2018 SIM Discussion Topics on book *First Women* by Kate Brower 2016

Note: In order to fully participate in this discussion reading the book is highly recommended
Available online & through Barnes & Noble

Four 90 minute meetings SIM Flower Mound * Professor Kaye Nubel facilitator

Class Title: First Women: *The Grace and Power of America’s Modern First Ladies*

Please note highlighted topics for possible discussion in each session

I. (Session 1) Monday October 15  2:30-4p
   A. Class Business
      1. Introductions: *characteristics of an effective discussion  *optional exercises as time allows  *find current media on FL’s  *preview of course. Chapters 5 & 7 especially important
   B. Chapter 1: The Political Wife
      1. Introduction of first ladies challenges, accomplishments & legacies.
      2. There is no job description for first ladies…. Be thinking of one.
   C. Chapter 2: Sisterhood of 1600
      1. Discuss friendships personal, unlikely & complicated.
         a) Ways they kept in touch & supported one another.
      2. Some first ladies enjoyed being first lady & the White House experience —some did not. Discuss.
   D. Chapter 6: East Wing vs West Wing. (Optional as time allows)
      1. There is an ongoing East Wing versus West Wing battle of the sexes in every modern White House. Note: P 24-27. more on this east west topic
      2. Discussion of the included first ladies in this chapter: Michelle, Pat, Betty & Hillary about her relationship with the West Wing.

II. (Session 2) Monday October 22  2:30-4p
   A. Special guest Annette Becker, director of Texas Fashion Collection At UNT.
   B. Topic: Fashion & Style of First Ladies. Focus on diverse styles of Lady Bird Johnson, Jacqueline Kennedy & Mamie Eisenhower
III. (Session 3) Monday October 29  2:30-4p
A. Chapter 5 & 7: Part 1 Supporting Actors/The Good Wife
   A. Lecture & Discussion  each first lady’s …
      1. Political support of President’s agenda.
      2. Emotional support especially during times of tragedy.
      3. Personal relationship with husband the President
      4. Creating her own projects & legacy

B. First Ladies & dates in White House
      7. Melania Trump 2017-
C. Chapter 6:  East Wing vs West Wing.  (Optional as time allows)
   1. There is an ongoing East Wing versus West Wing battle of the sexes in
      every modern White House.  Note:  P 24-27. more on this east west
      topic
   2. Discuss each first lady in this chapter: Michelle, Pat, Betty & Hillary &
      her relationship with the West Wing.

IV. (Session 4) Monday November 5  2:30-4p
A. Epilogue:  Ladies First
   1. Discussion first ladies difficulties, causes, gatherings, legacies, etc. after
      White House.
   2. Which first ladies have impacted history most?  The least?  Reasons?
B. Chapter 9:  Keep Calm & Carry On.
   1. Discuss challenges for first ladies included in chapter:
   2. Lady Bird Johnson, Pat Nixon, Betty Ford, Nancy Reagan
     & Rosalynn Carter
C. Thoughts on book, author & discussion.
   1. Was book easy to follow?
      a) Well organized?  Topic selection?  Nonpartisan?  Author’s
         writing style?
   2. Selection of first ladies for book. Who else would you want included?
   3. Have our discussions and or research significantly changed your opinion
      of any president or first lady?  What would have improved the
      book for you?
   4. Ideas for future discussion topics at Flower Mound  OLLI UNT?