

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE GUIDE

CHOMUN XI

Introduction

The Democratic Party is the oldest political party in the United States. The purpose of this background guide is to illuminate the changes in Democratic party strategy over time. To this end, this background guide is split into three sections. First, will be a brief history of the recent Presidential elections. After this history, will be a more specific discussion of the major candidates for the Democratic nomination. The final section of the background guide will consist of a description of the Iowa caucus as well as the New Hampshire and Nevada primaries.

As you read this guide, major themes should soon become apparent. The theme that will be revisited most often is that perception almost always trumps reality in the context of Presidential campaigns. As a result, it will be specifics of how this perception is created that will be of the greatest interest to this committee. In sum, it is the aim of this guide is to provide you with information that will improve your ability to analyze incoming political information so that you will be able to predict the electorate's response. The more history you are familiar with, the more likely your predictions will be accurate. The future of the Democratic Party's White House ambitions will depend upon your ability to hear what the public is telling you and respond in a way that will resonate and reassure. Questions such as the extent to which race, gender and experience will ultimately affect the voter's decision must be addressed by this committee.

I. Presidential Campaigns: 1932-2004

Modern Democratic Party history starts with FDR's election 1932. The stock market crash of October 29, 1929 set off an economic chain of events now referred to as the Great Depression. While running for President, FDR promised the American public a "New Deal". What is of most central interest to us is the manner in which is he was able to win the "realigning" election of 1932. Many Democratic Party operatives felt that it would be possible to defeat the then current President Herbert Hoover in 1932 since he was widely unpopular after the implosion of the US economy. FDR was able to secure the nomination through building a coalition that included Joseph P Kennedy and William Randolph Hearst.

The harsh economic realities of Great Depression made it possible for different groups of people to come together under the banner of the Democratic Party. The combination of these voting blocks was known as the New Deal coalition. FDR's campaign manager James A. Farley put the coalition together. FDR and the Democratic ticket won the Senate, House of Representatives and White House in 1932. FDR ran on a platform of insurance against the changes wrought by the Great Depression. In this context, the word "liberal" meant to be for the New Deal and the word "conservative" meant to be against it. FDR ran the Democratic Party until his death in 1945. Vice

President Harry Truman took over and was able to build a coalition of his own to implement his Cold War policies.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower was wildly popular after the end of World War II. He was “drafted” to run for President and decided to run as a Republican only at the last minute. He defeated Democratic nominee Adlai Stevenson in a landslide and was reelected in 1956 with 57% of the popular vote.

John F. Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon in 1960. In working to gain the Democratic Party’s nomination, Kennedy had to prove that his Catholicism would not be a problem. He ran against Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey in the Wisconsin and West Virginia primaries. Kennedy was able to win both contests and prove to the party leadership his faith was not a prohibitive factor. Though Kennedy had managed to prove that his faith would not prevent his victory in non-Catholic states, he had still not secured the nomination by the time of the convention in 1960. Kennedy faced very serious challenges to the nomination when he arrived at the Los Angeles convention. Lyndon Johnson and Adlai Stevenson both reported that they would be seeking the Democratic Party’s nomination. Both of these men posed a very significant challenge to Kennedy. Johnson had been leader of the Senate and thus was very powerful within the Party. Stevenson was a popular liberal Democrat. Kennedy was ultimately able to beat both men through his superior campaign staff and organization. Johnson accepted Kennedy’s offer to be his running mate.

The general election of 1960 is particularly relevant when considering the best strategy for 2008. Throughout the time leading to the election, Richard Nixon argued that his experience as Eisenhower’s Vice President had provided him important experience. Kennedy’s ambition was to confound this charge in the televised debates. 80 million people watched the first debate. Those who watched, saw a Nixon who appeared haggard and tired, contrasted with a tanned and relaxed Kennedy. Most who heard the debate on the radio felt that Nixon had been the stronger debater whereas those who watched the debates on TV felt that Kennedy had won. This is an important lesson. Polls reflected a virtual tie between Nixon and Kennedy in the days before the election. Nixon conceded the election on Wednesday.

Vice President Lyndon Johnson became the nation’s 36th President upon the assassination of JFK on November 22nd 1963. FDR’s New Deal coalition fractured in the face of the growing Civil Rights movement. In this context, it was possible for Republican Barry Goldwater to appeal to many southern Democrats throughout the presidential election of 1964. Despite numerous defections, Johnson held the White House. He managed to win the White House through characterizing Goldwater as an extreme Republican whose goals included the elimination of many social programs instituted by FDR. In this way, Johnson’s campaign took on a nostalgic attitude. Appealing to the greater history of the Democratic Party, one campaign slogan was “Let Us Continue”.

Republican Richard Nixon won the 1968 election. Both the events leading up to this election and the breakdown of the results demonstrate that an important shift had occurred within the country. Nixon ran on the promise to restore “law and order”. Given the chaos that was perceived throughout 1968, it is clear that this message resonated with the electorate to great degree. Indeed, Nixon displayed considerable skill in choosing a platform that responded to the fear felt by many Americans.

Senator George McGovern ran as the Democratic nominee against President Nixon in 1972. Trying to capitalize on the anti-war sentiment, his campaign promises included the removal of US forces from Vietnam. His slogan was “Come Home, America!” In the end however, Nixon won the election in a landslide, losing only the electoral votes of Washington D.C and Massachusetts.

Former Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter beat Ford in 1976 by promising to bring honesty back to Washington D.C. For many reasons, this was a very attractive message to the voting electorate. Most importantly, the break in at the Watergate hotel had damaged the faith that many Americans held in the US government.

Ronald Reagan defeated Carter in 1980. One of the reasons most often cited to explain Carter’s defeat in the Iran hostage crisis. After the Shah of Iran was overthrown as a result of the Iranian revolution, President Carter eventually granted the Shah sanctuary in the United States. In response to this, Iranian revolutionaries took control of the US embassy in Tehran and took 52 hostages. Carter’s initial response was to appeal for the release of the hostages on humanitarian grounds. This relatively weak response angered many Americans who felt that the taking of American hostages constituted a declaration of war. Carter’s next tried to bring the crisis to end through freezing Iranian financial assets within the US. After this plan failed, he then authorized a military rescue operation. The military rescue operation failed as a result of a sandstorm that damaged the helicopters dispatched to Iran. The failure of this rescue attempt further lowered Carter’s approval ratings. Algeria was able to ultimately broker an agreement between the two countries but by this time Carter had already lost the Presidential election. The hostages were released on January 20, 1981, on the same day Reagan was inaugurated.

There have been many allegations that the hostage situation was manipulated to improve the political prospects of either Carter, or Reagan, or both. One of the theories holds that Carter deliberately delayed the release of the hostages in order to beat Ted Kennedy in the Democratic primaries. The crisis, Carter is supposed to have thought, made him appear more Presidential and was thus served as a political asset. Another theory claims that the Republicans with the CIA, such as George H.W. Bush, ensured that the hostages would not be released until after Reagan had defeated Carter. In this way, Republicans hoped to avoid an “October surprise”. It is important to note, at this point, the manner in which international events can be manipulated in order to affect domestic election strategy.

Reagan won reelection in 1984, defeating Democratic nominee Walter Mondale. Reagan was able to characterize Mondale as a proponent of “big government” whose

policies would lead to comprehensive tax increases. Reagan won the greatest share of electoral votes ever, losing only the 13 votes of Minnesota. Reagan's reelection campaign is additionally memorable because it featured the now famous campaign commercial; "It's morning in America".

George H.W. Bush, Reagan's Vice President, won in 1988. The Democrats had managed to make gains in the 1986 congressional elections and were confident they would make a serious challenge for the White House in 1988. The Democrats nominated Governor Michael Dukakis in July. The candidates characterized one another in the following ways: Bush attacked Dukakis as a "Massachusetts liberal" and a "card carrying member of the ACLU." Conversely, Dukakis tried to link Vice President Bush to the scandals of the Reagan administration. The Iran Contra scandal is one example of this. Dukakis made a now famous blunder when he rode an M1 Abrams tank in an attempt to portray himself as more experienced with the military than his critics alleged. The Dukakis campaign suffered many comparable set backs and Bush was elected with a very generous margin.

President Bush's success in the First Gulf War as well as the perceived strength of the domestic economy lead many prominent Democrats to conclude that it would be impossible to defeat President's Bush in 1992. This led a less well-known Arkansas Governor, Bill Clinton, to achieve the Democratic nomination. President Bush's strength had always been in foreign policy but the fact was that after the fall of the Soviet Union, many voters felt that foreign policy was less important than it had been. Bush had also alienated many of his supporters when he broke his campaign promise and raised taxes. Clinton was able to identify and campaign on the areas in which the President had the lowest ratings, such as the economy, education and health care. Clinton managed to beat Bush in the Electoral College but was the first President to be elected without 50% of the popular vote.

The 1996 Presidential elections were fought between the incumbent, President Bill Clinton of Arkansas and Vice President Al Gore of Tennessee on the Democratic ticket, against Senator Robert J. Dole of Kansas and his running mate former Congressman Jack F. Kemp of Buffalo on the republican ticket. Being the incumbent and supported by a relatively strong economy Clinton retained his Presidency but failed to receive a majority of the popular vote. Clinton was able to focus on his Presidential campaign early thanks to the lack of any meaningful opposition in the primaries. Dole, on the other hand spent time, money and energy on securing the Republican nomination. Clinton ran a campaign that pegged his opposition as a member of the old guard, conservative, stodgy and far from the mainstream. Throughout the run-up to the general elections Clinton maintained comfortable leads over Dole. The major hiccup in Clinton's campaign for office was a campaign financing controversy. Seventeen people were convicted for fraud when it was found that the Chinese embassy in Washington D.C. was used for coordinating funds for the DNC. Additionally, a fund-raising event organized at the Hsi Lai Temple in California was deemed questionable by the U.S. Justice Department since it is illegal for religious groups to donate money for political purposes. The DNC eventually returned the money that was raised at the Temple. These minor

mishaps leading up to the election did not adversely affect the Clinton campaign and he found himself in the Oval office for a second term.

The 2000 elections were a dark period for the DNC, as an election that was all but won was lost by the decision of the Supreme Court. The fight was between the Democratic candidate, Al Gore and the Republican nominee George W. Bush. Bush won the election by 271 electoral votes to Gore's 266, although the validity of 25 of the electoral votes from Florida is questionable.

On November the 7th 2000, as the results were coming in it became clear that the elections were going to be very close. Both Gore and Bush had won approximately 48% of the national vote. Bush had swept the Southern States while Gore carried the Northeastern states to balance him out. It would all come down to Florida since whoever won Florida would win the Presidency of the United States. Based primarily on exit polls, the news networks had claimed Florida for Gore, but when Bush began to lead in the actual vote tallies, this claim was rescinded. Once 85% of the votes had been counted and Bush was leading Gore by approximately 100,000 votes, Florida was claimed for Bush. However, the three counties remaining were heavily Democratic and as their votes were counted, Gore began gaining on Bush. News networks had to withdraw their claim again when the margin narrowed down to 2,000 votes. In a recount on Wednesday, November 8th Bush's lead dwindled to 500 votes, triggering a mandatory recount in the entire state.

The recounts ultimately ended in a Supreme Court decision that the Florida Supreme Court's method for recounting was unconstitutional, and subsequently another decision by the Supreme Court that required the ending of the recount and a certification of the Florida results. Katherine Harris, the Republican Secretary of State who had been the Florida co-chair of Bush's campaign, conducted the certification. It is important to add to that the fact that Jeb Bush, George Bush's brother was the then Florida Governor. Florida was declared as a victory for George W. Bush and he was installed in the White House. An independent research conducted by The Media Consortium to examine the 175,010 ballots that were not counted in Florida revealed that the winner of Florida would have differed depending on the methods used to interpret and include ballots. Therefore, with the help of some luck and the right people in the right places, Bush was able to assume office after one of the most controversial and disputed Elections in our nation's history.

The 2004 presidential election was fought in the shadow of the disastrous election four years previously. With the Iraq war fiasco beginning to take shape it was thought the DNC had a fair chance at capturing the White House, but it was never going to be easy to defeat an incumbent, wartime president. The fact that the Iraq war was the central issue in the 2004 elections motivated decisions to a great extent.

On May 31, 2002, more than two years before American would vote, Howard B. Dean III, governor of Vermont, formed a presidential exploratory committee, thereby setting into motion the race for the Democratic primaries. Dean, as governor of a small state was not well known outside his state. He hoped that entering the race early would

allow him ample time to become a household name. December of 2002 saw John F. Kerry, senator from Massachusetts and a Vietnam War veteran, announcing his plans to form an exploratory committee. Kerry's credentials as a war veteran were thought to be encouraging if he were to be pitted against Bush, primarily running on a war ticket. A couple of weeks after Kerry's announcement, Gore made an announcement of his own, declaring that he had no intention to run for President in 2004. This came as a surprise because Gore had been widely expected to run. Once it was clear that Gore was opting out of the race, a number of potential candidates who were awaiting his decision, decided to throw their hats into the ring. Senator Joseph Lieberman, Gore's vice presidential running mate, who had promised not to seek the nomination if Gore were running, formally announced his candidacy. January of 2003 saw Senator John Edwards, Representative Richard A. Gephardt, Reverend Al Sharpton, libertarians Gary Nolan and Michael Badnarick announcing their plans to run. Additionally, former Senator Carol Moseley Braun, Representative Dennis Kucinich and Senator Bob Graham announce their intentions.

Of this vast field of Democratic hopefuls Howard Dean emerged an early frontrunner, raising \$7.5 million for his campaign. Over the summer of 2003 a strong nationwide movement had emerged for the inclusion of retired four-star general Wesley Clark in the Democratic race. Consequently, in the September of 2003 Wesley Clark declared himself the tenth hopeful for the Democratic Party ticket. Even though Dean was the frontrunner, Clark found he had a lot of support from the Democrats due to his military background as Supreme Allied Commander Europe of NATO. After endorsements from Gore and former President Jimmy Carter general consensus was that Dean would win Iowa. But on January 19th 2004, Kerry emerged with a 38% in first place, and Edwards with a 32% in second. Dean was relegated to third place with an 18%. Dean's shocking loss was attributed to the intense negative campaign between Dean and Gephardt leading up to the caucus. Dean's loss could also have been due to over saturation translating into a loss of momentum. His campaign took another hit when, at the post-caucus rally in Iowa, Dean gave an intense and enthusiastic speech that on television appeared loud, undignified and un-presidential. This speech came to be known as the "Dean Scream" and was blown out of proportion by the media, giving his opposition ample fodder. After suffering losses in New Hampshire, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arizona, Delaware, Howard Dean withdrew from the race on February 18th 2004. After Dean's withdrawal, Edwards was the only really challenger to Kerry's domination of the field. However, on Super Tuesday, March 2nd, when Kerry won the California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and Rhode Island primaries and the Minnesota caucuses and Edwards finished second to Kerry, he decided to withdraw from the race leaving Kerry the presumptive nominee.

Shortly before the 2004 Democratic national Convention Kerry selected John Edwards to be his running mate. Kerry was formally confirmed as the Democratic nominee at the democratic National Convention in July 2004. Kerry and Edwards now faced the incumbents, George W. Bush and Dick Cheney of the Republican Party.

The Bush campaign centered around the issue of national security and the Iraq War. He presented himself as a successful war president while Kerry was portrayed as a flip-flopper who would be “uncertain in the face of danger”. On the other hand, Kerry ran on the platform of “Stronger at home, respected in the world”, thereby implying that Bush had alienated the international community with his pro-war, aggressive tactics. Kerry branded himself as the man who could mend America’s relationship with the world.

Bush’s approval rating had been steadily falling since 9/11. This gave the Kerry campaign the hope of victory. In addition, during the August and September of 2004 issues of Bush failing to fulfill his required service in the Texas Air National Guard were brought to light. At the same time however, Kerry was being accused by the “Swift Vets and POWs for Truth” political group (commonly referred to as “Swift Boat Veterans for Truth”) of exaggerating his contribution in the Vietnam War. They challenged the legitimacy of his war medals. These allegations coupled with a successful Republican campaign gave Bush his first comfortable margin over Kerry since the nominations were announced.

On election night the focus was on Ohio. The swing states, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Ohio were to decide the elections. As the results came in, Kerry had taken Pennsylvania and Bush Florida. It all came down to Ohio. As the votes were counted it started becoming clear that Bush would win the State. Faced with this announcement, Kerry conceded defeat, giving George W. Bush his second term in office.

There have been allegations by Kerry and the Chairman of the National Committee, Howard Dean that the Ohio elections were not conducted fairly, if they had the democrats would have won the State and hence the White House.

II. Candidate Biographies, Stances, and Public Personae

Candidate: Hillary Rodham Clinton

Hillary Rodham Clinton hails from the state of Illinois, where she was exposed to the world of local and national politics at a young age. During her youth, she was an active member of the Republican Party, including her experience as a Goldwater Girl during the 1964 presidential campaign of Senator Barry M. Goldwater. As Rodham’s political beliefs transformed, beginning with her enrollment at Wellesley College, she shed her Republican loyalties and began to become a contributing member of the Civil Rights Movement, especially within her college community. Rodham’s most politically formative years saw her entrance into the realm of national attention. Most notably, and contrasting sharply with her earlier political activities, Rodham delivered a liberally-minded speech at her college graduation in 1969, where she even criticized Wellesley’s guest convocation speaker, Republican Massachusetts Senator Edward Brooke. Soon

thereafter, Rodham entered Yale Law School, where she continued to develop her political focus.

While at law school, Rodham closely studied child law and was employed at a number of practices. She became an advocate in the comparatively young field of child law. Healthcare, education, and family structure became prime concerns of Rodham during her early career. While in law school, she became involved with a man who would factor heavily into her future position within the spectrum of American politics: William Jefferson Clinton. After graduating from Yale, Hillary moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she was on staff at notable child rights activist Marion Wright Edelman's Children's Defense Fund. Rodham continued to live with Clinton and was on the staff of the House Committee on the Judiciary during the Watergate scandal involving President Richard Nixon. Shortly after, Rodham moved to Arkansas with Clinton, where Clinton was elected Attorney General in 1976. Rodham worked as an attorney at the Rose Law Firm, where she focused on intellectual property law and performed pro bono work in cases concerning child rights.

In 1982 Bill Clinton was elected Governor of Arkansas, making Rodham the first lady of the state. Prior to and during this time, Rodham had been instrumental in establishing a number of organizations, including Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families. She sat on the board of the Arkansas Children's Hospital and the Children's Defense Fund, in addition to pioneering reform in the Arkansas public education system. One blight upon the Rodham-Clinton's time in Arkansas was their involvement in a scandal involving the Whitewater Development Corporation. In the late 1970s, the Rodham-Clintons had invested in this company, which was eventually investigated by the U.S Securities and Exchange Commission. This investigation culminated in criminal charges against the owners of Whitewater, who were business partners as well as personal friends of Arkansas' first family. Rodham also served on the board of directors of Wal-Mart Corporation from 1986 until 1992. In this capacity, Rodham pushed for the corporation, which was becoming a global commercial giant, to adopt more environmentally palatable practices and to augment the number of women who served in management positions within the company.

In the early nineties, Rodham and her husband were made privy to an unparalleled opportunity to exercise political influence. 1992 saw the Rodham-Clintons enter the White House as a fresh young couple with histories of political activism. Rodham played a significant role in her husband's 1992 campaign (which would prove useful in her future endeavors), and created an "oval office" of her own, establishing herself firmly within the world of national politics. At this time, Rodham assumed her husband's last name in addition to her own, making Hillary Rodham Clinton a powerful label throughout U.S. politics.

Rodham is noted for her somewhat complex private life, which often clashes with her liberal political policies. A devout Methodist, Rodham continued to attend religious services and prayer groups while in Washington. She became a frequent target of speculation due to her less than traditional career choice coupled with her position as a

mother. For many Americans, Rodham symbolized, and continues to symbolize, a certain degree of harmony between the two worlds with which contemporary American women are increasingly familiar. For others, she embodied a deterioration of family values and was seen as an unnecessary adjunct to her husband's position as President.

As First Lady, Rodham became noteworthy for the special attention she paid to the American healthcare system. Rodham was appointed by her husband to chair the National Task Force on National Health Care Reform, whose mission it was to improve employer's provision of health care for employees. Her effort was largely unsuccessful, and was cited as one of the chief reasons for the Republican gain of Congress in 1994. During the presidential elections of 1996, Rodham again played a pivotal role in her husband's campaign, often drawing large crowds by virtue of her popularity among many Democrats. The Rodham-Clintons returned to the White House in 1996 and Hillary Rodham Clinton continued to play a significant role in the White House.

In 1997, Rodham made some amends for her previous failure in healthcare legislation by successfully lobbying for the State Children's Health Insurance Program, through which children from low-income families are guaranteed health coverage. Rodham also worked closely with Attorney General Janet Reno to create the Office on Violence Against Women at the Justice Department. In addition, the First Lady held numerous issue-specific conferences at the White House, many of which addressed topics concerning women and children. In 1997, she also aided in the passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act in a Republican-controlled Congress.

The first family's dealings with Whitewater Development Corporation also re-surfaced during Clinton's second term. The Clintons were not complicit in any fraud or illegal action, but their close association with the scandal did tarnish their name toward the end of their stay at the White House.

In 1998, Rodham was forced into harsher spotlight when information was revealed regarding an alleged affair that had taken place between her husband and a White House Intern, Monica Samille Lewinsky. Clinton's affair became the highlight of his final days in office, and the First Lady was both praised and criticized for her refusal to obtain a divorce. Regardless, the First Lady's approval ratings skyrocketed, and she left the White House as a popular figure, despite being oft characterized as cold and career-oriented figure.

In 2000, Hillary Rodham Clinton surprised many Americans by announcing her candidacy for the position of Junior Democratic Senator from New York. Rodham left the political realm dominated by her husband and entered a different, more personal field. The 2000 Senate elections in New York were hotly contested between Rodham and her Republican opponent, Rick Lazio. It was at this time that Rodham became, for many Americans, a political entity more independent of her husband. Upon her victory in 2000, she would become a controversial figure in national politics. Since assuming office, and since her re-election in 2006, Rodham has practiced judgment over a far wider range of issues than those with which she was confronted during her time as First Lady.

Since 2000, Rodham has emerged as a leader within the Democratic Party, and she has adroitly utilized the political expertise of her husband. Senator Clinton has remained noteworthy force within the fields of Defense, Healthcare, Education, and Women's Rights policy.

Candidate: Barack Obama

As far as American presidential candidates go, few have had histories quite like Barack Hussein Obama. Currently serving his first term as the junior senator from Illinois, Obama has enjoyed a considerably rapid rise in the world of American politics.

Obama is the son of a Kenyan father and an American mother, whose marriage was terminated after their divorce in 1963, when Obama was two years old. He then spent his childhood between Jakarta, Indonesia and Honolulu, Hawaii, where he enjoyed a very diverse educational environment. Being the child of two parents of different race, Obama claims that the concept of racial difference was foreign to him. Only later in life did he recognize the connotations a majority of Americans ascribe to race.

After attending Occidental College for two years, Obama transferred to Columbia University in New York, where he received his B.A. in political science in 1983. After working for a number of corporations in New York, including Business International Corporation, Obama moved to Chicago in the mid-1980s, where he served as a community organizer, addressing the needs of low-income residents in specific areas of the city. In 1988, Obama entered Harvard Law School, where he served as the president of the *Harvard Law Review*. After earning his J.D. in 1991, Obama returned to Chicago to teach at the University of Chicago Law School from 1993 until 2004.

While teaching at the University of Chicago, Obama served as a State Senator from Illinois' 13th District, spanning the socio-economically diverse neighborhood of Hyde Park. Obama served a total of three terms as State Senator, where he worked closely on issues of health care, welfare reform, and childcare. In 2004, after having made an unsuccessful bid for a seat in the House of Representatives in 2000, Obama entered the race for a vacant U.S. Senate seat in Illinois in 2004. Early polling did not favor Obama, but he emerged ahead of his Democratic competitors. Shortly thereafter, Obama's leading Republican opponent, Jack Ryan, withdrew from the race due to allegations of sexual abuse. Another Republican candidate was presented, but Obama won the Senate seat in November of 2004 with 70% of the vote. It was marked as the largest electoral victory in the history of the state of Illinois. His wife, Michelle Obama, has been instrumental in the shaping of Senator Obama's political career. An active member of her community in Chicago, Mrs. Obama currently serves as a Vice President of the University of Chicago Hospitals. In the lead up to the New Hampshire primary, Mrs. Obama travelled to Iowa, New Hampshire, and other states as a partner on her husband's campaign.

Upon his arrival in Washington, Obama proceeded to appoint as his advisors a number of figures that had served in the Clinton administration, including Anthony Lake and Susan Rice. Armed with an expert staff, Obama's debut in Congress was marked by his immediate involvement with legislation concerning border security and immigration reform. In 2006, Senator Obama supported and voted in favor of the Secure Fence Act, which calls for the construction and improvements of border barriers (e.g. fencing and walls) along the United States' border with Mexico.

Other legislative pursuits of Senator Obama's have been the Lugar-Obama initiative, which calls for an expansion of an earlier piece of legislation regarding the reduction of the threat posed by conventional weapons. Also, the Coburn-Obama Transparency Act creates a web site that lists all agencies and organizations receiving federal funding from the fiscal year 2007 onward. Obama is the primary sponsor of a piece of legislation entitled "The Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security, and Democracy Promotion Act," which has acted as a mark of Senator Obama's concern for issues of global pertinence. He is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and has embarked upon a number of excursions around the world. In Kenya, his father's native country, Senator Obama enjoys a high degree of attention and celebrity.

During the 110th Congress, Senator Obama has pursued a number of initiatives aimed at cracking down on the frequently lavish connections between lobbyists and Washington lawmakers. His "Honest Leadership and Open Government Act," co-sponsored along with Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI), has been grouped with number of other efforts to cut down and eliminate fraud in federal U.S. elections. Along with Senator John McCain (R-AZ), Senator Obama has supported legislation that advocates for the drastic reduction of American greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050. Obama also introduced the "Iraq War De-Escalation Act," calling for the removal of all combat troops by April of 2008, phased redeployment, and a cap on the number of U.S. troops in Iraq.

In February of 2007, Senator Obama, while in Springfield, Illinois, announced his intention of seeking the Democratic Party's presidential nomination in 2008.

Candidate: John Edwards

While he has since withdrawn from the race to win the Democratic Party's nomination, the candidacy of John Edwards is interesting since his populist message did resonate with a significant number of voters.

John Edwards, a former United States Senator from North Carolina, has also enjoyed a rather rapid ascension in the realm of American politics. Edwards enjoys what some consider a Jacksonian mystique due to his humble origins and personable demeanor. He is not currently serving in public office, having decided to devote his time to his bid for the 2008 Democratic Party's presidential nomination.

A native South Carolinian, Edwards is the son of working class parents who worked at textile mills and in independent ventures throughout Edwards' childhood. Edwards attended public schools throughout South Carolina and North Carolina, after which he enrolled at Clemson University. Later, Edwards transferred to North Carolina State University with a degree in textile technology. In 1974, he earned his J.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and clerked for a federal judge until 1978. After marrying Elizabeth Anania in 1977 and completing his clerkship, Edwards moved to Nashville to practice as an attorney with Dearborn & Ewing. Edwards' clients at this Nashville firm consisted largely of banks and other corporate clients. After moving back to North Carolina in 1981 and settling in Raleigh, Edwards began practicing at Tharrington, Smith & Hargrove. Edwards' legal career was impressive from the beginning, and in 1984 he managed to win a significant medical malpractice lawsuit involving an overdose prescription of Antabuse. Edwards continued to practice law and concentrated on cases of medical importance, and established a number of precedents in North Carolina state law in the course of his practice.

Over the course of the next decade, Edwards would establish himself as North Carolina's foremost plaintiff attorney, winning his clients over sixty million dollars in settlements in the late 1980s alone. In 1997, Edwards and his partner, David Kirby, were awarded the Association of Trial Lawyers of America's national award for public service. In a landmark case involving the disembowelment of young girl due to a faulty pool drain cover, Edwards won the girl's family a settlement of \$25 million dollars and insisted on accepting a smaller percentage of the settlement as his practice fee, cementing his reputation as a personable and productive lawyer.

Much of John Edwards' legal and political career has been tied to the circumstances of his personal life. In 1996, shortly before one of his most successful cases, Edwards lost his oldest son, Wade, in an automobile accident. Edwards publicly utilized this event in a case following this accident, referencing the significance of the family and the devastating impact of death within families. This, in addition to the serious illness of his wife, Elizabeth, contributed to Edwards' reputation as an emotive litigator and would set the tone for his public persona later in his political career.

After practicing law for approximately two decades, Edwards opposed incumbent Lauch Faircloth in the 1998 U.S. Senate election in North Carolina. Edwards won by a margin of approximately four percent, and served one term as the junior Senator from his state. During his six years in the Senate, Edwards was a prolific sponsor of bills, encompassing nearly two hundred pieces of legislation. He worked closely with Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) to develop an Iraq war resolution. This resolution ultimately failed, yet Edwards did vote in favor of H.J. Res. 114, which authorized the full use of military force in Iraq. Edwards was an outspoken critic of Saddam Hussein and defended his support of military action in Iraq on numerous occasions. Eventually, he conceded that it had been a misguided vote. He published an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* in November of 2005, stating his regret for having voted in favor of U.S. military action in Iraq. Edwards also voted in favor of the Patriot Act in October of 2001.

John Edwards' stances on issues of national interest were mixed. Edwards, a Southern Democrat, was in favor of capital punishment, contrary to the positions of many of his party peers. His position on abortion was, and remains, pro-choice, in addition to his support of affirmative action. Edwards has also been an advocate a greater degree of cooperation between the United States and Mexico regarding illegal and legal immigration. The committees Senator Edwards served during his term included the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the U.S. Senate Committee on Judiciary.

In the time leading up to the 2004 election period, Edwards announced that he would not pursue a second term as Senator. Instead, he decided to concentrate on an approaching presidential bid. Eventually, Senator John Kerry (D-MA) selected Edwards as his Vice Presidential running mate. Following the Kerry/Edwards defeat in November of 2004, Kerry admitted to regretting his choice of Edwards as a running mate. Edwards returned to North Carolina, where he soon learned that his wife Elizabeth had been diagnosed with breast cancer. Edwards rejected his strong chance of succeeding Howard Dean as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and instead focused on working for the Center on Poverty, Work, and Opportunity at his alma mater. He also toured the United States, visiting young people on college campuses to discuss methods of involvement in the fight against poverty.

Edwards served as co-Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations throughout 2005 and 2006, and began meeting with potential supporters in Iowa and New Hampshire as a component of his initial strategy for seeking the Democratic Party's presidential nomination in 2008. During this same period of time, however, Edwards was entangled in scandal involving funds of his that had been invested in a corporation which used these same funds to foreclose on the homes of Hurricane Katrina victims. Once Edwards learned of this, he removed his financial support of Fortress Investment Group, the company in question, and provided personal funds to establish the Louisiana Home Rescue Fund.

III. 2008 Presidential Campaign: History and Commentary

For the first time since 1928, there is no incumbent President or incumbent Vice President running for President. On January 20th, 2007, Clinton formed an exploratory committee and filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission. At that time, she was able to surround her campaign with an air on "inevitability." As of autumn 2007, she was leading all national polls for the Democratic nomination with wide margins. Those margins steadily decreased until some December 2007 polls reported that Obama and Clinton were tied. Clinton sought to change her strategy at this point. Whereas one of the components of making her the "inevitable" candidate was tight control of statements and interaction with the press and public, Clinton now sought to be more "likable". In effort to gain ground against Obama in the lead up to the Iowa caucus, Clinton began to take more questions from the press. At this time her campaign also set up "the Hillary I Know" website which contained testimonials from friends and family of the candidate.

On January 16th 2007, Barak Obama announced that he had formed a presidential exploratory committee. In October of that year, Obama, still trailing Clinton in national polls, began to openly criticize her for failing to adequately explain her views on a number of national issues. In November, this message appeared to have gained traction and he began to catch up to Clinton in the polls. At this time he also began to put himself forward as a candidate with the power to bring the country together.

The Democratic Iowa caucus was held on January 3rd, 2008. The three main Democratic contenders had staked out their portion of the electorate well in advance. Clinton was popular with women as well as older Democrats. Obama, running on the message of change, appealed to younger voters while Edwards has staked out his territory on the left end of the spectrum hoping to capture the party's "base". The fact the candidates had already staked out their territory meant that the Iowa caucus would have to center on details and nuances rather than more substantial issues. In the days leading up to the caucus, pundits wondered which supporters would be more likely to stay home as a result of chilling temperatures: old or young? In the end, Obama won the Democratic Iowa caucus, he came in first with 38%; Edwards came in second with 30%; Clinton came in third with 29%.

What is of equal interest is how Clinton fought back and won the New Hampshire primary. Five days separated the Iowa caucus and the New Hampshire primary. One of the Clinton campaign's most enduring criticisms of Obama is that he hasn't received the scrutiny that inevitably results from close press attention. Clinton's campaign insists that the media has given Obama a kind of "free pass" by refusing to take a close look at the man and his record. In the days leading up to the New Hampshire primary, Clinton operatives sought to provide voters with the insight into Obama that they had been denied by the press. Obama responded to these attacks by characterizing them as additional evidence that Clinton was running out of ideas.

In the days leading up to New Hampshire primary, the media predicted, almost unanimously, that Obama would win. There are a number of possible explanations for why this turned out not to be the case. One possible explanation could be that since the New Hampshire Primary is a secret ballot and as such, people might have voted for Clinton and told pollsters they had done otherwise. It could have been that the electorate didn't make up its mind until the absolute last second or that momentum from Iowa really didn't carry over to New Hampshire to the extent expected. It's important to note that at this point in the race, voters that stopped supporting Edwards switch their support to Clinton more often than Obama.

In the end, Clinton was able to win New Hampshire because she held onto her base of support. She took steps to appear more accessible to both crowds and supporters and was ultimately able to change her strategy into something closer to what people wanted. Some in the media have focused on Clinton's "human moment" when she cried up on national TV, ostensibly because the pressures that come from running for President.

Clinton won the Nevada Democratic primary on January 19th. The most likely reason for this is her support from Hispanics. However, Barack Obama's later victory in South Carolina was attributed to his support from African Americans, as well as criticisms that were directed from Bill Clinton's campaigning in that state.

After John Edwards dropped out of the race due to a poor showing in New Hampshire, it was hoped that the voting during "Super Tuesday" (which was colloquially termed "Super-Duper Tuesday", and "Tsunami Tuesday" by much of the media) would settle who the Democratic nominee would be. In actuality, the vote turned into a deadlock, with Obama winning more states but Hillary getting a slight advantage over him by winning the larger states of New York and California.

Much of the media has identified how the two candidates divide the Democratic electorate; Hillary does well with older voters, poorer and less educated votes, and Hispanics. Obama in contrast does well with African Americans, and the more affluent. Delegates should remember that these campaigns are not static and that new polling data can show new trends unexpectedly.

It is necessary for the DNC to come up with a nominee. While Obama and Hillary are still campaigning, the GOP seems poised to make Senator John McCain their nominee, despite much internal conflict among the Republican base. It is important that the Democrats select a candidate soon who can defeat Senator John McCain.

If neither candidate can secure the votes needed to win the convention, then the DNC may need to step in and begin to intervene more actively in deciding who the candidate will be. While we would hope this not to be the case, the current prognosis looks questionable and delegates should begin thinking carefully about who the Democrats need to select to be the candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

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