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surprise her. If, somewhere along the line, he decided to end the agriculture embargo, he'd know that doing so would at least annoy and, in some senses, outrage the hard anti-communist part of his constituency. In a situation like that, it would be perfectly normal for him to discuss the consequences of an impending decision. It is very unlikely that she would weigh in during that discussion in such a way as to cause him to change his mind.

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It's hard to say how good her instincts are because we don't ~~really~~ often talk politics. We talk people. Take the whole matter of whether he would run in 1968. In *that year* 1968, there was an understanding more or less that if Nixon failed in the primaries in New Hampshire and Indiana, Reagan would come in rather than let Nelson Rockefeller have it. Of course, Nixon didn't fail in those primaries, but meanwhile a movement had developed. She was at once anxious for him to succeed in any enterprise and terribly afraid that he might be hurt. He didn't declare his candidacy until after he arrived in Miami and at the time I was quite certain the reason he had finally entered the race wasn't because he thought there was any chance of winning it, but

because he didn't want to let down people who had expended that much of an effort. She, in that situation, almost certainly urged him not to think so much about the people who had supported him as about himself.

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They grew up in their early married life fighting communists in Hollywood. It was a shared experience, ^{one} ~~and it was an experience~~ that continues to be extremely strong in Reagan. ^{helped} And it ~~formed~~ her opinions also.

There's a sense in which she's not that much of a hard liner. He's a very hard liner in his rhetoric, but less in his actions. He's been softer on the Soviet Union in respect of Poland and Afghanistan than Carter was. I can't imagine a situation in which she would say to him, notwithstanding how he feels about the Soviet Union, "We have got to entertain Gorbachev when he comes over here." It's much more likely that he simply would accept the institutional requirements that he has as chief of state and simply swing with it.

She thinks he's absolutely unique. She probably thinks he belongs on Mount Rushmore. And any failure of the public to recognize this is a failure of them to recognize that which is obvious to her. In that sense, she is

more ambitious for him but only because of her distinctive appreciation of him. Now is that the same kind of ambition tht Lady MacBeth had or is it something completely different? I think it's different. It's kind of a healicentric relationship.

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Bonita Granville Wrather:

Nancy and Ronald Reagan are a team. They're devoted to one another, very much in love, and they work as a team and they always have. I understand it. Some people may not because they may not have husbands. My husband, until he passed away, was a partner of mine. We talked about everything. I can't say whether she gives him advice, but I think they discuss everything and they advise each other. When I hear people say, well, she's his advisor, that's not so. They ^{just} discuss things together.

I know that the president thinks that his wife is a good judge of character. I know that he values her opinion on everything, whether it's raising children or politics. It doesn't matter. He values her opinion. As, by the way, do all of her friends.

C. Z. Wick:

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What I know well of their relationship is that she had excellent judgement and, like any husband and wife, there's interest in what the other does. He knows he can rely on very solid judgement, but I think that the character of that is his recognizing a smart person who is there for him and who's solid as a rock when you need some good advice.

She has terrific instincts for people's motives and their sort of personal agendas. She's micro and he's macro. He's the big picture in terms of the whole country. She's very good with the people ^{who} ~~that~~ are very close to him.

Ron Reagan:

She's got great instincts, not so much about what will play well to the country-- that's where he comes in, that's where he's very good--but as to how he plays best, just himself. How he comes off best, under what circumstances, and in what surroundings.

I can't say whether he discusses things

that are classified with her. I would guess he probably wouldn't want to. But they talk about everything else. They're very close. What don't you talk about with your wife?

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Maureen Reagan:

They have the ultimate relationship. They are each other's best friends. We all want to have that kind of relationship. They try things out on each other. They use each other as sounding boards. There's a difference between being an advisor and being somebody's best friend. He refines things that he's thinking about by saying them out loud and talking to her. She refines things that she's thinking about in the same way, and they give each other advice in that way. They have always done that. They will always do that. They are absolutely a team. You do not get one without the other, ever.

They're always two parts to everything--the ideas, the ambition, the ability to do it. Then there's the rest of us behind the scenes that sort of make it all come together and make it all work. She has created an environment in their lives that allowed him a lot of freedom to go out and

explore things that he might not have under other circumstances. But I don't call that a driving force.

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My initial reaction is that he would be president no matter what right now because I have a feeling of destiny in this particular enterprise. I think it all became possible because of the relationship they have, and because they both had a great deal of freedom and because they have this incredible friendship that allows them to talk about things.

Nancy Reynolds:

Nancy Reagan's only interest is what's good for the president. She has no hidden agenda, ~~she has~~ no other worries or concerns. She feels that if there are people who have other agendas, and in politics there are always such people, they are definitely working at some sort of disadvantage to the president and she's going to speak up.

They certainly fulfill each other's needs and perhaps that's the basis for a really successful marriage. They communicate with one another extremely well. And they have

such mutual admiration and respect for one another. Based on those two things, they agree on most issues. ~~The prominence of the family and the kinds of things that they like to do together,~~ ⁴⁹ They share so many things in common, but mostly they fulfill each other's needs, most of the personal needs we all have. He loves and respects her very much and vice versa. Like most marriages, no one is ever giving fifty fifty. At one time or another someone has done the eighty twenty bit or ninety ten. And they've each had opportunity to be in that position, as all good relationships do. And I think they have ~~the~~ bond, a personal bond, of all the things they've gone through together. It has only strengthened over the years.

Sheila Tate:

First of all, if you know Nancy and Ronald Reagan, you know that he's not going to every consider her a liability. She's his biggest asset, emotionally, and we knew we could get that story out.

To some degree, I think she was a convenient lightning rod, and when you have a

popular president, it's hard to attack the president. His wife is vulnerable. People took shots at her. ~~There was some of that.~~

So
They're inextricably bound, but she's certainly carved out an independent niche for herself that she could be proud of in her own right. I think she's probably teased the president about the fact that her rating is a little higher than his.

Do I feel she's a little competitive with the president? Only on the friendliest basis. We'd say, "We were the lead story on the network news," and she'd say, "I can't wait to tell Ronnie."

She was probably the best person to address that ~~age~~ ^{of the president's age} issue. She'd been through it before. She's the closest person there is to the president and she knew that it was not an issue. We were out campaigning and she took that issue head on. She walked over the rope lines when we'd get to an airport and invite reporters' questions and she would welcome that particular ^{one} ~~question~~. She had a very good sense that she could address that question in a way probably no one else could.

Lyn Nofziger:

Nancy's a perfectly normal human being. When things go wrong with her husband, and she thinks somebody's at fault, she gets upset. She gets over it. She's protective of him and that's a good thing. I'm sure all she's concerned about is that the people who work for him serve him well. That's what she's concerned about.

She's more interested in public relations and the president's popularity than she is, let's say, in his sticking to conservative doctrine. Apparently people want it both ways. Nancy goes with what is best for Ronald Reagan, and certainly part of that is, does he adhere to his principles. We all of us look at the public relations side of it. That's part of it. But I don't think that she does that to the exclusion of principle.

She is a very important woman. I don't think she's uncomfortable. I think she feels very strongly that her husband is the president and that he's the man who ought to be taking the credit. He's the person who ought to be out in front. To that degree, she has put herself somewhat behind, but that's not an unusual thing for a woman to do.

Ed Rollins: Ed Rollins served as
President Reagan's White
House political advisor.

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I think she is ^{or} ~~the~~ constant advisor. She is without question his closest friend. She certainly doesn't try and get involved in the day to day policy decisions, but I think there's no question when he wants someone whose advice he trusts, he goes to her.

He certainly likes it when she reinforces him. When she disagrees with him, he probably really ponders very much whether he's going in the right direction or not. So I would certainly say he heeds her advice.

She has as much clout as she wants ~~to~~. If she wants to weigh in on something, it certainly becomes the focus on his agenda, and can certainly become the focus of a lot of other attention around the White House.

Ronald Reagan is to a certain extent a very solitary man. He's ~~very~~ unique. He has no ego. He has no need for friends or advisors or what have you. He's just a very comfortable man with himself. And there's one person in that inner circle, day in and day out, ~~There's~~ one person who's a constant,

whose judgement he values above all. I think that makes her an extremely important part of the team.

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I think the president's toughness is totally underestimated. ~~I think~~ He has a real inner toughness. That when it comes down to things that are really crucial and important, he's there on the line. It's easier for her to make judgements because she's not dealing face-to-face with people as he is. When a staff person is not serving the president well, the president may still like the person. She's in a little more of an abstract situation. She can make judgements based on performance, where sometimes other factors enter into the president's judgment.

She can be very tough, no question about it.

I don't think he can rely on her any more than he does. He relies on her so much today. The president has had a career--not just his political career but his movie career--in which there have been a lot of people in and out. Making movies, he's had different directors, different costars. But for twenty five years, the one constant in his life has been her. Ronald Reagan would be very

happy on his mountain top, all alone, with one exception, and that's that he'd like to have her with him.

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Richard Allen: Richard Allen was President Reagan's first national security advisor. His White House tenure was marked by controversy when he arranged an interview with Mrs. Reagan for a Japanese publication which responded with gifts.

The president is the kind of man who, by my observation, in dealing with this able and strong willed wife, recognizes that she's on his side all the time. He's able to listen carefully and maybe it influences his point of view and maybe it doesn't. He doesn't always give an expression of whether he approves of what you're doing, saying, or how you're behaving. It's a very interesting feature of the man.

To see Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan in

circumstances of difficulty, as I have seen them in the pre-campaign days and campaign days when things looked pretty dark at one point, and to watch them operate at the White House, one sees a reflection of a relationship that is clearly, in the first instance, grounded in love and caring about each other. The fact of the matter is that the president misses her if she's away twenty four ~~hours~~ or forty eight hours. It's almost an unbreakable team effort.

SS

There are lots of things that a husband will not want to do in which a wife can help out without her work carrying the connotation of dirty work. I think that's very helpful. I'm pushed frequently by my wife and I think he is pushed frequently by his wife to do things or not to do things.

~~I think~~ she steps into a role that he probably at least subconsciously invites her to fill. I think that's very interesting. Every couple that is married knows about those limits on either side. Most husbands invite their wives in. ^{others} ~~Many~~ do not and live to regret the day. I think President Reagan has invited Nancy Reagan into that realm. She knows what the margin is, the boundary so to speak, and

she operates freely up to that boundary.

Michael Deaver:

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Nancy will fight to her dying day to protect Ronald Reagan whether he's actor, governor, private citizen, or president. She'd want to know, is he getting out on the patio for lunch to get some of that sunshine? What's he having for lunch today? Don't you give him some time in the morning? Give him some time in the afternoon so that he can sit at his desk and think a little bit himself. She is not the kind of person ^{who} ~~that~~ would call up and say, you know, I think the SALT talks ought to begin February 2nd. Her primary concern would be his personal needs.

I'm married. Sometimes I win, sometimes Carolyn wins. The same is true of the Reagan household as it is in most households. Sometimes they argue and she'll prevail and sometimes he'll prevail, but it's the most incredible love relationship I've ever seen in my life between a couple.

I suppose anybody who's here wants to leave something of themselves as far as their own mark and I'm sure that's probably true of Nancy. I've said this before. If Ronald Reagan

had owned a shoe store, she'd be out there pushing shoes.

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Dr. Barbara Kellerman: Dr. Barbara Kellerman is a professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University and an authority on American First Ladies.

Nancy Reagan's greatest strengths and greatest weaknesses have the considerable charm of being one and the same. Her greatest strength is that she is so tied to her husband that she provides him with the kind of emotional support ~~that~~ all of us wish we had. Her greatest weakness is that she is so tied to her husband and she provides him with so much emotional support that I think she is relatively ill-equipped to stand back and say, "You're doing this wrong. You might want to take another look at this."

Don't look to Nancy Reagan to provide Ronald Reagan with a critical perspective. On the other hand, do look to Nancy Reagan for this enduring emotional support.

If we had access to the living quarters, even if we were a fly on the wall of the Reagan apartment in the White House, I think it would be very hard for us to understand fully what goes on. I think in the relationship between two people one doesn't see orders being given. It's a dynamic, the way all relationships are dynamic. I don't for a moment think Nancy Reagan orders her husband to do this or do that. I think she makes her opinions felt in certain ways, the way all women and men do in the context of long marriages and long relationships. Those opinions, in a good marriage, in a good relationship, will be taken very seriously by the other person. It's that kind of power: power that's private; power that's abstract, if you will; power that's articulated much more through interpersonal influence than it is through the usual kinds of authority relationships that we associate with the word power.

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~~(END CHAPTER THREE, END "NANCY AND RON")~~

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CHAPTER ~~EIGHT~~ ^{four}: Meeting with the Pope

Nancy Reagan:

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My meeting with the Pope was I think one of the most moving, wonderful experiences I've ever had. I've met with him twice before but this was the first time alone.

What was so special? Being alone. Talking about something that concerns me very much and concerns him, and hearing his views on it--and his comments about what I'm doing.

Yes, he thought what we're doing is important. You can't ask for anything more. How could you not be moved?

We discussed the seriousness of it. I believe very strongly in the family, getting parents' groups and families involved. He believes just as strongly that it's necessary for these young people who are trying to work their way back, which is a very difficult thing for them to do, to have some kind of spiritual help, religious help.

He's such a marvelous man. Number one, a very strong man, but he has a gentleness at the same time. The attempted assassinations, they came very closely together, so I feel a

special affinity with him.

I just hope whatever I say or do can be of help to people. It's special to be here on my own, but on those terms--only on those terms. That I can be of help.

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(END CHAPTER EIGHT, END "Meeting with the Pope")

CHAPTER FOUR: First Lady

Nancy Reagan:

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I hope people like me. I think it's been a process of getting to know me, and that took a long time. Probably some of it was my fault, some theirs. It was so new to me. I didn't know quite what to do, and there's no training for this job. When something is new to me, and I'm a little shy about doing something, then I tend to hold back.

The first year was a bad year for lots of reasons. I had all these personal problems that were on my mind and I was holding back.

There wasn't a deliberate sitting down and saying, "Now I've got to turn this around." It wasn't that. I'm no different than I ever was. But as time went on, I got more used to the job, and more used to being here. I got past the first year.

I always knew I wanted to be involved in the drug problem, and then I had more time. I was more ready for it, and it just evolved.

There isn't any clearly defined role for the First Lady. You make of it what you want. I see my role as what I'm doing. I didn't

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realize that you had such a tremendous platform, if you were interested in one particular thing, to try to advance it and inform people and get your feelings across. I've chosen that way. But then, everybody has their own way. ~~I don't mean to criticize anybody else.~~

The term, "the right image." That seems to me such a phony kind of staged thing--I'm going to carve out this image and that's what I'll be. Now, whatever kind of image that conjures up in peoples' minds, I don't know. But all I can do is be myself. I'm not going to be like anybody else. I'm going to be Nancy Reagan. So I'll push the things that I'm interested in. That's the way it's been all through history. Every First Lady has her own particular style or her own particular individuality and gets her own particular criticism.

Is it true I can be "relentless?" I think I know what I want. But actually I would think that if I were working for somebody, I would rather work for somebody who knew what they wanted. The other would be very confusing to me. I wouldn't know if this is what she wanted or if that's what she wanted. I don't

^{have}
~~leave~~ any doubts, but isn't that easier? We
have a lot of laughs. If I'm upset about
about something that somebody's done, I tend
to just pull back. A curtain comes down. Now I
don't know whether that's good or bad, but
that's always been so. I don't yell and shout
and throw things, I just pull back.

Everybody who's been here knows the
job's tough. I would never criticize another
First Lady. I never knew that Mary Lincoln
was criticized so terribly. Well she was.
Across the hall, there's a painting of Mrs.
Coolidge. It's a beautiful painting, her
standing with the dog. She was criticized
because supposedly there were people who said
that her dress was really shorter than it was.
It was really kind of a flapper style. And
that she had had it painted on and added to
and it was not the dress at the Smithsonian.
There was a whole big flap about this. Mrs.
Lincoln was criticized for spending \$2,000 on
her inaugural gown.

I don't think I'm getting all that bad a
press now. I think ~~people~~, as things have
settled down and ^{people have} ~~they've~~ gotten to know me
more, know that a lot of things were not true.

I hear a lot of times, "Well, Nancy
Reagan wants this or Nancy Reagan wants that,"

when I've never said anything about it and I don't know what they're talking about.

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Does the president sometimes say "no" to me? Sure. Does his "no" always end it? Not always. I'll wait a little while; then I'll come back at him again.

It really reaches a point where something's gone much too far, in my opinion. So it seems to me, sometimes, that if you can catch it before it reaches that point where a lot of people are maybe hurt, then it's easier to stop it right in the beginning, rather than let it build up a head of steam.

I don't have as much "clout" as they say I do. I don't get involved in how to balance the budget or how to reduce the deficit or foreign affairs or whatever. I think I get involved in people issues. I think I'm aware of people who are trying to take advantage of my husband, who are trying to end run him.

Sometimes he'll want to talk about problems and sometimes he won't. Sometimes his mind is so busy and so occupied, he just wants to go right to those papers as soon as he gets his dinner. And then, there's not much conversation about it. Other times, he does want to talk about it.

I didn't think it was fair when I'd pick up the paper and I'd read that he was a warmonger, that he was ready to go to war and so on. I know that that's simply untrue. He's trying to do everything he can to avert war and bring about peace. That did concern me. I was in favor of a meeting with Gromyko. I thought that was a good idea. I'm glad he came.

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He and my husband had been over at the Oval Office alone, and having dismissed everybody else, I was asked to come down to the Red Room and be there when they got back, be there to greet them, which I was. They came in and we said hello, and they came around with the trays. He took some tomato juice or something and I took a Perrier and he toasted me and I toasted him and then it was just sort of small talk. I think we were talking about the metric system. He turned and looked at me and said, "Is your husband in favor of peace or war?" And I said, "Peace." And he said, "Are you sure?" And I said, "I'm sure." And he said, "Well, then, you whisper 'Peace' in his ear every night." And I said, "I will. I'll also whisper it into your ear."

I haven't much time to be lonely. We plunged into so many things right away. There

isn't time ~~to be lonely.~~

When we went to church one Sunday, ~~my~~ ⁶⁴ ~~husband~~ said, "Look at this schedule. It used to be so simple just to go to church. All we're doing is going to church and look at all these people ^{who} ~~that~~ are involved ^{//} ~~with going to~~ church." Or, if we go to Camp David, he'll say, "What are all those helicopters doing out there?" You know, he still can't get over ^{it} ~~that~~ ^{23rd thing} ^{so} it takes ~~that~~ many people around you.

I think he's happy. ~~I think~~ He enjoys ~~it. I think he~~ enjoys being in the position of being able to try to do the things he feels very strongly about and has for a long time. Yes, I think he's happy.

^{Sometimes} ~~It's~~ very hard. At this particular time, with what's happening world wide and certainly in this country, with inflation and so on. Tremendous.

~~I think~~ Being governor of California was a very good training ground for this job, particularly because, as he said often during the campaign, he came in as governor when the state was in almost the same position as the country. It was broke financially and so on. You just multiply that by I don't know how many times. Of course, California didn't have

a foreign policy.

It's more work than I thought it would be, for me. I can't speak for him. He brings back stacks of papers that he reads every night, in his study or the living room, whatever, until he falls asleep at night, ^{at} ~~till~~ 11:30 ~~p.m.~~ ^{or} midnight.

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He gets frustrated by the entrenched bureaucracy--because it's an entrenched bureaucracy.

I have moments of accepting it that my husband is president and then moments of thinking I'm not really here. I was interested when Prime Minister Thatcher was here. She said somewhat the same thing to my husband. She said, "Do you ever have times when you think of other heads of state and you think, oh, they must be so brilliant, so marvelous, and so extra special? And then you realize that you're a head of state, and you think, I'm just an ordinary person."

There was a tremendous emotional upheaval that I didn't count on--at leaving our home and our children. I'm sure you saw the picture of Pattie and some at the house crying. And my crying. There was all this extra in it that I really hadn't counted on. All of it together did get me down for a

while.

But I'm enjoying it. Yes, I am enjoying it.

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Letitia Baldridge:	Etiquette authority
	Letitia Baldridge
	served as White
	House social
	secretary for First
	Lady Jacqueline
	Kennedy.

The First Lady belongs to the people. She has thousands of letters addressed to her every month, asking for advice, consolation, help. What she does is reflected throughout the entire United States. If she has good posture, mothers say to their daughters, "Stand up straight. Don't you see Mrs. Reagan has good posture?" If she has a good figure, everyone wants to look like her. If she has a beautiful home and has good taste, everyone wants to have the same apricot color living room that she has, and banana yellow on the walls. Everyone wants to copy the First Lady.

Therefore, if she is intelligent and if she has style and grace, it's pretty nice to

copy someone like that. She also is a wonderful helpmate to her husband, ~~She's~~ a ^{true} ~~wonderful~~ partner. And although she doesn't make policy decisions, the mere fact that she is the ultimate sympathetic listening ear at night when the president of the United States returns to his private quarters is very important.

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It's impossible to please all the public. But things straighten out through the years and various First Ladies have been criticized for being overly involved in White House affairs. People forget that and remember them for their intelligence. I think Mrs. Reagan is making a very classic, wonderful path, being a supportive ear to her husband but not even pretending to interfere in public policy.

I don't think there's a man alive who is in love with his wife and doesn't trust her intuition. She sees a lot on her own, I'm sure, that the president doesn't see. I think it's good to have that kind of advice.

I think she will go down in history as one of the very finest First Ladies because she has gone through bad publicity and surmounted it so beautifully. She has done such wonderful things with her drug program,

her foster children program, therapeutic riding. She's been involved in a lot of things. She is working hard on the drug program at a time when drug and alcohol abuse are really a very serious problem in this country. She's right on target. And what she does is very effective. She has influence. She works hard at it. I think she also derives great satisfaction from seeing the good that she does. ~~it's kind of nice, too.~~

There's a growth process in every First Lady. I've seen it in every single one of them. Mrs. Ford went through great personal problems and rose to surmount them. Roslynn Carter and Lady Bird Johnson, wow, I mean Lady Bird does things to this day. She has power and influence in the whole field of world wildlife and preservation that she never would have had if she hadn't been First Lady and if it hadn't evolved during her years as First Lady.

Mrs. Reagan has evolved, too. If they are smart, intelligent women, if they have their eyes and ears open, and they don't succumb to prejudices, ^{First Ladies} ~~they~~ all evolve and become greater people. If nothing else, they don't get any money out of it and as they get

a lot of grief out of it, they also develop inwardly and store up a tremendous amount of knowledge. It must effect their whole lives forever and ever. Once you're out of the White House, ^{the} First Lady has to be very changed and has to be very involved in what's going on around her. Just think of all the newspapers they suddenly start to read.

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When you're that busy, you don't have time to give into grief. You just keep plowing ahead. That's one of the perks of the job. You've so many things you have to do. There's this enormous schedule laid out for you. You just don't have time to dwell on grief or sadness or fear. You just ^{push} ~~plow~~ ahead and do your job. And I think that's what she's done.

I think that First Ladies have to realize that when they come into the job-- Claire Luce had a marvelous expression--"no good deed goes unpunished." They keep doing good deeds for the White House, for their country, and they're constantly criticized for it. But you have to go ahead and keep on anyway.

Both Mrs. Reagan and Mrs. Kennedy are remarkably good looking, remarkably kind and motherly in many ways. The two of them can be compared a great deal. What makes Mrs. Reagan

so unique is the wonderful love affair that she has with her husband. They're like young lovers. It's wonderful to see them walk down the hall hand in hand. I keep reminding my husband that we never hold hands. The Reagans hold hands all the time. And I think America loves that. It's a great, great symbol of marriage.

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It's very hard when you're working just your utmost to do the right thing in your job, and you're giving it your all, to see it put across in the headlines of the papers as something negative. It's very frustrating. Of course she was hurt and frustrated in the beginning and, intelligent woman that she is, she learned to accept it, to expect it, and not to be bothered by it. You have a choice in the White House: you either have a complete nervous breakdown or you learn to forget it. And that's what she has done.

Mrs. Johnson came along in history at just the right moment because the youth started to revolt and the women's movement ~~started~~ ^{began}. And women started leaving the home in droves to go to work. She was such an executive, the women related to her and were inspired by her and encouraged by her. When

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Mrs. Reagan came into the White House there was a tremendous need for the whole subject of husband and wife to be seen in a new light. People were putting each other down and the new young woman executive was perhaps too aggressive. All of a sudden, here was an old fashioned family coming back into the White House. It was a great moment for that to happen because not only was she a fantastic wife but she also developed these programs of her own. The whole idea of husband and wife plus the woman who does not work but involves herself in the non-profit sector in a very meaningful way, it all came along in the right time in history. The First Lady is always a role model for women whether she likes it or not, and whether they like it or not, they look up to her. And what she does is very important to all the young women who are getting their MBA's and to women who are trying to save their marriages and all of this. It's of tremendous sociological importance.

I think there were more women who applauded her, coming back with some of the old-fashioned, more conservative values at a time when we needed them. America's feminist movement has taken such great strides and has gone forward so fast that the whole subject of

having children and being married needed paying attention to. And she's done it.

Nancy Reynolds:

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Nothing prepares you for being First Lady, nothing. Basically, Washington is not a city that wishes you well. So I think you come in here really unprepared for the onslaught of personal and press criticism. Mother Theresa could be in the White House and within six months there would be some sort of expose story about something she had done.

In Nancy Reagan's case, she is a woman who always takes things a day at a time. She concentrates entirely on one project, and her own personal concerns about the president's welfare come at the top of the list. Getting settled in the White House, making it a home, not just a public house, was a very important thing for her. So she concentrated on getting the house the way she wanted it and making it a comfortable, warm and welcoming place for the president at the end of the day.

She's always been like that. I think she was just totally unprepared for the fact that people expected, as they often do

unrealistically, a kind of First Lady who was going to leap into a project immediately and become something they felt she should be. Now Nancy Reagan has always had a couple of projects in the years I've known her. The foster grandparent program and drug abuse have been the two things that she's always been interested in, always put time in on. When she got to Washington, she wanted to continue with the foster grandparent program because she knew it, she felt comfortable in it, she had really put her mark on it all those years, and had done extraordinary things for the program.

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What happens in Washington is that people try to push projects on you. Nancy Reagan has her own best instincts about what she wants to do, how it's going to work for her, and the kind of time she's going to give it. ~~I think~~ she felt that, except for the foster grandparent program and her interest in the drug program, she wanted to take a little time and see what was ahead. I think she became buried in the details and interests of what to do in the White House, managing a ^{large} staff, ~~which she had never had in her life~~. She had never been a manager before. All of her staff were new people--from her press secretary to social secretay--people she had just met. I think it

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was kind of overwhelming at first. So she was unprepared for good old Washington and the immediate criticism that comes to you if you're not conforming to Washington's rules of how they think the First Lady should behave.

Her performance at that Gridiron dinner changed her image, most certainly the president's near death did. The assassination attempt had a tremendous effect on her. And her own father's death. All of these things coming in the first year. All of them were traumatic, although the Gridiron was fun.

People always say, has Nancy Reagan changed? She really has not ~~changed~~. What has changed is the perception of her. For years and years and years, we had all been saying, there's this wonderful, witty, funny, caring, loyal, intensely dedicated woman, but no one ever wanted to hear it. I attended thousands of press briefings and listened to hundreds of press woman interviewing her over the years. In the sixties, in Sacramento, you were dealing with young sixties reporters, most of them ardent feminists who came in with a chip on their shoulder, already making up their minds and with a very cynical view of a First Lady who cared about her family first and

foremost.

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She is not someone who likes to make speeches or ~~make~~ public appearances unless it's on behalf of her particular interests. I think she was a nervous wreck, appearing before the Gridiron. You never know how it's going to come off. But it showed the side of her that we've all known for years. You could feel the differences in the audience. You could feel people judging her very differently than this woman they had made ^{casual} assumptions about. She turned out to be something quite different. ⁴ She's a very complex person sometimes. She has many sides to her and this was a side no one had ever seen. And when she did the encore, you knew she was having fun. You can sense when people approve of what you're doing. The applause was tremendous. That one incident showed she basically has excellent instincts about herself and what she feels will be good and what will be natural for her. She never extends those boundaries by trying to do something that isn't natural, that isn't something she would do in ordinary life. I think poking fun at herself at the Gridiron dinner was her way of perhaps saying, well, if I got off to a rocky start, let's have a few laughs about it because I'm going

to be around for a ~~little~~ while. I think that was the turning point. There's no question about it.

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I don't think on substance that you can say Nancy Reagan has influenced policy. She expresses herself as we all do to him when we have the opportunity. ~~Some of us feel sometimes one way and~~ the president always listens very intently. Of course, he adores Nancy. Many times she's right and he's not right. At least we feel that way. But sometimes he will ~~assede~~ if he feels that it's something he hasn't thought about. It's more style than substance. She never claims to be an expert. She certainly is knowledgeable and understanding about a lot of things but Nancy Reagan is a back to basics person.

I think she sees her husband as a man of peace. He is a man of peace. To that end, I think she will always offer up solutions and ideas and comments as we all do anytime we're asked, and even sometimes when we're not, asked.

But Ronald Reagan is his own man. I think she has influence in the general sense but any wife of all those years is going to have an opinion. And his daughter Maureen, who

spends a great deal of time at the White House, most certainly has a lot of influence. And ~~he~~ ^{she} doesn't always agree with her, either. That's what makes it such an interesting family.

When I first met Nancy Reagan, she was a housewife in her forties who had never been on the campaign trail before. Ronald Reagan had done all of the campaigning for Senator Goldwater and she had stayed home as most wives do, and loved ^{being} ~~staying~~ ^{that} home in a rather protected environment. To be thrust all of a sudden into Sacramento and be asked to live in an old mansion that was a fire trap and not near any schools. That was a big story in those days, that Nancy Reagan said the governor's mansion wasn't good enough for her. In fact, it wasn't safe enough. The fire department said there was no way they'd ever get off that second floor if a fire came along. The wood was rotting. It was in an awful neighborhood. Now it's a museum.

So she insisted on moving to a suburb. That sounds a little silly now, but in those days, it was pretty courageous. She took a lot of flack from the press on that. She wanted a normal life for her children, especially for her young son, and in a neighborhood, in a

house that looked just like all the other
houses. That was what she wanted. Ultimately,
^{it}
~~that~~ was the best thing. But you're damned if
you do and damned if you don't. I think she
found out the hard way. These things all made
sense to her. She really couldn't understand
that anybody wouldn't agree that this was a
sensible thing to do.

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Nancy Reagan never held a press
conference the whole time she was in
Sacramento. She felt it was presumptuous.
There were a few incidents where she had press
in or something, but she never really called a
press conference except one time. That was
when a man who was this leader of the
opposition in California publicly criticized
her for trying to solicit furniture for a
governor's mansion that wasn't even built. She
was trying to get people to donate antiques or
old California pieces. And there was a big
critical piece in the paper. She called a
press conference the next day and just
absolutely let him have it. It was the best
time, and the only time I ever saw her do
that. She had her dander up and she felt that
they had gone far enough. That was the end of
the criticism. There was never another article

and she got tremendous donations of furniture and antiques from people who wanted to give them to the state to be used in a governor's mansion in the right way.

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Dr. Barbara Kellerman:

There's no set definition for the role of First Lady. The role as realized at any given moment in time really depends largely on three separate factors. One is the woman who's filling it. Two is the man she's married to. And three, by no means the least important, is the temper of the times. One can predict that a First Lady in the 1980s will be different from a First Lady in 1950s.

There are lots of common denominators among First Ladies, and in powerful ways the role has stayed remarkably the same as it was twenty and thirty years ago.

There was one First Lady who deviated somewhat from the norm in our recent history and that was Rosalynn Carter. Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter were very close before they entered the White House. From all appearances, they're as close having left the White House. They were certainly well matched and partners in effect during the four years that they were in the

White House. But Rosalynn Carter always took a very strong interest in the substance of her husband's political life. If that's your interest as First Lady, then the nature of the relationship and the nature of what you talk about and how you decide to spend your time--literally, how your days are spent--will differ enormously than if you are more like Nancy Reagan, which is to say, less interested in substance and more interested in being protective of her husband, as we know her to be.

Rosalynn Carter had an interview in the White House with Barbara Walters. She was asked questions on policy matters. She was asked about energy, ~~she was asked about health, she was asked~~ about the political situation. You will notice that when Nancy Reagan is interviewed, there's rarely a question directed her about any substantive policy issues.

This is not to say that, in the privacy of their own quarters, they don't discuss these issues, but I think it's safe to guess, from the evidence that we have, that she's not ~~very knowledgeable and not~~ as interested in these matters as her predecessor was. Rather, she sees it all through a political lens of sorts, that is, how it will politically effect the well



being of her husband. That should not be lightly dismissed because White House life is political life.

I think Nancy plays a large role with regard to personnel matters, ^{though} I don't ^{believe} think she plays a larger role than other First Ladies have--comparing her to Rosalynn Carter, which is the most obvious comparison because they've been the most powerful First Ladies of recent times. Anyone who reads the newspapers knows that she helps her husband make decisions with regard to who should be around him, and when somebody lets her husband down and gets him into trouble--we have some recent evidence of so-called sloppy staff work--there are immediately reports that Nancy Reagan is furious at this and is doing everything she possibly can to make sure it doesn't happen again.

If you're going to look at the recent First Ladies, they really need to be looked at in their own separate categories. In different ways, they did exert power.

Jacqueline Kennedy certainly was divorced from the political life of her husband. On the other hand, she was so attractive a figure, such a star in the White House, that by osmosis almost her aura lent him an aura of sorts. To be a media celebrity is to exert a kind of



political clout, even if ^{that} clout is only in terms of public relations.

Lady Bird Johnson was for many years--in fact, during the entire Johnson marriage--what I call his trusted and indispensable junior business partner. She was junior because he treated her as if she was junior. She was junior because she knew ~~she was junior~~ or felt herself to be junior and never claimed to be his equal the way Rosalynn and Jimmy would say, "We're partners."

At the same time, she was always engaged in his political life, indispensable to his political life, and remained so in the White House. So her clout during her husband's White House tenure derived from various political activities she undertook on her own. For example, during the 1964 campaign, there was the "Lady Bird Special," which was one of the first efforts by a First Lady to step out on her own to campaign on her own and to really become a political figure in her own right.

She also had her own projects. She had highway beautification and conservation and so forth and so on. Through Lyndon Johnson's dependence on her, through her long historical ties to his political career, and through her



own projects--in at least three ways--she played a political role.

Pat Nixon's political clout was perhaps less than any of the other recent First Ladies. Basically, there are two ways to be politically powerful in the White House, or to have some political impact ^{there} ~~in the White House~~. One is through your tie to your husband, like Nancy Reagan's, and the other is to be such an attractive, imposing, or impressive figure in your right that you get media attention and political attention on your own, the way Jacqueline Kennedy did. Pat Nixon, although she was attentive politically, and played her role capably and well, simply didn't have that strong a relationship with her husband. Nor was she so attractive, to those interested in political life and political culture, that she derived any clout from that. So she had less of an impact than other First Ladies.

Betty Ford is a separate story. The Fords entered the White House in a very unusual way. There was no campaign. Virtually overnight, they were catapulted from relative obscurity into the White House. She played a very important role in those early months, making him better known, attracting attention in her own right. Shortly after they entered the White House, she

developed breast cancer. That really became the first family occasion for the Fords and, through her illness, the Fords, again virtually overnight, became something of a known quantity. It became a very hot topic, as it were, and she got a lot of attention. She was very open about her breast cancer, which other women in public life had not been up to that moment. From that point on, she became rather a loved figure. When he ran for president, for what really amounted to the first time, in 1976, there were buttons, "Betty's Husband in the White House," or, "Betty for President." She really became a very popular First Lady and in many ways deservedly so.

What the public expects from a First Lady depends on the temper of the times. It's a difficult balancing act nowadays because we both are in a very different time with regard to women and what women are supposed to do and what we expect.

Nancy Reagan's experience as First Lady was somewhat atypical. The more conventional pattern for First Ladies, and indeed for presidential families and presidents, is for everyone associated with a new administration to

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to have something of a honeymoon, ~~the~~ and this
~~honeymoon~~ extends to the president's wife.

People are usually withholding judgement. For whatever reason, Nancy Reagan's career as First Lady has been reversed. She was under much more attack during the first year than she has been since and appears to be in much better shape now with regard to her public appearances and her appreciation by the public than she was in the beginning.

The interesting question to ask about Nancy Reagan is exactly ^{how} ~~why~~ she reversed the trend. I think you have to look to the three critical factors, the three pieces of the "First Lady Puzzle." One is Nancy herself. She is much more comfortable now as First Lady than she was in the beginning. She's more relaxed. She's less defensive, less self-protected, and has simply gotten accustomed to the role in a way she was not at the very beginning. Second, there's the trajectory of her husband's career. In the very beginning, the Reagans were an unknown quantity, ~~they~~ ~~were~~ Washington outsiders. No one knew how this so called "B" movie actor from Hollywood would fare in the White House. I think the evidence has been that he has had in many ways a remarkably successful presidency. And his

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1984 electoral victory is evidence of the fact that he is widely admired, liked, respected. People enjoy having him in the White House. If you enjoy having ~~the president in the White House,~~ a particular president in the White House, you are also enjoying having, by definition, the First Lady in the White House.

Finally, it has to do with the times. The Reagans succeeded the Carters. In the beginning, the Carters were much admired for their relatively simple style. Carter would go on camera sitting by the fireplace in a cardigan sweater. In the beginning of his administration that was regarded as an asset. A little later on, people began to hunger for a little bit more glamour in the White House.

When Nancy Reagan first came, she was something of a culture shock. Virtually overnight, we had gone from the relatively simple peanut farmer from Georgia to a Hollywood couple. And this was perhaps too rapid a movement for the American public to take to. It was one thing to have too simple a White House. It was another thing to have a White House that appeared to us to be run more like a monarchy than a democratic republic. So for all three reasons--her own comfort with

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the situation, her husband's popularity, and the fact that we've now gotten used to and rather fond of a more glamorous lifestyle-- she's doing so much better now than she did in the beginning.

The reason First Ladies are such easy targets is because they're out there. They're celebrities with political ideas, and the combination of being out front and associated inevitably with the policies, ideology, and attitudes of her presidential mate, makes them vulnerable on a multiplicity of levels. The trick is for them to find a line between seeming to be politically appropriate and yet personally supportive. That's not easy, as we've seen, in presidents' wives and in candidates' wives.

Some like Jacqueline Kennedy and Nancy Reagan do feel a fairly strong need to keep themselves out of the public limelight. Some like Lady Bird Johnson and Rosalynn Carter, however shy they may both have been to begin with--and there's ample testimony to suggest that they both began as very shy ladies--they somehow overcame this shyness and became public personas.

If you look at a book such as "Lady Bird Johnson's White House Diary," which is a big,

fat tome about her activities in the White House, you will see that there was very little time in her life that was kept to herself. Whenever she had a private minute or two, she almost wrote about it apologetically, as if she were indulging herself. Rosalynn Carter, too, was a workaholic, and most of that worklife was political life.

Nancy Reagan is a more private figure than her predecessor, a more private figure than Lady Bird Johnson. But with the evolution of time, we're seeing her increasingly comfortable with those moments when she is in public.

I think most First Ladies end up, finally, taking on the aura of their husbands. As much as we would like to say, "Let's look at the First Lady in isolation from her presidential mate," I think finally the way history will remember them, except for the few students of the subject of First Ladies, is the way their husbands are remembered. Successful presidents will tend to be accompanied in the mind's eye by successful First Ladies. Failed presidencies will tend to have accompanied First Ladies remembered less than favorably.

This is not to say that there are no distinctions made. Lydon Johnson is known as a very complicated man. His presidency is in some ways very great; in other ways tragically flawed,^{with} Lady Bird Johnson is almost universally admired.

If Nancy Reagan goes down in history favorably, as a good First Lady, then I think she is good in the ways that matter, she is supportive of her husband, she is appropriate in public. But finally she will be remembered in relationship to Ronald Reagan's presidency.

I think she understands it very well, and I think she's extremely happy.

Sheila Tate:

I remember one day when there was an inconsequential story. A reference attributed something happening in the West Wing to her influence. It was something she didn't even know about--didn't have any idea what they were talking about. She said, "You know, some days, I feel like if it rains, it must be my fault." And I remember thinking that she must feel so powerless sometimes to control some of these events because if someone wants to attribute something to you as an unnamed

source, what can you do? She's not able to defend herself constantly. She was deeply upset about it and concerned that there^{should} be some way to change it.

How did she turn it around? She got on an airplane and hardly ever came back to the White House. She was on the road month after month after month. She visited treatment centers where she asked kids, "Tell me what happened? Why did this happen to you? What could you have done?" She said, "You know, you can't learn unless you listen."

She would have been on the road four months earlier had it not been for the Libyan terrorist threat because that constrained us from traveling for a while. So we went out as soon in the new year as we could. I think that first trip heartened her so much because she saw kids responding to her. She saw that, in just visiting one-on-one, she was having an impact. She got so immersed in that subject that I think she forgot about herself.

If you don't set an agenda, the agenda is set for you. If Nancy Reagan, in that first year, is meeting privately and it's not making an impact on the perception in the media, then, obviously, we're not setting our own