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SIDNEY MCCAIN INTERVIEW
JOHN MCCAIN: FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS
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SIDNEY MCCAIN
Daughter of John McCain
December 13, 2017
Interviewed by Teddy Kunhardt
Total Running Time: 45 Minutes

START TC:
QT: 01;00;00;00

QT: 01;00;00;00

CREW:

Sidney McCain interview, take one, marker.

QT: 01;00;07;13

TITLE

Where Sidney falls among the McCain siblings

QT: 01;00;11;00

SIDNEY MCCAIN:

I am the oldest of John and Carol—of their children. I have two older brothers that were—my mom had before—before I came along, and then my dad and mom got married, which would be John McCain and Carol McCain. And I came along, and so I'm right in the middle, but the—probably the youngest of the first half of the family.

QT: 01;00;34;03

TITLE

Sidney was a baby when her dad was captured in Vietnam

QT: 01;00;38;05

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I was only six months by the time he was stationed away to when the worst all happened, and his career of being a Navy pilot and what not. So no, I do not have any memories of him beforehand.

QT: 01;00;51;06

TITLE

Earliest memories of her dad

QT: 01;00;55;01

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I knew that my dad—that's a really good question. Awareness of my dad was always around, because strangers would come up and give me gifts because of my father being a POW, or there would be talk of my mom, whose—who all of her lady friends were also wives of POWs or of military men that were overseas in Vietnam, and so the knowledge of my father was always present but I had really no idea what I was in store for until he came back. And actually, we were all reunited in 1967, so—and I was a year and a half when he came back. Or, sorry, six and half when he came back, I was a year and a month when he was shot down. But my recollection of him during that time is next to zero.

QT: 01;01;46;10

TITLE

The day her father returned home

QT: 00;01;49;20

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I had no idea what was going on. We were there and people were talking about my dad coming back but, again, it was such an abstract idea to me

that—that my father was coming back from war, because I didn't understand it at the age of six that—what that meant. But he was there and we embraced, and my mom and he embraced, and it was great. The next memory I have of him though coming back was it was my mom and I and he and we were at a beach house, and I don't know the timeline between his return and when we went to the beach house, but I know it was so that my mom and dad could be alone, for some other reason I was there as well. And I did not understand, I was really like, "Who is this guy? What is he doing here?" I ha—yeah, I was very—did not understand the whole concept of his return from—from Vietnam.

QT: 01;02;43;07

TITLE

On life without her father

QT: 01;02;47;18

SIDNEY McCAIN:

My brothers were—were my—my—they were the everything. They were my protectors, they were annoying, they were everything. They—they—and to this day they are still the most important people in my life. They are—always have been looking out for me, and I feel very blessed and lucky to have them. But it was my mom and my brothers and I for a really long time. That—if—those memories I have, I have of Christmases, I have of dinners, I have of baseball games, all of that stuff I have from that time period.

QT: 01;03;24;23

TITLE

Christmas without her father

QT: 01;03;28;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Music was always an important part of our household, and Andy and Doug had both been given—and I don't know if this would have been—no, it must

have been after dad got back. They were given Jethro Tull, they were given the album Jethro Tull, and I can remember as a kid thinking, "What, this is ridiculous, I've never heard anything like this in my entire life." And I look back at thinking about Jethro Tull and I'm like, "Oh, I can't believe I was really into that." But they were really into music. But Christmas was—we'd always open up a gift before we'd go to bed, we'd always—in the morning—we would wear our pajamas all day long. I mean it doesn't sound like it's so unusual compared to other Christmases from my youth, but I can remember dressing the tree and the colored lights, I can remember tinsel and the fake spray snow can, getting it all over ourselves. Like that's—that's the memories that I have of that—of that time period.

QT: 01;03;25;00

TITLE

On Sidney's Mom, her car accident and her strength

QT: 01;04;26;14

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I think the most interesting time during that time period while my father was away is my mom holding it down, keeping everything together. She was in a terrible car accident—I don't remember my mom when she wasn't—didn't have a limp or wasn't in a wheelchair, because I think it happened when I was probably about two or three years old that this terrible car accident happened. And for her to go from almost dying, to not being able to walk, to walking—the prognosis was terrible and that to me just shows some kind of incredible strength in her. I used to go with her to her physical therapy at the VA in Orange Park, Florida, I remember that I never wanted to own a motorcycle from going with her too, because everybody who was missing a leg had done it on a motorcycle, which was—was just terrifying. She was always very social.

QT: 01;05;24;15

SIDNEY McCAIN:

She had a lot of friends whose husband's were missing in action or were POWs or who were overseas serving—serving their country, and they became permanent fixtures in our lives, whether it be the Hickerson's or it

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would be Bob Craner's wife, who—Bob Craner was a POW with my dad, and Audrey Craner and her two kids would come and stay with us. It was very much a bigger family, I guess, in a way, just because we'd always have people coming into our home and staying. I just remember there was never alone time, there was always a group of people in the house. But I think it was more out of support than anything else. I mean, she had Joyce Block moved in with us to take care of my mom and us while my mom was recovering from the car accident, so it was very busy. But her strength during that time is incredible. I hope that I inherit some of that.

QT: 01;06;19;12

TITLE

Life in Orange Park, Florida and her mom's ingenuity

QT: 01;06;24;18

SIDNEY McCAIN:

It's incredible. And she was always very smart. We have a pool in our—had a pool in our backyard in Orange Park, Florida, and she figured out that the pool was going in at the Holiday Inn because—I should describe Orange Park, Florida to you, my memory of Orange Park, Florida. We had a Holiday Inn, we had a Char Grill, We had a House of Lu, which was fancy—that was high end, it was tiny, it was amazing, and a Pizza Hut. So after the football games you'd go to the Pizza Hut or the Char Grill, or if you wanted to have a fancy night of Chinese food you'd go to the House of Lu, but it really wasn't that fancy but that's all we—we knew.

QT: 01;06;58;20

SIDNEY McCAIN:

But at the Holiday Inn they were putting in a pool, and she somehow talked the firm or the company or the contractors putting in the pool to put a pool in our backyard, because she knew it would save so much more money if they had just—she was like, "The leftover cement you have, the leftover stuff to put the pool in." And she was always incredibly clever with the way she could make ends meet, and the way that she could come up with ideas to—it would just make our lives better.

QT: 01;07;23;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I mean, we had a pool in our backyard and we definitely didn't have the salary for a pool in our backyard. It's—I think that's another amazing thing that she's done, and that wives in the military and spouses in the military do now, there's not a lot of money for—to raise a family of three kids, and there wasn't a great deal of money for her to raise the three of us, and yet she still figured out a way to make it work and make everything really exciting. Going on vacation, she had a station wagon that had—and this is ridiculous, but she had a station wagon that had rusted through on sides of it, so she took those plastic flower things that you put in the bottom of a bathtub and she put them over the side of the station wagon, and that had to last, she had to make that last. But for—to take us on vacation she'd say, "We're going to go to the beach" and we're like, "We live an hour from the beach", "No, this is going to be a great beach, we're going to go to a different—you're going to love this beach."

QT: 01;08;22;19

SIDNEY McCAIN:

She'd pile us in, feed us full of egg salad sandwiches, we'd drive for eight hours, and lo and behold we'd be in Cocoa Beach or we'd be in—I don't know, but we'd be down at Hollywood Beach near Miami, we'd be in Fort Lauderdale. But it was another adventure that we would go on. And was that beach really much different than the beach in South (Inaudible) Virgin—no, but she would build it up that this was going to be a magical trip that we were gonna take, and it was. It was always really great. So that's just an example of how she made things really—she handled it really well, the—absolutely incredible the way that she would create fun things for us to do.

QT: 01;09;02;18

TITLE

John's father Jack McCain

QT: 01;09;06;17

SIDNEY McCAIN:

He terrified me. He would always want to hold me and squeeze me, which I get that, he's my grandfather, that's what you want to do to your

granddaughter, is to hold her and squeeze her, but I found him terrifying because he was always just a very—for a little man he was very strong in presence. I lived with my grandparents in Hawaii, I couldn't even remember the year that it was, but my grandfather every morning would jump rope, do pushups, do leg lifts. I think that was everything that he would do, and he always every morning—it takes like 20 minutes, I would go out with him, and he talked to me the whole time. We were—weren't the closest, but I think we were pretty close to share those experiences. Always a cigar in his mouth, always just making silly jokes with me. He was an incredible man and a very loving man, I just—yeah, I'm sad that he's not here—I'm sad he wasn't there to see dad run for president, I'm sad that he wasn't there to see dad be a congressman or a senator, I think he would have been incredibly proud.

QT: 01;10;15;05

TITLE

On John McCain's mother

QT: 01;10;20;02

SIDNEY McCAIN:

My grandmother, she taught me how to behave as a small child. She is incredibly worldly, but she loved me, I mean I think she still loves me a great deal. Which that sounds really obvious, but I think sometimes when your parents are divorced, a lot of times the relationship with grandparents could be hard or be not as close. But during that time she took me through Europe with her. And she's an incredible traveler, and she has incredible stories, and she's always very fashionable. I traveled with her and grandfather through Europe, and it was pretty great. My grandfather always used to let me pick out what the dessert was going to be, and he would share it with me. And it was—it was—she's a remarkable woman. I'm sure you'll see—you've already spoken with her I think, but she's a remarkable woman.

QT: 01;11;17;05

TITLE

The day her father returned home

QT: 01;11;22;13

SIDNEY McCAIN:

She obviously loves him, it's her son, but she's—she's tough. Grandmother's tough, she's—but very proud of him. I mean she's done her part to support his running for office and she's—but she can—she can be tough. I think that's—she's a tough love parent.

QT: 01;11;43;05

TITLE

The day her father returned home

QT: 01;11;47;08

SIDNEY McCAIN:

It was—it really was such an incredibly long time ago. I remember I was standing with Joyce Block, who was the woman who was taking care of my mom after her accident and became a very dear friend of the family's, and my brother. I had on a long skirt, it was like a long red and yellow or red and white or red and black. I don't think I really understood what was going on. I really—I don't think I understood what was going on, because it just—for me it was exciting, there were a lot of people. I remember hugging my dad, but I couldn't tell you like the emotion at that point because I think I was too young to process the whole thing. So that's—that's where that whole feeling is.

QT: 01;12;45;18

TITLE

Orange Park's local parade and McCain becoming her dad upon his return

QT: 01;12;49;17

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I was a mascot, yes, for—for the local high school, Jacksonville high—high schoo—Orange Park—sorry, Orange Park High School. I remember—so my

dad was often the main—because Orange Park was really small, a very, very small town, and he would be asked to be in the local parade or whatever. And I can remember being with my friends watching the parade and he made the float stop and he had me climb onboard, and I climbed onboard and I thought, "This is really cool. I have no idea why I'm here, but this is really, really cool." I think the hardest thing to wrap your head around is like during that time he just became my dad and it was—I can tell you things that he taught me in my youth, I can tell you things that—all of a sudden he was the hand of discipline that came into my life when he showed up. It was—it wasn't the—I think my brother's concept of it, Doug and Andy's, would be a lot different because they had something to hold onto when he left, when he was captured. I didn't have that.

QT: 01;14;03;10

TITLE

On growing up a McCain

QT: 01;14;07;17

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I was very—I was very lucky. My mom will say that she's the only person she knows that's raised three only children, that we each have our own vision and want of what we wanted in life. It—even as a kid there was no pressure, I think our childhood's were very much like anybody else's. There was an expectation to make good grades in school, I made terrible grades in school until my senior year, but you look at my dad's education, his track record in high school and what not, I don't stress about it now but at the time—but it wasn't about being a McCain, it was just about being a good student. In my older years when I started establishing a career for myself, it was actually important to me to play that very low, I didn't say—let people know that he was my dad.

QT: 01;15;00;09

SIDNEY McCAIN:

And it wasn't that I wasn't proud of him and proud of being a McCain, it's just I really wanted a career for myself. I started out as a receptionist at Adco

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Records making \$16,000 dollars a year, and built it up from there. I didn't want it to be like, "Oh, you're John McCain's daughter? We're gonna—we're gonna give you a little job here." that I probably at the time would not have been qualified for. And maybe that's a strength that I learned from my mom and from my dad is that at the end of the day it comes down to you to make the right decisions and the right choices, and to follow through what you're passionate about.

QT: 01;15;38;14

TITLE

On McCain's POW experience

QT: 01;15;41;03

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I remember one time I asked him and he just really did not want to talk about it, so I never brought it up again. It's just gonna sound probably odd, but all of his—all of his experiences in the Hanoi Hilton I've read about in books and have not asked him directly. It's too hard, I don't want to know about the beatings and the—what he experienced during that time period. And it's—and it's so—can be so overwhelming. And like Lifetime I think it was, did a movie on my dad's first book, and they barely touch upon it and—and then I'm just—I see it and I start sobbing. I don't think I'm ever going to be ready to hear it straight.

QT: 01;16;23;07

SIDNEY McCAIN:

And I also find it incredible as much as what my dad went through it's also what other POWS went through. You look at what Bud Day went through. Just recently in Milwaukee where I live now, there's a POW named Lance Sijan who was the first—he was sort of the lore of "You don't give up any secrets. You don't—your first act is to try and escape." He escaped like three times.

QT: 01;16;49;15

SIDNEY McCAIN:

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He had been beaten all of—like just—his story is just harrowing. And he died in Hanoi Hilton, and he was before my dad. My dad tells an incredible story about Lance Sijan and that he is the reason why he—other prisoners and why my dad could also maintain the code of conduct of when you're a POW. So it's just for my dad's experience it's incredibly personal, and when you read it I think it's a lot different than if I heard him tell it to me straight, to my face.

QT: 01;17;22;00

TITLE

On going to Vietnam

QT: 01;17;26;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I've never been to Vietnam.

QT: 01;17;27;03

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Yes, there is interest. I love to travel; it's a matter of taking the amount of time I think it would need to go. I don't want to go for a week and go check it out, I want to see everything while I'm over there. I understand—I have many of friends that have gone and they tell me that there is quite—they tell quite the story of John McCain and show his cell and all of that. It's—it's—you'd—gosh, you would think after all this time it'd be so easy to just talk about, but it's—it's—yeah, it's—I don't know, it's just hard.

QT: 01;18;01;11

TITLE

On McCain as a father

QT: 01;18;05;18

SIDNEY McCAIN:

We don't talk about emotional things. That's what my mom's for. No, he's—I mean he's a very loving person, but it's in a very strict—he was raised very

strictly, he was raised by an Admiral and by my grandmother. They were very tough. And I think he comes from the same ilk, but he'll also out of the blue tell me he's proud of me. It's not—we're not a warm, huggy family, we're very—there is an expectation that you behave and that you act properly and that type of thing, but he also—one of my dads—if you want to know a great story from my childhood, his favorite thing to do with his grandpa is going crabbing. He's a great crabber.

QT: 01;18;48;18

SIDNEY McCAIN:

So his—I'll go into the aspect of this, because a lot of people have two different ways that they crab. One is you tie a chicken neck to a string and you pull it out of the water. No. He would wait for the full moon and he'd wait for the tide to be low, and he'd wake up—up—wake us up which felt like it was—3:00 o'clock—it felt like magic hours, 3:00 o'clock or it was midnight or whatever, could have been 9:00 o'clock in the evening but it was pitch black. Go out with our lanterns, get our crabs, come back, he'd talk about the whole reason why he had to go at that time, why it was important to crab there, all this stuff, it was pretty amazing. Come back, my dad would cook them up, we'd sit in our bathing suits and eat them at 6:00 o'clock in the morning. Like I had to eat them right away.

QT: 01;19;28;22

SIDNEY McCAIN:

He's a great storyteller. When we'd do our big driving trips he would tell the story of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. By the time I'd seen the movie I thought for sure he was the one who told them how it should be filmed, because it was to a T, he could take us to these places on these trips. Like—so he's got these great warm gifts and great qualities of doing things very—like the crabbing taking the time to show you, taking the effort and the love of the sport, for lack of a better word. And the same with like telling a story to make you transform to be there. It's pretty incredible. But as far as like every day to day, the hug and kiss goodnight, no. He was—he's very much the same ilk as I think my grandparents were. It's a very tough love.

QT: 01;20;16;18

TITLE

On Movies

QT: 01;20;20;08

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Feel like he loved movies the way that we all loved movies. Like I don't remember it being something exceptional as far as liking movies.

QT: 01;20;29;06

TITLE

Description of McCain

QT: 01;20;34;18

SIDNEY McCAIN:

He's tiny, which I always giggle over. He's my height, so he's 5'6". Back in the day, very handsome. I think he's handsome now but in a very different way, but he's very handsome and very manly. It's a hairy chest and like just very—swimming in the ocean—like I used to—I associate the ocean with him so much, body surfing, all of that stuff, regular surfing, but very, very, very manly. Now, you know, he's older, he's 80, so he's a little more frail, but his brain is sharp as a tack. He's very strong in his opinions, he is still a good-looking man in his 80's, but when he was younger I think he was devastatingly handsome so.

QT: 01;21;28;17

TITLE

On McCain's injuries

QT: 01;21;33;07

SIDNEY McCAIN:

He can't lift his arm over his head, so it kind of goes to here. He's got a very bad knee that makes him limp. He—and to see the scars on his knee, it's not attractive, but I don't—when I think of him I don't think of somebody with

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injuries. But it's the same as my mom, and I think if people meet my mom, they—that's the first thing they see. And with my dad, I wonder if that's the first thing that they see is that he doesn't move as well as he should, because he's pretty—he's pretty spry. So I don't—I don't know, I don't ever really even think about his injuries.

QT: 01;22;18;16

TITLE
No tattoos

QT: 01;22;23;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

He has no tattoos.

QT: 01;22;24;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Like a Sailor Jerry? No, I wish—I wish I could be the one to spill that one. That would be hilarious. Like, "Check out his calf, he's got a dancing hula girl."

QT: 01;22;32;05

TITLE
McCain's a lot of fun

QT: 01;22;38;08

SIDNEY McCAIN:

They used to have these giant parties for the squadron at our house, and I was always shipped off to friends—like a babysitter, I don't even know who's house I'd be shipped off to, so they could have this crazy squadron party. My mom would get the candles to float in the pool that was made by the guy from the Holiday Inn, and my dad would get—roast a pig and they'd have all sorts of—you know, the Hawaiian punchy thing to go with the tiki drinks and everything else, so it was a big luau that they were having for the squadron. And I remember that I had to stay so I was in parents room, I'm watching this

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and I came out and there's my dad and I can picture this, like in all of his glory telling stories among—of like all of these—there had to have been 60 people at least—our house was tiny in Florida, so it was like 60 people just glued to every ounce that he was saying.

QT: 01;23;26;22

SIDNEY McCAIN:

And I—I just can just see this so vividly that that was his element. Him being right in the middle of the attention and sharing his tales of whatever he—I don't even know what he was talking about, but I just remember all these people staring at him while he's telling his story, and laughter. He's an amazing storyteller, as I alluded to before. But that's—when I think of him I think of that, I think of learning to bodysurf and what a great body surfer he was because of his love of the ocean. Which is weird that he wound up in Arizona where there's no ocean, but ya know, he had his years in Coronado as well and San Diego. But those are what I think of. And he would take us—he took us on trips down the Colorado through the Grand Canyon. Loved it, loved being right in the front raft and having the—the experience and the—it's a pretty incredible experience, so I can understand—understand that.

QT: 01;24;24;23

TITLE

Life after her parents split up

QT: 01;24;29;19

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I was 14, 13-14. It was really hard. So my parents get a divorce, and I—but part of the deal is that I have dinner with my dad once a week. So that became a pretty common experience and (Inaudible) became this weird "having dinner with my dad once a week." Which I know that sounds—anybody with divorced parents can totally relate to this, because then instead of it just being time where you can just hang out and it's cool, now it's like, "All right, I'm going to come pick you up at 6:00, we're going to wherever, eat food and then I'm going to drop you off." And it just feels very forced and it's very uncomfortable. And I can remember bringing friends with me because it was just such an—awkward isn't even the right word, because you should

never feel awkward with your parents but all of a sudden I did feel awkward. That's the beginning of when my parents get divorced. Also, being a terrible student, I was very rebellious.

QT: 01;25;40;22

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I would go to see punk shows when I was 15 at the 9:30 Club in downtown D.C. And this is the old 9:30 Club and I know my mom was terrified that I would wind up dead somewhere, because downtown D.C. was not the most safest area to go out in. So then I went off to boarding school and my time with my dad became a lot less. I would see him for a week in August, I would see him during the holidays on occasion, but it was definitely during that time period where we were a lot—we very separate. But I think that's kind of common with children of divorce. And my dad, you know, he's newly in love and he was working on his political career.

QT: 01;26;31;03

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I went out to Arizona in 1980 to help him campaign. Went door to door when he ran for congress for house representative, I can remember that and thinking it's really hot in Phoenix in August, answering phones at the headquarters and making phone calls at the campaign headquarters. We reunited again, but I don't think—I'm not sure—I'm not sure what the norm for us will ever be, because he wasn't around for the first six years of my life, and then seven years later he—my parents are divorced, and so then you—you figure out a relationship that works for the both of you. He always got my back and I know that, and when we talk it's great, but it's just different.

QT: 01;27;20;11

TITLE

The difficulty of the divorce

QT: 01;27;26;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

She was shocked and heartbroken. I think it was the last—obviously, it was the last thing that she was expecting. We were all shocked and heartbroken; it caused quite a rift within the family. I think as adults looking back it's a lot easier than at that time, because you don't understand why your dad would

want to leave the family. My brother Doug and Andy took it incredibly hard, but my mom was—I was the only one home during that time. They were off in college. I think Doug was actually off to business school at that point from UVA. Actually, he wasn't off at business school, Andy was going to business school. Anyways, that doesn't matter. But it was very hard. My mom was working for the Reagan's at the time, too, so she was very, very busy. She worked for Nancy Reagan during the campaign time, and she would come home and just have migraines and was very unhappy and it was really—it was really hard.

QT: 01;28;35;14

TITLE

On McCain's second marriage

QT: 01;28;40;08

SIDNEY McCAIN:

It was very hard. Cindy I think, she was very young too and you can't help who you fall in love with, you know? I truly believe that my dad is very much in love with—with Cindy and I think she is very much in love with him and I think there's something really beautiful about that. But at the time it was really awful and—I—I think my dad at that time too, focused on other things.

QT: 01;29;17;07

TITLE

Her relationship with John and Cindy's children

QT: 01;29;21;19

SIDNEY McCAIN:

It's not as deep as I would like it to be, but I mean Jimmy and Jack and Bridgette, they're all—they're all great, they all have their own fun and own personality they bring to the table. I'm so proud of Jack and what he's been accomplishing. It makes me nervous though that he's in the military, and both Jack and Jimmy I think are going to go over again. I believe that Jack's going off to Afghanistan and some—I don't really even understand it what his

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role is going to be going over there, which probably makes me a terrible sister, but I just know that he's going and I worry. And Jimmy's going to be over again too and I think that's like his fifth tour. And I think our family's given enough to an overseas conflict, to overseas conflict but yes, I love them quite a bit. We have our own internal struggles and I can say what I want about my siblings, but anybody else says anything about my siblings I will take you on, because that's what you have in life is your family, warts and all.

QT: 01;30;24;07

TITLE

The McCain military legacy and her siblings

QT: 01;30;28;17

SIDNEY McCAIN:

It's his—it's the way they're made. I don't have that genet—that gene in me, I don't have that. Jimmy's the same way, the both of them—it's if there—and I—and I don't know if it's a special genetic thing but I feel like it is because of the history of the military and the McCains, Jack has been trained from the get go by going to the Naval Academy, and Jimmy's been trained as well to be over there. And it's—it's pretty incredible.

QT: 01;30;58;12

TITLE

Her involvement with her dad's campaigns

QT: 01;31;04;06

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I tried to be present. For the—senate—the senate—the first senate one, yes, I was fully involved, but it was more of being president—present and supportive.

QT: 01;31;18;04

TITLE

The presidential campaigns

QT: 01;31;22;15

SIDNEY McCAIN:

My dad called me up and he said, "I'm going to run for president, I wanted to give you the heads up." And I was like, "Great." And inside I'm like, "Oh, no." I was very happy for him, but—and I think you could kind of see it coming that that was going to be his calling to go and run, and it was exciting to go to his announcement in Prescott and to go on the campaign with him was very exciting. I didn't go a lot because I was working, but I would go when I could. It's very interesting, because when he ran in—in what—against Bush, like it was—that campaign was not nearly as exciting to me as with Obama, because with the Obama campaign there was such a backlash towards the Republican party at the time.

QT: 01;32;24;20

SIDNEY McCAIN:

And I—so an example would be I was in Midem, which is this music conference, and I was trying to wow this young label to come to this new distribution, which is what I did for a living is I would distribute smaller labels through EMI's record company's distribution at work, and I was like, "Hey, we finally get to meet. I'm Sid McCain." He goes, "God, I hope you're not related to that man." And I just was like—I completely went completely silent, and I was like, "Well, actually, he's my father. And that man is actually—he—his heart is to make a better country. His heart is what he believes in. He's not doing this to be self-serving, he's doing it because he's a true believer that the country is—needs him."

QT: 01;33;09;16

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Same reason why Jack is going back over to Afghanistan, the same reason why Jimmy's going to go over again is because he feels like that's their calling. My dad's calling is to make America a better place in his philosophy, in his ideology. "And my father's very conservative, I'm not, I'm very liberal, but we

still manage to meet on some issues that are important to both of us." So I don't know, it was—it was very exciting times, both times.

QT: 01;33;36;12

TITLE

The media attention during the presidential campaigns

QT: 01;33;41;06

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I think it was hardest for my mom. She did not want to talk to any media, and I don't blame her because it's a lot of—can of worms to open up for her. I think she did one interview during the time and that was it. During that time period of—I didn't really worry about dirty laundry, I think I was more worried about—I don't know, I wasn't worried about dirty laundry. I knew whatever it was we could handle it. Nobody killed anyone, nobody—there were no skeletons in the closets that couldn't be handled, and the things that did come up were so preposterous that it just made the other guys look worse. My biggest concern was my mom, and she's always my biggest concern. I think my brothers would say the same that—that we always want to protect her, because she's the one who probably experiences the hardest than all of us.

QT: 01;34;41;07

TITLE

Her participation during the 2008 presidential campaign and her dad's concession speech

QT: 01;34;46;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I went on the announcement tour, I went on a couple of city stops, I'm trying to think particulars at the time in 2008. I was living in Toronto at the time, so I could not be as part of it as much as I would have liked to have, but I did make some time. I just remember that—like the—it was the same—I wish I had great stories; I don't have great stories from that time. I really don't. I just know specific stops and I know the—the Republican Convention, going

to that, but I don't have—no speaking in front of crowds of people at the Republican Convention and being absolutely terrified and not being able to get through the points that I wanted to make in support of my dad, but just basically saying "Thanks for your support" and walking off stage, because that's just not where I'm comfortable. I remember the resignation speech—you remember—the day-to-day stuff to you is not the standout, my dad's resignation speech is a standout moment. Standing with my grandmother, she's holding my hand, and we're watching my dad make the most incredible speech I've ever heard in my entire life.

QT: 01;36;11;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

And all the things that he said that we should follow as far as, "We need to unite, we need to be together, we need to support this president. This moment in history of the first African American president being elected, this is a time to remember." all of that stuff. And nobody follows that. We're still as split between Republicans and Democrats as we've ever been, if not more so. That's the moments that I remember. I remember my grandmother being amazing during that time, too, she's sharp as a tack, but holding hands with her and just watching the speech. And I was like, "God, I am so—this was my proudest moment of you, when you lost and you're doing it so respectfully and incredibly." And then—I don't know, I wish that was something everybody had to study in school or something is my dad's speech at his resignation.

QT: 01;37;04;15

TITLE

Her father's bipartisan approach

QT: 01;37;08;22

SIDNEY McCAIN:

So that's the beauty of my dad right there; you nailed it in the head. When he's talking about Joe Biden, completely opposites of the spectrum as far as political ideology goes—well, ideology's not right, issues based, opposite opinions, but such respect for each other, and genuine love for each other. My dad is not afraid to cross the aisle over something that's important, and he's

not afraid to stand on his side of the aisle when something's important. But he is loved and that to me is very genuine. And I don't think there's a lot of politicians that have that.

QT: 01;37;50;15

TITLE

Her dad's pick for VP in 2008

QT: 01;37;56;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Joe Lieberman would have been an incredible pick for my dad, and I think that would have been a game changer. I think the outcome would have been completely different. But his—the person that he picked was not the wisest choice, and that is the first thing I hear from everyone. "I would have voted for your dad, but why did he—" I—I've—I feel funny saying Sarah Palin, because I don't want it to get back to me that I'm like, "Why'd you pick Sarah Palin as your running mate? That was a dumb thing to do." So—but I've had friends of mine that would have voted for him who didn't purely by who he chose for his running mate, so. And Joe Lieberman is fabulous, and his wife is great and smart and charismatic, all those things that you would want in a— in a vice president.

QT: 01;38;46;07

TITLE

What she learned from her dad

QT: 01;38;51;12

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Truth, character and honesty, it's—it's sort of ingrained from us from—from birth. If you—if you can't sleep at night with the decisions that you've made, then there's no point, like to be truth and honest. I think one of the other things my dad has also taught us all is to be very self-reliant, that the only person who's going to get this done is you. With that becomes being truthful

and with being honest, it's part of all of that. I think my brothers would say the same thing, that it's—you have to be self-reliant, there's nobody else who's going to take care of—take care of you is the wrong decision—wrong word, but with the decisions you make you have to stick by them, and you have to be sure of the decision that you've made, that that's the one that you want.

QT: 01;39;43;00

SIDNEY McCAIN:

He's so self-reliant, oh, it's ridiculous. And energetic, yes he is. But, yeah, no, I think at the end of the day it's self—it's self-reliance. I would not have had the career that I had or had the life that I had if I hadn't done it myself. You know, you can't—the McCain name's only going to go so far.

QT: 01;40;01;16

TITLE

McCain's personality

QT: 01;40;05;15

SIDNEY McCAIN:

He's hilarious, but he's hilarious in a very dry way. Like—he's got a few jokes, one is, "The female salmon swims upstream and lays 20 million eggs a year, but nobody remembers it on Mother's Day." Silly things like that that he'll say and you're just like, "Oh, my God, dad. Dad, please." And he tries. I mean I don't know when you talk to him about our relationship of growing up, but he does try. He took me to Father/Daughter dance, it was very unexpected. And I was in seventh grade, eighth grade, I want to say eighth grade, and he was fantastic and he could dance and we had a great time. And he loves to have a good time. My dad is not boring, he's very—if he—if he had his way I think he would be telling stories in front of a group of people for his entire life. That's just his magic. But he—he's very fun.

QT: 01;41;11;02

TITLE

How she found out about her father's illness and her relationship with Cindy

QT: 01;41;14;23

SIDNEY McCAIN:

My stepmother. I have to say the one thing you realize as you grow older and all the relationships that you have with the people around you—I mean Cindy and I's relationship was not always great, but as you get older you realize that it's just—most of it's my immaturity and her dealing with a husband who has three kids already. But she's been amazing; she has kept us all up to date. She called me and told me, and I called Dad. You think of your parents as living forever, I do know he's going to beat this, and if he doesn't then he's done every ounce of his being to beat it because he's not done. He's just not done doing what he needs to get done. And I feel very lucky that Cindy has made sure that we know exactly what's going on in the process and everything else. Cindy called me and told me and I—and I know that sounds probably like it would be really obvious, but sometimes when you're dealing with tragedy you just want to deal with the person who's going through the tragedy, but she's been amazing.

QT: 01;42;19;12

TITLE

On her father's illness and regret

QT: 01;42;25;02

SIDNEY McCAIN:

It makes me wish I had spent more time with my dad, truth be told. I wish we had a better relationship. It's not like we have a bad relationship, we just have one that's not as—like you see your friends who like, "Oh, I'm a daddy's girl." I'm not a daddy's girl, I'm a mommy's girl, but I wish I had had more time to spend with him.

QT: 01;42;42;21

TITLE

Her father's legacy

QT: 01;42;46;23

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Probably his kids. Like, I mean—like Jack and Jimmy I think are going to go on to do great things. I think there will be legislation that he's left behind; He'll have—his story will be told forever. He's so prolific with his writing, I just—I think his legacy is going to be a lot of things. But I do think that—and I don't mean to narrow in on Jack and Jimmy, it goes for Andy and Doug as well, I guess because Jack and Jimmy are still in their career going time, I wouldn't be surprised if one of them pursued a life of politics. They are—but his legacy—I—that he was honest—like, an honest politician. He really cared; at the end of the day, he cared about America and he cared about what was going to be great for the country, and not what was going to be great for Republicans, and not what was going to be great for Democrats. As much as there are issues that I don't agree with him on, it's okay; I know his hearts in the right place. But that's the legacy I think that he'll leave.

QT: 01;43;52;22

TITLE

She does not talk politics with her dad

QT: 01;43;57;06

SIDNEY McCAIN:

I learned a long time ago not to talk politics with my dad, because it's just—and he knows better than I do. As much as I would like to think that I'm as well educated on some of the issues as he is, he sleeps, eats, and breathes it. And he knows things that are going through congress that—that I have no idea, that there's been tacked on additional parts that—but it keeps me paying very close attention, and I think that's important to everyone to be paying close attention to the government, but I think it also comes from my dad. You got to pay attention.

QT: 01;44;28;01

TITLE

On the tax plan

QT: 01;44;31;13

SIDNEY McCAIN:

Wait and see what happens though, it's not done yet. Wait and see, seriously. It's full—there's—there's always surprises coming, I mean especially with what's happened in Alabama. Let's wait and see what happens.

QT: 01;44;46;00

TITLE

Memory fades with time and perceptions

QT: 01;44;50;10

SIDNEY McCAIN:

No, I wish I could be more—more descriptive for you, but it was so long ago. Like, I think that's—that's the hardest part is that it was a really long time ago. And the one thing that I was talking to your brother about is I'm dying to see when this is done—I—so I always felt it was hardest on my brother Doug when my dad got captured, my brother Doug always thought it was hardest on me. And like poor Andy, nobody worried about Andy because he always had Doug or my mom or whatever and I had my brothers. And I'm curious to see when the piece is done what their perception of that time period was. Because even my brothers and I, we really haven't talked about it very much. So—

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END TC:
QT: 01;45;32;01