

Ann Richards Memorial Service Transcript
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Frank Erwin Center, University of Texas at Austin

Speakers: Henry Cisneros, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Lily Adams, Liz Smith, Ron Kirk

RON KIRK

Thank all of you for coming today as we celebrate the life of Ann Willis Richards, the 45th governor of the state of Texas who was the smartest, funniest, and strongest woman, that many of us every knew. To begin our celebration, (APPLAUSE) we have music Ann loved from Wesley United Methodist Church Intergenerational Choir under the direction of Miss LaMonica Lewis and under the leadership of Pastor Sylvester Chase. (APPLAUSE) Thank you again, thank all of you for being with us today.

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Ron Kirk. I grew up here in Austin. I'm a life-long friend. (APPLAUSE) Normally, at a program like this, it might be presided over by someone from the pulpit, I am not a preacher. But I'm a lot more comfortable here than I would be in a pulpit, but if you insist, you can think of me as sort of the preacher pro tem for the day. For all of you dignitaries that have gathered here, know that your presence means a great deal to all the friends and family.

We don't have the time to introduce you all, but thank you so much for being here. I have the distinct honor, and joy, and challenge of trying to speak for all of Ann's children, not those seated on the front row, but all of the children that she reached out and brought into her administration and that she mentored and loved over the years, to tell you that I received hundreds of calls and e-mails, and suggestions about what to say, and stories to tell, would be an understatement. To all of those of you who sent those, thank you so much, but time does not allow us to do that.

But I do want to share a couple of thoughts that I think embrace the Ann Richards that I came to know and love. A good friend of mine, Dale Williams (SP?), who describes himself as the second best Sunday School teacher in Dallas, Texas, and I were talking about how much Ann meant to us, and how it affected us in different ways. And he reminded me of a lesson from Micah, in the Old Testament, that what God requires of us is that we do justice, that we love kindness, and that we walk humbly with our God.

By any measure, Ann Richards was as fierce a warrior and advocate for justice as any public servant I've ever known. (APPLAUSE) She embraced every person she met, no matter their station in life with dignity, and love, and compassion. Now the humility part, I think I'll leave to some of the other speakers. (LAUGH) But two out three is, ain't bad. When I thought about Ann, and how do you distill in few

moments the life's work of someone as powerful as Ann Richards, I hope you are not offended by a comparison to Jackie Robinson.

Someone once said, when asked to speak of Jackie Robinson's impact on baseball, they came up with the simplest most prophetic saying, that baseball was a better game once everybody got to play. Ann Richards understood and embraced more the notion that this state of Texas that we love so much could not be the Texas that we dreamed of until all God's children got to play. (APPLAUSE) And that included, and that meant all of us, and that was essentially the message of her New Texas, to let us in the door.

I can't help but think it's hard to believe it was only 15 years ago that we all assembled with so much energy, so much innocence at the bridge to begin that march up Congress Avenue, but Ann understood, (APPLAUSE) and we were excited, we didn't know any better, but our governor knew that not everybody at the legislature was waiting for us with open arms. (LAUGH) But she charmed them, she loved them, she hugged them, until they all finally embrace the central message of the New Texas to the good old boys was never move out but just move over. (LAUGH)

And so, move over they did, and thanks to men like Pete Laney and others, we forged a partnership that changed the face of this state. But what I learned from Ann, more importantly than anything, was it wasn't just enough from her that we had the chance to play, she wanted us to play well. And fair or not, she understood that for girls and for boys who were of color, and for poor people, and those who had overcome addictions, it wasn't just enough to be at the table, that we had to show Texas, we could govern, and we could lead, and that we did.

And we were led by a woman with the fiercest blue eyes, the most infectious smile, the most unflinching wit, and the deepest love of this state of any woman I've ever known. (APPLAUSE) And she elevated us all, she gave inspiration to all of us, she gave face to our dreams, and she elevated our state from the Lone Star state to rock star status, and thank God, we all got to come along for the ride. So, today, we're here to celebrate the life, the work, the wit, the wisdom, the love of Ann W. Richards. To start us off is one of Ann's longest friends, and best friends, and the second funniest woman in the state of Texas, Liz Smith.

LIZ SMITH

Oh, dear friends and loved ones of Ann. I'm the comic relief here today. And that's a terrible assignment, talking about Ann but, and this is a maddening thing to do because there's too much material, you know, tell an anecdote about Ann, well, I've got a million of them. In my long life, I've known a lot of fantastic women, Eleanor Roosevelt, when she was at the U.N., Katharine Hepburn, Mother Teresa, forget them. (LAUGH) I think Ann Richards was the greatest woman I've ever known. (APPLAUSE) NOW I know what you what you want to know today.

You want to know some things about Ann you don't know and, well, I guess you really want to know how did, how the hell did she do that with her hair all the time? (LAUGH) I don't know. I called Ann, Xena, The Warrior Princess. She was courageous,

electrifying, brilliant, beautiful, quick, loyal, informed, dedicated, concerned, tolerant. She was all those things. She was a wicked wit, a vast appreciator of other people, a grand storyteller in the old traditions, particularly off color and political humor. And she was a great star, and stars had been my business.

Ann and I met not long ago with George Clooney. She had a piñata of Tom DeLay to give to him. (LAUGH) And, so it happened in (WORD?), it really happened, then I thought, I'm here at this event. I couldn't get over it. Ann was all of the things I've said, great things but she was also exhausting and I'm really surprised that she stopped long enough to leave this world or Cancerville, as she had damed (SIC) it in her last days, 'cause, you know, everything was risk to the mill of her wit. Her main man, Bud Shrake, and I remember walking with Ann.

Walking. She would get you into the marine double quick march right on the streets of Manhattan, I'd fall five paces behind, Bud would be back at the light. (LAUGH) And Ann would keep striding on, then she'd turn around to say to me one of her one-line zingers, it's your problem, Liz, from eating only from the brown and white food groups. Sandra (WORD?) remembers working at Ann's office in New York, and she says, some days, she couldn't help it, she, Sandra, she would burst into song. She would be singing that Disney thing, Zippy Dee Do Da.

And she said, always the irrepressible Ann would drop what she was doing, rushing, rush out of her office, and sing, my, oh, my, what a wonderful day. (LAUGH) Well, I met Ann long before she became governor, but I really got to know her when she was working for Public Strategies. And Ann said she had to take a job like that because, Lizzy, I don't want to end up living in a trailer parked in Ellen's driveway in Austin, Texas. (LAUGH) And although Texas will always claim Ann as its own, let me tell you, New Yorkers were in love with Ann.

Joe Armstrong and I gave Ann a party when she first came to New York, and 600 people came to that party and 6,000 people stopped speaking to Joe and me because we didn't invite them. (LAUGH) I had a blissful five years of introducing Ann around, suddenly I was very popular, men crawled all over me to get to Ann, and women too. (LAUGH) And in introductions of me, Ann would say what a phony I was that I pretended I was a good old southern Baptist girl from Texas, and I was an elitist. Well, people knew there was nothing phony about Ann. She spoke the hard truth to power.

But with humor, so that people could swallow it and understand it. And she embraced her frailties and ours with unending laughter. Okay, I'm gonna tell you a story. Ann and Liz decide to do a TV talk show together, Two Old Broads Talking, we were gonna call it. (LAUGH) What else? We were having dinner at La Zerk (SP?) with the head of ABC TV, and Ann explained that our show would be a callout program, not a call-in, she said, heck, Liz, we know everybody, let's just call them up and let them talk. (LAUGH)

Wonderful idea. So, we're sitting there, and all of a sudden I realize there's a man standing by me, and I look. He says, I beg your pardon, in a very polite way. I look, it's the famous actor, Tony Curtis. Well, I had recently described his wife as

an Amazon. (LAUGH) Tony reared back then and he screamed at me using the F-word, only he didn't use, just say F. Anyways, said, F-you, he yelled. The room just gasped, everybody fell silent, while the waiters were hustling Tony out, I looked at Ann, she was hanging on her chair, half off, hysterical with laughter. (LAUGH)

We never heard anything from ABC about our show after that. (LAUGH) But Ann was delirious, she loved this happening so much, it was her idea of something perfect to take home to Texas. Public humiliation, a huge, huge celebrity, loud noise, scandal, shock among the crème de la crème, and of course, a dirty word. (LAUGH) And ever after, she'd say to me if we were some place, Liz, this is boring, let's call up Tony Curtis and have some fun. (LAUGH) Ann was a great talker, also, she was a great listener, she was an intimidating listener.

Because, you had to bring something to the table with Ann, you had to participate, you had to contribute, it didn't matter if you were a big business tycoon or six-year-old child, at a stuffy party in Connecticut, we were thrown with a lot of rich Republicans who seem to like to quote Dick Cheney. (LAUGH) So, Ann went to the piano and she said to the piano player, do you know the Twelve Days Of Christmas? So, she instructed us all to do as she was doing, and pretty soon these ladies in their twin sweater sets and their rich husbands were singing and following Ann.

They were flapping their wings and warbling, six geese a-laying, and Ann made them squat down for the laying. (LAUGH) That party turned out to be a blast, and my last story. Ann and I emceed, of all things, the Menopause Awareness Ball. (LAUGH) Now, I wrote some very clever patter for us. Even though I know nothing about menopause, but anyway, (LAUGH) Ann wisely threw my part out. She said, just say one sentence, Liz. Say that thing about hot flashes and I'll do the rest.

So, I delivered, and beside me, suddenly, Ann turns into Martin Luther King, and she raises her arms, waiving them, praise the Lord, sisters, our time has come, hallelujah. This is just absurd. She even had placards that said hallelujah, so everybody was saying hallelujah. (LAUGH) And the audience went crazy for this, and Vernon Jordan came, stepped up to the podium and said, she didn't think that Vernon had ever been particularly interested in menopausal women, but anyway. (LAUGH)

For Ann, he came, he presented the award to the writer, Gail Sheehy, and Ann, the born leader had already spoken, she said, don't give Gail one of those lucite doodads, give her an expensive Prada purse. (LAUGH) I have written that going out with Ann in public was like being with a rock star. At the theatre, people lined the aisles at intermission to speak to her. They wanted to touch her like Louis The XIV, I mean, they thought she could cure the Scrofula. (LAUGH)

But now, they wanted her to cure America. I voted for you, Governor, someone from New Jersey would say. (LAUGH) This just killed Ann, it just killed her. She said, I never ran for office in New Jersey. I said, yes, but Ann, they feel like you should have. (LAUGH) If Ann could have just shaken hands with every legitimate voter in America, I think she could've been elected President or anything else she wanted to be. (APPLAUSE)

Okay, I know the people at CNN are having a heart attack, I've got to get off here but, while Ann cared deeply about this country, there was nothing she cared about as much as you people named Richards in the front row. You may not know this but I'll just speak to you directly, Ellen, Dan, Clark, Cecile, all your families, Ann felt she had never done right by you. She expressed this thought over and over to me.

She felt she owed you all a debt, for having been a wild, crazy, young mother, for having divorced, for having you intervene with her drinking, for dragging you into her public life, and yes, for having, tada, become Ann Richards, icon, legend, warrior. I think somehow she knew her time was short. And fate had her in its sights. And that's why she came home to Texas, to do and be with you. And of course, you all did for her. She loved all of you so much.

You know, there are an awful lot of New Yorkers and people in foreign lands that know all about you, they know all about Lily's (sp?) visit with the Queen Of England, Ellen's new baby, they know about Cecile's great new job, and they know about her invincible sons, Dan and Clark. I think she considered you her greatest legacy. Well, now, Ann is going to throw down a thunderbolt or maybe she gonna throw one up, I don't know. (LAUGH) It's got me to thinking about Jesus. Lots of people these days are asking, what would Jesus do?

Yeah, they even ask that in wicked, old New York and in Washington. Personally, from henceforth, I intend to spend my time asking, what would Ann Richards do? (APPLAUSE) I can just hear her now, Liz, you got to eat right, you got to exercise, you got to work in those November elections, you've got to fix the environment, you got to help the Democrats get their act together, (APPLAUSE) you got to work for minorities, you got to make women keep the right to choose, you've got to work for sex education and fight AIDS, in your spare time, Lizzy, have a bone-density test. (LAUGH)

And turn young women into leaders in this country, and in your spare time, don't forget to have a hell of a good time. Just like I did. Ann Richards was the most alive person I have ever known in my life. Let's keep her that way. Let's keep her that way in our hearts. (APPLAUSE)

RON KIRK

Liz, thank you so much. And now, join me in welcoming Jessye Norman, soprano to the world and friend of Governor Richards who will sing, Ave Maria by Bach/Gounod. (APPLAUSE) You know, through Ann's travels around the state, she had a love affair with its people, but I'm not sure that she loved anybody more than she loved the people of South Texas, and South Texas loved Ann. Help me welcome to the podium, one of her favorite sons of South Texas that she loved, respected and adored, the honorable Henry Cisneros. (APPLAUSE)

HENRY CISNEROS

Thank you Ron, Cecile and Dan and Clark and Ellen, members of Ann Richards' family, public officials, fellow Texans and friends of Ann. Governor Ann Richards

was charismatic and smart and witty and awfully hardworking and very human. In a wise sense, she understood the human story. It's ups and downs and high points and low points and she was always striving and hoping for the good. To me, that humanity was the key to her ability to connect with real people, and connect with people she did.

I saw the light in people's eyes as they approached her at public events, particularly, young people would stand there, and you could see the expression in their face that they were actually talking to Ann Richards and saw someone who had opened up possibilities for them. And I saw it up close in the face of my own daughter, Mercedes. Her number one hero in the world was and is Ann Richards. She worked in Ann's campaigns. And we have a photograph of her at a campaign event where it looks as if she is just taking all of the wisdom of the world from Ann's face.

Her eyes are so bright, looking into Ann's face in awe and admiration. When Mercedes graduated from high school, a Catholic girls' school in San Antonio, she was put in charge of the graduation ceremony. And her first thought, of course, was of Ann Richards. But understandably, the Governor's Office had a policy that they didn't schedule Ann at high school events, because they're just too many. It'd be impossible to respond.

So, you can imagine our surprise when Mercedes got word that Ann, indeed, had accepted this Sunday afternoon event. As the graduation drew near, some of the men in the church hierarchy objected because of Ann's national profile on a range of women's issues. They suggested that she be uninvited. They prepared pickets and protests. And some pressure was put on Mercedes. And Ann could have easily backed out of a messy situation.

But, Mercedes held her ground. And of course, Ann Richards held her ground, and delivered a powerful, uplifting message that those young women will remember to this day. It was a profound learning experience for my own dear daughter. How to fight for what you believe in, stand your ground and do it with grace. Ann Richards is still my daughter's number one hero. And she now, is raising her own daughter in that sort of same independent spirit.

When I think of Ann and that human connection, I remember my own experiences. Every time I went to see Ann, on political matters or San Antonio business, or Texas business, or administration business, I realized in retrospect, that what was the most rewarding aspect of that meeting was her genuine human connection. She would ask me about Mercedes in detail. And ask me about my son John Paul's condition. The fact is, that because she had been a mother, and a grandmother, and a teacher, she had distinctly women's concerns.

The kind eyes, the pleasant face, the knowing look, the indomitable spirit of dealing with life's ups and downs, the strong hands, the caring advice, the genuine interest, the effect was wise and solid, and encouraging. And it all led me to think, did the question people used to ask in those days apply? Will it make a difference to have a

woman in high political office? Well, Ann proved the answer is absolutely, yes, (APPLAUSE) it made a difference. And the proof is in the record, it made a difference.

She opened the doors to women more than any of the 44 governors that Texas has had before her. (APPLAUSE) One-half of her governmental appointments, nearly one-half, were women. She mentored young leaders with a kind of maternal sense of the future. She advanced education, drawing on her experience as a classroom teacher. And she made the state of Texas look like the face of Texas, more Latinos and more African Americans, appointed to positions of responsibility than ever before. (APPLAUSE)

She had a sense of the family of Texas. And she set an example of what was possible for Texans who've been locked out of the mainstream, out of traditional power, with a kind of a, just natural feeling for average folks, for the underdog. She fought for jobs to come to Texas, because she understood that families can't make it without their finances. And she funded programs for Texas with substance abuse and other problems, because of her empathy for people who've hit a low point in their life.

She improved the state's finances just like Texas families (BACKGROUND NOISE) have to deal with their own family budgets. Did it make a difference to have a special human being like Ann Richards as Governor Of Texas? You bet. It made a huge (APPLAUSE) difference. A mother, a grandmother, a teacher, a friend, a sister to many, a leader and our Governor, she made a big difference with her life. Ann Richards made a difference. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

RON KIRK

Boy, that was wonderful. Ann, we love you. Henry, thank you for those wonderful words. We all know what a role Ann played in the lives of so many women in politics. We know how she enjoyed mentoring them. It wasn't easy then or now. So, join me as we welcome another courageous woman who now serves the State Of New York, Ann's friend, our friend, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. (APPLAUSE)

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

Thank you. Boy, it's good to be here with all of you, for this celebration. And I was looking at those pictures, and I was thinking, some people are so afraid of dying, they never live. And some people are so afraid of failing, they never try. And one of the reasons we love Ann Richards, is she tried. She gave it her all. Every single (APPLAUSE) minute of every single day, she was full of life, full of possibility and potential. There are so many people in this center today who have their own stories about Ann.

I wish we had time for all of them, Ron. Because you'd hear from people who were down on their luck, and along came Ann Richards, and lifted them up. You'd hear from women who thought that they just couldn't really break a barrier or reach that glass ceiling. And, she'd tell them they could. In fact, they had to, it was no ifs,

ands or buts about it. (APPLAUSE) You had to get up and get going, and just believe in yourself. There's so many stories.

When Bill and I first got to know Ann, I thought to myself, I have just met another force of nature. (LAUGH) I already lived with one, (LAUGH) and now, along came another one to be part of my life. And indeed, that's how I thought of her. When she got into politics here in Travis County, she was the first woman elected to the Commissioners' Court. And she showed that, she not only could do the job, but do it better than a lot of folks had ever expected.

And when she decided to run for treasurer, again, people didn't give her much of a chance when she started. But she believed she could do it, and she never wavered. And that campaign was also a great campaign here in Texas. And it sent ripples across the country, because all of a sudden, this laughing, happy, smart, tough woman had won a statewide position in Texas. And everybody thought, well, if it could happen there, it could happen anywhere. (APPLAUSE) And so, it did.

I'm here with two of my friends and colleagues from the Senate. Senator Mary Landrieu from Louisiana, and your own (APPLAUSE) Kay Bailey Hutchison from right here in Texas. And she did a great job as treasurer. It's what gave her the credibility and the platform to run for governor. You know, she used to tell people that she got into politics in part because she didn't want her tombstone to read, she kept a clean house. (LAUGH) Instead, she went into government and cleaned house. (APPLAUSE)

And she was a loyal friend. But as you've already heard from Liz, she was a friend who could not resist giving you advice, whether you wanted it or not. (LAUGH) I was down in South Texas with her in (BACKGROUND NOISE) 1994 at a political rally and event. And, we were out on a tarmac of an airport, I can't remember whether it was Brownsville or McAllen, but we were down there. And I was mostly just looking forward to some good Mexican food.

But, I had to give my speech too, and so, the wind was blowing and I got up, and my papers were blowing all over the place. So, Ann takes me aside and she goes, Hillary, you need one of these. (LAUGH) It's called a speech box. It keeps your papers from flying all around. And I'm gonna send you one because I cannot bear to see how pathetic you look out there (LAUGH) with those papers flying everywhere. So, in the mail came my very own speech box.

So, every time I use it, which is quite often, I think of where my first one came from. During Ann's governorship, I watched with great admiration, because she had such a grasp of what we've heard called, and what she made a reality, the New Texas. She was determined that every little girl and every little boy, no matter who you were or where you were from, or what your parents did for a living, or the color of your skin, or your accent, that by her very example, you could feel that you were part of Texas.

It was inclusive. It sent a message far and wide. And people believed it. And because they believed in her, they believed more in themselves. Now, we all know

that she didn't win that re-election campaign. But, you know, in all of the time that I spent with her or saw her in the years since, I didn't hear the usual kind of Monday morning quarterbacking, the what ifs, what coulda, woulda, shoulda happened. It was all about the future, with Ann. It was all about what she could do next.

What was the next adventure in her life. Not that she didn't quit caring, she cared deeply and passionately. She cared about Texas, the people of Texas. She cared about our country. And she was filled with all kinds of advice about what to do. It's pretty good advice even today. There's a lot that Ann Richards stood for, a lot of what she pushed us to do, that we should be paying attention to even now. But she also had fun doing it.

You know, politics is hard enough, because, especially in these days, the partisan bickering, the gridlock, the mean-spirited attacks, you know, they can take a toll on a person. But Ann was often there when you most needed her. Not when times were good, but when times were hard. I got a lot of advice from Ann about my hair. (LAUGH) Now, some of you may recall that one of the crowning achievements of my time as First Lady was that I probably generated more press about my hair than Bosnia or Kosovo, or... (LAUGH)

And, one time I was with Ann, and she sort of looked at me in that way she had and she said, you know, really, you got to make up your mind. (LAUGH) So, you either just have to do something that people forget about and pay no attention to, or you got to make a statement. (LAUGH) Well, you can see with yourself, your own eyes, (LAUGH) what my choice was. But she enjoyed the activities of everyday life. You know, a lot of you who have been friends of mine ever since I rolled into Texas in 1972 on the ill-fated and doomed effort to represent George McGovern in Texas. (LAUGH)

Yes, I know there are some hearty souls out there. And we did have a good time, lots of time at, you know, (WORD?) and the Armadillo and other places we won't talk about, what happens in Austin stays in Austin when it came to that campaign. (APPLAUSE) So, I started getting flooded with all these stories from so many of you about your own personal favorite Ann Richards' event quip. And you know, I loved the story that my old friend, Roy Spence (SP?) told me about how Ann would come to see the Lady Longhorns play here.

And she would sometimes come with another great Texas icon, Barbara Jordan. (APPLAUSE) And Jody Conradt, the coach would hear these two women yelling at her players, (LAUGH) but there was a real difference in what they were yelling. Barbara Jordan was yelling things like, girl, where'd you get that bad habit of dribbling behind your back? Ann Richards would be yelling, girl, where'd you get those shoes? (APPLAUSE) Ann had an appraiser's eye for good jewelry and good clothes.

And it got to be a little bit threatening to some women because when she'd come and campaign for me or for other Democrats, she'd walk into a room and she'd size all the women up. (LAUGH) And she'd go to a well-dressed women with beautiful jewelry on and she'd say, you know, for what that ring cost you, you could give the

maximum contribution to this candidate. (LAUGH) When I was running for the Senate, actually, while I was contemplating running for the Senate from New York, I talked with Ann, of course, to get her advice.

She goes well, you're gonna move to a state you never lived in and you're gonna run for the Senate, sounds like a great idea to me. (LAUGH) And she said, on a more serious note, because I was having a hard time deciding, a lot of my friends in New York were pushing me to run and, you know, it was a kind of, daunting prospect as you might guess and Ann said to me one day, she said, well, do you know yet whether you want to run? I said, well, that's what I'm trying to decide.

She said, well, that's what the decision has to be. It has to be from deep inside you. Not what anybody else says, do you want to do it? Do you want the job? Do you want the responsibility? But don't make the decision because you think it would be hard. It's got to be hard. That goes with the territory. Make it because you want it. Ann Richards sent out a message to young women that is reverberating today. Set your own course. Dream your own dreams. Go places where you want to go even if nobody has gone there before.

Stand your ground. But never forget you're no better than anybody else. I came to Texas during my Senate campaign and Ann, of course, was by my side. And we had an event here in Austin at one of the local hotels, and the room was packed with my friends and Ann's friends. And so, Ann gave a great barnburner of a speech and, gosh, I was embarrassed and proud at the same time about everything she was saying. So then, I got up to speak and you know, following Ann Richards is like, not a good idea. (LAUGH)

But you know, you do the best you can with what you've got, hair and all and you just kind of forge ahead. (LAUGH) So, I started in on my speech about why I was running for the Senate and what I was gonna try to do for the people of New York if they were so good as to give me a chance to serve. And all of a sudden, in the back of the room, this happens to me a lot, somebody started protesting and yelling. And we couldn't quite figure out what he was protesting and yelling about.

But it went on, it didn't stop. And usually, when you're in that situation, you just keep talking and hope that the person loses interest or steam, and everybody just sort of rallies around you. But this gentleman was determined and he just kept yelling. So Ann could see that, you know, I was a little perplexed about what to do next. So, she came rushing up to the podium, and she leans into the mic and she goes, will somebody please call for emergency help, this man's having an attack. He needs emergency help, call the ambulance right now. (LAUGH)

Well, this poor protestor was dumbfounded and just shut right up. (LAUGH) I'm so grateful that Ann's family would allow all of us to be here today to remember her. (APPLAUSE) And, oh, to Cecile and Dan and Clark and Ellen, we're so grateful you shared your mother with us. And to (APPLAUSE) all of the grandchildren who knew this extraordinary woman as someone special in your life, we want you to know that we will remember her with you.

We wish you all the happiness and joy in life that she wanted desperately for you to have. Ann burst into the national consciousness with that extraordinary keynote address that she delivered at the Democratic Convention in 1988. And, (APPLAUSE) you know, I particularly remember it 'cause I was in floor of that convention and it was one of those moments where you just felt transported to another place and another time. She had the entire convention in the palm of her beautifully manicured hand. (LAUGH)

She played them like the great conductor of human emotions that she could be. And then she got to the end and she talked, Lily, about becoming a grandmother. And she spoke with such tenderness about this nearly perfect granddaughter she had. She talked, as some of you may recall, about spreading that Baptist pallet out on the floor, and rolling a ball back and forth with Lily. And, at that moment, it didn't matter who you were or where you were from, but you were part of Ann Richards' family.

You could see her with that grandchild and you could think about all the times that in your own family something so ordinary occurred but which she imbued with such meaning. That, to me, is the genius of Ann Richards. She led a life that was filled with the daily occurrences that any life consists of. She faced challenges she acknowledged when many of us, particularly in public life are afraid to do, that guess what, she was a human being, too. And because of her example, she made a difference, as Henry said, in the lives of not only those who she knew personally, but millions of others.

It was so typical of Ann that she would move to New York right after 9/11. While some people were leaving, Ann was coming. She took New York by storm. She'd walk down the street, and people would yell out her name. It really was her kind of town. And I was so pleased that she was someone who I could see as she strode those streets with such pride and energy. We'll miss her, but she's not ever gonna be forgotten.

And the best way that we can honor her memory is by taking up her challenge, see the potential, the God-given potential in every child's face, open up every door that is blocked, remember where you came from, and don't ever forget that others want to come along with you. Love and laugh so that when your time on this earth is done, whenever that might be, people will say, that was a life well lived. God bless you, Ann, and thank you for that life. (APPLAUSE)

RON KIRK

Outstanding. Thank you to intergenerational choir from Wesley United Methodist Church, and my other mother, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson would kill me if I did not let you know that it was her daughter-in-law who was the soloist. (LAUGH) So, thank you. Thank you so much, Senator Clinton, Hillary, thank you so much for being with us and sharing your words. (APPLAUSE) Thank you of reminding us, thank you for reminding us of love, Ann's love of her children and her grandchildren.

Ann was quick to tell you that she had eight nearly perfect grandchildren. And, you know, that had to be pretty tough duty because all of us have watched Lily grow up from when we first saw her in those first campaign ads, but she has accepted that challenge and that love, and she is a remarkable young woman of intellect and her own passion. She's no stranger to platforms and no stranger to public speaking. Here to speak on behalf of the family is Lily Adams. (APPLAUSE)

LILY ADAMS

Thank you to Ron Kirk, and thank you to all of you for being here. I am so grateful for all of you who have come here today to say goodbye to my grandmother. I am here not just for me, but for my brother Daniel and my sister Hannah, and also my cousins, Jennifer Maeve (SP?), Wyatt (SP?), Samantha and baby Kate. To all of you, my grandmother was Governor Richards or Ann, but to us, she was Mammy. First, I want you to know how much she loved everyone who spoke here today. Each of you touched her life, and so I thank you for that.

Like all of you, for the past few days, I have been thinking of memories I have of my grandmother, and I want to start by sharing a few stories and some lessons that I learned from Mammy. As early as I can remember, we were campaigning. (LAUGH) That's me on the banner up there. I was, I think, about 18 months old, and I was a lot older before I realized that most families don't spend most of their time going to pancake breakfasts in Tyler or Cinco De Mayo parades in Brownsville. (LAUGH)

But this was part of our life with Mammy. She was always going somewhere and moving, and she was always eager to take us along. She wanted us to see what she saw, learn what she learned, and know who she knew. And she didn't want to do anything small. She wanted to do it big. She wanted to do it right with all the bells and all the whistles. When I was five, the Queen Of England came to Texas to visit us. And, years later, Mammy and I went to England where we saw the Queen, but it wasn't quite enough just for us to visit the Queen.

We had to have tea with the Queen, and we also had to have it at Buckingham Palace. (LAUGH) And when we went to the Lady Longhorn games here, the basketball games at the Erwin Center, we didn't just go and cheer politely. We sat behind the bench with Barbara Jordan and we yelled until we were hoarse. (LAUGH) Today, Coach Jodie Conradt, her assistant coaches, and lot of former and current players are here, and nothing would have made Mammy happier. (APPLAUSE)

Going to those Lady Longhorn games left me with two impressions. First, it wasn't until I was older that I knew that boys played basketball too. (LAUGH) And the second, Mammy was by far the most competitive person I have ever known. Whether it was family games of Charades at Thanksgiving or a game of contract bridge with friends, it definitely mattered to Mammy who won. (LAUGH) Then, there were the simple but profound lessons that Mammy taught us all. You can wear black with anything. (LAUGH)

Never wear pattern clothes on television. Stand up straight. Always wear your nametag on the right, and when you give a handshake, do it like you mean it. But more importantly, Mammy taught us that life is about service, about helping people you care about, helping them do the things they need to do and want to do in politics or anything else. Every time Mammy saw one of us grandkids, she would say, how's school? And then she would ask, are you the smartest one in the class?
(LAUGH)

And if we hedged in our reply, she would ask, well, why not? This might seem a little too demanding, but it wasn't, because Mammy had learned the most important lesson of all, and she was teaching it to all of us. That lesson was simple. This is your life. It is the only one you get. So, no excuses and no do-overs. If you make a mistake or fail at something, you learn from it, you get over it, and you move on. Your job is to be the very best person you can be and to never settle for anything less.

This message was not just given to her children and to her grandchildren, but also in countless speeches and one-on-one conversations with many thousands of people, many of them young women, across this country. (APPLAUSE) She delivered this message, as only she could, with wit, with intensity but most importantly, by example. Mammy was the very best person she could be every single day. (APPLAUSE) For us and for all you, she is irreplaceable. We will never stop missing her and her unconditional love and support.

She would always say, as Ron said, that she had eight nearly perfect grandchildren. And we want you to know that she was a nearly perfect grandmother. (APPLAUSE) So thank you all for coming and honoring her today. (APPLAUSE)

RON KIRK

Well, what a wonderful and spectacular day it has been. Lily, thank you. Thanks to the family for allowing all of us to be a part of this wonderful celebration. I would also ask you to join me in acknowledging and thanking President Bill Powers and the University Of Texas in making this facility available to us. (APPLAUSE) And as you entered the hall today, you were entertained by the University Of Texas Faculty Brass Quintet. Thank you so much for being with us as well. (APPLAUSE)

And, finally, on behalf of all of those who worked for Ann, who got those phone calls at 3:00 in the morning, who got those messages that always started, never with a, can you hold for Governor Richards, but, Ron, you got to tell them this. The one thing we wanted to make known, Ann Richards was a woman of substance, and she was a woman of purpose, and she understood that we had this discreet moment in time to show Texas how wonderful we could be.

And she asked us and challenged us over and over and over again. Did our presence make a difference? On behalf of the family and all of us, to all of you assembled here today, your presence validates the fact that Ann Richards made a big difference in the life of the state of Texas. (APPLAUSE) Thank you. As you leave the

auditorium, you're gonna be given a fan. Now, for those of you not from Texas, you may not know back in the olden days, we didn't have celebrations like this inside.

And sometimes, they'd be outside, and it would be kind of hot and kind of dusty and either the funeral parlor or the church or the politicians would give you a fan. Well, we're giving you a fan, but it's a fan with a purpose, because it's got a story on the back, and it will remind you about Ann and what a difference you can make in the life of somebody when you care. Thank you all for being with you. God bless you. God bless Texas, and God bless Ann W. Richards. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

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