n the Fall 2005 issue of Vox Pop, Joe Freeman outlined a concise and logical argument as to why Hillary Clinton won’t run for President. Freeman asserts three reasons prevent Hillary from running. First, Hillary’s position as a political wife forces her to carry the heavy baggage of Bill Clinton’s legacy in office. Second, Hillary’s position as Senator from New York renders her too liberal to successfully vie for national political office. Finally, Freeman argues that to combat societal sexism that deems women less competent than men, Clinton would have to serve as governor of a big state or as vice president to prove her competence. I’d like to present an alternative view.

Hillary will run because the Democrats typically have not made the ability to win an election a priority when selecting presidential candidates. No sitting U.S. Senator has won the presidency since John F. Kennedy, yet Democrats chose John Kerry in 2004. No Democratic Northerner has won the presidency since John F. Kennedy, but again, Democrats chose Kerry. Ideology also has not been a top concern: note Kerry, and also Massachusetts Governor, Michael Dukakis.

Hillary will run because there is little alternative. Names that have been tossed around include John Edwards, Wesley Clark, Evan Bayh, and Mark Warner. But each of these has their flaws. Edwards has the legacy of losing in 2004, Biden comes from too small a state. It’s questionable that Clark, Bayh, or Richardson could sustain a long, expensive primary campaign. Indeed, in 2004 Clark bowed out in February with a much more wide open field than the 2008 election promises. Warner, who served as Virginia’s Governor from 2002 until his protegé was elected in 2005 is the closest thing to a rival. But Warner’s conservatism will have little appeal to primary voters in 2008. Where Clinton may be too liberal to win a general election, Warner is to conservative to win a Democratic primary.

Clinton’s lead is just so enormously overwhelming that she will scare off some competition. Most potential contenders would first need to buy name recognition, but finding financing to do so when trailing in the polls is difficult. A recent Gallup poll asked self-identified Democrats which candidate they’d be most likely to support. The results:

New York Senator, Hillary Rodham Clinton 40.70%
Massachusetts Senator, John Kerry 16.25%
Former North Carolina Senator, John Edwards 15.41%
Delaware Senator, Joe Biden 7.60%
Retired General, Wesley Clark 4.58%
New Mexico Governor, Bill Richardson 3.06%
Indiana Senator, Evan Bayh 2.66%
Virginia Governor, Mark Warner 1.98%

While early, and with the understanding that her potential rivals have done little in the way of campaigning, there also is the understanding that Hillary also has not yet begun to campaign.
Hillary will run and win the primary election because she has proven to be one of the best fundraisers the Democrats have. She has more than $27 million sitting in her Senate reelection war chest (her opponent has raised about a half million). Hillary’s access to big money early on will prove important in the primaries, when she can out spend and eliminate the competition, one by one.

Running and winning a Primary is a much different task than winning the Presidency. And Freeman is right in arguing that “while prejudice against women in public office has declined greatly in the last 40 years, it’s not gone.” Over a period of time, pollsters have explored the question of whether Americans would vote for a qualified women for president. In 1937, only 33 percent of Americans said that they would cast their presidential ballot for a qualified woman, that figure has steadily risen; indeed, by 1999, 92 percent of respondents said that they would. Yet by 2005, that figure had declined to 89 percent. One explanation for this drop could be that with Senator Hillary Clinton frequently mentioned as a likely candidate, some respondents who are not inclined to support her candidacy respond that they are not willing to vote for a woman for president. One might presuppose that this eight to 11 percent of the electorate who are unwilling to vote for a qualified woman for president might preclude Clinton or any other woman from winning an election in an era in which razor-close presidential elections are the norm, frequently determined by much less than that eight to 11 percent. I would argue that those voters who readily admit their unwillingness to vote for a woman hold staunchly traditional views of gender roles, and therefore, probably constitute a core of the conservative base of the Republican Party.

Therefore, they would be unwilling to vote for any Democrat. These voters are Republican women’s problem, not Hillary’s.

Hollywood is doing its part by getting the nation used to the idea of a women in the oval office. For those who simply can’t imagine it, the creators of the hit drama Commander in Chief have imagined it for them. Geena Davis is an unlikely trailblazer, but the show makes the notion of a women president tangible; “This is what it would look like; this is what it would feel like. See, it’s not so bad. It’s not so different. Why yes, it’s even doable.” Clinton has even fewer issues to deal with than her prime-time counterpart: Clinton’s husband has a job, presumably one he could keep if she were elected. He has skills and experience, so she could appoint him - say as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations - with little difficulty. She has no rambunctious teenagers, no young children to evoke the omnipresent working-mother guilt.

Freeman also is right in that in many places in the nation, people hate Bill Clinton. And one need only attend one of Hillary’s speeches to know that some people really hate her too. But as that hatred of the Clinton’s solidifies and mobilizes the Republican base, so too would Hillary’s candidacy ignite a Democratic base that reviles George W. Bush with a fervor rivaling the anti-Clinton sentiment. And then there is the “woman thing.” While sometimes women may not be more likely to vote for a woman candidate, Hillary sparks an undying allegiance among some women -- often times women with resources, but also with poor women, African-American women, and yes, even some women whose husbands have cheated, who have endured privately her public debacle. An October 2005 Gallup poll names Hillary Clinton the most admired woman in America, ahead of even Oprah Winfrey. Among Democrats, Clinton is cited as the most admired women nearly two-to-one over Winfrey (24 percent to Winfrey’s 13 percent). Clinton is the second most admired woman among “Independents” (8 percent to Winfrey’s 14 percent) and ranks fourth among Republicans with six percent, below Laura Bush (nine percent) but above Margaret Thatcher (at five percent). She typically is named in Ladies Home Journal’s “Most Admired Women.” Ladies Home Journal, not The Nation or The New Yorker or The Atlantic.

Hillary knows that she can spark even more allegiance and perhaps create a winning coalition through her vice presidential nominee. Selecting New Mexico Governor, Bill Richardson could mobilize Latino voters anxious to see the first nationally-elected Hispanic, or selecting General Wesley Clark could garner her candidacy legitimacy among those who question her ability to serve as Commander in Chief, and also among some veterans.

And while Bill Clinton is demonized in some places, in others, he is idolized. If used strategically, he can be an enormous asset. He is a Southerner, one of the best campaigners of his century. He is loved in cities, among African-Americans, among Democrats, particularly loyal Democrats who vote in primaries. He is an extraordinary fundraiser. And let’s face it: he owes her.

Hillary does not have the experience of being a governor. But Hillary has the experience of being First Lady, which may be even more important. As First Lady, her creation of her role and her status having been something close to the chief of state brings with it a legitimacy enjoyed perhaps only by vice presidents running for president. Her experience as First Lady and her tenure in the Senate, particularly her post on the Senate Armed Service Committee has made her the most qualified, eligible person to be president among the potential candidates. Who else has served eight years in the White House?
Perhaps more importantly, however, is that Hillary has been in the national spotlight for 14 years. We know her darkest skeletons, and unless she has taken up a recent unsavory hobby, there is nothing that can be said about her that we haven’t heard before. This is important because of the nature of national politics today. That Republic strategists could take what Democrats perceived to be an asset in 2004 - John Kerry’s service in Vietnam, compared to George W. Bush’s lack of service - and turn it to Bush’s advantage and an embarrassing nightmare for the Democrats indicates the likely nature of the 2008 campaign. Hillary has been through this scrutiny. None of the other potential nominees have. She understands this political mentality perhaps better than anyone else in public life.

Hillary will run because she has nothing to lose. If she wins re-election to her U.S. Senate seat in 2006, and then runs for president, wins the primary and loses the general election, she can go back to the Senate, and she has the distinction of being the first woman in U.S. History to win her party’s nomination for U.S. President. But Hillary is a Clinton, and she knows that while it may not be easy, sometimes skillful politicians can beat the odds.

Hillary will run because she cares about the country. While this may seem idealistic, she has seen her husband’s work, her work unraveled. Budget surpluses have evaporated. Debt has skyrocketed. The war in Iraq has cost thousands of lives. Civil liberties have been suspended. She will run because she believes the rightness of her views. She believes she can make a difference.

Hillary will run because the time is right for her. She has spent the better of her life circumscribed by her husband’s career. At 58, she has plenty of time, his career has reached its apex, her child is grown. This is her time. And as a feminist, she does not want to sell herself short. She understands the burdens of her unique place in history. She knows that she is not just herself-that she represents women of the baby boom and subsequent generations, the frustrations of women in the generations before hers, the potential of women candidates in the future, the role model of 11-year old girls right now. She takes that role seriously, and she takes her position in history seriously.

Brigid C. Harrison is Professor of Political Science at Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ. She is the author of *Women in American Politics* (Wadsworth, 2003); *Power and Society 10e* (with Thomas R. Dye) (Wadsworth, 2005) and is currently writing an introductory American Government Text (with Susan J. Tolchin, Jean Wahl Harris and Suzanne Samuels) (forthcoming, McGraw-Hill, 2008).

---

FROM HEADQUARTERS

List of POP Award Committees for 2006
Nomination Deadline: March 30, 2006

**Jack L. Walker, Jr. Outstanding Article Award**
This award honors an article published in the last two calendar years that makes an outstanding contribution to research and scholarship on political organizations and parties.

- Larry Evans (William & Mary University), Chair
- John Ishiyama (Truman State University)
- Matthew Wilson (Southern Methodist University)

**Leon D. Epstein Outstanding Book Award**
This award honors a book published in the last two calendar years that makes an outstanding contribution to research and scholarship on political organizations and parties.

- Marjorie Hershey (Indiana University), Chair
- Scott James (UCLA)
- Beth Leech (Rutgers University)

**Samuel J. Eldersveld Award**
This award is to honor a scholar whose lifetime professional work has made an outstanding contribution to the field.

- Ken Kollman (University of Michigan), Chair
- Jeffery Berry (Tufts University)
- Dave Rohde (Duke)

**Emerging Scholar Award**
This honor is awarded to a scholar who has received his or her Ph.D. within the last seven years and whose career to date demonstrates unusual promise.

- John Coleman (University of Wisconsin), Chair
- Barbara Burrell (Northern Illinois)
- Larry Rothernberg (University of Rochester)

**Party Politics Award**
This award honors the best paper presented on a POP panel at the preceding APSA annual meeting. The award recipient is offered the opportunity to publish the paper in *Party Politics*.

- Kevin Esterling (UC, Riverside), Chair
- Robert Lowery (Iowa State University)
- Josephine Andrews (UC, Davis)
FROM THE FIELD
JOURNAL SCANS

The Journal Scan is a list of articles on political parties, interest groups, and social movements from major journals in political science and related fields.


(continued on page 5)
FROM THE FIELD

(continued from page 4)


(continued on page 6)
FROM THE FIELD

(continued from page 5)


BOOK SCANS

The Book Scan is a list of new scholarly books of interest to POP members.


*Why No Parties in Russia?: Democracy, Federalism, and the State* by Henry E. Hale; 2005; Cambridge University Press.

*Political Parties in Britain* by J. Fisher; 2005; MacMillan ELT.

*Party Lines: Competition, Partisanship, and Congressional Redistricting* by Thomas E. Mann (Editor); 2005; Brookings Institution Press.

*Political Parties in Post-Soviet Space: Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, and the Baltics* by Anthony Kulik (Editor), Susanna Pshizova (Editor); 2005; Praeger Publishers.

*Political Parties Matter: Realignment and the Return of Partisan Voting* by Jeffrey Stonecash; 2005; Lynne Rienner Pub.


FROM THE FIELD

(continued from page 6)


From Movements to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics by Donna Lee Van Cott; 2005; Cambridge University Press.


The Talk of the Party by Sharon E. Jarvis; 2005; Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.


The Political Thought of the Conservative Party Since 1945 by Kevin Hickson (Editor); 2005; Palgrave MacMillan.

Lula and the Workers Party in Brazil by Sue Branford, Bernardo Kucinski; 2005; New Press.


The Stock Ticker and the Superjumbo: How the Democrats Can Once Again Become America’s Dominant Political Party by Rick Perlstein; 2005; Prickly Paradigm Press.


Decentralizing the State: Elections, Parties, and Local Power in the Andes by Kathleen O’Neill; 2005; Cambridge University Press.


Political Parties and Political Systems: The Concept of Linkage Revisited by Andrea Rommele (Editor), et al; 2005; Praeger Publishers.


Party Politics in New Zealand by Raymond Miller; 2005; Oxford University Press, USA.


The Silent Revolution: Book I: A Study of the Functioning of Dominant Political Parties in Emerging Societies, Using PNM of Trinidad and Tobago as . . . Parties of India, Ghana, and Tanganyika by Alvan Quamina; 2005; Publish America.

Political Parties of the World by Alan J. Day (Editor); 2005; John Harper Publishing.

Modernizing the Labour Party: Organizational Change since 1983 by Thomas Quinn; 2005; Palgrave MacMillan.

PAPERS OF INTEREST

American Political Science Association

“Business and the Legislative Process: Congress, the Bush Administration, and Proposed Changes to the Clean Air Act.” Gary C. Bryner, Brigham Young University.


“Assessing the Privileged Position of Business in an Age of Media Saturation.” Christopher J. Bosso, Northeastern University and Deborah Lynn Guber, University of Vermont.

“The Institutional Determinants of Identity Politics in Columbia and Ecuador.” Erika Moreno, University of Iowa and Karleen Jones, University of Iowa.


“Funding the War of Ideas: Foundation Strategies for Information Advocacy.” Andrew Rich, City College of New York.

“Shifting Priorities: The NAACP’s and the National Urban League’s Advocacy on Behalf of the Poor.” Catherine Paden, Northwestern University.

“Elite Framing of the University of Michigan Affirmative Action Cases.” Rosalee Clawson, Purdue University, Katsuo Nishikawa, Purdue University, Terri L. Towner, Purdue University, and Eric Waltenburg, Purdue University.

“Collective Action and Institutional Advocacy by Charter Schools in the States.” Thomas T. Holyoke, California State University, Fresno.

“National Black and Latino Advocacy Groups: Re-examining the Promise of Cooperation.” Robert R. Preuhs, University of Colorado and Rodney E. Hero, University of Notre Dame.


“Party Strategies and the Politics of Transition.” John E. Jackson, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Bogden Mach, Radoslaw Markowski.


“The Suits that Counted: The Judicialization of Elections After Bush v. Gore.” Charles Anthony Smith, University of Miami and Christopher Shortell, California State University, Northridge.