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April 4, 1986

Ms. Elaine Crispen
Press Secretary to Nancy Reagan
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Elaine,

As I promised, I enclose a copy of the manuscript for FIRST LADY. This has not yet been copyedited, but otherwise is close to the finished text. The only major component missing is Chris Wallace's introduction, which he should be starting shortly. Please keep in mind that if the narrative occasionally seems choppy, this is in essence an oral history, and when the book is designed and laid out, the text will have a much more even flow. I've done some extremely light editing to avoid repetition of certain words or phrases in the conversations. Otherwise, the entire text is verbatim. As per my agreement with NBC News, I cannot offer your office formal approval of the text, though I would be happy to modify anything which might be an error in fact about a date or occasion, etc.. Primarily, I wanted you to see that the book will present a very positive portrait of Mrs. Reagan, both as a First Lady and a person.

As for the photos, we will be using the bulk of those you were kind enough to send. We have also found some smashing pictures from various photo services. The only gaps in the photos were pictures of Mrs. Reagan on the campaign trail, at the debates, the conventions, mixing with domestic political leaders, etc.. Also lacking, and I understand if this is a sensitive matter, photos from the trying period of the attempted assassination and the President's recovery. In both instances, we should be able to find good photos from other sources, but if there are some good ones in your office, we would be pleased to have them (perhaps five or six in each case). Should this prove difficult, please do not go to any special efforts. Finally, I've noticed that the pictures most people here have responded to best are those which are more "informal"--those taken at the ranch, in the family quarters of the White House or on the Air Force One (carving the turkey-building a snowman-eating off trays together-shopping for a greeting card-bathing the dog-and so on). Frankly, everyone is curious about how the great and powerful really live and everyone loves to have a peek at the living room, kitchen, etc. in the background. If you have five or ten more "homey" shots, these would be invaluable in giving the book a balance between the formal and informal. Again, I'll leave it to you to decide if your office can take the time to round up a few more.

The only other thing we'll ask (I promise) is a bit down the road, but some of the individuals or occasions in the pictures will need to be identified so the captions are accurate. I'll send copies of those to Mary Gordon as the design progresses.

Again, thank you very much for all your help.
With best wishes.

Sincerely,



Thomas L. Dunne
Executive Editor
Publisher of Thomas
Dunne Books

P.S. One last thought. Several of my Washington journalist friends have mentioned a lovely picture of the First Lady on Air Force One dozing with her head in the President's lap. I gather it's hanging in a hall in either EOB or the White House. If you recall it and think it's appropriate, it sounds as if it would be a charming addition.

INTER-OFFICE MEMO

Elaine S. G. TD

S T. M A R T I N ' S P R E S S , I N C .

TO: Tim McGuire

DATE: 4/3/86

FROM: Margaret Schwarzer

COPIES:

SUBJECT: People interviewed in FIRST LADY

<u>Person</u>	<u>Position</u>
1. Nancy Reagan	
2. Richard Davis	Mrs. Reagan's stepbrother
3. William F. Buckley	
4. Michael Reagan	adopted son of Reagan and Wyman.
5. Bonita Granville Wrather	former actress/ old friend
6. C.Z. Wick	son of U.S. Information Agency Director/ old friend
7. Ron Reagan	son
8. Maureen Reagan	daughter of Ron and J. Wyman
9. Doug Wick	?
10. Nancy Reynolds	former California newswoman/ current Washington consultant
11. Sheila Tate	N.R.'s former Press Secretary
12. Lyn Nofziger	Formerly Reagan's chief political advisor
13. Michael Deaver	Washington consultant/ former White House Aid
14. Stuart Spencer	a veteran Republican Party Strategist/ served in Reagan's presidential campaign
15. Donnie Radcliffe	Washington Post reporter/ covered White House for years
16. James Rosebush	former East Wing Chief of Staff
17. President Reagan	
18. Ed Rollins	served as Reagan's White House political advisor
19. Richard Allen	P. Reagan's first national security advisor
20. Dr. Barbara Kellerman	professor at Fairleigh Dickenson University/ authority on American First Ladys

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INTER-OFFICE MEMO

S T. M A R T I N ' S P R E S S, I N C.

TO: Tim McGuire

DATE: 4/3/86

FROM: Margaret Schwarzer

COPIES:

SUBJECT: People interviewed in FIRST LADY cont.

	<u>Person</u>	<u>Position</u>
21.	Letitia Baldrige	etiquette authority served as social secretary to First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy
22.	James Rosebush	Nancy Reagan's Chief of Staff
23.	Richard Wirthlin	?
24.	Mary Jane Wick	?
25.	Bill Blass	fashion designer/ longtime friend
26.	Betty Freidan	feminist/ author of THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE
27.	Richard Allen	?
28.	Ed Rollins	?

It was a White House correspondent's nightmare come true. The President of the United States was standing three feet up the hill, beckoning me to come with him. Normally, that would be a rare opportunity, not a problem. But a problem it was, because at that moment, the First Lady of the United States was standing three feet down the hill, asking me to join her. It was a moment worthy of Talleyrand-- and I hope I did not shame him. Addressing the First Couple of the United States, standing uneasily between them, I said, "If you think I'm going to choose, you're crazy. You two work it out."

The occasion was a fine spring day in April, 1985 at Rancho del Cielo, the Reagan ranch in the Santa Ynez mountains of California. I was there along with a producer, two camera crews, a light man, and a unit manager, shooting an NBC News documentary on Mrs. Reagan. It was supposed to be an opportunity to see the First Lady in an informal setting-- what her life was like away from the White House, the designer dresses, and the fancy receptions. But I had gotten more informality than I bargained for. And in the four months I spent with Nancy Reagan, for the documentary-- it was one of the several key incidents that told me alot about her.

We had a good day at the ranch, shooting pictures of the First Couple riding, her serving him lunch ("Just like usual," he said to her with a wink"), and driving in a pick-up truck.

Now it was time to do an extensive interview with Mrs. Reagan on her personal life. While she ducked into the ranch house to get ready, the President started talking about an outhouse he had put on the hill next to his home to store his tools.

"Come see it," he said, and we headed up the hill, just as Mrs. Reagan walked out of the house and asked where we were going.

"I want to take Chris up to the outhouse," the President said.

"But the camera crew is ready. You're holding up everything." Mrs. Reagan replied, "the worshipful gaze she focuses on her husband in public nowhere to be seen.

That was when I bowed out-- wanting no part of this First Family Feud. But Mr. Reagan stood tall, "It will only take a moment."

"But everything's ready," Mrs. Reagan said with some exasperation. And then, "All right, but don't spend too long there."

It may not be Eugene O'Neil, but there was a clear sub-text to this family spat; Ronnie, I've spent 20 years standing in the background, having TV crews push me out of the way to cover you. Now, for once, a reporter is here to talk to me. The cameras are here to take my picture. Please, darling, don't muck it up.

The idea for a documentary on Nancy Reagan came out of a dinner I had in January, 1985 with NBC News president Larry

Grossman. We started talking about how Mrs. Reagan had grown in the job-- from a very rough start when she was severely criticized for spending too much time on clothes and china-- to a point where she was widely praised for her campaign against drug abuse. Her husband had just won 49 states in his re-election effort, but some polls showed that the Reagan with the highest approval rating was named Nancy.

It seemed to us there was an interesting story here-- or rather, several interesting stories; how Nancy Reagan had turned around her image; whether there was a real change in the woman or just clever public relations; whether she was actually the behind-the-scenes influence on policy that had long been rumored; how to understand this loving wife who had such stormy relations with her children.

NBC News spent the next four months covering those stories. We took our cameras to places the Reagans had never before allowed them; a weekend at Camp David; sending the President off from the White House family quarters to make a major speech. We accompanied Mrs. Reagan to the Vatican where she discussed her anti-drug campaign with Pope John Paul. Most important, we talked to the people who know Mrs. Reagan best-- to her family (except for her daughter Patti, who refused), to friends, and top Reagan staffers. By far the greatest insights, though, came in several extensive conversations with Nancy Reagan herself, in which she talked more frankly than she ever had before about her personal life, her political clout, and her growing willingness to "go public" about her role. We ended up with the first prime-time documentary on a First Lady-- not a tour of the White House, but a serious

examination of her role and views.

This book is the fruit of those interviews: not a formal biography, but rather an oral history of Mrs. Reagan taken from twenty-eight perspectives-- a portrait of the First Lady by the people who know her best. Right here, I want to recognize the work of Executive Producer Robert Rogers and Producers Paula Mashore and Rhonda Schwartz. They did several of the interviews and came up with most of the ideas.

As a political reporter, what interested me most in this project was how to find out if Mrs. Reagan was as powerful as people said she was. The answer was: even more powerful.

I had heard that she regularly called a few top Presidential aides to discuss politics or her husband's schedule. But as I talked to people in the White House, I discovered that the network was much wider and far more important. I learned that Mrs. Reagan called the Personnel Office to suggest appointments--that she spoke to campaign officials to discuss the nuts and bolts of the re-election effort. Most important, top aides told me--and Mrs. Reagan later confirmed--that she played a key role during the 1984 campaign in turning around the President's policy toward the Soviets--ending the hardline rhetoric and sending out feelers for negotiations--in no small part to blunt Democratic charges that Mr. Reagan might get the country into a war. The First Lady generally sided with moderates over hard-line conservatives--more interested in seeing her husband win than in ideology.

I also found that most people around Mrs. Reagan were

afraid of her. I reduced one top official to stuttering simply by asking, "Are you a little scared of her?" The people who felt confident of their relationship with her were the most honest. Campaign strategist Stuart Spencer talked about what a tough enemy she could be--that after he backed Gerald Ford against Reagan in 1976, she treated him as a "leper," refusing to talk to him for years. Son Ron said, "She can be a handful. I mean, she's not always the easiest person to get along with....I don't think I'd want her to be my boss."

In talking to people about the First Lady, one word kept coming up again and again: when she wants something, Nancy Reagan is "relentless." I was to learn that first-hand. During the work on our documentary, Mrs. Reagan was a total pro. She gave us surprising access to her daily life and never applied any pressure as to what we would say. But there was one exception: she wanted Frank Sinatra on the program.

We had been following her for several weeks when Mrs. Reagan suddenly asked if I was going to interview Sinatra. I was a little surprised--I didn't think of Sinatra as a close friend of hers, and I wouldn't have thought she would suggest him, with his alleged link to the Mob, as a character witness. But she said that they had talked, and he was willing to do it. Every few weeks after that, she would call--or have an aide call--to ask how we were doing with Sinatra. The conclusion I came to was that Mrs. Reagan had never quite gotten over her girlhood crush on Sinatra, and if a documentary was being done on her life, she wanted Frank in it.

The problem was that President Reagan and Pope John Paul were far more cooperative than Sinatra was. We talked to lawyers, agents, and secretaries and each had a demand: there could be no editing of Mr. Sinatra's interview; we had to submit the questions in advance to Mr. Sinatra; Mr. Sinatra would consent to an interview in his Las Vegas dressing room on a certain night. And, as I say, every few weeks I'd get a call from Mrs. Reagan or an assistant asking how the interview was coming.

By this point, we had shot the rest of the documentary and decided to tell Mr. Sinatra thanks, but no thanks. But I then had the unpleasant duty of informing Mrs. Reagan. It is remarkable how quiet the other end of a phone line can get.

But before you try to pigeonhole Mrs. Reagan, let me confuse you. Because the First Lady is also one of the most vulnerable, warmest, funniest people I have ever met. Doug Wick, the son of close Reagan friend Charles Wick, described her as "one of the greatest lunch dates in America." I know what he meant.

We went with Mrs. Reagan to Arizona one day to see her ailing, 88-year-old mother. I was riding on an Air Force DC-9 with her--and we ended up spending the entire four-hour flight together chatting. There are not many members of your own family with whom you would want to spend that length of time. With Mrs. Reagan, it was easy.

First of all, unlike most public figures, she does not talk just about herself. She asks what's on your mind, and, even more unusual, remembers the next time. She's interested in everything--Washington gossip, the latest movies, how your kids are doing. And she has a remarkable ability to fasten her big, doe-like eyes on you--and make you feel very important.

Mrs. Reagan also projects a vulnerability that is appealing and genuine. She may be a woman who has talked with Emperors and dined in palaces--but there is still a lot of little Nancy Davis in her. Mrs. Reagan did not have a storybook childhood. Her father left the family when she was a baby, and her mother--who was an actress--left soon after. Nancy was brought up by an aunt and uncle. She remembers visiting her father once and, after they got into an argument about her mother, being locked in the bathroom. Finally, when Nancy was seven, her mother married a wealthy Chicago surgeon, Loyal Davis, and reclaimed her.

Perhaps as a result, there is a sense of frailty just beneath Mrs. Reagan's glittery surface. During a long interview at the California ranch, she began to cry as she talked about the death of Dr. Davis in 1982 and about how much she missed him.

But possibly even more poignant were her comments about relations between mothers and children. Mrs. Reagan calls her mother everyday, no matter what she is doing or where in the world she is. "It's always been difficult for me to understand how children could turn against their mother or

be separated from their mother," she said. "For all those others who had their mothers, I wanted to say to them, 'You're so lucky...you've had all those wonderful years that I never had.'"

It is one of those strange contradictions in life that Mrs. Reagan has often had strained relations with her own children. Son Ron had an explanation, saying Mrs. Reagan's childhood has "given her the desire for a close family and a family structure that's idealized in a certain way and one that no family can really live up to."

The most interesting development we found during the time we spent with Mrs. Reagan, however, was that after years of playing "Wife of...." she was finally ready to step forward and let people understand her true role in the Reagan phenomenon. I can't overstate what a big change this was for her.

I had interviewed Mrs. Reagan in March of 1981, shortly after she became First Lady. She was the ultimate politician's wife--saying the kinds of things that had long set feminists' teeth to gnashing. Her life "began," she said, when she "met Ronnie." How would she balance her role as wife with her new responsibilities as First Lady? No question--she said--the role of wife, of making Ronnie comfortable, would always come first--and, in fact, was the most important part of being First Lady.

The woman I interviewed in 1985 still did not meet Betty Friedan's standards--but she had a very different sense of

herself. She was proud of what she had accomplished in her campaign against drug abuse. And, for the first time, she wanted people to know she was a key part of her husband's success.

Mrs. Reagan's interest in drug abuse is revealing, because I believe it started out largely as a public relations effort. Mrs. Reagan had long had a vague interest in the drug issue--along with the Foster Grandparents program and other good works. But in late 1981, when the "Queen Nancy" controversy was reaching its height, Presidential pollster Richard Wirthlin and Reagan strategist Michael Deaver decided to try to dispel that image with a big push against drugs.

The First Lady was soon touring the country, hugging kids who had beaten drug addiction and urging parents to get involved. And in the course of this campaign, several interesting things happened. First, Mrs. Reagan saw that she could have an impact. Mike Deaver told me she realized "that she is in a position for the first time in her life to be more than just Mrs. Ronald Reagan--that she can do something with her life independently which can make a change for the good."

In addition, the anti-drug effort was a big success--and part of Mrs. Reagan seemed to blossom with the applause. During the making of the documentary, I asked the First Lady if she had become more self-confident. "Yes," she said, "because I think, maybe, more people like me. And if I think people like me, I'm better."

There was a dramatic illustration of that when Mrs. Reagan went to the Vatican to discuss her anti-drug campaign with Pope

John Paul. She had met the Pope before, but always as the wife of the President. This time, she was meeting him in her own right to talk about her own project. Her aides pointed out that she wore a business suit-- instead of a long dress and veil-- because she was there on business. And after her Papal audience, she was glowing with excitement. "It was," she said, "one of the most moving, wonderful experiences I've ever had. I've met him twice before, but this was the first time alone." By alone, what she meant was: without her husband.

I don't mean to overstate here, because Mrs. Reagan is still a traditional wife-- devoted to her husband, fiercely protective of his interests, and clearly willing to take a supporting role. It's just that she now realizes there's plenty of spotlight left for her.

Whenever Mrs. Reagan had been asked before about her White House clout, her answer, in effect, was "Who me?" But after I had gotten a number of top advisers to talk--on camera-- about what an important player she was, I decided to try to get her to come clean.

Just before a long interview in the White House family quarters, I took Mrs. Reagan aside. "We have all these people calling you a tough, savvy politician," I said. "If you get on T.V. and giggle, you're going to look a little silly." But I don't think the pep talk was necessary, because it was soon evident that the First Lady had come to the same conclusion.

"I think I'm aware of people who are trying to take advantage of my husband," she said. "All of my little antennas go up." What happened when she saw that? "I try to stop it."

Mrs. Reagan then told me how she wanted to cut the deadwood out of the Cabinet after the 1984 election. (She doesn't win them all. The President asked the entire Cabinet to stay on.) As I said earlier, she acknowledged playing a key role in the turnaround in Administration policy toward preparations for Mr. Reagan's first debate with Walter Mondale, in which he gave a fumbling performance. Were any changes made? "Well," she said with a broad smile, "the second debate was better, wasn't it?"

Mrs. Reagan will never satisfy the feminists-- but, in a sense, she has been liberated during her years in the White House-- liberated by her new popularity and the confidence that has generated-- liberated

by her greater awareness of the platform she enjoys-- liberated by the simple fact that she'll never have to face another election.

And so, as the Reagan years play out, we will have to assess not only the President's place in history, but also Mrs. Reagan's. What will her place be? My guess is that she won't be loved--or hated-- as Eleanor Roosevelt was. Her public persona is too reserved, too dispassionate for that. She won't be idolized as Jacqueline Kennedy was. We're no longer that innocent. My guess is that she will be respected-- as a very good wife working hard at the many aspects of a demanding job. And, as the years pass, my guess is that we will be surprised to learn how much influence she had on key decisions.

During one of our conversations, I asked Mrs. Reagan whether she felt she had grown in her time as First Lady. "I don't know how you could help but grow," she said. "I mean, in a way, even the negative things that all happened in the beginning were probably part of a growth process." And then we had this exchange:

Question: How do you explain the fact that people seem to like and be impressed with Nancy Reagan now?

Answer: I hope they like me. But I think it's been a process of getting to know me. And that took a long time.

It did take a long time-- for all of us-- and for Mrs. Reagan herself.

First Lady

First Lady

A Portrait of Nancy Reagan

by NBC News and White House Correspondent
Chris Wallace

St. Martin's Press
New York

Title First Lady

Correspondent Chris Wallace

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Design by _____

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First Edition

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Table of Contents

Introduction by Chris Wallace	10p.
Chapter One: Before the White House	1-11
Chapter Two: The Real Nancy	12-36
Chapter Three: Husband and Wife	37-58
Chapter Four: First Lady	59-114
Chapter Five: The Nancy Reagan Style	115-125
Chapter Six: Nancy and Controversy	127-162
Chapter Seven: The First Lady's Causes	149-163
Chapter Eight: The First Lady and Politics	169-187
Chapter Nine: The Assassination Attempt	188-194
Chapter Ten: Family and Friends	195-231
Chapter Eleven: The Years to Come	232-235

Introduction (by Chris Wallace)

CHAPTER ONE: Before the White House

Nancy Reagan:

When I was four, my mother left me in Bethesda, Maryland, and went off touring. She had to. She had to earn a living and she couldn't take me touring all over the country with her. When she would get a play that ran for a while in New York, then I'd go to New York and be with her. But the times in Bethesda with my aunt and uncle and my cousin Charlotte were very happy times. I have pictures of us on the Fourth of July with Ginger, our wirehaired terrier, and a bike all decorated ~~with~~ ^{for} the Fourth. Charlotte and I put Fourth of July costumes on. And it was happy, except that I missed my mother.

It was a real ache. My aunt and uncle were nice, but your mother is your mother and nobody can fill that spot. It was hard on me and it was hard on her.

I went to New York once on one of those times when I could visit her and stay with her. She was in a play. I've forgotten what it

20612

was. But it was a play in which they were very mean to her--oh, they were awful to her. And I got so upset that, sitting up there in a box, watching, I began to cry. I guess I created quite a commotion. Then, when I went backstage, I wouldn't talk to anybody because they'd been mean to my mother. And mother had to finally take me aside and say, "Nancy, it's just make believe. They're really nice. That was all just make believe. They don't really feel that way about me."

Another time I visited my real father and he locked me in a bathroom. I'm sure that afterwards he felt badly about, well, lots of things that had happened. I was always reluctant to talk about it when he was alive because there was no point in hurting him. But this was a visit and I remember something had been said about my mother that I didn't like. We got into an argument and I was locked in the bathroom. Ever since then I can't stand a locked door.

My stepmother, his wife, was a nice woman and she came and got me out. But when we were first married, I remember my husband was going to lock a door and I wouldn't let him and he never knew this story. I said, "No,

3

please, I don't want the door locked." And he couldn't understand why, and then I told him the story.

It wasn't all marvelous for a little girl. But there were nice times, too. My aunt and uncle were darling people, and so was my cousin. But I didn't have my mother.

When finally we were together, maybe I appreciated it more than if that hadn't happened to me. And it's always been difficult for me to understand how children could turn against their mother or be separated from their mother voluntarilly. I never could understand that, particularly during the sixties when all the turmoil and so on between parents and children began. I had a hard time understanding that. For all those others who had their mothers, I wanted to say to them, "You're so lucky, you're just so lucky, you've had all those wonderful years that I never had."

When my mother met Loyal Davis and brought me to Chicago, it was like the happy ending to a fairy tale. She came to Bethesda to tell me that she'd met this wonderful man and she wanted to marry him but she wouldn't marry him unless it was all right with me. And I often think, what in the world would have

happened if I had said no.[?] I think she would have gotten around it somehow, but I said, yes, of course, and we went to Chicago. And I really couldn't have asked for a more wonderful father. He was a hard act to follow, but I think, with my husband, I followed it pretty well.

I graduated from college at a time when a lot of Smith graduates were getting married. I had people say to me afterwards, "You know, the rest of us stayed back there in Chicago and got married and had children and settled down. And you didn't and you went off to New York and Hollywood and to making movies and doing plays."

I hadn't found a man I wanted to marry. And I couldn't sit in Chicago and do nothing. I stayed with mother until my father went overseas and I stayed with mother for almost a year. And then, when he came back, I left Chicago. I hadn't found the right guy. And so, you do something, and acting was the only thing I knew. I mean, I'd been raised around it. Whatever you do, you want to do as well as you can and accomplish as much as you can. That was inside me.

I liked acting. Not enough to keep on

S
after I was married, but I liked it. It was fun and I met some great people. I met my husband that way.

I think I was pretty good. The first movie that really kicked it off was "The Next Voice You Hear." I was sent to New York for a promotion tour. I remember going to Radio City and taking a picture of the marquee with my name up on the ⁺marquee and, oh, I was impressed. But I think my favorite picture was one with Ray Milland and Johnny Hodiak, "Night Into Morning." I liked that picture the best.

There wasn't any big decision I had to make ~~after I got married,~~ after I knew I was going to be married. For me, the real fulfillment came with marriage, a home and children of my own. That was completing the whole thing for me. And I had the best of two worlds. I'd had a career that I was happy in and fairly successful in and I had the marriage. I can't say to somebody else, "You should do it my way." I know what made me happy and when I say, my life began then, that's what I thought. Maybe that's not true for somebody else but it was for me."

Richard Davis Dr. Richard Davis, Mrs.
Reagan's stepbrother, was a

6

boy when Nancy came to live
with the Davis family in
Chicago.

Our childhood together dates back to the
1930's and 1940's when we were growing up in
Chicago. We were particularly blessed with two
splendid parents, who were devoted to one
another and to us. We had a very stable home.
We had the opportunity for an education. And
we had some wonderful young friends.

My first memory of Nancy was probably
when she was in the third or fourth grade. In
those days, she wore a school uniform; a tunic,
and knee socks and a beret. At the beginning
of the school year, my father and I would walk
her to the corner of the drive and get her off
to school. She had a bouncy gait, was very
vivacious, and was a happy child. She would
speak to everyone on the way. With each step,
this tunic which was too short would sort of
pop up in the air and we'd see her bloomers.
Father would say, "Richard, Nancy has on those
dreadful midnight blue bloomers, doesn't she?"
And I would dutifully agree. And then he'd
say, with a big, broad smile, "Isn't she just
the most wonderful child?"

some outrageous

We played ~~destructive~~ games. We had one called "Help, Murder, Police!" This was a very precarious game. We'd both get on the highest piece of furniture and then jump on a sliding stool. And this went on and was very carefully timed for Dad's return home. By that time, we were totally exhausted, feigned broken arms and legs and, of course, the great surgeon had to heal us. Then we went on with the evening's activities.

I have some of the most pleasant ~~memories~~ ^{memories} of the summers, ~~we spent~~. We spent two summers with mother and dad as guests of Walter Huston and his wife in the San Bernadino mountains. The days were filled with a lot of outdoor activity--hiking, riding, swimming, tennis. Of course, those were pre-television days, so we all entertained one another at night. Each of us read ^{aloud} from a novel during the six weeks--^{or sometimes} poetry, Shakespeare. My father invariably put us all to sleep and then Walter Huston would say, "Well, that's all right, Loyal. I hope you're a better neurosurgeon than an actor." There were many, many happy times during those summers. One summer, we wrote, directed and actually photographed our own little play. Nancy played opposite the great Walter Huston. She had a

bathing suit on and was wrapped in a very elaborate sheet. At one point, he said, "Nancy, you're doing this far too demurely. Be more wicked and evil." And Nancy looked at me. I was photographing all this with a home movie camera. Neither one of us knew what demure meant. We found out later on. But I think if she ever made what we call today a career decision about drama and the theater it was probably back in those really very terribly happy days in the 1930s.

She really adored Dr. Loyal, her new father, so to speak. There was a great relationship between the two of them, even when she was small, which she carried on all through her adult life. They were extremely close. The family, the whole concept of the family and the comraderie, the laughter, the enjoyment of one another, has been extremely important to her--as a youngster and throughout her adult life.

Dad was an extraordinarily devoted person, to his wife and to both of us. He was a rock hard disciplinarian. When he asked either one of us to do something we always did it to the best of our ability and we did it promptly. He was extremely fair. He was never

unreasonable. But he thought basically that children with privilege should have responsibility. And we were reminded, not constantly, but often enough that we had the responsibility to be excellent and to strive, to meet the challenges, in anything we did. ^A He was the key figure in Nancy's life. There's no question about that. She was very open with dad. The day's activities centered around the dinner table. Some of the topics that Nancy brought up as a youngster and as a teenager were really quite extraordinary. It wasn't that infrequently that we discussed the soul. She asked him one night, I remember, what he thought happiness was. He said, "Nancy, the answer to happiness is almost 2,500 years old and it's basically what the Greeks said. It's the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of one's life." That's a very serious and heavy answer and I'm sure in hindsight Nancy and I would have a few things to add to that today. But she was always very open with him. She sought his advice, and once she ^{did} ~~sought his~~ advice, she followed it. She was extremely respectful and courteous, and extremely pleasant, not only with her peers but with older people.

We were disciplined. A principle was

0020

expounded and then the reasons for following that principle were explained. He never raised his voice with Nancy. He did with me occasionally.

We were very close, particularly in the summer time. Our educations were rather staggered. Sometimes I was home and she was away, but always at Christmas and holidays we were together.

Nancy was not at all politically minded. I think she became politically aware when she met the President in the early 1950s in California. We discussed all sorts of political issues at home, but I don't think Nancy was that deeply concerned about politics. Her love was the theater.

I think there's an element of truth in the talk that dad was a sounding board at the time the President was turning from Democrat to Republican. He was a good listener and he also gave the two of them advice. Perhaps he helped move the President off center in the 1960s when he decided to enter politics. I think ultimately dad was a really peripheral person in the whole mechanism of decision making. She probably followed the same line of thinking that her father did, which was not

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really along liberal lines.

One night, during a Christmas vacation, she came home from college and said, "Dad, I really have a heavy problem for the holidays. I have to learn all these sonnets by Keats and Shelly." Dad looked at her. The problem was attacked directly, ~~it was to be~~ met head on. She was sent upstairs for her English literature book and brought it downstairs and the four of us learned parts of these sonnets. He was very pleased with this pursuit of excellence. I turned around and there was Edith, an actress, of course, and she had gotten up from the dinner table and was doing a little soft shoe number and dancing and had thought up a little rhyme about Mr. Sheets and Mr. Kelly (cq). This was the lighthearted side of our home life and it was a good counter balance between a very serious and intent father and a mother who had a really wonderful sense of humor.

~~(END CHAPTER ONE, BEFORE THE WHITE HOUSE)~~

CHAPTER TWO: The Real Nancy

12

Nancy Reagan:

I'm not going to be like anybody else. I'm going to be Nancy Reagan. I don't think I'm any different than I've always been. But ~~I think~~ anybody who doesn't grow in this position has got to be pretty dumb. I certainly hope I've grown. I think I have. I don't know how you could help but grow. You're exposed to so many different things, so many different people, so many different experiences. In a way, even the negative things that all happened in the beginning were probably part of a growth process. It widens your whole life, your horizons.

I'm more self confident, I think, because, maybe, more people like me. If I think people like me, I'm better.

William F. Buckley: Newspaper columnist and TV host, William F. Buckley and his wife Pat are old friends of the

Reagans.

13

There's a difference between self confidence and being assertive. I think that Nancy Reagan has always intentionally cultivated two roles--one ~~her~~ public ~~role~~ and the other ~~her~~ private ~~role~~. In private surroundings, she never has let her opinion be known. In public situations, she is deferential, not in the sense that she feels women should be subordinant in public circumstances, but because she feels that it's her husband who has been elected. They're two personalities there.

Is this
what WEB
means?

She's a wonderful friend. She will really struggle to do you a kindness or help you in anything that you want. I make it a point not to ask powerful people for favors, but if I thought that without upsetting public policy she could be helpful, I would simply ask her. I don't doubt for a moment that she would go out of her way to be obliging.

I recently saw her having dinner with my wife after an operation, in my wife's bedroom. That kind of thing isn't done because of a lack of concern.

Everything interests her; peeves, among

other things. She, like a lot of other people, externalizes her frustrations by identifying them in conversation. And there's a lot of just chat which I sometimes simply come upon walking into a room and hear conversations at my wife's end. So there's a lot of what I would call relaxed bandiage.

14

can this
be clarified?

She doesn't like anybody to criticize her husband. I think that she feels that in the case of certain people, there's a sort of transcendent bond that allows certain liberties. George Will, for instance, was at the White House when we were watching "King Lear" with Laurence Olivier. That morning he'd written a very tough "anti-Reagan" piece. So the relationship was very civil. On the other hand, there's probably an interfacable part of her memory that clocks these little things. I wouldn't be surprised because she is the type. My wife is the same way.

Biologists tell you that in seven years, we are completely renovated biological animals and it is a continuing subject of scientific inquiry the extent to which this biological change, the life and death of individual cells, affects your mind. I'm certain that if I were a clinical psychologist and I spent ten hours with her twenty years ago and ten hours

with her tomorrow, I'd say there's been a change. But it's true of everyone. I don't see any change in her that reflects the fact of her being First Lady. The changes that I detect would be the changes that you would normally detect in a woman who was twenty years older than she was back then.

The reason she looks adoringly at her husband is because she adores him. The reason she is dressed chicly is because she dresses chicly. The reason for her rather delicate mannerisms is that that's the way she is. ~~And that's the way she is~~ whether she's at a ball or dressed in pajamas for breakfast in a beach house. That's just simply the way she is.

Michael Reagan: Michael Reagan is the adopted son of Ronald Reagan and his first wife, Jane Wyman.

I think it's true that Nancy Reagan has grown in confidence and has come out more and become more assertive and happier, to an extent. I think the first term for everybody is rough. You're learning so much. Just learning to get around the White House in the

first four years is tough enough. The only place she hasn't grown made my wife jealous. When she went into the White House, she was a size 6. She's now a size 4. And everybody wants her dresses.

I think it hurts Nancy to read ^{negative} things ~~negative~~ about her or about anybody in the family because sometimes they don't understand the whole story or the whole drift of what was going on, and so they're writing stories or saying things on television, not knowing all the facts.

I've talked to dad about the same situation when I picked up the paper and read something about me. I'll just call dad and say, "How can they say this?" Dad says, "Just don't worry about it. Let it roll off your back." She is thin skinned, I think. She absorbs all that. Maybe it rolls off dad's back; she's there and picks it up with a wheel barrel.

She's a one man woman. She lives, eats, breathes for Ronald Reagan. And she is probably one of the most caring people in the world. And she ^{truly} ~~really~~ cares about family and home life. I think people misinterpret that sometimes as a coldness and it really isn't. She's just more caring than people ~~really~~

realize. It's too bad some don't realize it as much as they should.

17

Bonita Wrather: Former actress Bonita Granville Wrather and her husband, Jack, are close, longtime friends of the Reagans.

I think Nancy is a very special human being. And I think she was badly maligned in the early days in the White House by the press. They didn't know her. They didn't understand her. One thing that's always amazed me is that nobody has ever realized what a fantastic sense of humor she has. Her husband has one, too, of course, but people don't recognize that about Nancy.

I don't think the media were willing to give her a chance in the beginning, ^{though} and I think they are now. ~~I think~~ People realize that she is a very warm, sympathetic human being. I don't think people give her credit for how really intelligent she is, and always has been.

Nancy's anything but frivolous. She's very level headed, she's very sincere, she's

18

very down to earth, and why she seemed frivolous I don't know. Again, I'm going to blame it on the media. That very first year in the White House was a pretty dreadful one. Not only the loss of her father, Loyal Davis, but that terrible attempted assassination. Her grief was private when her husband was hovering between life and death. Her grief was private when her father died. But once her husband recovered and they started going out, every time they stepped out of a car, everytime they walked out of a door into the open, imagine the fear of being shot at. That would inhibit anyone. I think that first year was a very, very difficult one. ~~And~~ It would be for anyone.

I think everyone is hurt by criticism, especially if it's unfair. She's a very vulnerable lady and she's very sensitive. ~~I~~ think she responds to constructive criticism very well, but the unfair criticism hurt her terribly. I just hope now that she's toughened up enough to let unfair criticism roll off her back.

C. Z. Wick

C.Z. Wick is the son of
United States Information
Agency Director Charles

Z. Wick and his wife,
Mary Jane, old family
friends of the Reagans.

19

Nancy Reagan has a terrific sense of humor, a terrific sense of style, is very giving, and is very tuned in to the world around her, willing to try new things, hear about new things, interested in people, and fun to be with.

I think that the conservative characterizations of Nancy Reagan have missed the point of the person. She's a very curious person. She's a very open and interesting person, and not one to ignore the world around her. The single most fun thing that characterizes any family gathering of our families, or just hanging out with her, is humor. She loves to laugh. She has a very quick sense of humor, and practical jokes and on-going family jokes are part of our relationship.

Ron Reagan

Ron Reagan, a former

~~ballet~~ dancer turned
journalist, is the son of
President and Mrs. Reagan.

20

She's old fashioned in some ways. She didn't grow up in the sixties or anything. She's from another era. She does think that it's better for my father to be out front alone. She's more comfortable that way. She's not comfortable in the limelight as much as in the wings.

I guess she's a very sensitive person. She's a very private person and I think that's one reason why this has all been a little tough for her. She guards her privacy jealously, and doesn't like intrusions into that privacy. When they happen, her thin skin makes her react. It hurts her.

She can be a handful. I mean, she's not always the easiest person to get along with. I guess it's because of that sensitivity. She's a bit of a perfectionist. I don't think I'd want her to be my boss. I would guess she could be demanding as a boss because of that perfectionism.

She's an incredible phone person. She's always on the phone, ever since I was this big. We had to get more line put in at home,

to satisfy her.

21

Out at the ranch, mom does not get up at daybreak and go bareback riding through the woods. She doesn't man the tractor or anything. She doesn't do the chainsaw, but she gets out there and neatens up the woods and stuff. I've seen her walk through woods and there'll be dead twigs hanging and she'll get up there and kind of pull these off and kind of get the whole place so it's neat. She's not a big rider or a big outdoors person, ~~She's~~ not an athlete or anything like that, but she can't help but enjoy the ranch because my dad enjoys it so much and she derives a lot of pleasure from his enjoyment.

Maureen Reagan: Maureen Reagan is the daughter of President Reagan and his first wife, Jane Wyman.

She's exactly the same person she was the day she walked into that White House. We all grow, but inside ourselves. The things that we care about, our families and our friends and who we know and what we are, that doesn't change. I have been very upset at the

idea that there is this new Nancy Reagan. It's not a new Nancy Reagan. A more confident Nancy Reagan. A more eloquent Nancy Reagan. But, gosh, I hope we're all more confident and more eloquent as years go by.

22

She's got this closet in the White House, and none of us are ever allowed to see it. She squirrels things away in this closet. *Later,* things come out of it. When my husband moved to Sacramento, she said, "Does he need a coffee maker?" I said, "Well, yeah, I think so." Rummage, rummage, rummage. We heard this sound, and all of a sudden, out comes a coffee maker.

Nancy Reagan was a career woman. She had a very good career in the motion picture industry, and she got married. After she was married, she was offered one of the choice television roles of all time, and turned it down, saying, "No, I want to raise a family, and I personally, cannot do both. I know this about myself, and I don't want to take the chance of not being good at either by trying to do two things that I don't think I can put together. Her husband did not encourage her to leave her profession, ~~or not to~~. It was her choice to make. In fact, he was really quite surprised.

Doug Wick:

Doug Wick is (IDENTIFY)

23

I've known Nancy Reagan since I was a kid. She's an old family friend. I went to grammar school with her kids. I think she's one of the great lunch dates in America. ~~I think~~ She's warm, smart, funny, ~~I think she's~~ a good friend. Needless to say, I like her.

interests?

~~I think~~ She's an unusual combination of smarts, interesting, and a good listener. ~~I think~~ A lot of times people who have ^{much} ~~a lot~~ to offer in one camp don't necessarily have a foot in the other, and she can do both. She's one of those rare people ^{who} ~~that~~, if you see her in a large group of people, when you speak to her, no matter where you are or who the group is, her eyes never leave your face. Her trick is that she also has that kind of antenna ^{so} ~~where~~ she knows everything else that's going on in the room while she's talking to you, but she never does that kind of thing where you ^{notice} ~~see~~ ^{someone's} eyes going over your shoulder to see who else is coming in.

I don't think she's comfortable being in the center of attention. ~~I think~~ She's someone who's more of a watcher, ~~I think she's~~ a person who's a little bit more comfortable on the sidelines, observing. She seems to have very little ^{interest} ~~ego~~ about wanting to have everyone look at her. ~~The First Lady is an~~ ~~I think she's~~ an extremely complicated woman. When she first got into office, I don't think people really understood her. She's very shy, and ~~I think~~ that was misunderstood as maybe not caring or being aloof. As time has gone on, people have gotten to know her and understand her much better. In a funny way, through that assassination attempt on her husband, they realized what a caring, deep, feeling person she is.

She's got unfailing instincts about people, and ~~I think~~ she's someone who you can sit at a party with and she'll know everything that's going on in that room, including the kitchen. She can read someone from across the room. She knows who likes them, and who's trying to work some scam on one side or some scam on the other. In that way, I know ~~he~~ ^{the President} enormously trusts her judgement.

I was working on the movie, "Sophie's Choice," and part of my job was to look for a Sophie, and that's a blonde Polish woman, a

25

tragic figure. I thought Mrs. Reagan would be a good candidate, so I called her and asked her if she was interested, and she said it sounded like a pretty good job, but she had this whole other thing in Washington, and she'd have to see how she liked it. So, I bumped into her at the inauguration and she came sweeping through with a giant entourage and I was in the crowd somewhere and she happened to catch my eye. She yelled across the room, "Keep Sophie on the back burner."

Nancy Reynolds: Nancy Reynolds is a former California newswoman who worked for the Reagans in Sacramento and in the White House. Now a Washington consultant, she remains a good friend.

She was wounded by the early press criticism. It made her feel as if she were a sitting duck. Stories were filled with absolute lies in many cases, very prejudicial, skewed stories. I ^{recall} ~~remember some of them; I~~ remember the reporters extremely well. I

remember some of them who are famous authors today writing scathing accounts of their interviews of Nancy Reagan. She was totally bewildered, very deeply hurt. She feels herself that she was pleasant and being honest and had invited them into her home. Some would then come out with something that was just so totally off the wall. ~~I think~~ she was weary and it was not always easy to get her to do interviews. I think if you'd been slapped or stung a few times, you'd say, hey, I don't need this.

26

She's very funny. It's something that she shows privately to her friends and family. She's witty, very sensitive, very current on cultural things as well as on public affairs. She watches all the news broadcasts. She's well read. But she basically thinks of herself as a private person. Her loyalty is legendary. A few weeks after Ronald Reagan became governor, she was on an airplane going to Los Angeles as she did every weekend and she was sitting in the front seat and behind her were ~~two people~~, two men discussing Ronald Reagan's budget. They were criticizing the governor very loudly and you could see the steam beginning to build. Before you know it, she pushed her button and the seat slipped back

and she turned around and said, "That's my husband you're talking about and every bit of the information that you two are exchanging is wrong and incorrect. I would like the chance to correct you." Those two men were so stunned, they just sank about five inches down in their seats. Their faces turned red and that was the last ^{w^r} you heard from them.

I think if people ask her if she feels strongly about something, she certainly expresses herself. I've heard her many times disagree with the president and others. It's like everything else, you win some and you lose some. And she's done both.

It's true that sometimes, as a governor's wife, she would sit in the bathtub and rant and rave at people in private. Those of us who were on the staff could always tell when she'd had a bad day, because she would be in the bathtub having wonderful conversations saying things to people who she felt had been cool and unfair and really mean spirited to her or to her husband or to her family. And it was one of the ways she blew off steam.

Sheila Tate:

Sheila Tate was Nancy

Reagan's White House
press secretary.

28

She doesn't like surprises. No one would like to read in the paper that they felt this way or that way about something when they hadn't been consulted about how they really did feel.

She's a perfectionist. If you have failed to provide all the necessary information, then she's not going to feel secure about the event or the interview or whatever she's doing, so she will ask for more information.

I don't think it's a fair criticism that she demands when she should ask. I think that's from people who are unfamiliar with her way of doing things. Perhaps once they got a call and they were so flustered that they stuttered and stammered.

Some say she gets along better with men than with women. She never ignored me. She certainly had close men friends, but I think she's interested in everybody.

Lyn Nofziger: Washington political
consultant Lyn Nofziger
served as President

Reagan's chief political
advisor throughout much
of his public career.

29

Everybody wants to leave ^{his or her} their own mark
but I ^{believe} think that she sees what she's doing
really as a way of assisting ^{the President} him, of building
him. We all have our own egos. But I don't
think she's ever set out to have people
compare her to him, or anything like that.

Michael Deaver: Washington consultant
Michael Deaver was one of
President Reagan's three
principal White House
aides and is a longtime
friend and associate of
the Reagans.

She's one of the most special people
that I've ever known in the world. She's
smart, she's strong, she is very intense. She
has a side to her that very few people know
about. And that is this very strong personal
loyalty to people ^{regardless} regardless of who they are
who've been good to her.

I remember when Carolyn's father died

my wife
18 ← OK? correct? identify.

W₂ x'd?

suddenly. He'd only been here three months. She called me on the phone and said, "Why don't you bring the kids up to Camp David for the weekend." We got to Camp David and she took those two kids of mine who had just lost their grandfather and made life wonderful for a weekend for them. She took them bowling, for hot dogs, bicycle riding, whatever they wanted to do. That's the side of Nancy Reagan nobody knows about. In California, during the Vietnam War, once a week, sometimes twice a week, without any press around, she'd quietly go to the veteran's hospital and sit there and hold a ^{vet's} hand ~~if they had a hand left~~ and go home and call their mothers and cry with them and go back the next week and do the same thing over again. She didn't do it because she was trying to change her public relations image. She was doing it because Nancy really cares about people.

30

Stuart Spencer:

Stuart Spencer is a veteran Republican Party strategist who served in the Reagan presidential campaign.

I don't think people realize that she is