TOM McNAUGHT: Good evening. I'm Tom McNaught. I'm the Executive Director of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, and on behalf of Tom Putnam, the Director of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, and all of our Foundation and Library colleagues, I thank you all for coming. Let me begin by acknowledging the generous underwriters of the Kennedy Library Forums – our lead sponsor Bank of America, Raytheon, Boston Capital, the Lowell Institute, the Boston Foundation, and our media partners, The Boston Globe and WBUR.

It also gives me great pleasure to welcome Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith, President Kennedy's sister and a great champion of this Library and of her brother's legacy. Welcome, Ambassador. [applause]

So tonight we welcome back to the Kennedy Library one of the city of Boston's greatest treasures, David McCullough. [applause] He's actually one of our nation's greatest treasures, but being proud Bostonians, we get to claim him as ours.

As a great patriot once observed, "You can't be a full participant in our democracy if you don't know our history. How can we know who we are and where we are going if we don't know anything about where we have come from and what we have been through, the courage shown, the costs paid, to be where we are." That is exactly what the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library is all about, and it is at the Kennedy Presidential Library where those answers are often found. Of course, the great patriot and historian who spoke those words is David McCullough, who honors all of us gathered here with his presence.

Let me pause at this time to recognize Mr. McCullough's wife Rosalee, who is also with us here this evening. [applause] If ever there was a reason for David McCullough's great success, she is sitting here in the front row. [applause] And what a great success it has been. David McCullough has twice received the Pulitzer Prize for Truman and John Adams and twice received the National Book Award for The Path Between the Seas and Mornings on Horseback. He has been honored with the National Book Foundation Distinguished Contribution to
American Letters Award and the National Humanities Award. He is the recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award that a United States citizen can receive.

But I bet were you to ask him what his greatest achievement is, aside from marrying Rosalee and raising a wonderful family – his daughter and grandson are here with us as well this evening [applause] – I think David's response would be that he has been able to introduce to so many Americans to the fact that history can be a source of pleasure, just the way literature or art or music is.

Mr. McCullough learned to write from a series of great teachers, most notably Thornton Wilder, the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and novelist, who was also a resident scholar at Yale where Mr. McCullough graduated in 1951. To this day, Mr. McCullough remembers Wilder's teaching that a good writer preserves "an air of freedom" in his prose, so that the reader won't know how a story will end, even if he's reading a history book.

Now, those of us who have read David McCullough know that he does this all too well. Despite the fact that we know they are historical stories based on fact, they read like Dickens, each one a page-turner, each one a mystery with a plot twist everywhere. Reading 1776, we were in suspense, wondering will Henry Knox be able to deliver the cannons from Fort Ticonderoga in time? [laughter] Will the Americans be able to fortify Dorchester Heights before the British know what they are up to? [laughter] When I finished 1776, I said, “Damn you, David McCullough, how does this story end? Did we win the war against the British?” [laughter] And since I have the mic, I'm hoping you do write a second book on this so you can tell us.

Not only is he a brilliant American author and historian, David McCullough is a wonderfully gifted lecturer and narrator whose voice, clear and deliberate, etched Ken Burns's Civil War documentary into memory for so many of us. And tonight we benefit from all of his remarkable talents. There will be no moderator tonight, nor should there be. I can't imagine listening to
anyone else when David McCullough has the floor. After his remarks, Mr. McCullough will answer a few written questions from the audience. Our staff will be going around the room to get them. I'll be reading them, so please write clearly. Following the Forum, Mr. McCullough has agreed to sign copies of his books. This includes his most recent book, *The Greater Journey*, the story of Americans who set off for Paris in the years between 1830 and 1900 and, as Mr. McCullough is about to share with us, "not all pioneers went West." In case you did not notice on the way in, *The Greater Journey* is now on sale in our Museum store.

If you've yet to read *The Greater Journey*, or any of David McCullough's other books, then I envy you. One of life's greatest pleasures is having a good book to read, and what greater pleasure is there in life than to look forward to reading a book by David McCullough.

It is an honor for me to introduce him to you now, our country's greatest living historian, David McCullough. [applause]

**DAVID McCULLOUGH:** What a gracious and blessedly exaggerated introduction that was. [laughter] You couldn't have pleased me more, Tom, thank you, and good evening all.

I was influenced by Thornton Wilder, but I was also influenced at just the right time by a writer whose name I'm at this moment going to forget. Harry Sinclair Drago. Yes, there's dead silence in the audience. [laughter] When Eisenhower first took office, he was asked at a press conference, "Who's your favorite author, Mr. President?" He said, "Harry Sinclair Drago." And somebody with a sense of humor said, "Well, Mr. President, who's your second favorite author?" [laughter] And he said, "Bliss Lomax." Well, the President didn't realize that Bliss Lomax was one of Harry Sinclair Drago's pseudonyms. [laughter]

Well, when I was quite young and just starting out in New York and thinking maybe, maybe, maybe I might write a book, I went to a gathering of Western writers. Harry Sinclair Drago wrote pulp Westerns, which President Eisenhower was very fond of, and it was a big crowd –
publishers, writers, and so forth. My host, Alvin Josephy, at one point said, "You see that old fellow over there? That's Harry Sinclair Drago. He's written over 100 books." And I thought, here I am thinking I might write one book and there's a man, a living man right there who's written over 100 books. So I waited my chance and I went over and I said, "Mr. Drago, I'm told that you've written more than 100 books." And he said, "Yes, that's right." I said, "How do you do that?" "Four pages a day." [laughter] Best thing an aspiring writer could be told: get to work, get busy, put it on paper, four pages a day.

I want to start off by saying a few things about our country and France. As many of you here know -- but not a sufficient number of people in our country seem to realize -- we would not have succeeded with our war for independence had it not been for France, for French financial backing when we had no money and for the presence of the French Army and the French Navy.

At the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, for example, the army under Rochambeau was as big as the army under Washington. Had the French fleet not been lying right off the shore there of the Virginia Peninsula, Cornwallis and his army could have escaped, which, as it turned out, they could not because the French fleet was right there.

If you look at the map of our country, French names are scattered all over it: names of mountain ranges, lakes, rivers, states, universities, colleges. We may not pronounce them exactly the way the French do, but those are French names. Our great gift from France, the Statue of Liberty, stands at the New York Harbor, still one of the most beloved symbols of what we believe in as any we have. And, of course, the size of our country, the very physical grandeur of the country, was more than doubled by the Louisiana Purchase which was made possible when Napoleon decided he needed money for his coronation.

The influence of France on our political thinking, through people like Voltaire and others … One of the wisest books ever written about us, *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville,
remains in the eyes of many must reading for anyone who hopes to understand who we are, and why we are the way we are.

Then, of course, there's no country on earth, except our own, where more Americans are buried than in France. In that respect, France ought to be sacred ground in all of our minds. The two World Wars and the cost in American lives is more than most people realize. There's 60,000 Americans buried in the military cemeteries in France. Those of you have visited Normandy or the Argonne have a good idea of what a moving experience that is.

Rosalee and I had our first visit to Paris right after I went to work for John F. Kennedy in the Kennedy administration. I was a very junior, but very devoted employee of the US Information Agency under Edward R. Murrow. I was sent on an orientation trip to the Middle East, and we landed first in Paris. It was a cold February night, raining, bleak as can be, as Paris only can be in the winter, and we were as thrilled as if it had been a gorgeous April morning, strolling in the Tuileries Garden. We put our bags down in the hotel and just walked for about two hours, happy as can be.

We've kept going back because of my research. People say, "Oh, this is quite a departure for you to be writing about France or doing research in France." Well, not at all. I was there extensively to do research for my book on the Panama Canal, because of the French story, French involvement in that project. For Truman, because of Truman's services in World War I, and again for John Adams, because so much of his time abroad as one of our diplomats was spent in France and crucially so.

But this experience, of writing about the Americans who went there from the 1830s to 1900, was like no other project that we had worked on. I've had the good fortune to have subjects that I've enjoyed without fail, all of them, and I've always regretted when each was coming to an end. But there's never been for us, for me in many respects, an experience like writing this book; in part, because so much of it has been a surprise. I've gotten to know about people that I knew relatively
little about. Also, because I think it confirms something that I have felt very strongly for a very long time.

I started painting when I was in my high school years. I've been painting ever since. I love it. And as any of you who do it, it's a way of clearing your mind and concentrating so that nothing else is weighing on your consciousness. I've been very interested in American painters, but also painters from all backgrounds down through the centuries.

I also care greatly about literature and poetry and music, and I have come strongly to the position that we must think of history as more than just politics and the military. We must see that our story as human beings involves everything we do as human beings, including those wonderful creations where we have soared into the blue, as Augustus Saint-Gaudens put it.

I've been thinking a lot about my work, and I realize in many ways that all my books — and I never really saw this until now. People ask me when I'm starting out on a book, "What's your theme?," and I make something up. [laughter] I have no idea what my theme is; that's one of the reasons I'm writing the book. [laughter] It eventually does come to me, sometimes in the last chapter. But I've been thinking about the work in total and what's been my theme. Well, it seems to me that there are many themes, minor/major, but the foremost is courage and accomplishment.

I was terribly moved by something that John Adams said to Ralph Waldo Emerson right over here in the Adams House, one night in Adams' last year of his life. He was talking with young Emerson and he said, "I would to God there were more ambition in the country." Then he paused for a minute and he said, "By that I mean ambition of the laudable kind, ambition to excel."

That's what this book is about. The young Americans who went to Paris is really about the ambition, an ambition to excel and to have the courage to make that crossing of the Atlantic; it was highly dangerous and always uncomfortable. But also the courage to find out if you're not very good, to find out that you really haven't got it, or to overcome all the obstacles.
I think it's very well put by a young Bostonian who became, for me, one of the emblematic characters in the book, young George P. A. Healy, who was ambitious to become a painter. His father had disappeared at sea and his mother was left with five children and very little means of support. So this boy who could draw portraits with pencil, sitting in the streets, began drawing these portraits for a dollar apiece and so forth. Several people began to notice how much talent he had and encouraged him to pursue it, so he decided he was going to go to France when he was about 19. No education. Here's what he wrote: "I knew no one in France. I was utterly ignorant of the language. I did not know what I should do when once there. But I was not yet one-and-twenty and I had a great stock of courage" – and I love this – "and of inexperience, which is sometimes a great help, and a strong desire to be my very best." Not looking for power, for money, for fame; "to be my very best."

But if we could have the lights down, please, let's go to Paris. This is, as many of you will recognize right away, the Rue de Rivoli. If you were to take away the horses and carriages and replace them with automobiles, it doesn't look any different today. On the right is the fence guarding the Tuileries Garden and just beyond again on the right is the Louvre Museum. The arcades along the street on the left are all very much the same. The Meurice Hotel, for example, would be just out of the picture on the left-hand side.

This photograph was probably taken about 1900 and what's so amazing is how sharp it is, how very sharp it is, even in a reproduction from a reproduction, because this photograph was brought home in the form of a postcard by my mother in 1907 when she was seven years old. We found this in the attic, along with a number of other postcards.

Now, this represents a key moment on the part of almost everybody who made the expedition. On the left is Emma Willard, the first American woman to champion higher education for women, a marvelous, formidable woman, who, when she walked the halls of the Emma Willard School, people sat up straighter. She wore a white turban, as you can see in that picture, and she
was an authority on a great deal and a very wise person. Her mother said – I love it – "Always do your best, and your best will keep getting better." Well worth remembering and passing on.

On the right is the great Rouen Cathedral. When they landed, they would land at Le Havre and then it was a 110-mile trip up the Valley of the Seine to Paris. There was no railroad as yet in the 1830s. They would go by diligence, which was an oversized, cumbersome-looking stagecoach, which in fact was remarkably comfortable and the Americans were very surprised and pleased right away by how good the roads were. The overnight stop was at Rouen, and they would see the Cathedral. They would be seeing something for the first time that simply took their breath away. Now, it isn't just Emma Willard's remembrance or what she wrote at the time that we draw this from. Everybody, almost without exception, talked about it. This was their first look at a great European masterpiece.

There were no museums of art in the country, very little sculpture of any kind. There were no big, massive, big-scale stone buildings. This building they were looking at was 300 feet higher than the highest building in the United States, which was then the old Capitol in Washington. They'd also never seen anything remotely so old. Now, keep in mind we're talking about the 1830s. This building was so old to them that they couldn't believe it. Independence Hall in Philadelphia would have been an old building at that time; it was less than 100 years old. This building began before Columbus ever sailed.

Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, the great Charles Sumner, said that he felt in front of this great work of architecture for the first time in his life, the prestige of age. This is what was going to so affect them, even before they got to Paris.

But I want to read you what Emma Willard wrote. One of the things that comes through in so much of this material, which by the way is all here in the United States because it's all in the form of letters and diaries that came back here to parents, friends, wives, whatever. They're here in Boston; they're at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Harvard, Yale, Library of Congress
and so forth. One thing comes through is how well they wrote. Now, she's a schoolmistress so you expect her to, but she wasn't writing this letter to be published in a book; she was writing it to a friend. And listen to the use of the English language:

I had heard of 50 or 100 years being spent in the erection of a building, and I had often wondered how it could be. But when I saw even the outside of this majestic and venerable temple, the doubt ceased. It was all of curious and elegantly carved stonework, now of a dark grey, like some ancient gravestone that you may see in our oldest graveyards. Thousands of saints and angels there stood in silence with voiceless harps, or spread forever their moveless wings, half issuing in bold relief from mimic clouds of stone. But when I entered the interior and saw by the yet dim and shadowy light, the long, long, aisles, the high raised vaults, the immense pillars which supported them, my mind was smitten with a feeling of sublimity almost too intense for mortality.

James Fenimore Cooper, who was with a group of people who had had a terrible crossing on the Atlantic for more than a month, said that they all agreed that if this was the only thing they saw, the trip would have been worth it. So for them, the old world was the new world. It was a new experience, and they went from there on to Paris with their visions already hugely enlarged.

Also keep in mind, almost all of these people, these Americans -- most of them young -- were Protestants, young people who had been brought up to think that anything to do with the Catholic Church is something to be avoided. Here they're being deeply moved by a great Catholic shrine. Their education had begun, in other words.

On the left is marquis de Lafayette, the most famous of all the French who gave of his time and energies and talents to our struggle for freedom, independence. This is a portrait by Samuel F. B. Morse. It hangs in City Hall in New York today still. It's life-sized, brilliant, tremendous. It was Morse who had been chosen by the City of New York to paint this in tribute to Lafayette's return
visit to the United States in 1823/24. He was an accomplished portrait painter, in other words, before he ever went to France. But he wanted to be better, just as young Healy said, "to be my best." So after the tragic, sudden death of his wife, following the birth of a child, leaving his children with his parents and his brothers, he set off for Paris, and there encountered not only one of the most difficult projects of his life, but a friendship like very few that I've ever read about it. And the friendship was with James Fenimore Cooper. That's Morse in the upper portraits; it's a self-portrait by Morse and Cooper below.

This is called the *Grand Gallery of the Louvre*. It's by Samuel F. B. Morse. This portrait, this painting was a radical departure. No American artist had ever attempted to do anything inside the Louvre, except copy individual paintings setting up an easel on the ground. Morse decided that he was going to bring back a painting that would educate the country. It's exactly the same spirit that Jefferson had when he brought back some 86 crates of books and other historic documents and paintings and the like after the end of his time as our minister to France: the idea that I'm going to elevate the level of culture and appreciation of culture in our country.

There were no color photographs yet. There were no reproductions in color of these paintings and no way to go see great paintings. So he was going to create this huge canvas which would have in it what he thought were the pick of the treasures of the Louvre, some 36 different paintings. Many of these paintings were hanging all over the Louvre, and many of them were hanging as much as 12-14 feet above the floor. So he built this contraption, this moveable scaffold, which he would push from one point to another, getting up very high to paint. He became, in fact, a tourist attraction unto himself, to come and see this strange American and what he's doing.

Now, much has been written about this painting, as there should be; it was just on view at Yale and then again at the National Gallery in Washington and the Metropolitan. It's a breathtaking accomplishment. But nobody talks about the atmosphere, the reality of that summer of 1831 when it was painted. The fact is it was painted right in the middle of the worst cholera epidemic
ever to hit Europe and ever to hit Paris. Now, it would be very hard for us to imagine what that would have been like. But imagine if you can, 18,000 people dying just within the City of Paris within less than six months. They're literally dropping dead in the streets. Nobody knows what causes the disease, nobody knows how long it's going to stay or if it'll ever go away. There are so many people dying they have a terrible problem with just disposing of the bodies. There's no class definition as to who gets it; in other words, it wasn't just a disease of the slums, as they used to say. Everybody was getting it.

Both Morse and Cooper – Cooper was there writing novels with much success – they had the reality of this terrible, horrific plague. Every day they walked from their homes, their resident apartments, to the Louvre. I say they because Cooper came with Morse to keep him company every single day, to keep his courage up. Both of them were writing back to friends at home saying, "We go to sleep at night not knowing whether we will last the night"; in other words, "We'll die in the night." Terrified. Morse was absolutely terrified. He was also running out of money and he, unlike Cooper, had no money whatsoever. He wanted to finish this before he had to leave, because the Louvre would close in August. The idea that Cooper was risking his life -- which he was -- to come and view with him every single day is a tribute to Cooper in itself. But even more, he would sit there and talk to Morse to encourage him; he'd kid him, he'd make jokes; he never gave up. Morse couldn't leave because he was determined to finish the painting. Cooper refused to leave Paris. Everybody else who could was getting out; certainly all the Americans who could were getting out. Cooper couldn't leave because his wife was very ill. They thought maybe she had cholera, but they weren't quite sure. As it turned out, she didn't and she survived.

But the other very important thing about this picture is what isn't explained. When it was finally displayed in the United States, there was a key for all the paintings. And I can just quickly point to a few.
That's *Francis I* by Titian. Francis I was the one who started the Louvre collection, the French king who started it.

Here, you have Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*.

You have Veronese's *Wedding at Cana* here, which is the largest painting in the Louvre. Was then, still is.

Here's the Grand Gallery, which was the longest room in the world at that time; it may be still, I don't know. But if you've been there, you know; it goes on and on forever; it's over half a mile long.

But he didn't give a key to who the people are and that's what's so interesting. Very quickly, there's Cooper and his wife and his daughter, who was aspiring to be a painter. This is a young American painter who was a friend and roommate of Morse, and this is Morse himself, who's teaching a young student who has her drawing board there. This is a young student who's doing miniatures. Over here you have Horatio Greenough coming through the door, the American sculptor, and he's looking over at the one piece of sculpture in the room.

One of the things Morse is trying to do is to show that in Paris, in France, women are part of the world of art, and he wanted to see that happen at home. So you see so many of these people are women. Now, what's not included are French soldiers, French priests, French aristocracy, the French bourgeoisie, and the crowds. Because the Louvre, it was packed almost all the time when it was open to the public and it was open to the public very often, much of the week. The Americans couldn't get over the fact that all these people would come to look at art. It wasn't just the educators or the connoisseurs, but people of all kinds.

He wanted to point out that he was not just an artist, he was also a teacher. One of the great benefits of this whole French experience by Americans, this Paris experience, is that so many of
them came back to teach. Not to teach full time necessarily, but to teach medicine, to teach sculpture, to teach painting and architecture. No school of architecture in the United States, not one. We live right here in a city which has got the influence, the impact, of those who studied at the École des Beaux-Arts on practically every corner, particularly in Back Bay: H. H. Richardson's Trinity Church, of course, on one side of Copley Square. He was a student at the École des Beaux-Arts. On the other side you have Charles McKim's great Boston Public Library, one of the most monumental and superb buildings in our whole country. That was by McKim, who was also a student at the Beaux-Arts, and patterned after a building in Paris. It's so patterned after it, it almost looks like architectural plagiarism: the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève. If you go there you'll right say it looks just like the Boston Public Library.

Now, of course, Samuel F. B. Morse got more home than just that painting. That painting, by the way, was a failure when he put it on exhibit. Very few people came to even look at it. So he sold it and he sold it for $2,000 to a private individual, which was about half what he hoped to get. In the 1980s, it sold for $3.5 million, which was the largest sum ever paid for a work of art by an American up to that point.

And, of course, it was Samuel F. B. Morse, while he was in France, who saw something which led to his idea of the telegraph, this invention that was to change life on earth, communication on life, in a way that no other invention ever had until then. Now, what's so interesting is that when Morse was a student in college, he was encouraged both to pursue his interest in art and to pursue his interest in science and technology; there weren't barriers between them, they weren't going to categorize him. That's a very, very important idea, and one that we ought to never lose sight of.

When Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., went off to study medicine in Paris, a young man still in his 20s, he was already a known poet for his famous poem about the Constitution -- the ship the Constitution, Old Ironsides -- and would become an even more noted poet and essayist and one of the founders of the Atlantic Monthly here in Boston. But he also devoted his life to the
science of medicine by teaching anatomy at Harvard for 35 years, and they saw nothing contradictory or incongruous about that -- a very healthy way to go about life and to go about education.

Now, on the left is our friend George Healy, who because he didn't have anybody who wanted to pay to sit for him, would paint himself [laughter] -- a very common thing among portrait painters. It's the low-cost model. [laughter] That's one of his many self-portraits. He was a terrific guy, a terrific man, who overcame the fact that he had no money, knew nobody in Paris, and spoke no French. He immersed himself in the whole thing, and happily was to spend a very large part of his life in Paris. He would wind up painting everybody who was anybody on both sides of the Atlantic.

There are seven Healys hanging in the White House, for example. There are 17 Healys hanging in the National Portrait Gallery. He painted Ferdinand de Lesseps. He painted Louis Philippe. He painted Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, right after Lincoln was elected President. He painted Beauregard, General Beauregard, very soon after that in Charleston, right at the time of the attack on Fort Sumter. He was a little bit like Forrest Gump; he'd just show up [laughter] wherever history was being made. Over here on the right is his portrait of Andrew Jackson. Now, Louis Philippe, the King of France, heard that Jackson was very ill and he was very old and he didn't have much longer to live. Louis Philippe commissioned this young American to go out to Tennessee to paint Jackson's portrait before Jackson died. He got there in the nick of time and painted this wonderful portrait on the right and was at Jackson's bedside, as it turned out, when he did die.

But this is the painting that I hope all of you will recognize. This is by George Healy. It hangs in Faneuil Hall as the backdrop for the stage there. It's the great scene of Webster's reply to Hayne in the Congress. All the faces are accurate and the room is accurate, and it's a very important historic record done, again, at a time when there were no photographs much yet.
I should add there, very quickly, that along with the idea for the telegraph and the creation of the telegraph, Samuel F. B. Morse brought back photography because he had been to see the great Louis Daguerre -- who invented photography -- seen the daguerreotypes, as we call them, asked Daguerre for permission to bring that process back to the United States, and did. That was the introduction of photography into our country. So we had the introduction of the telegraph and photography, all because this one man had gone to Paris.

This is the Sorbonne and inside the courtyard of the Sorbonne. Doesn't look any different today. Rosalee and I were just in Paris the week before last, and right there, it's the very same. One of the most interesting of all students who ever showed up at the Sorbonne in this period was young Charles Sumner, graduate of the Harvard Law School, who opened a law office and after a few years decided he didn't know enough, so he was going to go to Paris and study. He attended lectures at the Sorbonne in every imaginable kind of subject and just crammed his head with everything. It was like gorging at a banquet.

Now, what is very interesting and largely unknown by most Americans is that in that day and age, if you were a foreigner -- which, of course, we were in France -- you could attend the École de Médecine -- School of Medicine or the Sorbonne -- for free. All you had to do was pay for your transportation across the sea and to pay for your lodging. So that's what most of these young Americans were taking advantage of.

Now, Sumner's statue stands in the Public Garden. It's a marvelous piece by the same sculptor, Ball, who did the great equestrian statue of George Washington who stands in the Public Garden. And all it says on the statue is "Sumner," and I doubt that there's one Bostonian in a thousand who has any idea who he was. They probably think he's the guy that built the Sumner Tunnel. [laughter] But when Charles Sumner died – imagine this – in the 1870s here in Boston, his body was laid in state in the State House. At the funeral the body was taken from Beacon Hill all the way out to Auburn Cemetery, which is five miles. And the whole route, all the way out, was
lined with people. The whole city had shut down in honor of Charles Sumner, and now we don't know who he was.

Well, what he was, what he became, what he did, all happened in its acorn or embryonic stage right here at this building, the Sorbonne. One morning, in January 1836, he was listening to a lecture that didn't hold his attention much, and he began to look around at his fellow students, hundreds of them, a huge lecture hall. He noticed that the Black students were treated just like everybody else, dressed just like everybody else and had the same aspirations as everybody else.

He wrote in his journal, which is reproduced there, which is over at Harvard: "I wonder if the way we treat Black people at home has more to do with how we've been taught than the natural order of things." It was a transforming moment, much as seeing that cathedral at Rouen was a transforming moment for so many like Emma Willard. He came back home determined to do something about this problem and got into politics, got elected eventually to the Senate when he was still in his early 40s, and became the most powerful and persistent voice for abolition in the whole Congress, to the point, as many of you know, I'm sure, where it almost cost his life. He was attacked on the floor of the Senate from behind by a Congressman from South Carolina named Brooks, who nearly beat him to death with a heavy gutta-percha walking stick, struck him 30 times and bragged about it afterward. Sumner fell to the floor, unconscious, bleeding badly, and had to be carried away. Brooks became a hero in the South; Sumner became a hero in the North.

But it doesn't stop there because Sumner kept up his attacks on slavery. But also, when John Brown with his people out in Kansas, heard about the attack on Sumner, that fired them to perpetrate what became known as the Pottawatomie Massacre where a lot of very innocent people were killed by Brown and his people. So think of it: there's one stone dropped in the pond, sending out these ripples because one man, one young man with a conscience and a great mind, began thinking about it while attending a lecture in Paris.

Sumner, alas, never really recovered from the attack, either physically or psychologically.
Here is a point where American celebrities start to arrive in Paris. This is the 1840s. That's inside the old Tuileries Palace and that's Louis Philippe and his family over on the right, and they are observing a show of Indian dancing being put on by Ioway Indians that had been brought to the city by George Catlin, the great painter of the Plains Indians. Paris went wild over Catlin and Catlin's Indians because right at that time, as the result of the writings of Rousseau and the natural man and his natural ways was very much in vogue, when people like Delacroix were going off to Africa to paint Arab chieftains and lions and the rest. They stopped traffic wherever they want. Catlin had brought 500 of his paintings and put on a show such as no one ever saw, complete with not just the paintings, but with teepees and drums and tomahawks with the old remains of blood still on them.

The other two sensations which happened within the same three or four weeks -- above is Moreau Gottschalk, Louis Moreau Gottschalk, who was the first American pianist or musician to perform solo on stage in Paris ever. He packed the house. Chopin and others came to hear him because of his reputation, and he was a sensation, and he was 15 years old. Now, prodigies were a common item of interest in Paris -- Mozart obviously having been one -- but there never had been an American prodigy, and that's what interested them. He became a very well-known composer; his music is still played and is still highly regarded. But he, alas, died, unfortunately contracting a disease in Latin America on a tour when he was in his 40s.

Below is Tom Thumb with P. T. Barnum, and they really were the hit of the time. Again, never had anyone seen anything like Tom Thumb. Tom Thumb wasn't just very small; he was also quite a performer, and his charming performances before the King and all kinds of other people, as well as on stage, won the hearts of the city like nobody had before him. There was nobody like him before him, either there or here.

Up above you have Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman, American woman, to become a doctor, who studied medicine in Paris.
Below her is William Wells Brown, the first African American novelist, who also lived here in Boston.

On the right is Harriet Beecher Stowe, who escaped from England where her popularity, because of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was more than she could cope with, so she went over to Paris to get some peace and quiet because, as yet, her book hadn't been translated into French. She was smitten by Paris; she fell in love with Paris. There are wonderful accounts, in her own hand and in her brother's diary, of her spending hours just sitting at the Louvre in front of one painting. She was tremendously taken by Delacroix's *Raft of the Medusa*, perhaps more than any other. She was really a very important person in the history of our country and admirable in a number of ways. But I must say, as someone who knew nothing about art but who wanted to learn, her attention to those paintings is exemplary. She said something so wonderful. She said, "It isn't just that Paris is so beautiful, but that it brings out your own innate love of beauty in a way you've never experienced before." She got a little mad about the way she'd been raised by her Calvinist family to eschew all such things as painting and theatre, and the like.

Now, the time in Paris for these Americans was not just the moveable feast; it wasn't just wining and dining and dancing and carousing and feeling sorry for themselves because nobody understood them. [laughter] These people didn't have that attitude. They are not there because they're alienated from their country or that they are feeling misunderstood, or that they are feeling deeply sorry for themselves with what life and tragedies of the world have done to their time. They are there to bring something home, and they're there as ardent patriots.

There's an old expression -- I don't know who said it; maybe somebody here tonight knows; I'd love to know who said it -- that when you travel abroad, the country you learn the most about is your own. That's exactly the sum total of this whole experience for many of these people.
They were caught -- those who were there in the 1860s, late 1860s and beginning of the 1870s -- they were caught in one of the most horrible expressions of human cruelty in the history of the world. First came the surrounding of Paris by the Germans in the Franco-Prussian War and their decision to starve the city into surrendering. The city was starving, and the city was eating everything and anything.

This painting, which is on the right, is of a young Parisian chef selling his cooked rats on the street. They ate sparrows, birds, pigeons. They ate all the animals in the zoo. They ate horses. Everything, everything. People who had love for their dog or cat kept them in hiding because they would be grabbed and put on the market. There was one store that sold a paté of rat meat. There was another store where they had an egg in the window the way you would display a crown jewel in the window.

They did not lose their sense of humor entirely, and they didn't lose their courage. The people of the city of Paris were brave and well-behaved in the extreme through all of it, as the Americans who stayed there attested. Very few stayed. Over 6,000 got out as fast as they could when the German army was marching on Paris, but there were 150 who remained through the siege, which lasted almost five months.

Our minister to Paris was a man named Elihu Washburne, who ought to be better known than he is, who performed one of the most heroic acts that I know of in our story as a people. Washburne was perfectly free to leave, but he decided that as long as there were Americans there, it was his duty to stay. He was the only diplomat from a major power who stayed through the horrors that followed. Because what happened, as you probably know, after the siege was over the Germans conquered France and won the Franco-Prussian War. The people of Paris burst into a vicious civil war known as the Commune, and the Communards were the people who wanted to take over the government of the city for the people. Now, they weren't Communists, as is often misunderstood. They were the unemployed, the poor who were rising up, trying to create a government that would really, truly represent them.
And as civil wars can do, it became bloody in the extreme – slaughtering people, men, women, children, left and right, by both sides. One of the great services that Washburne provided was that there were 20,000 Germans in Paris who were the lowest of low in the employment realm. They were the street cleaners, the garbage men, the laundresses; they were uneducated, illiterate, poor as can be, but innocent of having any part in this war between France and Germany. They were sitting potential victims of the anger at the Germans by the French, and they were really were most likely going to be slaughtered.

Elihu Washburne, this man here on the left, organized an exodus for those people and got almost all of them out by train with the cooperation, to be sure, of the French government and the German government. But neither the French nor the German governments were going to run this thing and make it work, but Washburne did it. Add to that, he kept a diary every single day. This diary has been known about, but nobody ever saw it. I'm glad to say that because of the hard work and tenacity of my research partner, Mike Hill, who's worked with me for 25 years, we found the diary. It's so revealing, so visual in describing everything that was happening. Here was a man who was out every day trying to solve problems and seeing some of the most horrific acts of violence and murder imaginable, who would come back home each night, sit down at one or two in the morning and write these long, wonderful accounts. Again, a man who had very little formal education, but could use the English language in a way that too few people today can handle.

He came from Livermore, Maine, and his mother had almost no education, but she raised her children with the motto: "If you can get an education, there's no limit to how far you can go." He and three of his brothers all became members of the United States Congress, either in the Senate or the House; never happened before, never happened since. They all went off to different places. Washburne was a Congressman from Illinois; that's how he got to know Lincoln, how he got to know Grant. The others went to Minneapolis or other states; one stayed home in Maine, became the governor, became the one first to use the expression Republican to describe the new party.
Once their mother was asked by a reporter, "Why is it that all of your sons left Maine?" She said, "Oh, there's no state big enough in the country to hold my sons." [laughter]

Here's Paris burning, really burning. The Communards at the end decided the game was over, they were going to lose and so they decided they would destroy the city while they could. Fortunately, they put it out before it destroyed the Louvre. The whole story of how they concealed the Venus de Milo in order that it could be saved is a book unto itself.

On the left is Archbishop Darboy, the Archbishop of Paris. On top of everything else Elihu Washburne, who was a Protestant, did everything in his power to save him because he had been taken prisoner by the Communards who hated everything to do with the Church and all priests and were executing them by the dozens all the time. Darboy was taken to prison, and Washburne went to see him repeatedly, did everything he could to get him released, get them to spare his life, but failed. He was executed, and Washburne really never got over it.

Now comes the period when American genius is really on display in Paris. Very quickly, these are the works of John Singer Sargent. You see Sargent in the photograph over here taken in his studio in Paris. This one of The Daughters of Edward Boit is at the MFA; many of you may know it. Boit was a wealthy Bostonian and a painter, quite a good painter, whose works are also at the MFA.

Above is El Jaleo, which is Sargent's great painting of Spanish dancing, which is at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum; it's their crown jewel.

On the upper right is the famous painting of Madame X, which was thought to be the most scandalous portrait ever presented. Many people think it is Sargent's greatest piece, which I don't agree, but it's a very great one, and it's in the Metropolitan Museum.
Now, what I want to stress is that Sargent was a student in Paris in the atelier of Carolus-Duran. He was, again, a phenomenon. All these paintings, which still stand as some of the greatest paintings in all of American art, were painted when he was still in his 20s and all painted in Paris. Sargent's case is a little bit sad. His parents were well-to-do, well-educated Philadelphians whose financial wherewithal had diminished rapidly and they were embarrassed by it. They went to Europe in good part to hide the shame of that, because they could live in Europe for a fraction of what it cost to live at home. This was true of a number of Americans, and eventually is the same for Mary Cassatt's parents, also, who came from Philadelphia.

So Sargent was born and raised in Europe; he was really a European. But at the end of his life, when he was living in England, they wanted to knight him and he said, "No, I can't accept knighthood because I'm an American citizen." As many of you know, this brilliant young man had his first one-man show ever here in Boston at the St. Botolph Club. So if you're ever walking by there, just remember that and if you step in the door, there's a copy of his wonderful portrait of Isabella Stewart Gardner. Sargent's love of the United States was real. His paintings of the West, his paintings of the Rocky Mountains and of Florida are just brilliant. I particularly adore his watercolors, which to me are so brilliant; it's hard to imagine a human being doing them.

Here's Mary Cassatt who was determined not just to be a woman who paints, but a painter. Some very brave women in all these stories, courageous women: Emma Willard, the first one to champion higher education for women; Elizabeth Blackwell, the first American doctor; and now this brave young woman who went to Europe to study, to improve herself, became so good that she was the only American taken in as one of them by the French Impressionists.

Of course, her paintings of women and the life of women, and particularly women of her social economic level -- a very private, very well-dressed, polite society, whether in Paris or back home in Philadelphia, become part of our vision of that time. That's a painting of her mother reading *Le Figaro*, done in Paris. Her mother and father, whose money was running out, were dependent on this young woman selling her work. She had to look after them, and they lived with her in her
apartment. They lived a very enclosed and private life. Her sister Lydia, who's up in the painting at the top, was suffering from Bright's disease. She was a very appealing person who decided that if she couldn't go have some role in life the way her sister was having, she'd have the role of being her sister's model. She's a noble act, and she did die in France but she is immortalized in many, many paintings, famous paintings, by Cassatt, in which she was the model. Below is, again, another wonderful watercolor, Mary Cassatt's self-portrait.

Now, we come to the man whom to me is an American treasure that I am embarrassed to say I knew an embarrassingly insufficient amount about before I wrote this book, Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Now, we all know him because of the Shaw Memorial, which is his masterpiece and which is one of the great works of art in America, which stands, as you know, on Beacon Hill, and is the first work of art by a sculptor or a painter, American painter, to portray Black Americans in the role of heroes, heroic Americans. Before, they'd always been portrayed either as servants or as entertainment. That piece is worth each and all of our taking time to study and notice that each one of those Black soldiers marching with Shaw is an individual, with an individual face, an individual identity and story, presumably.

Saint-Gaudens went to Paris in steerage. He was a shoemaker's son from New York, who had this talent, this gift, this ambition to be a sculptor. Again, he had no money. He knew a few people, and he knew some French because his father was French, which was an advantage. Here you see him in a painting by his friend Kenyon Cox, which is in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The young Saint-Gaudens was doing one of his pieces on the right.

Below, here is a painting by Dewing of Saint-Gaudens's wife, Gussie. She was Augusta, he was Augustus. This is Gussie Saint-Gaudens, who came from Roxbury. Her maiden name was Homer. She was Winslow Homer's cousin. This painting here, on the left, is one of her paintings. She was quite a good artist. It's an interior of their apartment in Paris. The building is still there; the apartment has been changed, but it looks out in the direction of the Luxembourg Gardens.
They were a young, married couple, which was unusual for Americans, young married people to
go over. Gussie suffered from severe deafness, which restricted her capacity to take part socially
and otherwise, and she spoke very little French. She nonetheless kept going and did everything
she could to help with her husband's career. Once they were married, this was later, after he'd
gotten his initial education there, and it was in Paris that he did his first major piece, still
standing in a prominent public place in America, which is of Admiral Farragut which is in
Madison Square Park in New York. To the left you see the tower of the old Madison Square
Garden, the top of which was Saint-Gaudens's figure of Diana, which is now to be seen in the
Metropolitan Museum after the old Madison Square Garden was torn down. If you were to pick
that statue up and turn it over, it would say "made in Paris." [laughter] That's so true of so much
that we take for granted as being purely American.

Here you see the Statue of Liberty rising out of the back streets of a Paris neighborhood. They
built it, of course, to see if it was all there and then took it all apart to ship it over to this country.
But you can see how enormous it was and what a tourist attraction … well, attraction to
everybody, not just tourists.

On the right, of course, is the famous Eiffel Tower, which was built for the 1889 World's Fair,
the greatest World's Fair ever, until then, in which all kinds of innovations and historically
important inventions and the like were presented for the first time. In keeping with that spirit,
that's Thomas Edison below, who was the American rock star of the 1889 Paris Exposition. He
couldn't go out in public without being mobbed, and he got to the point where he couldn't stand it
any longer. So he retreated to the studio of an American artist who was one of his friends, named
Abraham Anderson. Anderson decided, since Edison was locked up in isolation with him, he'd
use the opportunity to paint Edison's portrait. He did, and it's a beautiful job, which is, again, part
of the collection at the National Portrait Gallery.
Here is the famous statue of Sherman which stands at the corner of 57th and 5th Avenue in New York, right by the entrance to Central Park and catty-corner to the Plaza Hotel. Now, if you've never stopped to look at this piece, I urge you to do so. It's, to my mind, the greatest equestrian statue ever done by an American. It's powerful in the extreme. There's much more to it than you first see. First of all, Saint-Gaudens loved horses and he saw them as a symbol of power. He also saw them, of course, as a symbol of his time because the automobile was just coming in. This particular horse was, of course, named Ontario, who was a famous jumper and therefore had tremendous power in his back legs.

But the most interesting part of the whole piece is the face of Sherman. Now, from the street level -- it's somewhat hard to see this -- but there are numerous studies that Saint-Gaudens did in order to do the statue, which are on exhibit in various museums, including the Metropolitan, and up at the Saint-Gaudens home in Cornish, New Hampshire. What you see up close and you can see from a distance -- you have to stop and really make sure you see it -- is that it is a face of a madman. It is scary. It is a tangible, touchable expression of Sherman's famous statement that, "War is hell." It's the face of someone who's looked into the heart of hell. So it isn't simply a great heroic tribute to a great warrior and aren't we wonderful that we conquered the Southern Confederacy and the like, it's saying something more than that and powerfully.

Now, the other thing that is very little known about this piece is the Goddess of Victory, who is leading Sherman on his march. The model who posed for that was an African American. Her name was Hettie Anderson and Saint-Gaudens thought she was the most beautiful model he'd ever had to work with, and she is gorgeous. But if you look at her face, she's not saying, "Oh, we won, aren't we wonderful? Glory days are here." She looks dazed, she looks in a trance. She isn't terrifying, as Sherman is, but there's puzzlement and wonder -- "Where do we go now?" perhaps. All of us can have our interpretations of this magnificent piece.

It very nearly killed Saint-Gaudens. He put everything he had into it. Again, it was made in Paris, sculpted there and cast in bronze there because the greatest bronze-casting work was done in Paris. He suffered from depression and he learned not long after he'd finished this that he had
cancer. He had to have an operation, and his wife came back from the United States to prepare all that for him. In one of his very down stages one morning, he decided he was going to kill himself. Now, when I got to this part of his story — and it's all recorded and made authentic by one of his assistants who was present the morning he came in on his mission to destroy himself, present in the studio — I thought if somebody put this in a novel, no editor would allow it to go through; it's just too melodramatic. Things like this don't really happen in real life. But it did happen in real life and it's in many ways the note that I end my book on because it expresses exactly the point.

He came into the studio -- this is on the Left Bank -- and he was in a tizzy. He was going around doing this and that, and he seemed not to know what he was doing. His young assistant was watching. He said, "I'm going out." He went out the door, and as he would later tell this same young assistant, he ran down the Rue de Reine, nearly a mile, down to the river, out onto the Pont des Arts, the bridge for pedestrians over the Seine. It was early in the morning, very early in the morning. He was determined to jump in the river, kill himself, and as he got out onto the bridge, the sun came up in the east, very low down beyond Notre Dame. All of the Louvre and the French Institute on the left-hand side were magnificently lighted by this early morning blaze of sunshine. He looked at it and he said, "I don't want to kill myself. I want to live." He started whistling, and he went back up to the studio and told his young assistant the whole story. Paris had saved his life. Paris had made him see how much there is to live for.

Now, think about Paris for a minute. What is the pull? It's not because it has magnificent mountain views, snow-capped peaks, not because it's on a great shoreline and you can see the curve of the beach. There's nothing particularly appealing about the setting. It has a nice river. Lots of places do.

It's what human beings made of that place. It's the art of architecture. It is the art of spacing architecture, of creating parks and esplanades and boulevards and sidewalks. It's the civilized attitude toward the design of how and where we live done to an essence.
One of the most startling things about the whole story of Paris is that after it was all but destroyed and you saw it in flames, within no time when the war was over, they rebuilt it. Thousands of masons were put to work. It was rebuilt in a matter of about two years. Unbelievable, and rebuilt to be still perfection.

So we can do that, we human beings. Those young Americans who went there came home and showed us we could do that, just as the young doctors came home and showed us that we can practice medicine far more effectively and with far more feeling for our fellow human beings than we had been until then.

Well, the chance to write about that was, for me, a godsend. That's my book, and that's my talk. [applause] Thank you. You have all been very patient. I had no idea I'd gone on as long as I have. But I tell you, it's as if I were being asked to talk about it for the first time, and the thrill of having an audience as attentive and as understanding as you and nobody threw anything at me! [laughter] I hope very much that you'll not just go to Paris again, if you haven't been yet or go for the first time, but that you'll take a look at how much of our own city is a reflection of what these marvelous young people brought home for us. [applause]

TOM McNAUGHT: You're phenomenal. Truly.

DAVID MCCULLOUGH: Thank you.

TOM MCNAUGHT: I don't know how you keep all those facts.

DAVID MCCULLOUGH: Well, there was a wonderful professor of child psychology teaching at the University of Pittsburgh named Margaret McFarland. I got to know about her because of my friendship through public television with Fred Rogers, Mr. Rogers. I'm from Pittsburgh; Fred Rogers was from Pittsburgh. He told me that everything he did was based on her teaching. Her
admonition to teachers was: Show them what you love. That's what I was doing up here tonight, showing you what I really love. [applause] Thank you.

TOM MCNAUGHT: So you say when. We have a few questions, and we don't want to make the night too long because you have some signing to do.

Hello, Mr. McCullough. In The Greater Journey, you write about Americans who were influenced, inspired or changed by living in Paris. In your opinion, what influence, if any, was had on John F. Kennedy as a result of his travel through Europe and living in England prior to the outbreak of the Second World War while his father was the Ambassador to the Court of St. James? Do you think that his travel and living experiences during that time of his life may have influenced his political beliefs and ultimately his Presidency?

DAVID MCCULLOUGH: Very, very good question. Yes, absolutely, yes, of course, it did. It had an effect on the whole family as Mrs. Smith can attest. I didn't know President Kennedy, I never met him. I was very proud to be working in the government at the time he was President, but I did get to know Ted Kennedy very well. He had a great love of not just Paris and France, but of travel and history and all of that. He'd often tell me some story about something that had happened or some idea that had hatched as a result of his reading about the world and about history.

Ted Kennedy's love of history was genuine. It was part of him, a big part of him. We clicked just like that once we met, because we had so many favorite books in common, among other things.

TOM MCNAUGHT: What does history teach us about our current political impasse?

DAVID MCCULLOUGH: I'll tell you what it teaches us. [laughter] That very little of consequence is ever accomplished alone. You've got to work together to accomplish great things. Joint efforts -- America is a joint effort, and that's what the Congress has forgotten. [applause]
also teaches us that we've been through bad times often before, that we have had to deal with rampant selfishness and greed and corruption and cheating and selfishness, indifference to the public interest, all of that. It's all happened before.

One of the worst of all times was the so-called Gilded Age after the Civil War. Famously rampant corruption in business, finance, government, but out of that same period came something as astonishing and as masterful and as enduring a symbol of affirmation as we have, which is the Brooklyn Bridge. Mark Twain called it the Gilded Age. Well, out of it came Mark Twain, too. So we shouldn't get down if we think we're moving in a time of prevailing rottenness. [laughter] There's a lot going on that we need to remember.

Think, for example, of the unbelievable advances in medicine just in our lifetime. Think of the fact that we've created the greatest universities in the world. Now, they're not perfect and they're not always doing a perfect job, but why are all these foreign students flocking to our country? Because they know this is the country that's created the greatest universities in the world. We should recognize that; we should be proud of it. In a way, we've been raising our own kind of cathedrals, but we don't seem to see them. We don't realize how important what we've done just in that way is.

I'm very optimistic. I think a real understanding of history, or an ambition to try and understand history, encourages optimism. Short-range pessimism, long-range optimism.

TOM MCNAUGHT: Due to the vast array of topics or individuals that you write about, what specifically motivates you to select such topics or individuals? Is it fueled by your own personal interest in a topic or individual? Or a gap in history you wish to fill through a book?

DAVID MCCULLOUGH: Well, I'm not very good at describing why I do what I do, because I'm largely puzzled by it myself. [laughter] But I think I try to choose a story not a subject. The Brooklyn Bridge is a subject, but the story is the Roeblings and the others who set out to do that
unprecedented structure, little knowing the troubles they were going to have to face, both with the project itself and with their own health or their own capacity to do the work.

History's about people. History's human. That's why it's so fascinating and that's why it ought to be high up on our list of the most important pursuits in education and in life. I think it's part of our human nature. Children's stories, "once upon a time, long, long ago," it's what gets us.

Scott Momaday is a Native American writer. He won the Pulitzer Prize for a wonderful book, *House Made of Dawn*, years ago. He's a great big fellow and a wonderful storyteller. He loves to tell stories to little children. He'll sit in a classroom or a kindergarten or wherever, in one of those little chairs that the children use. He's a great big man, and they'll all sit on the floor in a semicircle around him. One day, he started off one of his stories this way: "I'm going to tell you a story about a time long, long ago, when all the animals could talk." A little voice in the back said, "Ah, those were the days." [laughter]

It's in us. The two most popular motion pictures of all time are historical in outlook -- not necessarily very accurate -- but *Gone with the Wind* and *Titanic*. We want to know about who we are and where we come from and how we got here. We want to know all that.

**TOM MCNAUGHT:** What cultural differences did the Americans you researched mention most often in relation to their lives abroad? What did they appreciate most about Paris, and what did they find most challenging about life in a foreign country?

**DAVID MCCULLOUGH:** Well, keep in mind, it wasn't just that Paris was so beautiful and offered so much to do and so many forms of entertainment and the rest, but that we were so very far behind. They'd never been to a ballet. They'd never been to an opera. They had never eaten food like they had. I think one of my favorite observations was one young fellow wrote home that, "The wine is cheaper than the milk." [laughter]
They'd never seen such fashions. They'd never seen women treated equally in conversation or out in public. They'd never walked such avenues. They were shocked by some of it, mostly having to do with promiscuity, and they'd been warned about that by their parents, who were very worried; they were concerned about disease. But there were very few that didn't like it.

I think the students that worked the hardest, by far, were the medical students. Imagine, you're plunged into a huge medical school, thousands of students, all speaking a language that you don't understand and all the lectures are in a language that you don't understand, and you've got to try to catch up. They did it. They never worked harder in their lives. They all said that at the time, and they would say it again in after-years, but they were also never happier. I didn't find one example of those medical students -- a larger number of whom were from here, from Boston -- I didn't find one example of any of them who quit, who said, "Oh, this isn't what I thought it was going to be like; I'm going home." Not one.

I think they learned a little bit about savoring the simple pleasures of life. Not just to savor your magnificent food or glass of wine and not gulp it all down, but to do that with the pleasures of sitting in a park and watching the children play around the reflecting pool, or the pleasures of conversation, the pleasures of watching the world go by from your café chair and your cup of coffee. All that we still enjoy about Paris.

**TOM MCNAUGHT:** This one I think everyone would love to know. What subject do you hope to write about in your upcoming book?

**DAVID MCCULLOUGH:** I'm not ready to say yet, because I don't know. I'm toying with studying, exploring several subjects. I'm very tempted to go on with the Americans in Paris on into the 20th century, because there's an awful lot to be said about that which has been overlooked or misunderstood, people of great interest and of real importance to our story as a country.
I'm very interested in one or two particular years and what happened in them. I'm thinking about not so much a portrait or a biography of certain people, but a book about one or two different people, rather than doing the whole life, taking one particular moment or experience or accomplishment.

Stay tuned. [laughter] I hope.

**TOM MCNAUGHT:** I wish we could do several more of these. I wish the night would never end. This is the most incredible evening. But to give you a break and we are going to have a book signing. So, again, I just want to thank you for another awesome evening here at the Kennedy Library. [applause] Thank you so much.

THE END