

On the Tube

The American President, an epic 10-part series

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT, the epic ten-part series that tells the stories of all forty-one of America's chief executives, will premiere Sunday, April 9, 2000, 9-11 pm. (ET) with two one-hour programs presented under the umbrella title, "A Matter of Destiny."

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT is a co-production of Kunhardt Productions, Inc. and Thirteen/WNET New York and is presented on PBS by Thirteen/WNET. The series was written, produced and directed by Philip B. Kunhardt, Jr., Philip B. Kunhardt III, and Peter W. Kunhardt. The executive producers are Peter W. Kunhardt and William R. Grant. The series' sole underwriter is New York Life Insurance Company. The series will air in two-hour increments on five consecutive nights. Each of the programs profiles four (or, in one case, five) presidents who are linked by a common theme, and each of the five evenings presents two programs, further linked by an umbrella theme. The programs seen as "A Matter of Destiny" on premiere night, Sunday, April 9 are "Family Ties" and "Happenstance." "Family Ties" profiles four presidents who were scions of prominent American political families. The prickly, independent John Quincy Adams was the son of America's second president, John Adams. Benjamin Harrison, a notably chilly individual who was nicknamed "the human iceberg," was the grandson of William Henry Harrison, a fact he never bothered to mention during his campaign. Franklin Delano



President Bill Clinton

Roosevelt's family was, of course, prominent in New York politics and included two-time president Theodore Roosevelt.

John F. Kennedy's father was a prominent bootlegger and businessman who groomed his sons for political power, founding a large and frequently star-crossed dynasty.

The second program that will be seen Sunday evening, "Happenstance," explores what happens when a vice president assumes the Oval Office upon the death of his running mate. The only show to profile five presidents, "Happenstance" opens with the story of John Tyler, who, upon the death of William Henry Harrison, took the oath of office—and set the precedent that has been followed ever since, insisting that he was the

president in every sense, not the acting president, and serving the remainder of the term. His steely resolve and competence carried the day, helping to ensure the orderly transfer of power. Millard Fillmore, who rose from poverty to the vice presidency, found himself ignored by the president, Zachary Taylor. As president, Fillmore tried to keep the

nation intact despite the growing and irrevocable rift over slavery, but when he left office, the nation was closer to civil war. "THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT" is narrated by Hugh Sidey, *Time* magazine's White House reporter for four decades. Scholarly commentary is provided by Harvard's Richard E. Neustadt, whom Arthur Schlesinger has called "our most brilliant commentator on the presidency." A companion volume to the series, also called THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT, has been published by Riverhead Books. The volume has been singled out for praise by many historians and was a main selection of the Book-of-the-Month



Colin Powell

Club. The centerpiece of the educational outreach effort is a Web site to

which more than 1,400 American school teachers have contributed, www.americanpresident.org.

kmhd for the love of jazz

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Warning Signs of Heart Attack

American Heart Association

Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke

When heart attack occurs, every minute counts. Don't wait. Get help fast.

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest lasting more than a few minutes.
- Pain may spread to the shoulders, neck or arms.
- Chest discomfort with light headedness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath may also occur.

Sometimes these symptoms go away and then return. Take them seriously, and get medical help.



Jacqueline Kennedy