

BILL CLINTON AND AMERICAN MYTH OF SUCCESS



THESIS

**Submitted as a partial fulfillment of requirements
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2006**

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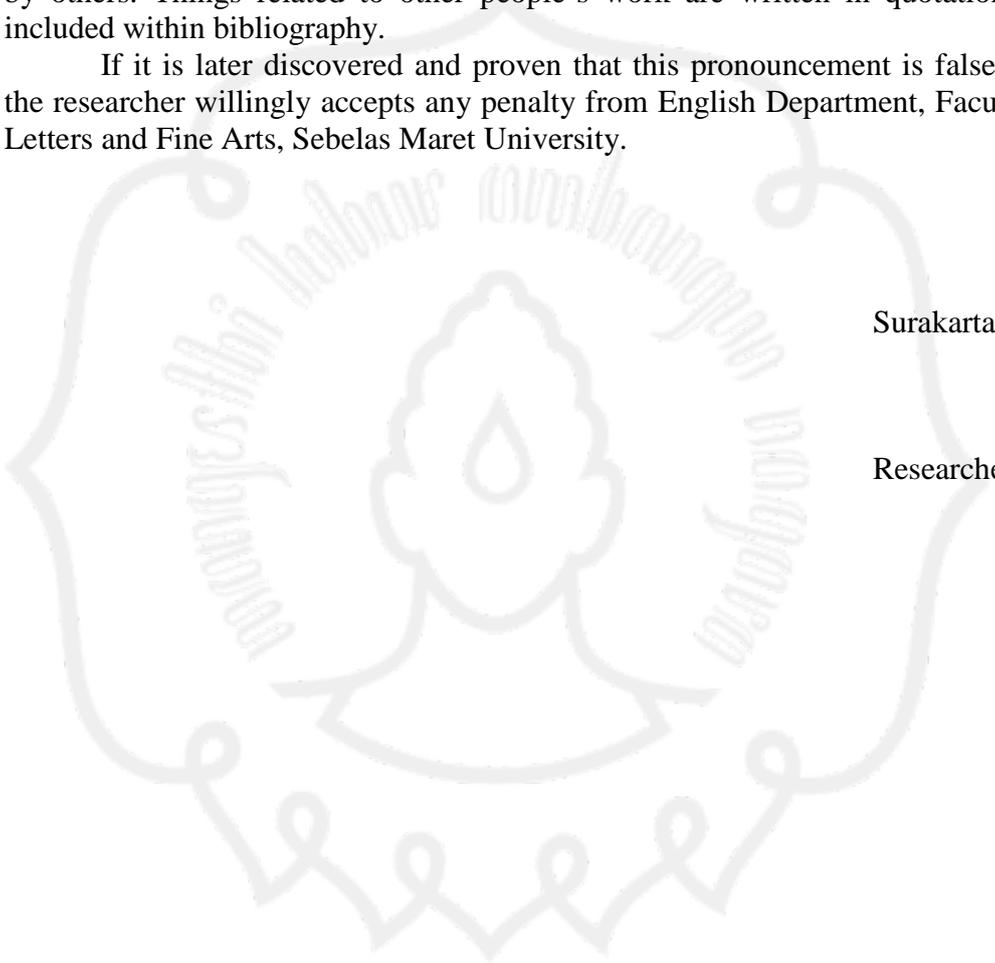
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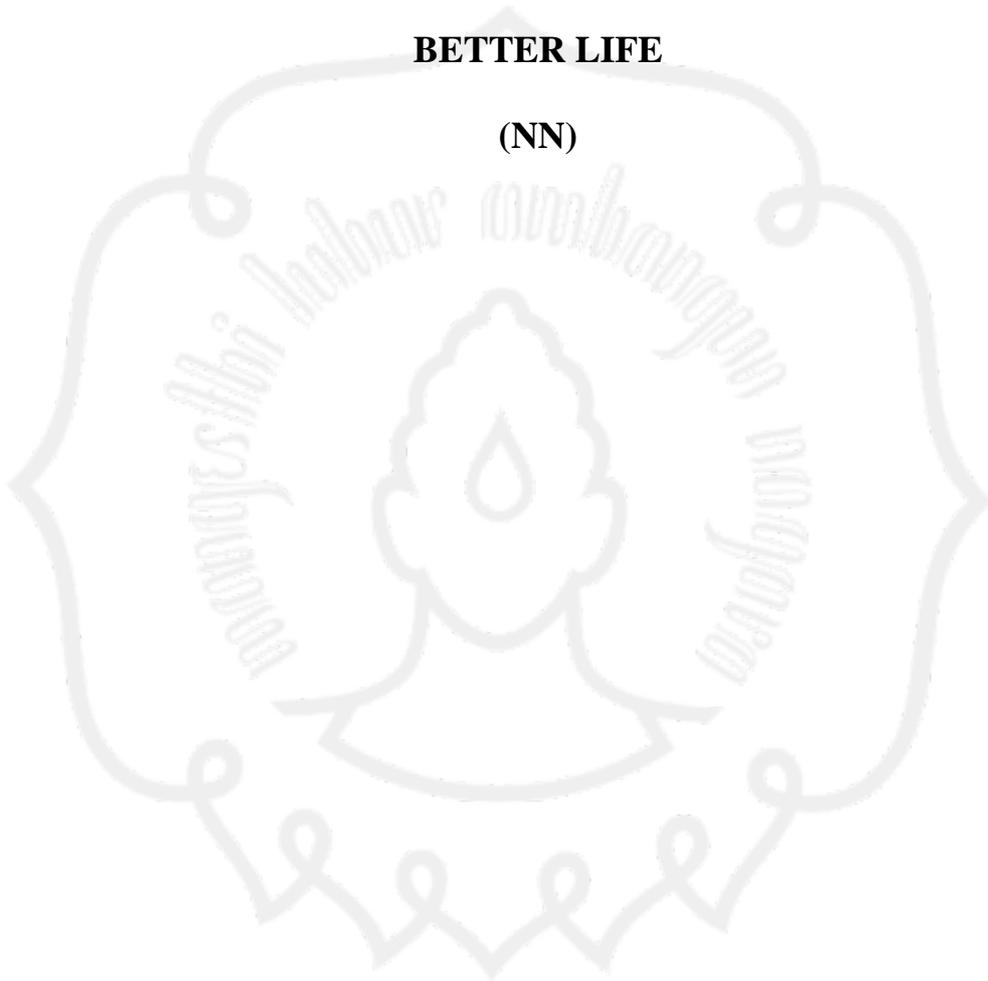
MOTTO

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DEDICATION

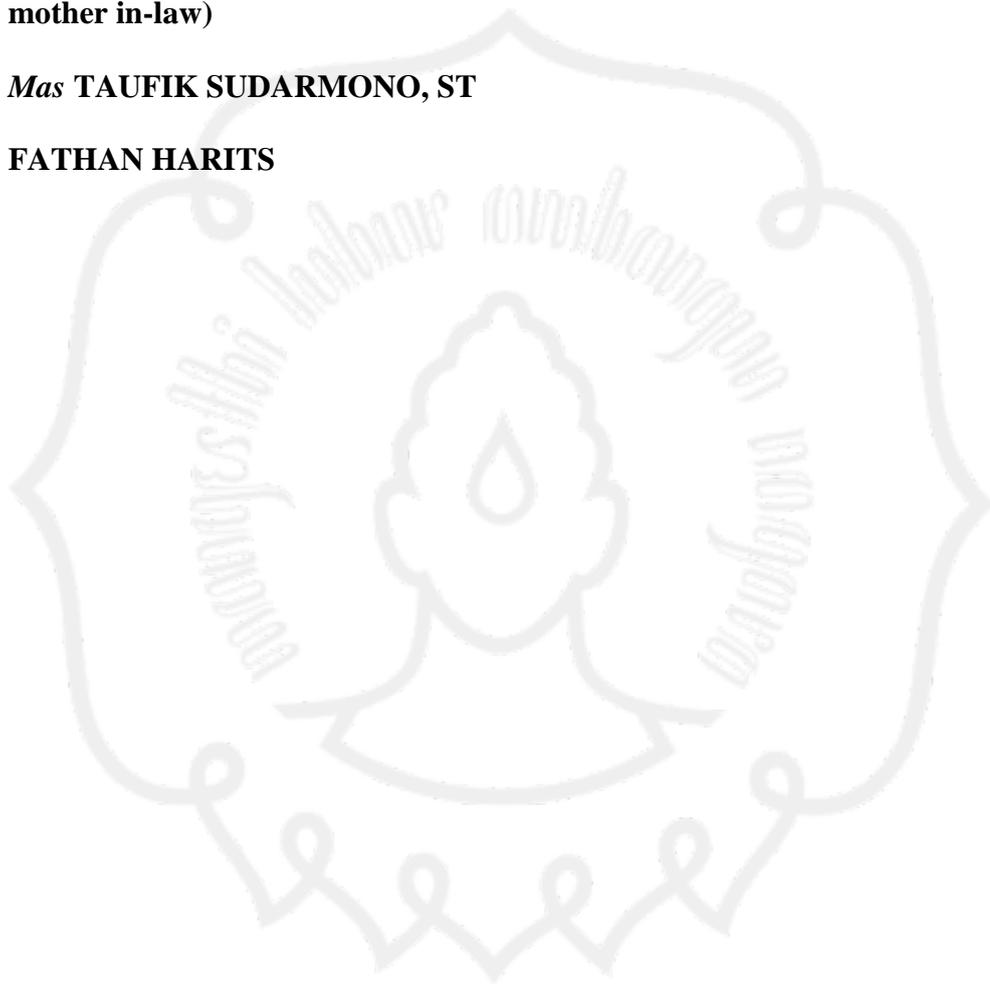
This Thesis is dedicated to:

***Bapak* NUROCHMAN and *Ibu* SRI SUCIATI**

***Bapak* SULARTO, SE (late father in-law) and *Ibu* SITI SUBANDIYAH (late mother in-law)**

***Mas* TAUFIK SUDARMONO, ST**

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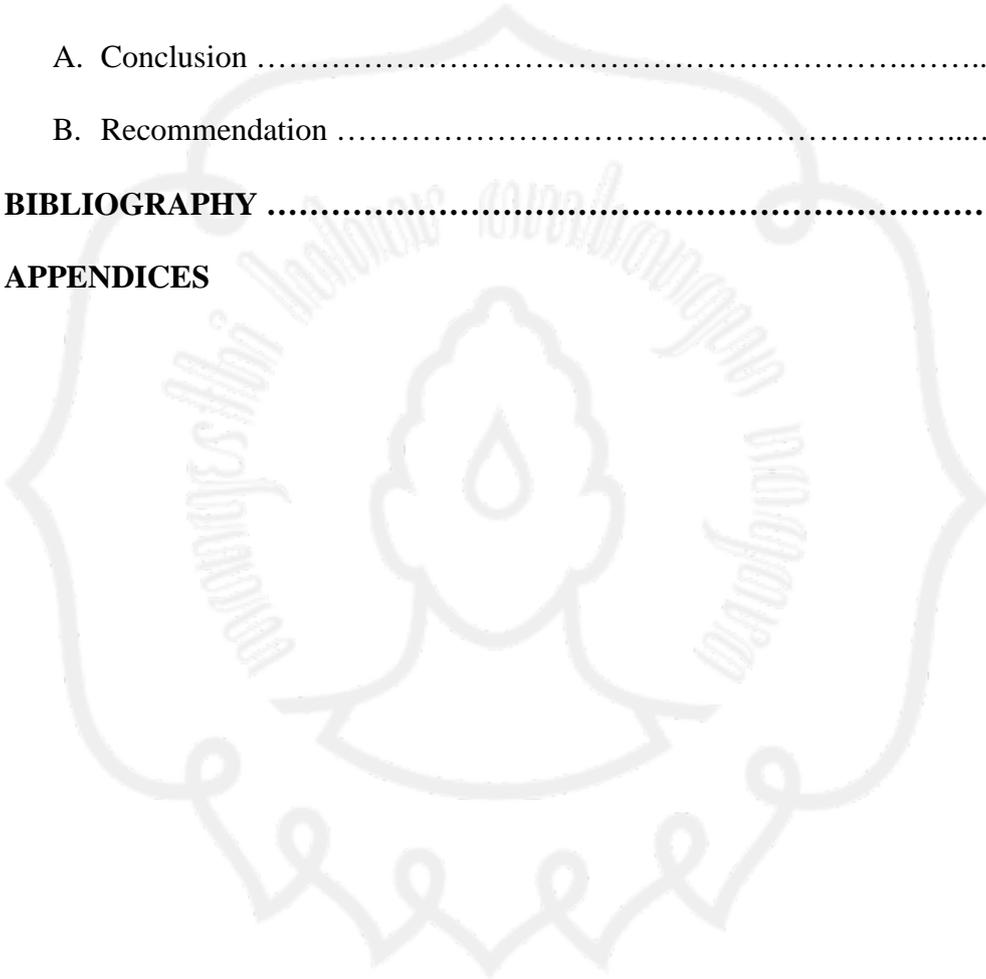
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ABSTRACT

Kikit Herina Utami. C0399039. Bill Clinton and American Myth of Success. Thesis. English Department Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts, Sebelas Maret University. Surakarta

This research is conducted within the boundaries of American Studies research for the purpose to find out how Bill Clinton's political career reflects the American myth of success.

This is a descriptive qualitative library research. The source of data is Bill Clinton's Biography: **Bill Clinton: An American Journey Great Expectation** written by Nigel Hamilton, published by Random House, Inc. New York, 2003. The main data are words and phrases, sentence or even paragraph relevant to the subject matter taken from the source of data. The secondary data is collected from books and other articles related to the study. The approaches used in this thesis are historical, biographical and sociological.

Based on the analysis, the researcher comes into conclusion that Bill Clinton political career reflects the American myth of success where there are self commitment to realize his dream as a president of the United States, hard work, discipline, thrift, undying spirit to fight and support from his loyal wife and friends.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Choosing the Subject

The United States of America is seen as a “land of opportunity” by its people and people of other countries. United States gives equal chances for its people to improve their material and spiritual well-being. The equal opportunity, individual self-improvement, and economic prosperity for all were thought to be the essential ingredients of the American Dream, a dream that had come true for so many (Paludan, 1978: 3).

If we open almost any American magazine, we will find the lavish array of material objects which connote the comfort, the status and the security which are the components of the American dream (Marsden in Nachbar, 1992: 145). For these are the clichés of the American good life: a chicken in every pot, a car in every garage, a place where even the person born into poverty can give a hard pull on his or her life and have a chance at the Presidency or a seat on the Senate. Think of the United States great political and industrial heroes: Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller. Though essentially simple men, they made the most of their native intelligence and natural spirit. They worked hard, rose through the ranks, and were rewarded by fame and or fortune. And that is the American myth of success. With hard work comes achievement, and with achievement comes the material comforts of the American Dream and sometimes even great riches and a place in history (Marsden in Nachbar, 1992: 135).

The myth of success has become the aspect of American Dream. Success for Americans is a symbol of prestige. The symbol is often identified by money although there are other acceptable proof prominence, public notice good works and fame (Smith in Curry, 1984: 90).

It is also noticeable that the Americans always want to be the best. Therefore, they like working hard to reach the best achievement. They want to prove their ability and their competence to others. American society will appreciate and pay more attention to a successful man particularly to a man who is able to succeed by his own effort.

Bill Clinton, the forty-second president of the United States, is the perfect example of baby boomer: on the one hand blessed with a near-genius IQ, on the other, troubled by character faults that made his presidency a veritable soap opera of high ideals, distressing incompetence, model financial stewardship, and domestic misbehavior. In an era of cultural Civil War, the Clinton administration fed the public an almost daily diet of scandal and misfortune.

Who is Bill Clinton, though, and how did this baby-boom long story begin? Clinton's upbringing in Arkansas and his student years at Georgetown, Oxford, and Yale universities help us to see his life not only as a personal story but as the story of modern America.

Behind the closed doors of the house on the hill above Park Avenue in Hot Springs, the struggle between Clinton's stepfather and mother became ultimately unbearable, causing Virginia to move out and divorce Roger Clinton. Unpleasant confrontation, Bill Clinton was good in almost every field save athletics. But the fabled success of the scholarship boy would be marred by the decisions he came

to make regarding Vietnam and military service-choices that haunt him to this day.

We watch with a mixture of alarm, fascination, and feeling of respect and fear as Bill Clinton does so much that is right-and so much that is wrong. He sets his cap for the star student at Yale, young Hillary Rodham, attracting her with his dreams of a better America. Wherever he goes, he charms and disarms young and old, men and women. He becomes a law professor straight out of college; he contests a congressional election in his twenties and almost wins it. He becomes attorney general of his state and within two years is set to become the youngest-ever governor of Arkansas, at only thirty-two. (http://www.geocities.com/arhencyc/wiki/bill_clinton, downloaded June 15, 2005)

Yet, always, there is a curse, a drive toward personal self-destruction and with that the destruction of all those who are helping him on his legendary path. His affair with Gennifer Flowers strains his marriage and later nearly sinks his chance for the presidency. He is thrown out of the governor's office after only one term and suffers a life-shaking crisis of confidence. Though with the stalwart help of a female chief of staff he regains his crown, it is clear that Bill Clinton's charismatic career is a continuous tightrope walk above the forces that threaten to pull him down.

The researcher hopes this thesis will help us to understand the real Bill Clinton as he stumbles and withdraws from the 1988 presidential nomination race but enters it four years later, to make one of the most astonishing bids for the presidency in the twentieth century: the climax of this exciting political, social,

and scandalous journey and to find out the American myth of success in his political career journey.

B. Research Question

In this thesis, the writer presents one research question as follows:

How does Bill Clinton's political career reflect the American myth of success?

C. Goal

The goal of this thesis is:

To find out how Bill Clinton's political career reflects the American myth of success.

D. Scope of the Study

Bill Clinton's political career, from being the Governor of Arkansas until becoming the United States president in 1992, will be the focus of the analysis.

E. Research Method

This research is a library research in the form of descriptive qualitative one. A library research is a study, the data of which is taken from bibliographical resources. While the descriptive qualitative is a way used in a research where the description about something is given, in this case about the research object (Kartono, 1976: 43).

The source of data is Bill Clinton's Biography: **Bill Clinton: An American Journey Great Expectation** written by Nigel Hamilton, published by

Random House, Inc., New York, 2003. The main data are words and phrases, sentence or even paragraph relevant to the subject matter taken from the source of data. The secondary data is collected from books and other articles related to the study.

1. Data Collection

This study is a library research or referential research. It means that this research used all possibilities to take the data from source of data. The source of data is read to get a good understanding. The data were collected by making notes on it. The supporting data were also read. After that, the data which are relevant were collected. Those selected data were joined together to answer the research question that lead to conclusion.

2. Data Analysis

Analyzing data is a process of answering the research question. The first way is exploring Bill Clinton's political career since the first time he enter politics until he became the president of the United States. The second way is connecting it with the American myth of success to reveal that Bill Clinton's political career reflects the American myth of success. In the end, the researcher draws a conclusion.

F. Theoretical Approach

This thesis is conducted under the boundaries of American Studies and especially on the subject of human and society. It was interdisciplinary

approaches. The researcher uses the combination of sociological, historical and biographical approach.

American studies as an approach to the study of culture and history of United States has been preoccupied with two key themes. First, it has been concerned with the meaning of American national identity and the ways in which America might be distinguished from other nations. Second, American Studies has been concerned to explore the possibilities of cooperation between practitioners from different disciplines, and even to develop interdisciplinary methodology (Campbell and Kean, 1997:1-2).

To study Clinton's career in politics based on historical context, the researcher needs historical approach. The historical approach is used to analyze events in the past, certain facts from history and the evolution phenomenon.

This research, basically, explores a Clinton's mind and role. Therefore, it is needed to comprehend the character's background of life by applying biographical approach. Understanding Bill Clinton's detail especially on how the figure's character and identity was shaped is important in order to analyze his conception of politics. The tradition of using biography is important in a historical study, since it emphasizes the description of how important the role of a political figure in a history is.

To understand myth in certain society, we have to know the society condition where the myth develops. Because myth is formed by social beliefs which develop from social activities, habits, and interactions (Setyawan, 2004: 5), sociological approach will be applied in observing social interaction. Sociology is the way to learn about all of social interactions and the impacts of the society.

Polak states: *“sosiologi adalah suatu ilmu pengetahuan yang mempelajari masyarakat secara keseluruhan, yakni hubungan antara manusia dengan manusia, manusia dengan kelompok, kelompok dengan kelompok, baik formil maupun materiil, baik statis maupun dinamis”* (Polak, 1966:7).

The combination of approaches mentioned above, hopefully will give more complete description. Analysis from various aspects will provide better understanding about the material.

G. Thesis Organization

This thesis is structured into four chapters:

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents Background of choosing the subject, research question, goal, scope of the study, research method, theoretical approach, and thesis organization.

CHAPTER II: REFERENCE REVIEW

This chapter presents Bill Clinton's biography and American society and myth of success.

CHAPTER III: ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the analysis to answer the problem statement. It presents the journey of Bill Clinton's political career and Bill Clinton's political career and American myth of success.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents conclusion and recommendation of the research.

CHAPTER II

REFERENCE REVIEW

A. Bill Clinton's Biography

William Jefferson Blythe was born on August 19, 1946 in Hope, Arkansas. His father, William Jefferson Blythe III, had died in an auto accident several months before his mother, Virginia Cassidy Blythe, gave birth to the future president.

Raised in the home of his grandmother, Edith Cassidy, Bill's early years were dominated by two strong women, who often competed for his attention. His mother, an attractive and fun-loving free spirit, was often away from home taking nursing classes in New Orleans. It was during those periods that his grandmother, a temperamental and strong-willed disciplinarian, tried to shape her grandson's character. As little Billy Blythe grew from infancy to toddler, he became not simply the go-between but a sort of prize in the battle between Edith and Virginia.

Between these two poles, bright, little Billy Blythe tried his hardest to satisfy both sides. As his high school friend and daughter of a Baptist minister Carolyn Staley later remarked, Bill would be fated to "wear good on one shoulder and bad on the other" (Hamilton, 2003: 44). This is better illustrated in the fight between grandmother and mother as Edith enrolled Billy at the local Baptist church, even though she herself disliked organized religion. She simply left Billy at the church door to be indoctrinated in the "good" as opposed to the "bad" that Virginia personified.

In 1951, Virginia married Roger Clinton, a used car dealer and abusive alcoholic. The family moved to Hot Springs, an exciting resort town five miles away. Hot Springs in 1953 had a population of 36,807-four times that of Hope (<http://www.historychannel.com/arkansas>, downloaded June 15, 2005). More important, the town had an annual tourist population of half a million, which made it more cosmopolitan than any other town in the state, including the capital, Little Rock.

Little Billy Blythe was driven into town each day to the first private, parochial grade school he had attended in his life: St. John's School, next to St. Joseph's Church on West Grand Avenue. St. John's had been started in 1908 for white children and by the 1950s boasted 250 pupils, all still white (<http://www.historychannel.com>, downloaded June 15, 2005). Classes were conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, and it was they who, in their spinsterly but dedicated way, were the first to recognize the ability of the little Baptist boy in their midst: attentive, bright, and competitive to the point of annoyance.

Roger Clinton Jr., born on July 25, 1956 certainly seemed a godsend: the answer to a prayer for Billy Blythe. He was no longer home alone and would no longer be the sole brickbat between fighting parents. There was another birth that summer, that of a new national political hero. Virginia had bought a television set the year before. Televising of the national conventions brought the drama of political selection to tens of millions of viewers, including ten-year-old Billy Blythe at 1011 Park Avenue.

Television thus provided the beginning of a lifetime love affair with politics, as Billy later acknowledged, "I think it sort of came home to me in a way

on television that it wouldn't have otherwise," he reflected (Hamilton, 2003: 73). The grand television challenge left a lasting impression on him.

On April 9, 1962, Virginia divorce Roger Clinton. At that time, Bill was fifteen. For Virginia, divorce offered liberation without poverty. The days of Roger Clinton's tyranny and alcoholism seemed finally over. The new Virginia could start afresh with her two wonderful boys.

Virginia Clinton moved into her new home at 213 Scully Street on the other side of Hot Spring. Her divorce had been finalized on May 15. To mark this new family scenario, Billy, the next month went to see the chancery judge at the Garland Country Court with a view to changing his name into William Jefferson Clinton. Sometimes after years he would say, "I decided it was something I ought to do. I thought it would be a gesture of solidarity. And I thought it would be good for my brother, who was coming up." (Hamilton, 2003: 111).

At the age of sixteen, Bill Clinton had been a junior class president at Hot Springs High and had subsequently put his name forward for the annual training week in politics and government:

"The Boys State is a program where the leaders or the people at various high schools will pick a number of boys who are finishing their junior year. You get sponsors, and certain boys are selected for leadership qualities, and they go to this summer school. You spend a week learning about the workings of government. You are divided into cities and counties and states. People run for office. You carry out elections. It is designed to foster knowledge about the American political system, the American governmental system and get you involved in government. So that, theoretically, you'll have men that will know about

government and be very involved in the system” said Joe Purvis (Hamilton, 2003: 117).

The Boys State took place at Camp Robinson, which is a military installation; it was a World War II military army camp. But Bill was not content with Boys State: he was running for Boys Nation. Election for Boys Nation, held at the end of the session at Camp Robinson, would take two winners to Washington D.C., to participate in a week of mock political meetings, sightseeing, meetings with real senators and a visit to the White House to meet the President of the United States.

Bill won his first significant election outside school at the end of the week. For several weeks later, in July 1963, Boys Nation senators Bill Clinton of Hot Springs and Larry Taunton of El Dorado, Arkansas flew to Washington D.C. There, the seventeen-year-old Bill Clinton was captured in a historic photograph shaking hands with his political idol, President John F. Kennedy, in the White House Rose Garden. That handshake later symbolized the continuity between the Kennedy 1960s and the Clinton 1990s.

Bill Clinton graduated from high school in 1964 and enrolled at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., where he majored in international affairs. He was elected president of his class during his freshman and second years. “Bill Clinton was not a normal 1960s undergraduate,” (Hamilton, 2003: 133) his American Spectator nemesis and Georgetown graduate contemporary Emmet Tyrrell would later reflect. At an “epochal moment in American history” Bill was a government “goody-goody”, in other words, “a sycophant”:

“Generally of prosaic mind, the student government goody-goody rushes through four years of college, living a delusory life usually in frequent and unwholesome proximity to precisely those professors judged by serious scholars and discerning students to be decidedly flaky. Always, the student government goody-goody imagines himself cast in the role of a famous leader” (Hamilton, 2003: 133).

During his junior and senior years, Clinton worked as a clerk for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which was chaired by Senator J. William Fulbright, an Arkansas Democrat. Clinton greatly admired Fulbright, who was a leading critic of United States involvement in the Vietnam War (1959-1975). Just prior to his graduation from Georgetown, he won a prized Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford University in England for two years. However, he was faced being drafted for the Vietnam War due to a change in federal policy that eliminated almost all college deferments.

Bill needs to serve his country, but not in Vietnam. In New York he set about pulling the necessary influence to get his draft induction withdrawn so that he could fulfill his military obligations in the National Guard, the army reserve, or ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corp).

Bill had been granted his wish. His draft induction was withdrawn on the contractual understanding that he fulfills his stated intent to go to the Law School of the University of Arkansas from September 1969 and to serve in its army ROTC from the following spring, becoming a commissioned officer in three years' time. He would thus be saved from serving in Vietnam. Three years in the Law School of the University of Arkansas ROTC and another two years in uniform as an officer seemed a heavy price to pay for avoiding the draft. Back in

England, he again placed his name in the draft pool after the Johnson administration imposed a three-month freeze in calling up new recruits. His birth date draw came up 311, a distant enough number to ensure that he would never be called.

In 1970 Clinton enrolled at Yale University Law School, where he studied for a law degree. He paid his way with a scholarship and by working two or three jobs at the same time. At Yale he met a fellow law student Hillary Diane Rodham, from Chicago.

As a Republican Hillary Rodham was not quite as smart as a Democrat Bill Clinton, but she had an impressive degree of focused intellect, a strong ability to cut away the irrelevant and less relevant and cut to the core issue. In a conventional woman this was a most unattractive character, since it negated traditional society's ideal of maternal love; soft, securing, and cuddling. Hillary Diane Rodham was a new breed of woman.

Unlike Bill Clinton, Hillary had, for example, succeeded in becoming senior class president at her women's college. In the spring of 1970, toward the end of her first academic year at the school, Hillary had already become involved in the Black Panthers' cause. Whereas Bill Clinton had marshaled five hundred well-mannered student protesters in London, Hillary had helped marshal 15,000 Yalies on the university green in support of the Black Panthers, watched by gas-masked police, armed units of the 82nd Airborne and 2nd Marines, and National Guardsmen. As an unelected but prominent spokesman for law school students, Hillary had negotiated with the university administration, achieving high marks

for her cool handling of the hotheads in an unstable situation. She also achieved high marks for her class work.

Thus romance between Hillary Rodham and Bill Clinton gathered pace in the early summer of 1971. What drew Hillary to Bill, then, was his very promiscuity with love; his very refusal to count out his love or be miserly in love. Compared with the cautious New England approach to money and affection, his was a generous, giving spirit. That he did not date her exclusively and wise saying, perhaps even had sex with, other women only increased the challenge. Instinctively, she could sense his need for her; of the hard ambitious intellect within her little body. Bill and Hillary were married on October 11, 1975, in Bill's new house. They have a daughter named Chelsea Victoria Clinton, born on February 27, 1980.

Toward the end of Bill's studies at Yale, he managed the Texas campaign of the Democratic presidential nominee George McGovern and then worked briefly as a staff member of the House Judiciary Committee. After graduation, Clinton moved back to Arkansas with a job teaching constitutional law at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Almost as soon as he arrived home, Clinton threw himself into politics, running for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives against the incumbent Republican John Paul Hammerschmidt. Although Clinton lost this race, it was the closest election for Hammerschmidt in his twenty-six years in Congress.

Having demonstrated a great amount of energy for politics and holding connections to the influential Arkansas Senator Fulbright, Clinton was quickly identified as a rising political star in his state. Two years later, Arkansas voters

elected him state attorney general. Then in 1978, at age thirty-two, Clinton ran for governor, winning an easy victory and becoming one of the nation's youngest governors to date. However, his youth and inexperience left voters unimpressed. Governor Clinton had several missteps, including failing to handle rioting among 18,000 Cuban refugees temporarily interned at Fort Charles, Arkansas. He also raised gasoline taxes and auto license fees to pay for road construction, and cleverly talked about Arkansas as a stepping-stone to national politics. Consequently, the voters turned him out in favor of Frank White, a little known Republican savings and loan executive.

Shocked by his defeat, Clinton went to work for a Little Rock law firm but spent most of his time campaigning for re-election. In the 1982 race, Clinton admitted his mistakes and used his incredible charm and well-honed TV ads to convince the voters to give him another chance. He won in 1982 and again in 1984. Voters then supported him for two, four-year terms in 1986 and 1990, a spectacular rebound that earned him the name of the "Comeback Kid." (http://www.geocities.com/arhencyc/wiki/bill_clinton, downloaded June 15, 2005)

As governor, Clinton championed centrist issues that avoided conflict in place of mediation. He strongly advocated for educational reform, appointing Hilary Clinton to lead a committee to draft higher standards for Arkansas schools. One of the committee's proposals adopted by Clinton's administration called for competence test for all teachers; this policy development stirred up a national debate. Governor Clinton's sweeping education reforms positively impacted Arkansas schools, which experienced a decrease in dropout rates and increase in

college-entrance exam test scores under his watch, though the state remained at the bottom in national ranking of educational achievement.

During Clinton's tenure as governor of Arkansas, he dropped his opposition to capital punishment. He promoted welfare reforms aimed at pushing welfare recipients into the workforce, and moved quickly to promote affirmative action-appointing more African Americans to state boards, commissions, and agency post than all of his predecessors combined. Additionally, he initiated a style of government that looked like a permanent election campaign. Using the talents of the political consultant Richard Morris, Clinton pushed legislative agenda based upon public opinion polls. The governor and his strategist then built support for their policies through well-orchestrated sales campaigns that used television, leaflets, and telephone banks to pressure state lawmakers.

Clinton's first major effort into national politics occurred when he was enlisted to speak at the Democratic Party convention in 1988, introducing candidate Michael Dukakis. Clinton's address, scheduled to last fifteen minutes, became a debacle as Clinton gave an incredibly dull speech that lasted over half an hour.

Despite his setback, Bill Clinton prepared for a run in 1992 against incumbent President George H.W. Bush. In the circumstances of the Persian Gulf War, President Bush seemed undefeatable, and several potential Democratic candidates passed on what seemed to be a lost cause.

Clinton won the 1992 election against the Republican Bush and independent candidate Ross Perot, largely on a platform focusing on domestic issues, notably the economic recession of the pre-election period, using the line

“It’s the economy, stupid!” in his campaign headquarters (<http://www.americanpresident.org/history/billclinton/biography>, downloaded, June 15, 2005).

Clinton’s opponents raised various “character” issues during the campaign, including Clinton’s evasion of the draft during the Vietnam War, and his clever response to a question about past marijuana use. Allegations of womanizing and illegal business deals also were raised. While none of these unproved faults led Clinton’s defeat, they did fuel unusually attack opposition to Clinton’s policies among many conservatives from the very beginning of his presidency.

Clinton was the first Democrat to serve two full terms as president since Franklin Delano Roosevelt. His election temporarily ended an era in which the Republican Party had controlled the presidency for twelve continuous years, and for twenty of the previous twenty-four years. That election also brought the Democrats full control of the political branches of the federal government, including both houses of Congress as well as the presidency, for the first time since the administration of Jimmy Carter.

Immediately upon taking office, Clinton fulfilled a campaign promise by signing the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which required employers of a certain size to allow their employees to take unpaid leave because of a family or medical emergency. While this action was popular, Clinton’s unwilling to fulfill another campaign promises relating to the acceptance of openly gay members of the military garnered criticism from both the left and the right. After much debate, Clinton and the Pentagon agreed to a “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Policy”

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/bill_clinton, downloaded June 15, 2005), which officially remains in effect.

Throughout the 1990s, Clinton was in charge over continuous economic expansion, reductions in unemployment, and growing wealth through the great rise in stock market. Clinton's role in promoting this prosperity is a matter of considerable debate.

As president, Clinton was characterized as being a much more "hands on" president than some of his Republican predecessors. While Bush and Reagan had operated under what some critics dubbed an Imperial Presidency of bureaucratic "courtiers," Clinton had much more unfaithful relationships with his aides, and did not delegate them significant powers. He went through four White House Chiefs of Staff, a record number of men in a position that had once been the epicenter of the Imperial Presidency. This is not to say that Clinton was without political confidants in the White House. The First Lady Hilary Clinton played an active role in helping the President form policy, and Clinton's two best friends and most loyal supporters, Paul Begala and James Carville could often be seen defending the President's policies in Washington and on the media.

In the 1996 election, Clinton won re-election over Republican Bob Dole, while the Republicans still control of the Congress but lost a few seats. In 1999, in conjunction with a Congress controlled by the Republican Party, Clinton balanced the U.S. budget for the first time since 1969.

B. American Society and the Myth of Success

Myths are stories, drawn from history, that have acquired through usage over many generations a symbolizing function that is central to the cultural functioning of the society that produces them (Nachbar, 1992: 85). Myth says nothing about “truth” or “falsity” of any belief or value; it says that the belief or value is significant and long lasting, vital to the mindset of the culture which holds it, and that is widely accepted as being true (Nachbar, 1992: 84). The myth of success in America may sometimes be true in that someone do work hard, get a little good fortune and thereby achieve wealth, fame, and power.

One of the single greatest drives within human being is the drive toward success (<http://www.msu.edu/~kimheej/succcess.htm>, downloaded July 25, 2005). This is understandable, as the opposite alternative to success in life is failure. But in America they have a myth of who can be successful. Success in America is living the American Dream: Owning a nice house, having a perfect family, owning two cars, and excelling in career. But the myth of success is that everyone has a chance at living this dream. It doesn't matter who you are, what economic class you are born into, what gender you are, or what the color of your skin is. As long as you try your hardest and contribute to society you will have the opportunity to succeed. But this has been proven untrue time and time again. With few exceptions, success is only available to those who have from the start and those who are not held back by minority status or gender or other factors. In fact, the myth of success is used against minorities (<http://www.msu.edu/kimheej/success.htm>, downloaded July 25, 2005). It is dangled in front of them like a carrot getting them to work as hard as they can

contribute to society. It is supposed to keep them in the dark about the oppression that exists, and happy they live in the land of opportunity. But, in reality, the myth of success is a tool of oppression used by the majority to oppress the minority in America.

Contrary to popular belief, America is not a classless society (<http://www.msu.edu/kimheej/success.htm>, downloaded July 25, 2005).

Economically, Americans are divided by economic class into lower, middle, and upper class. And yet, if the upper class is the wealthiest twenty percent of Americans, then the upper class alone holds eighty-five percent of the nation's wealth (Mantsios, 2000: 321). This means that one-fifth of the nation's population controls nearly seven-eighths of the wealth. Mantsios also tells that the lowest class, made up of seven percent of Americans, live below the federal poverty line (Mantsios, 2000: 321). This means that over one in fourteen Americans are poor. And yet, the economic class you are born into is not the sole factor of success.

Americans are also divided into racial and gender class. The economic and racial or gender boundaries are often found in the same places. For example, Mantsios tells that, while one in eleven white household lives in poverty, one in three Latino and one in three black led households life in poverty. The statistics are even more discouraging for women, where one in four white women led and one in two black or Latino led household life in poverty (Mantsios, 2000: 333). These numbers clearly show lines that divide those who will succeed from those who will not. Though many will say it is possible that women and minorities are simply lazy or unqualified, there is no way that simple answer can account for black woman led household to be more than five times as likely to be poor as a

white man led household. There are clearly outside factors at work. And how can a child from a poor household who has to dropout of high school to work and help the family compete with a rich child who can go to Stanford or Harvard fully paid? It does not matter how much the poor child wants to succeed or how hard he or she tries. He or she simply cannot compete. And it is far more likely for this student who cannot compete to be a minority.

The racial group most often cited as an example minority that upholds the myth of success is Asian Americans. Asian American household incomes often meet or exceed those of the white majority. However, according to Takai in *Race at the End of History*, there are two main factors that contribute to this. First, “A close look at these number reflects that Asian American families typically have more workers per family than white families, which serves to incline upward Asian American family incomes,” (Takai, 2000: 386). So while an Asian American household will have a greater income than a white household, the three or four working family members will each make less than the two white working families each do. Furthermore, most Asian Americans live in areas with the nation highest cost of living:

The majority of the Asian American population lives in three states: New York, California, and Hawaii, with the highest concentration situated in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, and Honolulu. These cities annually report among the highest cost of living indexes in the entire country. So, of course, an inflated index will incline income upward. Those numbers do

not necessarily suggest a higher standard of living, however.

(Takai, 2000: 386)

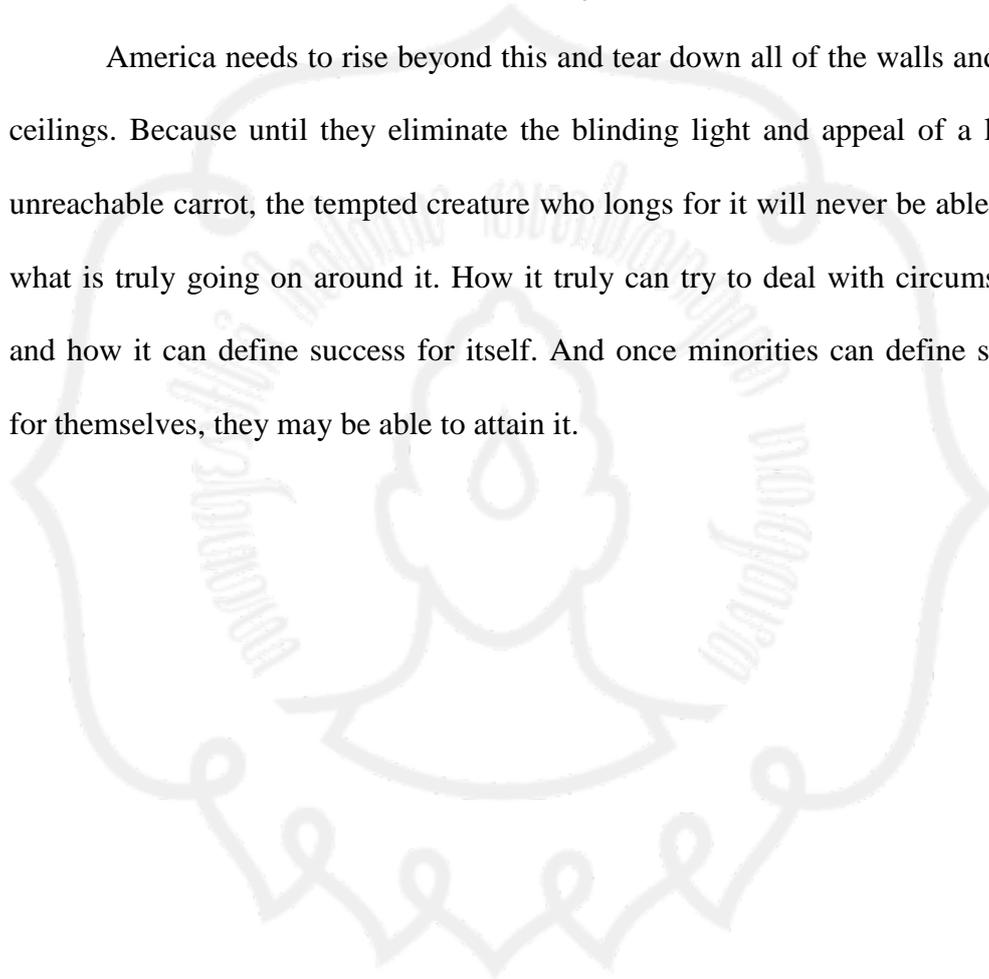
However, the skewed statistics are still broadcasts. They are shouted from the highest mountains to show that the myth of success is real, and any minority member who wants to work hard can succeed. And the reason is clear. When a minority complains about the economic discrimination against them and how they are trapped in this class, the majority can just point out how all you need is hard work, citing the skewed Asian American example. If the majority can sell the myth well enough that everyone believes it, nobody will ever question their place or see it as the system's fault. This is how the upper class majority uses the myth to oppress the lower class minorities.

Another effect of the myth of success is broadness. It is all covering, and does not argue with factors like race, class, and gender. Instead, it simply ignores them. In *Horatio Alger*, Dalton comments on this oversight in regards to race and racial classes. "The Alger myth encourages people to blink at the many barriers to racial inequality (historical, structural, and institutional) that litter the social landscape," (Dalton, 2004: 315). Basically, by simply ignoring these factors of race they are indirectly discounted; out of sight, out of mind. The tyrannical majority simply ignores factors, and the "ignorant masses" which blindly follow the majority see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil. And the minority blacks who just had their sizable racial disadvantage completely discounted needs to nothing to succeed but to work hard.

The myth of success in America is clearly inaccurate, but at the same time clearly serves a purpose. Its purpose is not, however, motivation (Ernest, 2005: 3).

No, its purpose is to further oppress minorities it claims to be the key for. It is the carrot that draws them in and keeps them quiet and happy, and yet it is also the stick that beats them into acceptance of defeat so the majority can stay on top. And even though the definition of success is a personal judgment call, the myth of success paves the way for a definition of success that is the same for everybody, and at the same time out of reach for so many.

America needs to rise beyond this and tear down all of the walls and glass ceilings. Because until they eliminate the blinding light and appeal of a largely unreachable carrot, the tempted creature who longs for it will never be able to see what is truly going on around it. How it truly can try to deal with circumstance, and how it can define success for itself. And once minorities can define success for themselves, they may be able to attain it.



CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

How Bill Clinton's Political Career Reflects the American Myth of Success

A. The Journey of Bill Clinton's Political Career

Clinton had worked on a number of political campaigns in the late 1960s, including those of several Arkansas Democratic politicians and a U.S. Senate candidate from Connecticut. In 1974, midway through his first year teaching at the University of Arkansas, Clinton entered his first political race, campaigning for a seat in the United States House of Representatives. The incumbent Republican congressman, John Paul Hammerschmidt, was a popular candidate and was considered unbeatable. Clinton defeated three candidates for the Democratic Party nomination and ran an energetic campaign against Hammerschmidt. Although Hammerschmidt defeated Clinton with 52 percent of the vote, the election was his closest in 26 years in Congress.

Clinton's close race with Hammerschmidt earned him statewide attention and helped him during his campaign to be attorney general of Arkansas in 1977. He defeated two Democrats for the nomination and had no Republican opposition. Clinton took public office for the first time in January 1977. As attorney general, he fought rate increases by public utilities and opposed the construction of a large coal-burning power plant. He promoted tougher laws to protect the environment and consumers.

When Arkansas governor David Pryor ran for the United State Senate in 1978, Clinton ran for governor. He promised to improve the state's schools and

highways and to improve economic conditions so that more jobs would be created. At that time, the average income of people in Arkansas ranked 49th among the 50 states. Clinton won easily, receiving 60 percent of the vote against four opponents in the Democratic primary election and 63 percent against the Republican candidate, Lynn Lowe, in the general election. When he took office in January 1979 at age 32, he was one of the youngest ever governors in the nation's history (<http://www.americanpresidents.org/history/billclinton/biography>, downloaded June 15, 2005).

Clinton's first term as governor included efforts to improve Arkansas's economy. One of his biggest successes as governor was his highway program, but it was politically costly. Clinton thought good highways were a key to developing the state, and the state's roads were among the worst in the country. To upgrade the highways, he asked the legislature to pass a package of tax increases. The largest increases were on licensing fees on big cars and on large trucks such trailer and container that damaged the highways with heavy loads. Clinton was forced to make compromises in his plan because many businesses and the trucking industry opposed his program. The compromise plan passed but was unpopular because it demanded more taxes individual car owners. The plan was also opposed by the trucking and poultry industries because it did not raise the weight limit for trucks on Arkansas highways. (<http://www.geocities.com/archencyc/wiki>, downloaded June 15, 2005)

Clinton also undertook other legislative initiatives that generated opposition. His criticism of the practice of clear-cutting trees in national forests alienated the lumber and paper-making companies, which were the largest

employers in the state. Physicians opposed his efforts to increase health care in poor, rural areas. Bankers disliked Clinton's proposal to withhold state funds from banks that did not lend enough money for businesses that created jobs in their communities. The state's largest utility disagreed with Clinton over the cost-sharing arrangements for distributing power from nuclear plants in Mississippi.

Another factor affecting the governor was the presence of Cuban refugees in Arkansas. In 1980 Cuba temporarily removed its exit restrictions and permitted about 120,000 people to go to the United States. In May 1980, President Jimmy Carter temporarily housed about 18,000 Cuban refugees at an old United States Army post near Fort Smith, Arkansas. By the end of May, the confined refugees were upset with delays in their resettlement, and some 300 escaped from the fort. On June 1 approximately 1,000 Cuban refugees broke through the gate of the post and were met in the nearby town of Barling by about 500 armed townspeople (<http://www.historychannel.com>, downloaded June 15, 2005). State officers had controlled the refugees, but the incident proved disastrous for Clinton, who had previously campaigned on his friendship with Carter. The incident marked the start of a historic shift of Democratic votes to the Republican Party both in the country and in Arkansas.

Clinton ran for re-election in 1980 against Frank D. White, a Little Rock businessman who had switched to the Republican Party to run against Clinton. White received support from many of those alienated by Clinton-including the trucking and wood-products industries, the poultry industry, banks, and utilities. In addition, White used television advertisements that showed the Cuban rioting and claimed that they would be released into Arkansas communities and would

take jobs away from Arkansas workers. Clinton's popularity fell rapidly further, and White won the election with about 52 percent of the vote.

After his defeat, Clinton joined a large corporate law firm in Little Rock. Against the advice of most of his friends and advisers, who urged him to wait before running for office again, Clinton quickly began planning his campaign for the 1982 governor election. Clinton won the Democratic nomination, although it required a runoff election because of the closeness for the race. In the general election, Clinton faced White, who was running for reelection, and the two candidates exchanged bitter charges. White repeated his accusations from the 1980 campaign, and Clinton accused White of unfairly letting utilities raise the rates people paid for electricity and telephone service. Clinton promised he would make it harder for utilities to obtain rate increases. Clinton campaigned for the votes of blacks, and he received more than 95 percent of their votes. Clinton ultimately defeated White with nearly 55 percent of the vote.

Clinton had found lessons in his 1980 defeat about how to govern. He learned to choose his fights carefully, to resist the urge to change everything at once, and to prepare people before proposing major changes. These lessons helped Clinton win re-election in 1984, 1986, and 1990, with the last re-election coming after the gubernatorial term was changed from two years to four years.

At the start of his second term, Clinton decided to spend all his energies trying to improve education, which he thought was the state's biggest problem. Clinton believed that the state's poor education system neither prepared children for good jobs nor made Arkansas attractive to industries that offered such jobs. He appointed his wife as the head of a committee charged with proposing higher

standards for Arkansas schools. She conducted hearings in each of the state's 75 counties, and she and her husband made numerous speeches across the state, saying more should be demanded from schools and students.

In the fall of 1983, Clinton called the legislature into a special session to approve many changes in the school system. Clinton won approval of most parts of his sweeping reform program; taxes were increased to pay teachers more money, offer more courses in the high schools, and provide college scholarships. State money for education was distributed differently to help the poorest schools. Eight graders were required to pass a test of basic knowledge before going to high school, and all school teachers and administrators had to take a basic knowledge test to keep their jobs. The Clinton administration also adopted tough new standards proposed by Hillary Clinton's committee. These standards raised the requirements for graduation from high school and forced high schools to offer more sciences, mathematics, foreign languages, arts, and music classes. School districts that did not meet these requirements within three years would be merged into districts that did meet the standards (<http://www.americanpresidents.org/history/billclinton/biography>, downloaded June 15, 2005).

The requirement that called for testing of teachers angered many school teachers and generated a national debate. But the program, along with the taxes, proved popular with Arkansas voters. During this time, Arkansas students improved their scores on college-entrance test. In the early 1980s, a high percentage of Arkansas students dropped out of school before graduating, and

fewer high school graduates went below the national average, and the percentage of young people who went to college matched the national average.

Clinton also concentrated on economic development, promoting new businesses and job growth. He introduced an economic package to change banking laws, provide money to start new technology-oriented businesses, arrange loans for people to start new businesses, and reduce the taxes of large Arkansas companies that expanded their production and created new jobs. The legislature approved nearly entire package. Although the rate at which new jobs were created in Arkansas in the late 1980s was among the highest in the nation, most of these jobs did not pay high wages, and the average family income remained low.

Clinton had difficulty trying to persuade the legislature to raise more taxes to carry out further reforms in education. The business groups he had once angered, the state's largest electric utility, the wood-products industry, trucking companies, the poultry industry, and other farm groups, combined to block Clinton's proposed tax hike. They also defeated legislation that would have imposed higher ethical standards on public officials and lobbyists.

In the November 1984 gubernatorial election, Bill Clinton was triumphantly reelected for a third two-year term, winning by a 63-to-37 percent margin against the Republican nominee, a Jonesboro contractor named Woody Freeman. It was a landslide.

While Hillary continued her struggle to reform Arkansas public education, the good moods permitted Bill Clinton to envision a brighter economic future for Arkansas based on a better access to education. The governor began to receive national approvals for his and his wife's work on educational improvement in

Arkansas. After a long period of uncontrolled inflation and unemployment, the economic situation in America had improved and under Clinton's guidance the Arkansas economy did the same too.

Since Arkansas had achieved statehood in 1836, its governors had been elected to serve two-year terms in office. In the fall of 1984, however, legislators had tentatively suggested changing the two-year term to four years, subject to voters' ratification-the new rule to begin with the gubernatorial candidate elected in November 1986, in line with other states.

In July 1985, Bill Clinton announced that he would run for reelection as governor in 1986 for the four-year term, which he promised he would serve out fully, his audience listened with interest and respect for his lawyerly long explanation. His words were carefully chosen. "I cannot ask you to stay the course if I am willing to spend the rest of this term as governor running for some other office of trying to push Arkansas forward," he declared. "To put it simply," he maintained, "I want to stay home to finish this job." (Hamilton, 2003: 444)

The November 1986 election told it all. Former governor Frank White carried a mere seven of the seventy-five Arkansas counties. By a landslide majority, 439,882 votes to White's 248,427, Governor Bill Clinton, having been made chairman of the National Governors Association and chairman of the Education Commission of the States, was elected to a fourth gubernatorial term, this time for four years in consequence of a ballot item approving the legislators' amendment to the state constitution.

Another reason to run, and a reason that was of critical importance in mapping out a logical case against his chief of staff's objections to his running

was the matter of other aspirants. As he spoke to the group of media, staff, and supporters, Governor Clinton therefore ran over the alternative candidates from his own and the Republican Party. Not one of them, in his opinion, was worthier than him for all that himself came from a rail side, rented house in Hope. He might be hard to make a decision and hard to pin down in terms of issues, but were any of the other potential candidates any better?

“I believe in what you and I can do together,” the governor of Arkansas therefore suddenly announced, looking at the sea of old friends and supporters-buoyed up by their “imploring looks.” “And so I am here to say this. In spite of all my reservations about the personal considerations, I believe that more than any other person who could serve as governor, I could do the best job.” (Hamilton, 2003: 530)

It was the turning point in Bill Clinton’s life. This was preacher stuff, and completely untrue, but the relief of the crowd was clear. Bill Clinton would run again! With more than five hundred gubernatorial appointments and reappointments made every year, there was good reason for supporters to break out with almost enthusiastic applause. Reporters rushed out to file their stories as the press conference ended, while Bill and Hillary, who had arrived hand in hand, kissed each other on the lips and hugged each other tight: their marriage saved and their new future before them.

Clinton thus sailed through the gubernatorial primary with a 14 percent clear lead over the rest of the stroke, avoiding a runoff. He was home and dry as long as he felled his Republican opponent in November. The results of the

election were gratifying. Just under 400,000 Arkansans gave their votes to the incumbent governor and only 292,000 to the Republican challengers. Clinton collected 59 percent of the vote, far above expectations. He would become governor of Arkansas for a fifth time, by a landslide. Triumphant, Governor Bill Clinton would be all set to run for the presidential nomination, two years later, from the grand, gated grounds of the Arkansas governor's mansion in Little Rock.

After his election to a fifth term in 1990, Clinton was more successful in getting his legislative program passed. Based on his overall success at the legislative session in 1991, Clinton announced that, despite a campaign promise in 1990 to complete a four-year term, he intended to run for president because he had accomplished his goals for the state more quickly than he had imagined. (<http://www.americanpresidents.org/history/billclinton/biography>, downloaded June 15, 2005)

Clinton had headed national leadership roles during his years as governor. In 1985 and 1986 he served as chairman of the Southern Growth Policies Board, a group that planned strategies for economic development in 12 Southern states and Puerto Rico. He became vice chairman of the National Governors Association in 1985 and was the organization's chairman in 1986 and 1987. As chairman, Clinton became a spokesman for the National's governors. In 1988, he led a movement to change the nation's system of providing welfare for the poor people. In 1990 and 1991 Clinton headed the Democratic Leadership Council, a group of moderate Democrats and business people who work to influence national policies.

Meanwhile, on May 6, 1991, Governor Clinton gave a crucial speech to the national convention of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council in

Cleveland, Ohio. He had crisscrossed the West from Los Angeles to Colorado, setting up chapters of the council as chairman, but in order to show he was heading a party of New Democrats, not Old Democrats.

As the summer of 1991 ran its course, Governor Bill Clinton resigned as chairman of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council (committee membership which prevented the backing of any specific candidate) and continued to crisscross Arkansas seeking further financial, political, and moral support for a possible presidential chance.

The more Bill Clinton articulated his vision of the future with the implication that he himself might, as a national leader, contribute to America's metamorphosis from industrial to postindustrial information technology greatness, the more he was taken seriously as a candidate.

Clinton's three speeches given at Georgetown University during the fall of 1991 had encouraged Washingtonians to witness at first hand the governor's control both of international and domestic issues; his speeches to the National Democratic Committee's executive meeting in September 1991 and some weeks later at the Association of Democratic State Chairs in Chicago, had, however, been masterly. In Florida in December, the Clinton team spent \$50,000 in a demonstration of his organizational strength alongside his speeches skills. It was money well spent. Clinton's victory in the straw poll at the Florida State Democratic Convention in Lake Buena Vista had resulted in an immediate introduction of further funding.

For months prior to the New York convention Bill Clinton had thought over the question of an appropriate vice presidential candidate. Bill's preferred

option, General Colin Powell, met with no positive response from the general, just as President Truman had sought unsuccessfully to co-opt General Eisenhower in 1984. Some sixty alternatives vice presidential candidates had thereupon been reviewed by a committee under the chairmanship of the black Washington lawyer Vernon Jordan and directed by a lawyer, adviser, and quintessential “public servant,” the former deputy secretary of state Warren Christopher, who had advised Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter.

In the end, Clinton argued the experts who suggest for a ticket balancing North and South, age and youth. Instead, he chose a man of his own age, indeed a year younger, and also from the South: Senator Al Gore.

Mark Grobmeyer, a political insider, had introduced Clinton to Gore five years before and had recently urged Clinton to take Tennessee senator as his running mate, despite the same-South constituency they represented. Gore was well grounded in Washington and in foreign as well as environmental policy, Clinton in domestic economic, educational, and social issues suggesting a good team. The one had gubernatorial experience, the other senatorial. Above all, however, they represented the “best and the brightest” of a new generation of baby boomers and they got along well from the moment they began practicing their political beliefs and aspirations.

Suddenly, somehow, a campaign that had moved from crisis to crisis and had lacked definition now united into a real, triumphant flow: the most professional nominating event since that of the Republican former governor California, Ronald Reagan. By choosing Al Gore as his running mate and with almost military orchestration of televised national convention agenda, official

Democratic nominee William Jefferson Clinton's national polls soared to a 20 point lead over those of incumbent President George Bush: the biggest single rise in political records and the largest votes over an opponent at this point in a presidential campaign for half a century. It was a very attractive achievement.

As Clinton and Gore zigzagged across the nation in the final days of the campaign, it became clearer and clearer that it was not a question of believing in Bill Clinton but of believing in his energy, dynamism, and commitment to trying to improve America's ailing economy, its inequitable health care system, and its public education in time for a new, electronic information age, on the one hand, while accepting his willingness to be slick, to compromise, and even to lie as the sadly necessary qualities to achieve this agenda in modern, indeed postmodern, America on the other.

Early on the morning of November 3, 1992, polling stations across the continent opened. At 11:15 P.M. Central Standard Time, George Bush admitted defeat. As predicted by the polls, Governor Bill Clinton had won 43 percent of the votes cast, President Bush only 38 percent, and Ross Perot a respectable 19 percent. In the electoral college, in which each state has a certain number of electoral votes depending on the size of its population, Clinton won 370 votes to Bush's 168. In the congressional elections, the Democrats, who held a majority in both houses of Congress, gained one seat in the Senate, lost nine seats in the House of Representatives, but ultimately maintained their majority in both houses. On January 20, 1993, Clinton was sworn in as the 42nd president of the United States of America.

Dream of success had made Bill Clinton keep on struggling and doing his best efforts to win the battle. And strong commitment to success very inspires him to survive in such hard competition.

B. Bill Clinton's Political Career and American Myth of Success

The myth of success has encouraged people to have dreams and to make it come true. It is believed that success will be in hand if people are willing to work hard. It seems that hard work is viewed as an important aspect if someone wants to be successful in the United States. Even there is a belief that the poorer you are, the more you should save, and the harder you should work: "The first principle is that in order to move up, the poor must not only work, they must work harder than the class above them." (Gilden in Harris, 1990: 370)

In 1960, John F. Kennedy was elected president. Two years later, when Bill Clinton was a senior in high school, he was selected to go to Washington to be part of Boys Nation, a special youth leadership conference. Bill Clinton was one of the first in line to shake President Kennedy's hand in the Rose Garden. That event was one of the most memorable and important experiences of his youth. After that, he knew he wanted to make a difference in the lives of the people of America by becoming President of the United States.

That same year, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his historic speech "I Have a Dream", at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Bill watched the speech on television and was so deeply moved by Dr. King's words that he memorized them. He admired Dr. King's gift for communicating a clear vision

and his ability to pull people together to work toward a common goal. Dr. King became one of Bill Clinton's heroes.

Inspired by the success of these leaders, young Bill thrived on the hard work that his academic and extracurricular activities required. As an active member of his church, he raised money and organized charity events. Most important, he learned about working with people and being a good citizen.

Bill Clinton recognized that although college would be expensive, it would give him the education he needed to accomplish his goals. His hard work in school, combined with his musical ability earned him many academic and music scholarships. With the help of those scholarships and loans from the government, he was able to attend Georgetown University in Washington. He chooses Georgetown because it had an excellent foreign service program.

While earning his Bachelor of Science degree in International affairs, he worked as an intern in the office of Arkansas Senator J William Fulbright. There he learned how government worked and what it was like to be a politician. When he finished college in 1968, he won Rhodes scholarship which allows select students to study at Oxford University in England. There, he studied government and played rugby. Upon his return to United States, he began law school at Yale University. There, he continued to work hard and maintained his interest in government by campaigning for a Senate candidate in Connecticut.

When Republican Nixon won the 1972 election and defeat Senator McGovern, Bill Clinton returned to Yale saddened and defeated more than ever, aware that a career in politics was what he wanted but it would entail a struggle against a fast flow Democratic tide. Increasingly, he had in mind different kind of

politics than the one Senator McGovern and other candidate, a politics where the candidate did not simply represent sectional interest in the manner of a labor leader but in which the politician created a network of friends, colleagues, and allies from the ground up while also seeking to find answer to political problems that were less ideological and more practical.

In such circumstances one could not bring back Democratic electors by ideological appeals: one could only hope to appeal to voters on a personality level, a level that beyond policy issues. Here Bill Clinton would score his highest marks, as a politician who listened carefully and sought compromises that both sides could live with. Thus the big Arkansan saw himself increasingly as a peace broker between conflicting party interests rather than as an ideologue: a mediator rather than a standard-bearer.

In a Mexican restaurant in Houston, Bill had told his new game-plan to the legendary liberal Democrat organizer Billie Carr, a generation older than himself. “As soon as I get out of school,” he told her, “I’m moving back to Arkansas. I love Arkansas. I’m going back there to live. I’m gonna run for office there. And someday I’m gonna be governor. And then one day I’ll be calling you, Billie, and telling you I’m running for president and I need your help.” (Hamilton, 2003: 268)

And there, in Arkansas, after he graduated from Yale, Bill Clinton was offered a job as a teaching professor at the University of Arkansas Law School at Fayetteville. There he could concentrate on his goal of running for political office. Bill was offered the job by a unanimous vote. One member of the faculty, charged

with taking Bill around the campus, had asked him directly if he had any political intentions.

“I’ve thought a lot about Bill’s long term agenda,” Professor Witte later mused. “It became clear eventually, even to me. Nut I think I was one of the last ones to realize this. In other words, I oblivious or obtuse or whatever: that his number one agenda was to be a politician! That he had moved to this corner of the state because he thought that the local Republican congressman incumbent was vulnerable-as it turned out, for the one and only time in his life. I would guess he had decided that before he moved here! That he was going to enter that race...In any event, I am positive he had it all mapped out well before he wrote me that letter about a job.”

(Hamilton, 2003: 276)

Witte was right; indeed, it is a testament to Bill Clinton’s brilliant, calculating mind that he so plotted his rise to political importance in Arkansas that he was able to move from graduate school to the presidency of the United States in just twenty years. Others, like Kennedy, had made it in less time, but JFK had had a millionaire father to plot and guide his trajectory. Bill had an hair salon owner.

He did, however, have a live-in-girlfriend who would make history as a partly co-president. It would take them several decades, but possibly no president of the United States has ever worked so hard, or charted his life course so carefully, from the beginning, to reach the sanctuary of the White House as the young man from Hope and Hot Springs did. That the most wanted position, the

presidential sanctuary, would self-destruct in his hands, he could not know in advance. It was as if he was increasingly driven, from his time at Yale, by something even he could not control. Its common, generic name was “ambition.” The whip for this drive, however, was Hillary Rodham.

Behind every great man, Churchill said, there is a great woman (<http://www.historychannel.com>, downloaded June 15, 2005). Without Hillary Diane Rodham, would the stepson of an alcoholic spare parts manager and then a beauty salon owner ever have made it to the White House? Without Hillary, how would his life have a progress?

After his closely run race against John Paul Hammerschmidt on Congress, Bill Clinton accepted that the moment of opportunity had passed, that he would not beat the popular Republican congressman in the Third District in a rerun in 1976. Although he lost the race, he learned much about politics. In many ways, therefore, Bill Clinton’s political career in Arkansas was shaped from and by the start. In the following years he would constantly consider alternative options, but they remained always, in the end, theoretical. To reach the White House, someone must or have been a governor or a senator, usually after service in the House, or a five-star general. Since military distinction was never going to be Bill Clinton’s destiny, and since Dale Bumpers and David Pryor were going to tie up the two U.S. Senate seats from Arkansas for another generation, this left only the governorship, which was currently vacant.

The only clear post Bill Clinton would be able to run for was in 1976, after his wedding to Hilary. Therefore he had to turn out to be attorney general of Arkansas. Becoming attorney general would mean, however, taking a huge step

down in salary, to a paltry \$6,000 a year as against his current \$26,000 as a law professor. There was nothing else to be done, however, if he were to pursue politics in Arkansas at the top. Via the attorney generalship, then, the governorship of Arkansas would have to be Bill Clinton's fate if he wished to become President of the United States. Buoyed by Hillary's faith in him, he decided he did. "Historically, the state attorney general's office has been a stepping-stone to higher political office," (Hamilton, 2003:327) attorney Rotenberry pointed out.

Specifically, the governor's office, or a United States senator, or a U.S. representative is a stepping-stone. To say that Clinton saw it as a stepping-stone is not saying anything more uncomplimentary about him than people could say of about a hundred years worth of politicians in the state of Arkansas. State Attorney General's office was a very low-paying office. It is not the type of office someone wanted to stay up in for a long time.

To reach more high position, Bill runs for a senate seat. To raise money and promote his name, he and Hillary had already begun to speak at as many as twelve engagements per day, rising at six in the morning and crashing late at night. Bill's fund raising efforts would become legendary, not because they were different from those of other candidates but because they covered every level and were more successful, being conducted on a vast scale, from mailings to personally negotiated deals. As Bill's later aide Bobby Roberts reflected, "He doesn't mind asking for money. He just doesn't mind asking you for money. A lot of politicians hate that. You hear them bitching all the time about it. Not him. He

didn't think anything about it. Bill didn't mind the source either" (Hamilton, 2003: 289).

After he lost the senate seat, Bill run for governor office. Bill triumphed the election in November 1978 and became the state's youngest-ever governor at the age of thirty-two, winning 65 percent of the votes cast. As an electoral campaigner, Bill had proved himself inventing an almost carnal relationship with voters. He was so physical about everything, and with everybody: great hugs and kisses, even with reporters, so hands on and with black people just bear hugs and so perfectly natural. Bill Clinton's familiarity and comfortableness with black people is as intrinsically different from his familiarity with others. Bill had made so many appointments with African-American people. He needed them all. "He adores people! And he wants people to love him! And the bigger the diversity, the happier he is!" (Hamilton, 2003: 339).

In every success there is failure. Bill Clinton's failure is when he was defeated in the next gubernatorial election. Defeat is hard for any human being to bear. Bill would never accept that he was wrong nor apologize for his own behavior or actions. Accepting blame was beyond him. The inability to address or realize the truth about himself, that he had proved a disappointing administrator and needed to learn new lesson in self-discipline and leadership, starting in his own life, was potentially made him weak.

Bill Clinton's political career might indeed have run into the proverbial sand, one of many thousand of want to be politicians who dreamed of high position but lacked the moral fiber necessary to stay the course. But in Bill Clinton's case a wonderful native instinct had caused the beaten politician to turn

to those few people on earth who could, in fact, restore him to his throne. With their patient, focused help and guidance, Bill Clinton would find himself rescued from historical oblivion not by his own inner spiritual maturation, but by several extraordinary characters beyond his fractured ego who believed in him and his promise: Betsey Wright and Dick Morris, and Hillary Rodham: his breadwinning, loyal wife and mother to Chelsea, their beloved daughter.

As Morris recalled of 1981, “Clinton didn’t want to apologize. ‘It’s not me. It’s not my style’ (Hamilton, 2003:383).” It would never be, for Bill, by virtue of his tough childhood, could never see himself at fault. Hillary, becoming more and more the corporate lawyer, sided with Bill, however, on the grounds that her husband would look weak if he said he was sorry, and thus make a bad image worse.

Fortunately, Bill’s high intelligence and understanding forced him to face up the fact that only drastic measures would overcome a public impression of young extreme pride and incompetence. In the end he therefore accepted Morris’s idea of making television commercial, several weeks prior to his public declaration that he would run again, in order to prepare or soften the political condition.

In Tony Schwarz’s special studio in New York, Bill Clinton in perfect time filmed the advertisement, inventing his own version of an apology. As he put it,

“Many of you have told me you were proud of some of the things I did as governor. But you also think I made some big mistakes.

When I became governor, we had serious problems with our streets

and roads, and I did support those increases to try to solve the problem. But it was a mistake because so many of you were hurt by it. And I'm really sorry for that. When I was a boy growing up my daddy never had to whip me twice for the same thing. And now I hope you'll give me another chance to serve as governor because our state has many problems and opportunities that demand strong leadership." (Hamilton, 2003: 383-384)

Clinton's version was masterly. Like John Fitzgerald Kennedy's broadcast after the Bay of Pig catastrophe in 1961, it indicated a willingness to acknowledge his error. In the promise not to do it again, and the reference to the need for strong leadership, he looked presidential, as JFK did twenty years before.

Watching Bill fall apart after his defeat, Hillary Rodham had lately accepted that she herself must adopt a new persona if Bill was to succeed in Arkansas. She must downplay her independence as a partner in the Rose Law Firm, not boast of it. Instead, she must project an image of the committed wife across Arkansas. That commitment entailed, however, changing her image.

With almost deadly seriousness Hillary began to dress fashionably; to have her hair cut, dyed, and styled, and to wear makeup. She also decided to use contact lenses instead of her goggle spectacles. But the biggest transformation of all was in nomenclature. Hillary Rodham, proud and confirmed feminist, decided in future to use the name Hillary Clinton. Mrs. Clinton, as she let herself now be known, would, if her husband demanded a rematch, stand by her name.

Hillary's metamorphosis could not therefore be likened to that of Jackie Kennedy, who slowly changed her voice in the 1950s to a whisper and hide her

size ten shoes and heavy eyebrows in a calculated “Barbie doll” image, in order to be seen to be more submissive and seductive. Rather, Hillary adopted the technique of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Revising her attitude to her name, her hair, her spectacles, her makeup, and her clothes, she now went out each day to disarm men then hit right through their defenses.

Without the electorate, political commentators, or even political historians becoming aware of the change, then, the Clintons became a pair, allowing almost every voter to find good in one or the other. The concept of co-candidacy was born: “Vote for one-get two!” (http://www.geocities.com/archencyc/wiki/bill_clinton, downloaded June 15, 2005)

The combination of Bill Clinton as governor and Mrs. Clinton as co-governor proved surprisingly effective and unique. Churchill had acknowledged the importance of strong women in support of great men, in order that they might fulfill their destinies. In Argentina, Eva Peron had, until her early death, reduced the darker aspects of her husband’s dictatorship, and in the United States, Eleanor Roosevelt had won both wide respect and sharp critics for her crusading work among the disadvantaged. But Bill and Hillary Clinton, as they became after Hillary’s change of name, represented a wholly new deal in American politics. For the first time in Arkansas history, an up-and-coming political leader had been felled, only to right himself with the aid of his feminist wife, thereby inventing a new electoral and political combination that would be unique in twentieth century democracy.

Bill Clinton had learned his lesson. In order to face down the union, he would need the backing of the press and media in putting across his and Hillary's mission, and the reason for it. To win the media backing, Bill and Hillary were now willing to go to any lengths.

“So Hillary was part of that effort to co-opt John Robert Starr, an *Arkansas Democrat* columnist, and they consider it worked! They were obsessed with John Robert Starr! I began to see this little thing in Starr's column, every so often: ‘Well Bill Clinton called me, he liked a column I wrote about so-and so.’ Or ‘I ran into Bill at lunch and he stopped by the table, and he liked this or that.’ You'd begin to see it appear more and more often in Starr's columns: these conversations with Clinton! And with Hillary! And then,” Dumas recalled with a despairing chuckle, “Starr goes in and has heart surgery. And Clinton goes to see him in the hospital! Even Hillary goes in to see him! And of course Starr writes about this in his columns, he can't help it, he's the biggest name-dropper! That Hugh Rodham, Hillary's father, said he was his favorite columnist’! (Hamilton, 2003: 397)

Bill Clinton was brilliant, that he had a remarkable ability to absorb conflicting views and find a synthesis that was acceptable and could work. Despite his oversized brain, he had an easy, southern manner, as well as an extraordinary conversational range, trading dirty jokes with sexist and statistics with idealists. The chameleon in him was here a benefit, however much it might infuriate Arkansas lawmakers. He seemed to possess an extra energy, requiring

only four to six hours sleep at night. With his intellectual curiosity and photographic memory, especially for people and faces, he came across as a polymath: the “Education Governor” (<http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia>, downloaded June 15, 2005) who had vision for America’s future in an increasingly technologically competitive age.

The key to Bill Clinton’s success in Arkansas beside Hillary is Betsey Wright. Betsey was not only his political adviser, but she became his chief of staff.

Betsey never married. She would stay at the governor’s office till late at night, go home, get up the next morning and she would be at her work, whenever the first person arrived at work in the morning, Betsey would already be there. And she would go on Saturday. She would get up early on Saturday and go up to the Capitol, to the governor’s office. And she read every bit of mail that came through that office. She reviewed every document, every decision, when he ran for governor and when he was governor.

Bill Clinton was one of the smartest tactical politicians people would ever deal with. But Betsey gave him the discipline he needed to be a good politician. She was really good at it. She was not only his political adviser, but she became his chief of staff, and the most productive years of Bill Clinton’s government were when she was there, because she would hold him accountable. She did not let him make any independent decision if she could help it. She really held him accountable and made him a much better governor for five terms.

Bill Clinton, giving speech after speech, address after address certainly took televangelism. Big Bill Clinton was a Southern Baptist by birth and from the

earliest age had attended evangelical church services, which he loved. Despite its tiny population, the state of Arkansas had grown more than its fair share of tented revivalists and preachers, in part because evangelism in America had always had a frontier character that worked well in Arkansas: a character that televangelists had now brilliantly transformed into a modern, technologically sophisticated missionary appeal. Old-fashioned church hymns had given way to crossover black gospel singing, emotive vocal music that reaffirmed a sense of community through its intensity, rhythm, and lyrics. The South was music indeed, if Chicago-born Hillary Rodham had felt envious of Bill Clinton's sense of rootedness in the South, it was in part because the North has no importance church, unless it be the old-fashioned church rituals of Catholicism.

That Catholicism, however, owed its loyalty to a bejeweled Vatican pontiff far away in Italy; moreover, its rituals followed European styles of religious observance, with their accent on hierarchical pomp, ceremony, ritual, holy images, sanctified relics, saints, incense, and fine ecclesiastical robes and paintings. Evangelicals, by contrast, were exciting classless and distinctively American in language, style, ritual, and charismatic leadership ability, without the need of robes or uniforms.

Puritan fundamentalism in the North was boring, unhappy, rough, and withdrawn from sensual pleasures. By contrast, the Black Baptist Church is often equally fundamentalist, but is expressive, exhibitionistic, joyous, and ecstatic. The especial of televangelism was it could make up for the sense of loss, of insecurity, of generalized anxiety, that is a part of the daily life in today's America. The large and colorful TV stages are no mean and unimportant for the poor. They represent

and demonstrate material success. They are a special representation of the American Dream on a par with Hollywood (<http://odur.let.rng.nl/~usa>, downloaded June 15, 2005).

Meanwhile, the New Left movement was growing under its charismatic, centrist Arkansas preacher Governor Bill Clinton, accompanied on his revivalist crusade by his stalwart northern wife, Hillary Clinton: tapping into the rock and well of American individualism, pain and need with a new political message of prospective plenty also of the need for change in order to achieve it.

Over the years Bill Clinton had constantly, extremely, even obsessively worked to build up his audience support. In the same way as an American televangelist, a modern American politician seeking high office had, Clinton recognized, not only to master the art of television performance and electronic voter persuasion, but also to raise the funds to put out that televised message. For many politicians, such fund raising, like campaigning, was the least pleasant aspect of political life. Yet for Bill Clinton, despite or because of his humbled background, it rarely posed a problem.

How Bill Clinton managed to raise such great amount of funds from so many thousand of supporters, rich and poor, was certainly phenomenal. It had its source not in any secret but, in large part, from the candidate's complete lack of embarrassed in asking for funds.

Nor did Bill's mind delivering his political message to the electronic media. As religious cultural historian Quentin Schultze noted, "What is said, and how, must compete effectively with other programs on broadcast TV, cable, and VCR. Televangelists face the competitive tyranny of the broadcast marketplace

and the perceived needs of fickle viewers” (Hamilton, 2003: 586). Forcing preachers to become super-competitive as well as emotionally articulate. As Professor Schultze noted, the mainline churches simply failed the test of television, in part because of their innate pride. They might permit the sale of candles, crucifixes, icons, and statuettes in church store attached to cathedrals and places of worship, but in a larger sense they remained terrified of giving even the appearance of commercialism and therefore refused to ask for funds on air or to shape program content to be competitive in the commercial-TV ratings race. That philosophy has virtually guaranteed that no mainline programs will ever rival the popularity of independent televangelists, just as public television attracts much smaller audiences than its commercial counterpart.

Television, thus, proved had helped Bill Clinton in his campaign for president when Gennifer Flower’s case broke out. Ultimately it was the supermarket tabloid *The Star*, searching for stories that hit pay dirt. For a nothing more than \$200 its reporter got Gennifer’s unlisted phone number via an unsuspecting friend and continued to blackmail her. The journal indeed, they informed her on the telephone, after taking unauthorized secret photos of her in the tribunal parking lot, to publish allegations of an affair with Bill Clinton, illustrated with the photos.

The headline took Gennifer’s breath away: DEM’S FRONT-RUNNER BILL CLINTON CHEATED WITH MISS AMERICA AND FOUR OTHER BEAUTIES- A FORMER MISS ARKANSAS, A SINGER, A REPORTER, AND HIS OWN PRESS SPOKESWOMAN (Hamilton, 2003: 608), the headline screamed. Inside, there were the parking-lot photographs of Gennifer and an

interview, with photograph, of the Quapaw Tower manager, who confirmed having seen the governor arriving for his trysts.

It was high noon on New York's OK Corral set, in the gathering new soap opera that would run for the next ten years. For \$100,000, Gennifer sold her intimate story, and without realizing it, made Bill Clinton President of the United States of America.

In the end, it was arranged that Bill and Hillary would be interviewed not on *Nightline* but on CBS's *60 Minutes*, directly after the Super Bowl, the most watched sports event of the year. This would be a masterstroke if it worked, since a significant part of the population of the United States would be watching, an audience dominated by men, after an evening of male-female struggle and heroics. Instead of limiting the impact to voters of New Hampshire, the campaign could suddenly reach out to tens of millions of viewers, achieving national name recognition for its candidate completely overnight.

60 Minutes proved more exciting to most American viewers than the Super Bowl game it followed. Presidential adultery, or the admission of such by a would-be president, had been aired on prime-time television for the first time in American history.

The one-hour interview, reduced to a quarter of an hour, had given the Clintons the national exposure they needed as a couple, and the result was beyond all expectations. The program had been watched by an estimated 34 million Americans with up to 50 million more seeing and learning of its highlights on other programs. A national poll was taken by ABC television that night, with 80 percent of the respondents reported as saying that Clinton should stay in the race. It was victory.

Instead of Gennifer destroying Clinton's candidacy, it was Gennifer who was now trashed: making Clinton looked good, not bad, as the press came under withering fire from Clintonites seizing the high ground and declaring anyone who listened to such garbage a traitor to the honorable codes of their profession.

Television also had saved Clinton when the draft letter surfaced. Years before, Attorney General Bill Clinton had assumed that his letter from Oxford to Colonel Holmes had been removed from the ROTC files in Arkansas and the evidence destroyed. He was wrong. Though he had annoyed his friends by his never ending determination to win over his enemies and even win their vote, his very success in politics was bound to arouse jealousy, and it did.

Bill Clinton's old Oxford University colleague Attorney Cliff Jackson, who had arranged the all-important 1968 interview with the ROTC commander at Fayetteville, had for years kept silent over Bill's draft record, for he, too, was one of the millions of American college students who had gotten deferments or found ways out of having to serve in Vietnam. His complain was not Vietnam service but Bill himself: disappointment in Bill both as a human being and a governor.

Jackson was one of the few who knew the real truth behind Bill's failure to stand by his agreement to serve in the military, but he had until now not to raise it during Clinton's campaigns for Congress, the attorney general, and the governorship. But with Bill Clinton running for the presidency, the issue could legitimately be brought up and used to attack against him by others.

As in the case of adultery, making someone look good would here be involved on a large, if often unconscious scale. Through deferments and alternative service, almost entire college population of the United States had

avoided fighting in the tragic Kennedy-Johnson complete failure in Southeast Asia, leaving the war to working-class and professional soldiers. Almost no historians, let alone journalists, supported the war in retrospect. But training or service in the armed forces was another matter, and in the Northeast, the home of the American Revolution, where local militia and volunteers had fought the British and inspired the War of Independence, Clinton's failure to honor his freely given contractual agreement with Colonel Holmes did not only look bad in hindsight, it was.

To create public image and personality, Clinton made a film of his life entitled *The Man from Hope*. Through the critical moments of his life: the confrontation with his abusive father, the meeting with President Kennedy, the impact of the civil rights struggle, his romance with Hillary, his presence at the birth of his daughter. The autobiographical film painted through interviews, events, and archival film but entertain, Horatio Alger like story of an American dream being realized. It was intensely emotional, intimate, and deep, revealing with attractive images that gathered viewers in a collective small-town of American past. The film is real, every snapshot, every amateur film clip, every interview recollection a genuine historical artifact. It drew on one of the most venerable and potent American cultural myths; the notions of the self-made man or rags-to-riches rise, using the power of archival evidence and witness-testimony to confirm the mythic portrait.

The quickly constructed film single-handedly recast Bill Clinton for the Democratic Party and the American electorate. It included Bill's reflection on the political system and a moving account of the death of Bill's stepfather; shot of

Bill and Chelsea playing softball; his thoughts on the *CBS 60 Minutes* interview about his marriage; Chelsea's response to the interview. *The Man from Hope* ended with Clinton's plane crossing the American sky, upon which home-video images played with current campaign footage and Bill Clinton's voice could be heard saying softly,

“Sometimes late at night on the campaign I'll look out the window and think how far I am from that little town in Arkansas. And yet in many ways I know that all I am or ever will be came from there. A place and a time when nobody locked their doors at night, everybody showed up for a parade on Main Street, and kids like me could dream of being a part of something bigger than themselves. I guess there'll always be a sadness in me that I never heard the sound of my father's voice or felt his hand around mine. But all of us have sadness and disappointments in our lives, and hopefully we grow stronger for it. I know every day that I'm alive I hope I'm a better person than the day before. I hope that every day from this day forward we can be a nation coming together instead of coming apart. And I hope that we as a people will always acknowledge that each child in our country is as important as our own. I still believe these things are possible. I still believe in the promise of America. And I still believe in a place called Hope.”

(Hamilton, 2003: 658)

Throughout his life, Bill Clinton has worked to make a difference in the lives of others. To him, Hope means more than a small town in Arkansas. It

means working to ensure that each American has the opportunity to fulfill his or her dream.

Bill Clinton is a good communicator. Another way to convince the voters is through speeches. Those who watched and listened to the speech on October 3, 1991, considered it to be one of Bill Clinton's very best. His allergies had flared up and his voice was once again hoarse, but the sentiments he expressed resonated with a new generation that looked forward to the future, and to change.

“All of you, in different ways, have brought me here today, to a step beyond a life and a job I love, to make a commitment to a larger cause: preserving the American Dream, restoring the hopes of the forgotten middle class, reclaiming the future for our children,” the governor announced. “I refuse to be part of the generation that celebrates the death of communism abroad with the loss of the American Dream at home. I refuse to be part of a generation that fails to compete in the global economy and so condemn hardworking Americans to a life of struggle without reward or security. That is why I stand here today, because I refuse to stand by and let our children become part of the first generation of Americans to do worse than their parents. I don't want my child or your child to be part of a country that's coming apart instead of coming together. The country is headed in the wrong direction fast, slipping behind, losing our way, and all we have out of Washington is status quo paralysis, no vision, no action, just

neglect, selfishness and division,” (Hamilton, 2003: 586) Clinton claimed.

These were both fighting and prophetic words. He spoke, moreover, not in a partisan spirit but as the leader of a new movement in America: a centrist movement of those who were tired of the wars of left and right, liberal and conservative and investing more in education and provide health care. Middle-class tax relief was a constant theme and, in a nation with 80 percent of Americans saw themselves in that bracket, a popular one. Bill Clinton’s message of economic rescued and middle-class tax cut was thus marked to appeal to “the people of America,” as candidates liked to call voters.

In the making of President, image is crucial, for upon it the prejudices and intuitive expectations of a nation can depend. Image can be created out of nothing, but it is better when it arises out of something like choosing a vice president, and Clinton and Gore as his vice president definitely had something. Both were “policy wonks” with a passionate, indeed obsessive, interest in the issues of the day, from abortion to education, health care to the environment, employment to taxation.

Despite of using a private airplane to go campaign over America, Bill Clinton used whistle-stop bus to trip across America. The whistle-stop bus tour had created an image in the public eye of two eager, good-looking, and highly educated young Democrats who shared more than thirty years’ experience of state and national government, hand in hand with two handsome and also highly educated young wives, both of them mothers. Hillary had learned from her counterpart how to melt into the backdrop as part of the blond blur supportive

wife, she wore only dresses and little makeup. Her headband was becoming her signature, like Jackie Kennedy's pillbox hats. She and Tipper, Gore's wife, would sit under a tent in their long-skirted milkmaid dresses circa 1958, their ankles crossed, spooning fruit cup, and chatting about nothing of consequence while the men tossed a football. Hillary proved impossible for Republican snipers to get into their sights.

From Madison Square Garden the Clinton team immediately boarded a line of eight buses. They then headed out the city to meet more Americans. The press now watched in amazement as the Clinton-Gore Ensemble was welcomed by voters of every color, class, background, and profession. While appearing on the *Larry King Show* earlier that spring, Bill had told his host he had no need of sympathy over the energy business of campaigning, for he loved the business. Now, on a symbolic road trip across America and in a very surprising display of indefatigable hand shaking, speaking, listening, and talking, he proved it to be true. He had been doing this almost all his adult life, and the excitement and challenge of it had never boring, his restless curiosity and intelligence both annoyed and honored by the attention ordinary voters gave him. It was narcissistic; on the contrary, to the disappointment of those who thought him their close friend, he still paid more attention to those with ambivalent or even aggressive opinions, celebrating in confrontational debate and discussion.

So successful was the whistle-stop bus tour that in all, seven such caravan campaigns were conducted. One Iowa legislator watched the Clinton-Gore team at work and remarked kindly of Clinton: "He has made two fabulous choices. First he picked this guy, and then this bus thing. People love it. They have to come out

and see these two young guys who look and act like they're ready to go.”
(Hamilton, 2003: 665)

This was the finest hour of the campaign to many of its campaign warriors, they judged, trouble pushing a new backs to the wall of friendship, a collective determination not to give in to the enemy. The broader publics were friends: anxious for a candidate with a credible solution to America's recessionary ills and the sort of charisma that promised energy, idealism, and pride in what America could become, as the world's largest successful multiethnic, multicultural community, covering all faiths and diversity. Following ABC's *Nightline*, Bill did two more television programs in which he fielded open question from voters, as well as a debate on the Saturday night before the primary and a Sunday-morning network interview. In between, he raced around the Granite State in his campaign van, sitting beside the driver, seeking to be seen, heard, and hugged by as many people as possible. Clinton's view was that he did not want anybody standing between him and the voters; he wanted to meet them all. In the space of a month Bill Clinton had taken every hit a politician could take. He had made up ground, made a personal connection with the voters, and finished strong. Paul Begala came up with the line about the “Comeback Kid” was perfect.

Given his reputation as “Slick Willie”
(http://www.geocities.com/arhencyc/wiki/bill_clinton, downloaded June 15, 2005), for dissimulation, adultery, and draft avoiding, this was the all-important factor. Bill Clinton, as a man, was not perfect, but as a campaigner he had proven in open, electoral combat that he was tough, and had an even tougher wife beside him. With the help of hairdresser, wardrobe advisers, and makeup artists, the

degree of glamour she brought to the campaign impressed those who had known her in Arkansas, and yet she spoke with the self-confidence and forcefulness of a full partner in the campaign.

The fallout from earlier Republican hits, Gennifer, marijuana, Vietnam War draft evasion, "Slick Willie," was still radioactive, and it might be difficult to change the minds of voters who were convinced by them, even though Bill would probably campaign, as was his wont, to the eleventh hour and fifty-ninth minute in an attempt to do so. Yet the larger part of the American population had never even heard of him, coming as he did from a tiny southern state. It was the time, then to construct a new image. With his illustrious academic record, Georgetown, Rhodes scholarship at Oxford, Yale University Law School, professor at the University of Arkansas by the age of twenty-six, governor at thirty-two, there was, the focus groups revealed, a widespread assumption that Bill had been born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Bill Clinton's television and Hollywood friends thus got down to work. The result would be not an atom bomb, but a hydrogen bomb.

Clinton believed that United States needed someone with a new vision and plan. He believed that he had the necessary experience as well as the best ideas for changing the United States for the better. Clinton indefatigable goodwill, vitality, stamina, and complete love of campaigning had shone through. Nothing could stop him from being president of the United States. And there he was, realizing his dream, on January 20, 1993, Clinton was sworn in as the 42nd president of the United States of America.

Bill Clinton's journey to the top reveals that in America everyone is free to make progress in his life. The phenomenon of Bill's success can be considered as

the realization of American myth of success where first there are hard work, discipline and thrift, and then followed by achievement and abundant material comfort and secure place as part of American ideal life. The spirit of myth of success had made Bill Clinton a great and respectable man.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Conclusion

Bill Clinton started his career in politics since he was in college by working as an intern in the office of Arkansas senator. Then he became a law professor straight out of college. He contested a congressional election in his twenties and almost wins it. He became an attorney general of his state and within two years was set to become the youngest-ever governor of Arkansas. He was thrown out of governor's office after only one term and suffers a life-shaking crisis of confidence but then enter it again four years later. After his fifth term as a governor, he won the 1992 presidential election and become the third-youngest president.

Based on the analysis it can be concluded that Bill Clinton's political career reflects the myth of success. Myth of success is seen differently by American people. The meaning of success is very personal in nature. The myth of success has encouraged many of American people to work hard and realize their dreams. In the myth of success, people must work hard to make his dream come true and to be successful. To realize his dream as a President of the United States, Bill Clinton had work hard from the beginning he entered the politics. As a politician, success means having the top position in politic i.e. as a president. To be a president, Bill Clinton must start from very low position. His work hard is

supported with self commitment to reach his dream, and with discipline, thrift, never give-up, and support of his loyal and supportive wife and friends.

Dream of success had made Bill Clinton keep on struggling and making his best efforts to win the battle. And strong commitment to success toughly inspires him to survive in such a hard competition. Bill Clinton's journey to the top reveals that in America everyone is free to make progress in his life. The phenomenon of Bill's success can be considered as the realization of American myth of success, the process of which begins with the hard work, discipline and thrift, and then followed by achievement and abundant material comfort and secure place as part of American ideal life. The spirit of myth of success had made Bill Clinton a great and respectable man.

Bill Clinton's political career is one of the clearest examples of American success which shows an American ambition, optimism and obsession. The myth of success will always be the essential spirit for American people to achieve their biggest dreams.

B. Recommendation

It is challenging to deal with Bill Clinton concerning with his political journey. Based on his biography there will be various aspects that can be analyzed to take any advantages as a contribution toward the body knowledge of American Studies. This study can serve as a precious introductory for further research on the other aspects of Bill Clinton as an ordinary person or as a politician.

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42nd President of the United States



Clinton and Vice President Gore talk while walking through the Colonnade at the White House.



Official Presidential Portrait of President Bill Clinton



Clinton visiting the Los Alamos National Laboratory, 1998.



Clinton embraces British Prime Minister Tony Blair.



Jiang Zemin and Bill Clinton.



Clinton plays the saxophone presented to him by Russian President Boris Yeltsin at a private dinner in Russia, January 13, 1994



Yitzhak Rabin, Clinton, and Yasser Arafat during the Oslo Accords on September 13, 1993.



President Clinton's Cabinet, circa 1997



Monica Lewinsky receives a hug from Clinton during a fundraising event in Washington, DC, October, 1996



President Clinton with John Huang (center) and James Riady (right) in the Oval Office



Clinton sitting with a child



Presidents Bill Clinton, George H. W. Bush, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, and their wives at the funeral of President Richard Nixon on April 27, 1994.



Hillary Clinton is sworn in as a U.S. Senator by Vice President Gore as Bill and Chelsea Clinton observe.



Bill Clinton on *The Daily Show*, promoting *My Life*



Clinton, along with President George W. Bush, Laura Bush, and President George H. W. Bush pay their respects to Pope John Paul II before the pope's funeral.



Clinton with former president George H.W. Bush in January 2005

BILL CLINTON'S BIOGRAPHY

William Jefferson "Bill" Clinton (born **William Jefferson Blythe III** on August 19, 1946) was the 42nd President of the United States, serving from 1993 to 2001. He is also the founder and director of the William J. Clinton Foundation. Clinton served five terms as the Governor of Arkansas. His wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, is presently in her first term as the junior U.S. Senator from New York.

Presenting himself as a moderate and a member of the New Democrat wing of the Democratic Party, he headed the centrist Democratic Leadership Council in 1990 and 1991. He was elected President in 1992 and 1996 with Vice President Al Gore.

His domestic priorities as President included efforts to create a universal health care system, improve education, increase local police forces, restrict handgun sales, balance the federal budget, strengthen environmental regulations, improve race relations, and protect the jobs of workers during pregnancy or medical emergency. With approval from Congress, he raised income taxes in 1993. His most dramatic domestic move was the radical reform of the welfare system in 1996 in cooperation with Republicans who had taken control of Congress.

Internationally, his priorities included reducing trade barriers, support for the North American Free Trade Agreement, preventing nuclear proliferation, and mediating the Northern Ireland peace process and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, and military intervention to end the Bosnian War and the Kosovo War. He engaged in air attacks on Iraq, most notably in Operation Desert Fox, and funded efforts to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Clinton was the first baby boomer president and the first Democratic president to be re-elected since Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944. Clinton was the third youngest president in history at 46, while Vice President Al Gore was 44. Clinton was one of only two presidents in American history to be impeached. The vote to impeach was along party lines in the Republican-dominated Congress. He was acquitted by a vote of the United States Senate on February 12, 1999. Clinton remained popular with the public throughout his two terms as president, ending his presidential career with a 65% approval rating, the highest end-of-term approval rating of any president in the post-Eisenhower era.

Early life

William Jefferson Blythe III was born in Hope, Arkansas, and raised in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He was named after his father, William Jefferson Blythe, Jr., a traveling salesman who died in a car accident three months before he was born. His mother, born Virginia Dell Cassidy (1923–1994), remarried in 1950 to Roger Clinton. Roger Clinton owned an automobile dealership business with his brother, Raymond. The young Billy, as he was called, was raised by his mother and stepfather, assuming his last name "Clinton" throughout elementary school but not formally changing it until he was 14. Clinton grew up in a traditional, albeit blended, family; however, according to Clinton, his stepfather was a gambler and an alcoholic who regularly abused Clinton's mother and sometimes Clinton's half-brother Roger, Jr.

Bill Clinton as a child went to St. John's Catholic School and Ramble Elementary School. While at Hot Springs High School, Clinton was an excellent student and a talented saxophonist. He considered dedicating his life to music, but a visit to the White House following his election as a Boys Nation Senator led him to pursue a career in politics. Clinton was a member of Youth Order of DeMolay but never actually became a Freemason.

Clinton received a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service (B.S.F.S.) degree from the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., where he became a brother of Alpha Phi Omega, worked for Senator J. William Fulbright, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and won a Rhodes Scholarship to University College, Oxford. While at Oxford, he played rugby union as a lock, and later in life he played for the Little Rock Rugby club in Arkansas. There he also participated in the Vietnam War protest movement. After Oxford, Clinton obtained a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree from Yale Law School in 1973. While at Yale, he began dating classmate Hillary Rodham. They married in 1975 and their only child, Chelsea, was born in 1980.

Arkansas political career

In 1974, his first year as a University of Arkansas law professor, Clinton ran for the House of Representatives. The incumbent, John Paul Hammerschmidt, defeated Clinton with 52% of the vote. In 1976, Clinton was elected Attorney General of Arkansas without opposition in the general election.

In 1978, Bill Clinton was first elected governor of the state of Arkansas, the youngest to be elected governor since 1938. His first term was fraught with difficulties, including an unpopular motor vehicle tax and popular anger over the escape of Cuban prisoners (from the Marief boatlift) detained in Fort Chaffee in 1980.

In the 1980 election, Clinton was defeated in his bid for a second term by Republican challenger Frank D. White. As he once joked, he was the youngest ex-governor in the nation's history. But in 1982, Clinton won his old job back, and over the next decade he helped Arkansas transform its economy. He became a leading figure among the New Democrats, a branch of the Democratic Party that called for welfare reform, smaller government, and other ideas that reached out to Democrats and Republicans alike. Clinton's approach mollified conservative criticism during his terms as governor. However, personal and business transactions made by the Clintons during this period became the basis of the Whitewater investigation, which dogged his later presidential Administration. After very extensive investigation over several years, no indictments were made against the Clintons related to the years in Arkansas.

Presidential campaign

Clinton's first foray into national politics occurred when he was enlisted to speak at the 1988 Democratic National Convention, officially nominating candidate Michael Dukakis. Clinton's address, scheduled to last 15 minutes, lasted over half an hour. Toward the end of the speech, conventioners began chanting "Get off!" The speech drew cheers only when Clinton uttered the words, "in conclusion." Clinton later poked fun at himself on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show by saying that the speech "had not been my finest hour, not even my finest hour and a half."

Four years later, Clinton prepared for a run in 1992 against incumbent President George H. W. Bush. In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, Bush seemed unbeatable, and several potential Democratic candidates—notably New York Governor Mario Cuomo and U.S. Senator Al Gore—passed on what seemed to be a lost cause. Clinton won the nomination, beating out Senator Tom Harkin, California Governor Jerry Brown and former Senator Paul Tsongas.

Clinton chose Al Gore from neighboring Tennessee as his running mate, surprising pundits who had expected a geographically balanced ticket.

Many character issues were raised during the campaign, including allegations that Clinton had dodged the draft during the Vietnam War, and had used marijuana, which Clinton claimed he had pretended to smoke, but "didn't inhale". Allegations of extramarital affairs and shady business deals also arose. Clinton displayed the resiliency in the face of these partisan attacks that would later be pivotal in his presidency. As the candidate with the most money and the best-articulated campaign strategy — creating more jobs — Clinton was able to stay in the race the longest, fending off all rivals long before the Democratic convention.

Presidential election

Clinton won the 1992 presidential election (43.01% of the vote) against Republican George H. W. Bush (37.4% of the vote) and billionaire populist H. Ross Perot who ran as an independent (18.9% of the vote), on a platform focusing on domestic issues; a large part of his success was Bush's steep decline in public approval. Previously described as "unbeatable" because of his approval ratings in the 80% range during the Persian Gulf conflict, Bush saw his public approval rating drop to just over 40% by election time.

Clinton was victorious for several reasons. Polls showed discontent with Bush, with voters complaining he seemed out of touch with ordinary people and focused too much on foreign affairs. By contrast, the younger, telegenic Clinton projected an image as highly sympathetic to the concerns of ordinary families.

Additionally, Bush reneged on his promise ("Read My Lips: No New Taxes!") not to raise taxes. This hurt him among conservatives. Clinton capitalized on Bush's policy switch, repeatedly condemning the President for failing to keep his promise.

Finally, Bush's coalition was in disarray. Conservatives had been united by anti-communism, but with the end of the Cold War, old rivalries re-emerged. The Republican Convention of 1992 was dominated by evangelical Christians, alarming some moderate voters who thought the Republican Party had been taken over by religious conservatives. All this worked in Clinton's favor. Clinton could point to his moderate, 'New Democrat' record as governor of Arkansas. Liberal Democrats were impressed by Clinton's academic credentials, his 1960s-era protest record, and support for social causes such as a woman's right to choose. Many Democrats who had supported Ronald Reagan and Bush in previous elections switched their allegiance to the more moderate Clinton. Clinton was the first Democrat to serve two full terms as President since Franklin D. Roosevelt. His election ended an era of Republican rule, including 12 consecutive years in the White House and 20 of the previous 24 years. That election also brought the Democrats full control of the political branches of the federal government, including both houses of Congress as well as the presidency, for the first time since 1980.

Domestic Policies

Economy

During Clinton's tenure, the U.S. enjoyed continuous economic expansion, reductions in unemployment, and growing wealth through a massive rise in the stock market. The economic boom ended in the first quarter of 2000, approximately 10 months before his term ended in January 2001, possibly indicative of a stock market bubble. Although the reasons for the expansion are continually debated, Clinton proudly pointed to his economic accomplishments, including:

- More than 22 million new jobs created
- Homeownership rate increase from 64.0% to 67.5%
- Lowest unemployment rate in 30 years
- Higher incomes at all levels
- Largest budget deficit in American history converted to the largest surplus of over \$200 billion
- Lowest government spending as a percentage of GDP since 1974
- Higher stock ownership by families than ever before
- 220% increase in the Dow Jones Industrial Average, 300% increase in the NASDAQ from 1993 to 2001

The reasons for this growth are debated, but Clinton supporters cite his 1993 tax increase, which they believe assisted in reducing the annual budget deficits every year of his tenure. These deficit reductions stimulated consumption and consumer spending and strengthened the dollar, which encouraged foreign investment in the United States economy. Alan Greenspan supported the 1993 tax increase, which was approved by Congress without a single Republican vote. Critics of Clinton point to Alan Greenspan's strong chairmanship of the Federal Reserve, 1995 spending cuts and the Republican Party's Contract with America initiatives as alternative reasons for America's strong economic growth of the late 1990's. Critics also argue that the economic recovery had already begun before Bill Clinton took office and did not pick up momentum until 1995 and 1996, after the GOP took over Congress (despite the fact that GDP growth was higher in 1994 than in either 1995 or 1996). Many economists attribute massive growth to the dot-com bubble, which coincidentally occurred during Clinton's term, thus adding many new jobs which may not be directly attributed to policies of the Clinton Administration or Republican Congress.

Gays in the military

Clinton's initial reluctance to fulfill campaign promise relating to the acceptance of openly homosexual members of the military garnered criticism from both the left (for being too tentative in promoting gay rights) and the right (for being too insensitive to military life). During the campaign, Clinton had promised to lift the ban on gays serving their country. After much debate, Clinton implemented the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which remained in effect under two Administrations of George W. Bush, stating that homosexual men and women may serve in the military as long as their sexuality is kept secret. By 1999, Clinton said he did not "think any serious person could say" that the policy was not "out of whack". Some gay rights advocates criticized Clinton for not going far enough and accused him of making his campaign promise simply to get votes and contributions. These advocates felt Clinton should have integrated the military by executive order, noting that President Harry Truman ended segregation of the armed forces in that manner. Clinton's defenders argued that an executive order might have prompted the then-Democrat-controlled Senate to write the exclusion of gays into law, potentially making it even harder to integrate the military in the future. Critics, however, said that the issue was one that should be experimented on in society as a whole, not in the military. The military's goal was not to be a "social Petri dish," but to defend the nation.

Healthcare reform

The most important item on Clinton's legislative agenda was a health care reform plan, the result of a taskforce headed by Hillary Clinton, aimed at achieving universal coverage via a national healthcare plan. Though initially well-received in political circles, it was ultimately doomed by well-organized opposition from conservatives, the American Medical Association, and the health insurance industry. Despite his party holding a majority in the House and Senate, the effort to create a national healthcare system ultimately died under heavy public pressure. It was the first major legislative defeat of Clinton's presidency.

Two months later, after two years of Democratic party control under Clinton's leadership, the mid-term elections in 1994 proved disastrous for the Democrats. They lost control of both houses of Congress for the first time in 40 years.

The spotlight shifted to the Contract with America spearheaded by Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. This initiative presented a blanket of traditional Republican proposals, plus several anti-corruption measures. Without a friendly legislative body, Clinton shifted from pushing new policy to blocking the Republican (GOP) agenda.

Budgetary Issues

In August 1993, Clinton had signed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 which passed Congress without a single Republican vote. It significantly raised taxes on the top 2% of taxpayers without providing middle class tax cuts as he promised during the campaign. Additionally, it mandated that the budget be balanced over several years, and put spending restraints in place. The Republicans objected vociferously, claiming that it would wreck the economy. In November of 1994, the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives. They were upset at being forced into spending cuts by the bill, but they could not ignore it without appearing to be softer on deficit spending than the Democrats.

In 1996, the GOP passed a budget with significant spending cuts, thinking that Clinton could either sign the bill (a major political defeat) or veto it (resulting in a shutdown of most government services). GOP leaders believed that their recently energized supporters

would stand with them, while the shutdown would be blamed on Clinton's veto of the spending bills. Clinton instead vetoed the bills and staged a media blitz, rallying his constituencies to blame the shutdown on the Republicans. The public agreed with Clinton's interpretation of the situation, and the Republicans suffered a major political defeat. The perception that the congressional Republicans were dangerous radicals stayed with the public for the remainder of the Clinton presidency, and Clinton repeatedly made skillful use of this perception to pass his initiatives while blocking any Republican agendas.

Welfare reform

The welfare system, unpopular with middle-class voters, was a major target of the Republicans. However, rather than present the programs as inefficient, bureaucratic and expensive, as they had (unsuccessfully) done in the past, their new tactic was to focus on the success of welfare in its stated goal: fighting poverty. In this they were more successful. Using statistics often compiled by welfare advocates to demand more spending, they pointed to a widening gap between rich and poor and the emergence of a dependent welfare "underclass." Under their proposed welfare reform, individuals could not receive benefits for more than five years. States, meanwhile, would receive "block grants" of federal funds that they would be free to spend on anti-poverty initiatives as they wished, rather than according to federal rules. This amounted to a major shift in welfare policy, and it was contested by Democrats. Clinton, however, supported the plan (to the fury and astonishment of even some members of his Cabinet). In his 1996 State of the Union speech, Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it". He later signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996.

This proved to be a major political victory, and a vindication of his strategy of "triangulation." With the welfare reform system, Clinton was presented as a fair-minded, mainstream moderate.

Other initiatives

Shortly after taking office, Clinton fulfilled a campaign promise by signing the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which required large employers to allow their employees to take unpaid leave because of pregnancy or serious medical condition.

Clinton signed into law the Brady Bill, which imposes a five-day waiting period on handgun purchases so that background checks can be done to help keep handguns away from criminals. President Clinton expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit, which benefits working class families with dependent children.

1996 presidential election

In the 1996 presidential election a few months later, Clinton was re-elected, receiving 49.2% of the popular vote over Republican Bob Dole (40.7% of the popular vote) and Reform candidate Ross Perot (8.4% of the popular vote). The Republicans lost a few seats in the House and gained a few in the Senate but overall retained control of the Congress. Although he did not win a clear majority of the popular vote, Clinton received over 70% of the electoral college vote.

Foreign policies

Free trade

In 1993, Clinton supported the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) for ratification by the U.S. Senate. Despite being negotiated by his Republican predecessor, Clinton (along with most of his Democratic Leadership Committee allies) strongly supported free trade measures. Though the measure was opposed by some anti-trade Republicans, most of the opposition came from protectionist Democrats and supporters of Ross Perot. Ultimately, the treaty was ratified, which was a major legislative victory. The Clinton Administration used the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights thirteen times and prevailed in the WTO thirteen times.

Use of military force

Clinton deployed the U.S. military several times under his Presidency. In 1993, U.S. troops, initially deployed to Somalia by the Bush Administration, fought the Battle of Mogadishu which attempted to capture local warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid. The U.S. withdrew troops after suffering 19 deaths and 73 wounded at the hands of Somalia militia. This militia was later proved to have been trained by the Al Qaeda terrorist network.

In 1994, Clinton sent U.S. troops into Haiti to restore Jean-Bertrand Aristide as president, ending a period of intense violence. Aristide, who had been elected, had been ousted in a coup just seven months into his term in 1991. Aristide was a socialist who had often spoke against America. He continued with his anti-American rhetoric even after he was reinstated as the Haitian leader by American troops. Clinton also committed troops twice in the former-Yugoslavia to stop ethnic violence, most notably in Kosovo. In addition, Clinton launched military strikes on Iraq several times to punish violations of United Nations sanctions.

In November 1995, Clinton committed troops to the Balkans, saying the mission would be "precisely defined with clear realistic goals" that could be achieved in a "definite period of time". Clinton assured Americans the mission would take about one year. In October 1996, shortly before Clinton's reelection, the Clinton Administration denied any change in the plans to withdraw troops in December 1996. However, shortly after reelection, Clinton announced troops would stay longer. Troops ultimately stayed in Bosnia for nine years.

On February 17, 1998, Clinton gave a speech signaling the danger of rogue nations providing weapons of mass destruction to terrorist organizations with global reach. Clinton specifically pointed to Saddam Hussein's Iraq. In August 1998, UN weapons inspectors left Iraq, leading to Operation Desert Fox in December.

Some critics argue that the Clinton Administration's attacks in Kosovo, Serbia, Somalia, Bosnia, Sudan, and Afghanistan violated international law. The action was never sanctioned by the U.N. and strongly opposed by Russia and China.

Clinton identified his major foreign policy failure as lack of response to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Along with the United Nations, the Clinton Administration initially did not publicly acknowledge that genocide was occurring. This delayed the mandatory response to the crisis which eventually killed one million people. A report from the Organization for African Unity singled out the United Nations, Belgium, France and the United States for condemnation. In 1998, Clinton went to Africa where he said he "did not fully appreciate the depth and speed with which you were being engulfed by this unimaginable terror." A report from the National Security Archive showed that the Clinton Administration had collected considerable amounts of information during the

crisis and it was passed up to policymakers. In 2005, the former President apologized for his "personal failure" to stop the genocide. However, the U.S. deployed 2,300 troops to Rwanda in an attempt to stop the genocide. The troops were withdrawn two months afterwards.

North Korea

In 1994, Clinton negotiated and signed the Nuclear Accords with North Korea. The underlying concern was that North Korea was developing nuclear weapons technology under the guise of a nuclear power plant. In exchange for assistance with energy needs, North Korea agreed to abandon all ambitions for acquiring nuclear weapons. However, by the mid 1990s defectors from North Korea, along with reports from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), indicated that North Korea was violating both the Nuclear Accords and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In December 2002, North Korea expelled IAEA inspectors from its Yongbyon nuclear facility, and announced (privately in 2003 and publicly in 2005) that they possessed nuclear weapons.

World Trade Center bombing

In 1993, Al-Qaeda began to emerge as a major terrorist threat with the bombing of the World Trade Center. In 1998, the group bombed the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. In retaliation, Clinton ordered Operation Infinite Reach, which involved cruise missile strikes on terrorist camps in Kandahar, Afghanistan, and a suspected chemical weapons facility in Khartoum, Sudan, that was believed to be tied to Osama bin Laden, and later turned out to be an aspirin factory. Clinton also gave orders authorizing the arrest or, if need be, assassination of bin Laden. In late 2000, the terrorists struck again with the USS Cole bombing. In 2004, Clinton said he regarded Al-Qaeda as the foremost threat to national security. In the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks, the independent investigating commission was critical of Clinton for focusing more on diplomatic than military means to eliminate the bin Laden threat.

Arab-Israeli conflict

After his presidency, Clinton identified his proudest foreign policy accomplishments as mediating peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, resulting in the Oslo Accords (1993). Subsequent events, including the collapse of the 2000 Camp David Summit and the commencement of the al-Aqsa Intifada, resulted in the Oslo Accords being widely discredited within Israel and in various Palestinian factions by 2004.

After initial successes such as the Oslo accords, the situation had quietly deteriorated, breaking down completely with the start of the Second Intifada. Clinton brought Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat together at Camp David. However, these negotiations proved unsuccessful. Critics charged Clinton with trying to "shoot the moon" to benefit his historical legacy, but instead making the situation worse with a botched negotiation. Supporters consider Clinton to have attempted to address new tensions from the recent outbreak of violence at its root causes, and that Clinton can hardly be blamed for a decades-old conflict. Some further argue that the perception that Arafat walked away from an offer that supposedly contained all of his previously stated demands enabled the US to pursue a more pro-Israel policy in later years.

Legislation and programs

Major legislation signed

- February 5, 1993 - The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
- August 10, 1993 - Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 - Raised income tax rates; income tax, top rate: 39.6%; corporate tax: 35%
- September 21, 1993 - creation of the AmeriCorps volunteer program
- November 30, 1993 - Brady Bill
- September 13, 1994 - Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, part of an omnibus crime bill, the federal death penalty was expanded to some 60 different offenses (see Federal assault weapons ban)
- 1995 - Executive Order 12958, created tough new standards for the process of classifying documents.
- February 1, 1996 - Communications Decency Act
- February 8, 1996 - Telecom Reform Act: eliminated major ownership restrictions for radio and television groups.
- February 26, 1996 - Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, a welfare reform bill
- March 14, 1996 - authorized \$100 million counter-terrorism agreement with Israel to track down and root out terrorists.
- April 9, 1996 - Line Item Veto Act
- April 24, 1996 - Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act
- August 20, 1996 - Minimum wage Increase Act
- September 21, 1996 - Defense of Marriage Act, allowed states the power to refuse to recognize gay marriages granted in other states, banned federal government from providing LGBT Americans with equal access to federal immigration, taxation and family laws
- August 5, 1997 - Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997
- October 28, 1998 - Digital Millennium Copyright Act
- October 31, 1998 - Iraq Liberation Act

Major legislation vetoed

- national budget
- H.R. 1833, partial birth abortion ban
- Twice vetoed welfare reform before signing
- the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act. Congress overrode the veto, however, to enact the bill into law.

Proposals not passed by Congress

- Health care reform
- Campaign finance reform (1993)

Initiatives

- Appointed a committee on Social Security Reform and then dismissed their recommendations without ever proposing legislation.
- Tried to get Ehud Barak of Israel and Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian National Authority, to agree to a final settlement agreement.
- Initiated the Don't ask, don't tell policy toward gays in the military, 1993.
- Reversed a ban on senior Sinn Féin politicians entering the U.S.

- Proposed a national challenge to end the racial divide in America, the One America Initiative.
- Extraordinary rendition got approval for the first time in the USA from the Clinton administration.

OFFICER | TERM

President	Bill Clinton	1993-2001
Vice President	Al Gore	1993-2001
State	Warren M. Christopher	1993-1997
	Madeleine K. Albright	1997-2001
Treasury	Lloyd Bentsen	1993-1994
	Robert E. Rubin	1995-1999
	Lawrence H. Summers	1999-2001
Defense	Les Aspin	1993-1994
	William J. Perry	1994-1997
	William S. Cohen	1997-2001
Justice	Janet Reno	1993-2001
Interior	Bruce Babbitt	1993-2001
Agriculture	Mike Espy	1993-1994
	Daniel R. Glickman	1994-2001
Commerce	Ronald H. Brown	1993-1996
	Mickey Kantor	1996-1997
	William M. Daley	1997-2000
	Norman Y. Mineta	2000-2001
Labor	Robert B. Reich	1993-1997
	Alexis M. Herman	1997-2001
Health and Human Services	Donna E. Shalala	1993-2001
Education	Richard Riley	1993-2001
Housing and Urban Development	Henry G. Cisneros	1993-1997
	Andrew Cuomo	1997-2001
Transportation	Federico F. Peña	1993-1997
	Rodney E. Slater	1997-2001
Energy	Hazel O'Leary	1993-1997
	Federico F. Peña	1997-1998
	Bill Richardson	1998-2001
Veterans	Affairs Jesse Brown	1993-1997
	Togo D. West, Jr.	1998-2000

Supreme Court appointments

Clinton appointed the following justices to the Supreme Court:

- Ruth Bader Ginsburg - 1993, making Clinton the first Democratic President to appoint a female Supreme Court justice.
- Stephen Breyer - 1994

Investigation and impeachment

Monica Lewinsky

Throughout 1998, there was a controversy over Clinton's relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. Clinton initially denied the affair, stating "I have never had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky. I've never had an affair with her." Four days later

he also said, "There is not a sexual relationship, an improper sexual relationship, or any other kind of improper relationship."

Clinton then appeared on national television on January 26 and stated: "Listen to me, I'm going to say this again. I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky." However, after it was revealed that investigators had obtained a semen-stained dress as well as testimony from Lewinsky, Clinton changed tactics and admitted that an improper relationship with Lewinsky had taken place: "Indeed I did have a relationship with Miss Lewinsky that was not appropriate. In fact, it was wrong. It constituted a critical lapse in judgment and a personal failure on my part for which I am solely and completely responsible."

He apologized to the nation, agreed to pay a \$25,000 court fine, settled his sexual harassment lawsuit with Paula Jones for \$850,000 and was temporarily disbarred from practicing law in Arkansas and before the U.S. Supreme Court. He was not tried for nor found guilty of perjury in a court.

Impeachment in the House

As a result of allegations that he had lied during grand jury testimony regarding his relationship with Lewinsky, Clinton was the second U.S. President to be impeached by the House of Representatives. The House held no serious impeachment hearings before the 1998 mid-term elections: Republican candidates rarely mentioned the issue of impeachment, but Democrats generally came out strongly against impeachment. In spite of the allegations against the President, his party picked up seats in the Congress. The Republican leadership called a lame duck session in December 1998 to hastily hold impeachment proceedings.

Although the House Judiciary Committee hearings were perfunctory and ended in a straight party line vote, the debate on the floor of the House was lively. The two charges which were narrowly passed by the House were for perjury and obstruction of justice. The perjury charge arose from Clinton's testimony about his relationship with Lewinsky. The obstruction charge was based on his actions during the subsequent investigation of that testimony. Two other charges were voted down.

Impeachment trial in the Senate

The Senate refused to convene to hold an impeachment trial before the end of the old term, so the trial was held over until the next Congress.

On February 12, 1999, the Senate concluded a 21-day trial with the vote on both counts falling short of the Constitutional requirement of a two-thirds majority to convict and remove an office holder. The final vote was generally along party lines, with all of the votes to convict being cast by Republicans. On the perjury charge, 55 senators voted to acquit, including 10 Republicans, and 45 voted to convict; on the obstruction charge the Senate voted 50-50. Clinton, like the only other President to be impeached, Andrew Johnson, served the remainder of his term.

Contempt of court citation

In April 1999, Clinton was cited by Federal District Judge Susan Webber Wright for civil contempt of court for his "willful failure" to obey her repeated orders to testify truthfully in the Paula Jones sexual harassment lawsuit. For this citation, Clinton was assessed a \$90,000 fine, and the matter was referred to the Arkansas Supreme Court to see if disciplinary action would be appropriate.

Regarding Clinton's January 17, 1998, deposition where he was placed under oath, the judge wrote:

"Simply put, the president's deposition testimony regarding whether he had ever been alone with Ms. (Monica) Lewinsky was intentionally false and his statements regarding whether he had ever engaged in sexual relations with Ms. Lewinsky likewise were intentionally false . . ."

Later—in January 2001, on the day before leaving office—Clinton agreed to a five year suspension of his Arkansas law license as part of an agreement with the independent counsel to end the investigation. Based on this suspension, Clinton was also automatically suspended from the United States Supreme Court bar, from which he chose to resign. Clinton's resignation was mostly symbolic, since he had never practiced before the Supreme Court and was not expected to in the future. The Paula Jones lawsuit was eventually settled out of court for \$850,000.

Other controversies

Chinese espionage

Throughout his second term in office, President Clinton's policies of *engagement* and *transparency* with the People's Republic of China came under intense scrutiny by Congress and the media. It was learned that political appointees and fund-raisers of his (John Huang, Charlie Trie, James Riady, et al.) either had direct ties to Chinese intelligence, or were found to have been illegally donating money wired to them from Asian sources to Clinton's 1996 re-election campaign and legal defense trust. The issue was compounded when it was learned that a top Chinese arms merchant (Wang Jun) was allowed to attend a White House "coffee" meeting with Clinton and a number of his campaign donors in February 1996. These questions gained added urgency after Congress released the unanimous report known as the Cox Report in 1999, which documented that China had acquired intelligence about the United States' top military secrets. According to the report, MIRV, encryption, satellite, ICBM, and advanced nuclear weapon technology was stolen. Many members of Clinton's staff learned of the thefts as early as July 1995, but Clinton himself was not told until July 1997.

Pardongate

The Bill Clinton pardons controversy involved a grant of clemency to FALN bombers in 1999 and pardons to his brother Roger, tax-evading billionaire Marc Rich and others in 2001.

FALN pardons

Bill Clinton pardoned sixteen members of the FALN organization. These men belonged to a Puerto Rican freedom terrorist group, which was responsible for planting over 130 bombs in public places in the U.S. They killed six people and injured seventy. The FALN represented the single largest terrorism campaign in the U.S. "Yet Clinton's clemency released individuals from prison after serving less than twenty years of terms running from fifty-five to ninety years." President Clinton did not follow formal pardon procedures. He skipped the Department of Justice and attorneys. The FBI did not conduct any background checks, and the FALN did not execute a formal request. These facts, coupled with the Department of Justice's 1996 denial of their clemency, make Clinton's motives questionable. Clinton received bipartisan condemnation and public fury.

The House of Representatives later passed a resolution condemning Clinton's pardon as an explicitly illegal action. Investigations were launched to find reasonable grounds for the clemency. However, "Congressional efforts to learn more about the FALN matter came to an end when Clinton invoked executive privilege to refuse subpoenas from

congressional committee.” As the critics raged, the White House maintained that the pardon power is not subject to legislative deliberation. It is speculated that Clinton pardoned members of the FALN in exchange for funds for his wife's New York senatorial campaign in 2000.

Pardons on the last day of office

On Clinton's last day in office, he pardoned over 200 convicted felons, including his brother Roger who had completed a prison sentence on drug charges and Dan Rostenkowski, the former Chairman of House Ways and Means Committee who had been convicted on corruption and mail fraud charges. Carlos Vignali (convicted of cocaine trafficking) and Almon Braswell (convicted of fraud), both of whom were clients of Clinton's brother-in-law Hugh Rodham, were pardoned. Rodham later returned the \$400,000 in legal fees he earned representing Vignali and Braswell. Another one of those pardoned was Marc Rich, a financier who had fled the United States decades before for tax evasion and other illegal activities including buying illegal oil from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Though his company put up a \$200 million dollar bond on behalf of Rich and his partner, Rich fled the country before being indicted and was never tried or incarcerated. Many questioned the pardon because his wife, Denise Rich, was a generous donor to the Clinton campaigns and to his library. These actions quickly led to public hearings by Congress, headed by Congressman Dan Burton, into the legality of all of Clinton's presidential pardons. Federal prosecutor Mary Jo White was appointed to investigate as well. The investigation revealed that Denise Rich's last donation to the Clinton library came a year before Marc Rich's attorney's discussed asking her to lobby Clinton on his behalf. Burton, as part of his investigation, listened to taped recordings of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak pleading with Clinton to pardon Rich as well. Rich had provided millions of dollars in financing for Palestinian development projects, and the Israelis considered Rich a significant part of the peace process. Marc Rich was required to pay a \$100 million dollar fine as part of the pardon and to waive all statutes of limitation in regards to any future civil charges. James Comey later replaced Mary Jo White, and he closed the investigation without filing any indictments.

Galagate

In June 2000, in an effort to raise money for Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign, Clinton detailed a friend and fund raiser from Chicago, James Levin, to serve as his direct liaison with a controversial Hollywood internet entrepreneur, Peter F Paul. Paul had expressed an interest, through Democratic National Committee Chairman Ed Rendell, in becoming a major contributor to Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign in order to engage Bill Clinton's post White House "rainmaking" services for his public company, Stan Lee Media. Paul was induced by Bill and Hillary Clinton, through Levin, to produce the Gala Hollywood Farewell Salute to President Clinton on August 12, 2000. Paul paid more than \$1.2 million to produce the gala. Three days after the Gala, the *Washington Post* exposed Paul's felony convictions from his activities in the late 1970's. In 2003 Paul filed a landmark civil fraud and coercion suit against Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, James Levin and Gary Smith, which was upheld by the California Supreme Court to proceed to trial, and a trial date was set for March 27, 2007.

Miscellaneous accusations and criticisms

Early in his first-term, a largely discredited documentary, the Clinton Chronicles, implicated Bill Clinton in numerous deaths of his acquaintances. This also became known as the "Clinton Body Count" and was the subject of a request for Congressional hearings

in 1994. As many as 60 people were on this list of "suspicious deaths" including Jim McDougal, Vince Foster and Ron Brown.

In March 1998, White House aide Kathleen Willey alleged that Clinton had sexually assaulted her. However, Clinton critic Linda Tripp held that Willey's allegations were false. Tripp told both Independent Counsel Ken Starr and reporter Michael Isikoff that she had seen Willey after Willey left Clinton's office that day, and that Willey was joyful from the encounter. She also testified that she helped Willey plot to seduce Clinton. In the end, the Robert Ray report deemed Willey an "unreliable witness" because of, "the differences between her deposition and Grand Jury statements, as well as her acknowledgment of false statements to the office of the Independent Counsel". Also in 1998, Juanita Broaddrick alleged that Clinton had raped her in 1978; however, when subpoenaed by attorneys for Paula Jones, she responded with an affidavit that stated, "I do not know or have any information to offer regarding a non-consensual or unwelcome sexual advance made by Mr. Clinton." She later offered up an affidavit that stated that Clinton had raped her, but her previous statements under oath damaged her claims. In addition, contemporaneous news paper stories documented that Clinton was not at the location at the time that she claimed he was.

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy was acquitted on each of 30 charges of illegally accepting gifts such as sports tickets, lodging, and transportation from companies regulated by his department in exchange for favors. HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros was indicted on 18 counts of conspiracy, giving false statements and obstruction of Justice. He pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor of lying to the FBI about the amount of money he gave his mistress, political fundraiser Linda Medlar. Medlar plead guilty to 28 counts related to the investigation. Both Medlar and Cisneros were pardoned by Clinton.

Clinton was criticized by those on the left for his practice of "co-opting" Republican policies, and "triangulating" himself. The triangulation practice caused the public to see Clinton on top of a triangle, putting himself above the Republicans and Democrats. The theory was that Clinton was, in his eyes, "doing the business of the American people", and not getting involved in partisan politics. He always stressed he was being bipartisan, but in the end many progressives concluded that he was simply a "Republican-lite". Conservative policies that he supported and passed while he was President were NAFTA, GATT, welfare reform, more crimes eligible for the death penalty, the Defense of Marriage Act, and deregulating the telecommunications industry. He dropped a nominee, Lani Guinier, from a key civil rights post because of her Black Power ideological views. Environmental advocacy groups faulted Clinton in many areas, such as allowing the reversal of automobile fuel efficiencies and allowing more pesticide use in the United States. Progressives like Ralph Nader and union leaders complained that Clinton's enthusiastic support of free trade cost the Democrats the Congress in 1994. They argued he alienated working class voters and the party's traditional liberal base, and these voters figured that neither the Republicans nor the Democrats cared very much for them.

Public approval

While Clinton's job approval rating varied over the course of his first term, ranging from a low of 36 percent in 1993 to a high of 64% in 1993 and 1994, his job approval rating consistently ranged from the high 50s to the high 60s in his second term. Clinton's approval rating reached its highest point at 73% approval in the aftermath of the impeachment proceedings in 1998 and 1999. A CNN/USA TODAY/Gallup poll conducted as he was leaving office, revealed deeply contradictory attitudes regarding Clinton. Although his approval rating at 68% was higher than that of any other departing President since polling began more than seven decades earlier, only 45% said they would miss him. While 55% thought he "would have something worthwhile to contribute and should remain active in public life", and 47% rated him as either outstanding or above

average as President, 68% thought he would be remembered for his "involvement in personal scandal" rather than his accomplishments as President, and 58% answered "No" to the question "Do you generally think Bill Clinton is honest and trustworthy?" 47% of the respondents identified themselves as being Clinton supporters.

In May 2006, a CNN poll comparing President Clinton's job performance with that of successor President George W. Bush, a strong majority of respondents said President Clinton outperformed Bush on most issues. (The poll of 1,021 adult Americans was conducted May 5-7 by Opinion Research Corp. for CNN. Margin of sampling error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.)

When asked which man was more honest as President, 46% favored Clinton to 41% for Bush. Respondents favored Clinton by a greater than 2-to-1 margin when asked who did a better job at handling the economy (63% Clinton, 26% Bush) and solving the problems of ordinary Americans (62% Clinton, 25% Bush).

On foreign affairs, the margin was 56% to 32% in Clinton's favor; on taxes, it was 51% to 35% for Clinton; and on handling natural disasters, it was 51% to 30%, also favoring Clinton.

Post-presidential career

Like other former American Presidents, Clinton has engaged in a career as a public speaker on a variety of issues (earning \$875,000 in 2004, according to President Clinton's financial disclosure statements). In his speaking outside the country and in public forums, he continues to comment on aspects of contemporary politics. One notable theme is his advocacy of multilateral solutions to problems facing the world. Clinton's close relationship with the African American community has been highlighted in his post-presidential career with the opening of his personal office in the Harlem section of New York City. He assisted his wife, Hillary Clinton, in her campaign for office as Senator from New York.

In February 2004, Clinton (along with Mikhail Gorbachev and Sophia Loren) won a Grammy Award for Best Spoken Word Album for Children for narrating the Russian National Orchestra's album *Peter and the Wolf/Wolf Tracks*. Clinton won a second Grammy in February 2005, Best Spoken Word Album for *My Life*.

Clinton's autobiography, *My Life*, was released in June 2004.

On July 26, 2004, Clinton spoke for the fifth consecutive time to the Democratic National Convention, using the opportunity to praise candidate John Kerry. Many Democrats believed that Clinton's speech was one of the best in Convention history. In it, he criticized President George W. Bush's depiction of Kerry, saying that "strength and wisdom are not opposing values."

On September 2, 2004, Clinton had an episode of angina and was evaluated at Northern Westchester Hospital. It was determined that he had not suffered a coronary infarction, and he was sent home, returning the following day for angiography, which disclosed multiple vessel coronary artery disease. He was transferred to Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City, where he underwent a successful quadruple coronary artery bypass surgery on September 6, 2004. The medical team claimed that, had he not had surgery, he would likely have suffered a massive heart attack within a few months. On March 10, 2005, he underwent a follow-up surgery to remove scar tissue and fluid from his left chest cavity, a result of his open-heart surgery.

He dedicated his presidential library, the William J. Clinton Presidential Center, in Little Rock on November 18, 2004. Under rainy skies, Clinton received words of praise from former presidents Jimmy Carter and George H. W. Bush, as well as from the current President George W. Bush. He was also treated to a musical rendition from Bono and The Edge from U2, who expressed their gratitude at Clinton's efforts to resolve the Northern Ireland conflict during his presidency.

On November 22, 2004, New York Republican Governor George Pataki named Clinton and the other living former Presidents (Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George H. W. Bush) as honorary members of the board rebuilding the World Trade Center.

In 2005, the University of Arkansas System opened the Clinton School of Public Service on the grounds of the Clinton Presidential Center.

On December 9, 2005, speaking at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Montreal, Clinton publicly criticized the Bush Administration for its handling of emissions control.

While in Sydney to attend a Global Business Forum, Clinton signed a memorandum of understanding on behalf of his presidential foundation with the Australian government to promote HIV/AIDS programs in the Asia-Pacific region.

On May 3, 2006, Clinton announced through the William J. Clinton Foundation an agreement by major soft drink manufacturers to stop selling sugared sodas and juice drinks in public primary and secondary schools.

On March 5, 2006, he received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Pace University. He became the first recipient of the Pace University President's Centennial Award. Following reception of the honorary degree, he spoke to the students, faculty, alumni and staff of Pace, officially kicking off the centennial anniversary of the university. Also in 2006, Clinton was awarded the J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding.

