary chair, I am delighted to be able to welcome all of you to this historic event celebrating the opening of the National First Ladies' Library. Not too long ago, I helped open the 'virtual' doors of this institution at the White House, and I am so pleased that the 'real' ribbon is finally being cut here in Canton, Ohio.

I'd like to thank everyone here who made this library possible. My friend Mary Regula, the President of the National First Ladies' Library, whose vision and commitment helped bring us to this day. Historian Carl Anthony has not only helped deepen our understanding of the role First Ladies have played in our nation's history. He has also been instrumental in getting this library off the ground. Appreciation to the countless others who have given so much of their time and energy to make this library a reality.

This unique American institution will give people from all walks of life the opportunity to learn about the important social, political, and humanitarian contributions our First Ladies have made over the years. Whether you are interested in Lady Bird Johnson's serving as chair of Head Start or Eleanor Roosevelt's role in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, you will find the resources and information you need right here in Canton.

I'm also pleased that the National First Ladies' Library will be reaching out to millions of Americans through its web page. Scholars, historians, students and teachers will be able to come here on 'virtual' visits from thousands of miles away, and learn from one another through the library's video-conferencing facilities. This library truly is "the library of the future."

The President joins me in congratulating all of you on this special and historic day.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

LIVING ARTS DOWNTOWN
5/5/98

Divider Title: _____

May 5, 1998

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

address to

LIVING ARTS DOWNTOWN

Thank-you, thank-you very much. I want to thank Bob Peck, who you may of surmised is an old friend of mine, and we were at Yale Law School together, and I think the real story is that we were spending a lot of time at the Lincoln Theater instead of in class.

It is a great pleasure for me to be here and to be part of this very important arts summit. I want to thank Madam Pretsien and the ambassador and the entire staff of the embassy for hosting us in this spectacular building. We are so grateful that the government of Canada saw fit when many a time thought it not a wise decision for them to stake their future here at the downtown with this absolutely wonderful building.

Mayor Barry, thank-you for being here, and thank-you for your strong words on behalf of the revitalization of the downtown that we all love. I want to thank Calvin Cafrits, and the Kafrits Foundation for your constant presence in our city and all that you do on behalf of it. Jim Gibson and the downtown arts committee thank-you for taking this piece of living downtown agenda and making it so real and important. Alexander Garden thank-you for being part of our efforts to know what works and doesn't work and to try to apply those lessons here in Washington.

You will have a great treat in a few minutes because you'll hear from some of the people who have been on the front lines of revitalizing other cities. Carol Brown from Pittsburgh, Marjorie Rendell from Philadelphia, and Lois Wiceburg from Chicago.

misspelling! Weisburg

Because I've been privileged over the past number of years to travel widely in our country I have literally seen the transformations of downtowns all over the United States. I have seen what seems to work and what seems not to work. But more often I have been inspired by the enthusiasm of those who are willing to really stake their own future's professionally and

personally on what they can do for the downtowns.

I want to thank the Federal City Council for your tireless efforts in organizing this event. Carol Thomson Cole will speak later, The Duke Ellington Choir and Brendan Conway for bringing us the gift of music and reminding us what this is really all about. As we listened to the inspiring performance of Brendan Conway, and as we think about all the young men and women who are part of this city, I thought about, as we heard earlier, someone who was a wonderful friend of the art who we lost this weekend.

Patrick Hayes went about filling this city with the sounds and sights and spirit of great art. Now if he were here for more than five minutes we would have undoubtedly heard an odd word "eino" which stood for Everybody In, Nobody Out, and that was Patrick Hayes's way of saying that when it comes to promoting the arts, when it comes to improving quality of life in DC, everybody needs to be at the table. Nobody should feel excluded from our efforts to work together to improve life in Washington. I know he would have been very proud of this gathering and proud of all that has brought us to this day. But I'm sure he also would have been looking a little bit skeptically to make sure we follow through.

For our family living in Washington has been a wonderful experience with respect to the diversity of art and music and sculpture and dance and all the other visual and performing arts that grace this city. That has always been the case going back to the beginning of the nation's capital here in Washington. I'm told that Abraham Lincoln ordered work to go forward on the capital dome during the Civil War, and FDR dedicated the National Gallery of Art in 1941 when the world was engulfed by war.

These leaders, President Kennedy once said, understood that the life of the arts far from being an interruption a distraction in the life of a nation is very close to the center of a nation's purpose and is a test of the quality of a nation's civilization. That is why at a time when the NEA has just survived its strongest challenge from congress, my husband has made it clear that the federal government must continue to support the arts. It is why we have tried to make the

celebration of American culture an integral part of the life of the White House and particularly with respect to the millennium activities. Where we were attempting to follow through on the theme we have selected, "to honor the past, and imagine the future", and there's no way even to think about doing that without thinking about and celebrating the arts and culture.

Now we have a wonderful opportunity before us. In the year 2000, Washington DC will see its 200th anniversary as our nation's capital. In addition the White House and the Library of Congress will be celebrating their 200th birthdays. The story of the last 200 years is in many ways the story of dreams born of inspiration and reached with old fashioned hard work and team effort.

Now when you hear from Lois Wiceburg I'm not sure she will tell you that one of the ways that she has absolutely created excitement in downtown Chicago is by celebrating everybody's birthday on a regular basis. If you are walking down the street in Chicago on a business trip, if Lois knows its your birthday you're likely to have it celebrated. But she's done that for a very simple purpose, it brings people together, it brings people downtown, it reminds them how wonderful it is that the great cultural and historic traditions of Chicago are part of their lives as well.

On the district's 100th birthday we remember the McMillian's commissions vision for a monumental center of Washington. A vision inspired by the beautiful city movement, and a vision that has largely been realized in the greatest concentration of museums and galleries in the world. In 1961 we can remember President Kennedy's dream of a Pennsylvanian Avenue that would be turned into America's main street. I can remember years ago coming to Washington, and as with many of you wondering whether that dream would ever be fulfilled. And yet today when we walk along Pennsylvania avenue we see a wonderful mix of historic preservation residential development, the arts, open spaces, and street scapes. In a few years it will be done. And we will see a bridge between the mall and downtown which is what the Pennsylvania avenue plan envisioned.

Now my husband and I are partial to bridge metaphors which is why I mentioned the bridge that is part of the long term plan. But bridges are helpful only if you want to get to the other side. And today, as we look to the 200th anniversary of our capital city, we have a lot of challenges about whether or not we will get to the other side the side that holds promise of the kind of revitalized dynamic city that Washington deserves to be.

We obviously have a lot of work ahead of us and many of you in this room have been working hard for many years, to make Washington what we want it to be. It is not only our nation's capital in a very real way it represents who we are as Americans to the rest of the world and if we don't give it the attention and the love it deserves then we in some fundamental way are not meeting our own obligations as Americans.

When I met last year at the White House with leaders from the business civic organizations, foundations, and art organizations here in Washington we talked about the projects already underway to restore economic vitality to downtown Washington. From the new MCI Center to a revitalized China town. We talked about the absolute importance of the federal government's continuing commitment to our city's nerve center. And I am pleased that this year the president's budget targets 100 million dollars to improve the districts economic development infrastructure.

This includes 50 million dollars for a locally chartered economic development corporation and 25 million dollars for the metro station at the proposed Washington Convention Center. But it will only just remain words and numbers on a page if we don't rally around to get it through the Congress.

We need to make clear to the Congress that this kind of effort, from the federal government is essential for the work that we want to see continue here to revitalize Washington, and I ask you to please do your part in getting that message across to our elected representatives. Most importantly on that day we talked about the role that the arts must and can play in lifting up downtown DC. The arts must be central, not peripheral, in rebuilding downtown and lifting up

the entire District of Columbia. They must be woven into everything we do. Now that may be preaching to the choir to all of you who are already here at this arts summit, but we have to do a better job to convince all the sectors of Washington's community how essential the arts are to realizing our economic, our social our political development.

I have been privileged to travel around Washington and meet all kinds of people as the mayor said earlier. And I have seen the impact that the arts can make in lifting up children's dreams and aspirations.

Just last week I went to a poetry slam to see junior high students in south east Washington participating in a poetry contest that is much like the Olympics, if you will, where students take turns reading their own poems and I heard poems about their names, about the plight of a homeless man, about the legacy of Duke Ellington, about their fears and hopes for the future. These young people talked about how poetry helped them put their anger on paper, instead of acting it out. This program was run by two young teachers, poets themselves, paid for by a NEA grant to the writing core. There was a lot more going on than just poetry being written and read. There was confidence being built, dignity being bestowed, futures being glimpsed that might otherwise have gone unseen.

So we know what the arts can do in the lives of young men and women, boys and girls in this city. The work that has been done in the last few years showing how the arts can take at risk children and give them places to go after school. Meaningful work to do is essential.

Again going back to Lois Wiceburg in Chicago, they have taken a whole city block and they've turned it into something called Gallery 37, where young men and women from Chicago's junior highs and high schools get minimum wage jobs to do art in the summer. And some of them continue during the school year. They're identified, they're encouraged, they're mentored, and some wonderful art is produced. For example park benches that the children design themselves. Instead of doing graffiti on the walls of buildings they're painting park benches that you can find all over the city.

So we know how essential the arts are to the future of the young people in Washington DC, but as we've already heard the arts are essential to economic growth in this city. If we want to complement them all where residents and tourists alike flock in the millions and then go home when it's dark, we have to do more to keep them and bring them downtown, and we have seen what other cities have been able to accomplish.

In a study by the National Association of Local Arts Agencies they found that the non-profit arts industry alone generated 36 billion dollars of business within its communities, supported 1.3 million jobs and brought 25 million dollars in personal income to local residents.

We know how that can work because again if you visit Pittsburgh, or Philadelphia or Chicago you can see how city sections that were given up for lost have really been transformed. You also need some anchors, and as with Gallery 37 where high school students create art and get paid for it in Chicago. Lake Front Gardens is an urban park which anchors the entire theater district and the Chicago Cultural Center offers art exhibitions dance performances, lectures, and a senior center all right downtown and all free and open to the public.

Now we've seen some progress in downtown DC that we can celebrate. We've seen it on E street's new theater row. We see it on P street an area once filled with boarded up homes and stores after the riots has now come alive. All because the studio theater and other non-profits moved in, stayed there, and grew there.

Now we have to continue to fill the space north of Pennsylvania avenue especially the 7th street corridor. We can create a downtown bursting with art, and culture and spirit. We can fill downtown Washington with painters and sculptors, musicians, photographers as well as lawyers and lobbyists.

We can have a downtown that will bring people from miles away to who will want to see what's happening now. I've been encouraged about the progress that the federal city council and the downtown arts committee and others have made in creating a music center, that will include a

museum of American music and other related stores, displays, and restaurants. And I'm pleased to announce that just yesterday the Smithsonian Institution made a formal commitment to dedicate its resources, collections, educational materials and expertise to help make the National Music Museum a reality in Washington.

It is my sincere hope that we are able to make comperable progress in developing a museum to house some of the world's greatest examples of photography. And I know those hopes are shared by many of you in this room. As Carol will explain later, we will expand the White House inter-agency task force on the District of Colombia, so that the federal government can support your work in bringing the arts downtown. And I will certainly pledge to you that I will continue to be personally involved in whatever way is useful to you, in our joint efforts to promote the arts in a living downtown.

I look forward to hearing the task group's reports and the challenges that you set for all of us. And as we look towards these goals I hope that we will think how in just two and half years, we will have an opportunity to showcase Washington, in a way that we haven't had in a long time. The 200th Anniversary of the White House, the Library of Congress, the first meeting in Congress, and this city as our nations capital city.

If we work together starting today, business and not for profits, art organizations, foundations, governments officials, citizens from everywhere then we can honor those 200th anniversaries with the kind of commitment to the future, and promise to this generation and extraordinary gift to the next that this great city deserves us to make.

Thank-you very much.

Copyright 1998 States News Service
States News Service

View Related Topics

May 5, 1998, Tuesday

LENGTH: 639 words

HEADLINE: JUDGE RENDELL TOUTS AVENUE OF ARTS

BYLINE: By Paul Kane, States News Service

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Judge Marjorie Rendell is already taking curtain calls on behalf of Philadelphia's multi-million-dollar Avenue of the Arts, even though she admits the city has only completed the first act of a three-act play.

In town to brief the civic leaders of the natin's capital, including First Lady **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, Rendell said Philadelphia is already reaping the rewards of "civic pride" from the ongoing construction and renovation of arts projects along Broad Street.

Most of all, she cautioned Washington's leaders to, above all else, be patient with their own neighborhood of "**Living Arts Downtown**".

"Rome was not built in a day, it took God six days to create the universe, and we have nearly completed Act 1 on the Avenue of the Arts in six years -- everything's relative," said Rendell, a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit.

Rendell is a board member of Avenue of the Arts, Inc., the non-profit overseeing the project, and was brought to Washington along with representatives from Pittsburgh and Chicago to talk about ther successes in pushing cultural projects in downtown locations.

Washington hopes to tap the knowledge and experience of other cities as it tries to create a downtown region complete with theaters and art houses and local museums, rather than the current hodge podge of art sites and a new sports arena intermixed between blocks and blocks of urban blight.

Mrs. Clinton, who has played a key role in White House oversight of District of Columbia issues, said that in Philadelphia "sections of the city that were given up for lost" have been recovered by promoting the arts, which has in turn promoted local restaurants and businesses.

Of the 22 million visitors to Washington each year, most of whom visit the monuments and head out of town, she said: "We have to do more to bring them ad keep them downtown. . . . We can fill downtown Washington with artists and painters as well as lawyers and lobbyists."

With a slide-show presentation, Rendell clicked her way through pictures of the key projects along the Avenue of the Arts, including the \$8 million Wilma Theater and the \$31 million Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts. And, of course, the design of the Avenue's centerpiece: the \$245 million Regional Performing Arts Center at Broad and Spruce streets, with its 2,500-seat concert hall and 650-seat recital hall.

She claimed the Avenue's new -- and those yet-to-be-built -- buildings would bring a 300 percent increase in the number of Center City events and draw 1.6 million visitors, creating 2,000 new jobs.

Other cities, however, can alreay point to tangible results from their art projects. For example, Pittsburgh, which completed its cultural centers along a single street in 1989, has seen the number of

artistic and cultural events grow from 200 to 1,200 by 1997.

The art company revenues grew from \$83.5 million to \$170.2 million in 1997, and almost 40 percent of all spectators at an art event come from outside Allegheny County. "The economic impact is growing, the audience reach is growing," said Carol Brown, president of Pittsburgh Cultural Trust.

"It's not just feel-good impact," said Jim Gibson, chairman of Washington's Downtown Arts Committee.

Rendell, who as a federal judge is allowed to be on a non-profit board but not do any fundraising, said Washington could see similar economic benefits from its downtown arts development if they focus on a single street or neighborhood to develop, the same as Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

She also said D.C. leaders need to travel to other cities that have undergone similar projects, the same way Avenue of the Arts board visited Pittsburgh and Cleveland before the Broad Street project got underway.

"You have to learn from what others have done," she said.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 1998

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;living arts downtown and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
SPRING GALA - 5/11/98**

Divider Title: _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE SPRING GALA
NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK
MAY 11, 1998

Thank you, Kevin, for your remarks. But mostly for your outstanding artistic direction of the American Ballet Theatre. Agnes de Mille once said that "The truest expression of a people is in its dances and its music." Thank you for helping to make ABT such is an enormous source of pride for all Americans, and such a beautiful expression of our nation's creative spirit.

It is a great pleasure to be here tonight, and an honor for me and for my husband -- my favorite dance partner -- to be honorary co-chairs of this gala event. I also want to thank Caroline Kennedy and Blaine Trump for their leadership roles this evening.

The American Ballet Theatre is truly America's ballet company. In addition to thrilling audiences here in New York, ABT serves as America's cultural ambassador across the United States and throughout the world. [Many of you may not know that the original name of the company, Ballet Theatre, was changed to the American Ballet Theatre at the request of the State Department, so that the message of America's cultural vitality could accompany the dancers on tour.]

I've had the pleasure of seeing ABT dancers here in New York and in Washington, D.C., frequently with my daughter, Chelsea. I was also thrilled to have an opportunity to visit ABT's dancers last year in Buenos Aires. How proud I was to see America's creative spirit and talent being represented so well abroad.

As many of you know, the President and I have taken a great interest in how Americans celebrate the upcoming millennium, and we have created the White House Millennium Council to develop ways to engage all Americans in marking this milestone in human history, and leaving a lasting legacy. The overall theme of the White House Millennium project is "To Honor the past; Imagine the Future." And the President and I are inviting everyone to think about what "gifts to the future" each one of us can give to enhance life for future generations.

Celebrating the human imagination -- through the arts and humanities -- is at the very heart of this millennium effort. Because as President Kennedy said so wisely -- "The life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction in the life of the nation, is very close to the center of a nation's purpose, and is a test of the quality of a nation's civilization."

So I find it particularly appropriate that as the world celebrates this milestone in the year 2000, that ABT is celebrating a milestone of its own -- its 60th anniversary. We are so pleased, therefore, that the American Ballet Theatre was one of only three dance companies nationwide to receive a special millennium grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. This grant will allow ABT to present and preserve the treasures of American choreography created in the 20th Century -- ensuring that masterworks of Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins and so many others are preserved for future generations.

Throughout our history, in a way that is uniquely American, we have always provided both public and private resources in order to pass on something of great value to the future. Important arts projects surely rely on such a consortium of funding from government agencies, corporations, and individuals. I thank each of you for your support of American Ballet Theatre, and hope you will take great pride in your role in supporting -- and preserving -- one of America's greatest treasures. This truly is "a gift for the future."

Thank you.

Copyright 1998 The New York Times Company
The New York Times

May 13, 1998, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final
Correction Appended

SECTION: Section E; Page 1; Column 3; The Arts/Cultural Desk

LENGTH: 803 words

HEADLINE: DANCE REVIEW;
Ballet Bites, to the Tune of a Benefit

BYLINE: By ANNA KISSELGOFF

BODY:

You know it's time to rethink the ballet-benefit formula when the star of the show is not in tights, much less a tutu.

Hillary Rodham Clinton, wearing a white suit with inlaid sequins, stepped on stage to cheers and applause on Monday night before a black-tie audience at the opening of **American Ballet Theater's** two-month season at the Metropolitan Opera House.

A listless string of brief pieces and excerpts from bigger and better ballets to be seen this season suggested that money, not only artistry, was of concern during the evening.

In this respect, Mrs. Clinton proved a good sport, a perfect pitchwoman for a worthy cause: Ballet Theater itself. Kevin McKenzie, the company's artistic director, saluted Caroline Kennedy and Blaine Trump, the chairwomen of the gala and post-performance dinner. She introduced Mrs. Clinton both as "a most welcome guest" and the event's honorary chairwoman; President Clinton, the honorary chairman, was absent.

Calling Ballet Theater "a source of pride for all Americans" and "truly America's ballet company," Mrs. Clinton skimmed over the troupe's history. Her delivery sounded heartfelt; one might even believe she had written the speech herself. After noting that the National Endowment for the Arts had awarded Ballet Theater a Millennium Grant to restage works by American choreographers, she elicited another round of applause with "another reason to support the N.E.A."

The program itself did not do justice to Ballet Theater's usual standards. Even this kind of laundry-list evening has been better chosen in the past. All excerpts do not work all the time, especially if certain dancers need to work up psychologically into roles that are seen out of context.

The idea may be to get as many dancers on stage as possible, but with the inevitable spread among the principals, not everyone is seen in his or her best role. Some socks will have to be pulled up soon; garters may even be in order.

Nonetheless, the canniest of the group knew how to seduce the audience by pushing too hard and too often. Congratulations go to Julio Bocca, Julie Kent, Jose Manuel Carreno and Vladimir Malakhov for knowing the value of restraint.

The first entry offered only a taste of Ronald Hynd's "Merry Widow," last year's comic hit, as John Selya, in some stylish bravura, led the ensemble in the ballet's fake folk dances.

A trailer for the company's premiere of a full-length version of "Le Corsaire" on June 19 featured the "Pas d'Esclave," in which the heroine's friend, Gulnare, is partnered by a slave dealer. As the villain in harem pants, Mr. Malakhov, and Amanda McKerrow, in a gold tutu and her face initially veiled, tried to make sense of choreography that has been treated by too many hands since Petipa staged his last version

of the full work in 1899.

One recalls the similar pas de deux in which Susan Jaffe made her stunning debut with the company, partnered by Alexander Godunov in 1980. The choreography here is more academic, but Ms. McKerrow, somewhat uninflected in her classical style, did shield her face from her captor, who mimed his need for cash before abducting her into the wings. Along the way, there was a typical Malakhov marvel, a high jump into a very deep, soft, plie.

The audience loved Ethan Stiefel's spastic brises, or traveling beats, and overemphatic accents, so at odds with the 19th-century Danish style of August Bournonville's "Sylphide." Christine Dunham's leaden sylph in the duet from Act II did not help.

By contrast, an exhilarating paeon to the earth in Jiri Kylian's "Sinfonietta," filled with Janacek's musical fanfares, came from a splendid ensemble. Keith Roberts, Maxim Belotserkovsky and Christina Fagundes led the galloping group, supported by Mr. Selya and Ethan Brown.

In the pas de deux from Act II of "Giselle," Ms. Kent's slow, unsupported adagio drew a dazed Mr. Bocca into classical dancing that was as pure as it was quietly passionate. Ms. Kent's willowy ghost, soft and quick in her beats, distilled the right Romantic image.

One wonders why an ersatz showpiece like Victor Gsovsky's "Grand Pas Classique," set to Auber's music, is being revived this season. Ms. Jaffe fell off toe at the wrong moment, but she and Mr. Carreno gave the classroom choreography more elegance than it deserves.

For show stoppers there was first Nina Ananiashvili offering her version of "The Dying Swan" with liquid arms and a new spasmodic ending. Her feathered creature arched back on the floor and lurched forward. Then there was the "Don Quixote" pas de deux with Angel Corella, inserting an unexpected split leap, and Paloma Herrera exciting in their very immaturity. Ashley Tuttle and four men, not the usual two, led the finale of Harald Lander's "Etudes." Jack Everly and Charles Barker conducted.

CORRECTION-DATE: May 14, 1998, Thursday

CORRECTION:

Because of an editing error, a review yesterday about a benefit performance by **American Ballet Theater** on Monday at the Metropolitan Opera House misidentified the person who introduced **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, the event's honorary chairwoman. The speaker was Kevin McKenzie, the company's artistic director, not one of the evening's chairwomen, who were Caroline Kennedy and Blaine Trump.

GRAPHIC: Photo: Julie Kent and Julio Bocca in a pas de deux from "Giselle" during **American Ballet Theater's** spring gala at the Met. (Jack Vartoogian for The New York Times)

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: May 13, 1998

FOCUS™

Search: General News;american ballet theatre and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives