

Hillary diane rodham essay



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i. Background

Hillary Diane Rodham was born on October 26, 1947 in Illinois, Chicago. Her father, Hugh Ellsworth Rodham, operated a small but successful business in the textile industry while her mother, Dorothy Emma Howell was a homemaker. Politically, she was inspired strongly by her high school history teacher, who got her to read a book called "The Conscience of a Conservative" and who was, like her father, a fervent anti-communist. She was also influenced by her Methodist youth minister and her mother who were concerned with issues of social justice.

In 1965 she enrolled in Wellesley College and majored in science. She was president of the Wellesley Young Republicans organization during her freshman year and supported the elections of Republicans John Lindsay and Edward Brooke at that time. However she eventually changed her point of view, due to the American Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War, and stepped down from that position. She actively sought to work for change within the campus system, rather than take radical actions against it unlike most of her peers.

In her junior year, she was affected by the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. and became a supporter of the presidential nomination campaign of Democrat Eugene McCarthy which was anti-war. She organized a student strike. Working with Wellesley's black students, she proposed for moderate changes, such as recruiting more black students and faculty. In early 1968 she was elected president of the Wellesley College Government Association and served through early 1969. She was successful at keeping Wellesley

from being embroiled by student problems which were common in other colleges at the time.

After a stint as an intern at the House Republican Conference and learning more about politics, she graduated with departmental honors in political science in 1969. Due to popular demand of students, she became the first student in Wellesley College history to deliver their commencement address. Her speech received a standing ovation lasting seven minutes. She was eventually featured in an article published in Life magazine, due to the response to a part of her speech that criticized Senator Edward Brooke, who had spoken before her at the commencement. That year, she worked her way across Alaska, doing simple jobs such as washing dishes.

Rodham then entered Yale Law School, where she served on the Board of Editors of the Yale Review of Law and Social Action. During her second year, she worked at the Yale Child Study Center learning about new research on early childhood brain development and working as a research assistant. She also took on cases of child abuse at Yale-New Haven Hospital and volunteered at New Haven Legal Services to provide free advice for the poor. In the summer of 1970, she was awarded a grant to work at Marian Wright Edelman's Washington Research Project, where she was assigned to Senator Walter Mondale's Subcommittee on Migratory Labor.

In 1971, she began dating Bill Clinton, who was also a law student at Yale. That summer, she interned on child custody cases at the Oakland, California, law firm of Treuhaft, Walker and Burnstein. Clinton canceled his original summer plans in order to live with Rodham in an apartment in Berkeley,

California and the couple continued living together in New Haven when they returned to law school. She received a Juris Doctor degree from Yale in 1973.

During her post-graduate study, Rodham served as staff attorney for Children's Defense Fund in Cambridge, Massachusetts and as a consultant to the Carnegie Council on Children. She was a member of the impeachment inquiry staff, advising the House Committee on the Judiciary during the Watergate scandal. Rodham helped research procedures of impeachment and the historical grounds and standards for impeachment. The committee's work culminated in the resignation of President Richard Nixon in August 1974.

Hillary Rodham and Bill Clinton were married on October 11, 1975, in a Methodist ceremony in their living room. She kept her name as Hillary Rodham, later writing that she had done so to keep their professional lives separate and avoid seeming conflicts of interest. Bill Clinton had lost the Congressional race in 1974, but in November 1976 was elected Arkansas Attorney General. This required the couple to move to the state capital of Little Rock. Rodham maintained her interest in children's law and family policy, publishing the scholarly articles "Children's Policies: Abandonment and Neglect" in 1977 and "Children's Rights: A Legal Perspective" in 1979.

Rodham co-founded the Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, a state-level alliance with the Children's Defense Fund, in 1977. In late 1977, President Jimmy Carter appointed her to the board of directors of the Legal Services Corporation and she served in that capacity from 1978 until the end of 1981. From mid-1978 to mid-1980 she served as the chair of that board,

the first woman to do so. During her time as chair, funding for the Corporation was expanded from \$90 million to \$300 million.

Following the November 1978 election of her husband as Governor of Arkansas, Rodham became First Lady of Arkansas in January 1979. Bill Clinton appointed her chair of the Rural Health Advisory Committee the same year. In 1979, she became the first woman to be made a full partner of Rose Law Firm. From 1978 until they entered the White House, she had a higher salary than her husband. On February 27, 1980, Rodham gave birth to a daughter, Chelsea, her only child.

When Bill Clinton took office as president in January 1993, Hillary Rodham Clinton became the First Lady of the United States. She was the first First Lady to hold a post-graduate degree and to have her own professional career up to the time of entering the White House. She was also the first to take up an office in the West Wing of the White House. Previously, the First Lady usually stays in the East Wing. She is regarded as the most openly empowered presidential wife in American history.

Several prominent Democratic figures, including Representative Charles Rangel of New York, urged Clinton to run for Moynihan's open seat in the United States Senate election of 2000. When she decided to run, Clinton and her husband purchased a home in Chappaqua, New York, north of New York City in September 1999. She became the first First Lady of the United States to be a candidate for elected office. Clinton faced Rick Lazio, a Republican member of the United States House of Representatives representing New York's 2nd congressional district.

The contest drew national attention and both candidates were well-funded. Clinton secured a broad base of support, including endorsements from conservation groups and organized labor. However, the New York City police and firefighters' unions did not support her. By the date of the election, the campaigns of the candidates running in New York had spent a record combined \$90 million. Despite that fact that she had never resided in New York nor participated in the state's politics prior to this race, Clinton won the election on November 7, 2000, with 55 percent of the vote to Lazio's 43 percent. She was sworn in as United States Senator on January 3, 2001.

Clinton had been mentioned as a potential candidate for United States President since many years ago. She has been ranked among the world's most powerful people by Forbes magazine and Time magazine. On January 20, 2007, Clinton announced the formation of a presidential exploratory committee through her website. This is due to her intention to become a candidate for president in the United States presidential election of 2008. In her announcement, she stated, " I'm in. And I'm in to win." No woman has ever been nominated by a major party for presidency.

Currently, Clinton is running for presidency in the United States. She is one of the two Democratic representatives running this year, alongside rival Senator Barack Obama. So far she has done well and has accumulated a lot of delegates (or " points" needed to be nominated for president), even leading in the race for a few months. She is in a very tight battle with fellow Democrat Senator Obama, as both of them have put up a good fight to stay in the race. If Clinton wins, she will be the first woman to be the president of the United States.

ii. Leadership Style

Hillary Rodham Clinton is a transactional leader. This is because she is clear about what she requires from the people and her staff to attain their needs (or in other words, goals). She also provides feedback, rewards and punishments based on the response of her people. For example, one of her campaign staff was instantly fired for making a racist comment against black people. She clarifies her requirements to attain these goals by campaigning to be a president in the elections. This is to achieve her goal to be the first female president of the United States and to achieve the goals of the people who want her to be the president for her qualities and policies.

Though many would consider her unsuitable for president due to her transactional leadership style, it is arguably a better choice. It is a more stable choice, with needs and guidelines clearly outlined. It is easier for the public to accept transactional leadership. It is not an easy style of leading, as to be a successful transactional leader, experience is required. Rodham Clinton's abundant experience in politics make up for her lack in charisma. Therefore, she is much more suited to be a transactional leader.

This straightforward approach might not be suitable in all situations. Her rival in the 2008 United States Democratic Presidential Elections, Senator Barack Obama, is a transformational leader and he is (at the time of writing) ahead of her in the race. He is capable of motivating the people emotionally by giving speeches and promises. His charisma has helped him gain a large surge of supporters despite the fact that he has extremely little experience in politics relative to Rodham Clinton. However, this is quite an unstable

method of leading as the outcome might not turn out as well as hoped. Once the public look past his charm and eloquence, they might not see anything more to support his bid to be the next president, hence leaving him.

c. Analysis

i. Types of Power

Rodham Clinton has a lot of legitimate power due to her position in the government. She is capable of influencing the thoughts of others and also taking legal action for being the First Lady of the United States during the time her husband was the president. As the senator of New York she is also powerful in that state and has the power to take legal action.

Aside from that, Rodham Clinton also has reward power and coercive power, shown by her actions in rewarding and punishing people based on their actions. She uses her reward power by thanking and motivating the public for voting for her and promising them that she will give them what they want. She uses her coercive power by firing staff members who deviate from her party's original target.

However, unlike other politicians in the running to be president, Rodham Clinton differs greatly from her rival Senator Barack Obama in terms of expert power and referent power. She has a lot more expert power than Obama due to her decades of experience in American politics. From her previous positions, she has gained a lot of knowledge and has learnt about politics. Despite that, she has a considerably lower referent power than Obama. She has lower attraction and likeability than him due to her lack of

charisma while speaking. She is also subject to stereotyping and prejudice resulting from her gender, so that lowers her referent power.

ii. Strengths and Weaknesses

The main trait that makes her such a good leader and qualifies her strongly as a leader would be her experience. She has had multiple experience in politics, gaining an impressive list of ranks and positions over the years. She has played important roles in the government of America and all this has given her a lot of knowledge today. This makes her a formidable contestant in the presidential race, and a good manager/leader. Of all her rivals, Rodham Clinton is the most accomplished.

Rodham Clinton's other strength would be her ability to pursue change and not bend the rules. She is capable of making changes moderately and carefully. For example, she organized a two-day student strike at her college to get what the students at her college wanted: more opportunities for the black community. She does this demonstration peacefully to avoid damage and misunderstanding. This way, both parties get to negotiate and come up with something they can agree on.

She also has a strong sense of right and wrong and will do what she thinks is right. For example, she caused a fish processing cannery in Valdez to shut down. It was where she worked at before it fired her when she complained about unhealthy conditions. She has also written numerous articles on her dissatisfaction with children law and these have been big contributions to those in the law community.

Furthermore, coming from a middle-class family, she identifies with the common people and understands what it's like being from middle-class families. She appeals to the poorer people of the nation because she is focused on helping out those who need to be helped, not those who are already well-off. Due to this, it can be said that she has high emotional intelligence. She is aware of herself and the public, and uses her power to help those who are in need.

On top of that, one of her most admirable qualities would be her resolve and determination in not giving up. During the start of the United States presidential race, she did not do well and lost to her rivals. However, she kept going and eventually started winning states. In the middle of the race, when her rival won 12 states consecutively, there was pressure on her to drop out of the race. Despite that, she kept going, more determined than before, and started winning again, halting her rival's momentum.

However, her weakness would be her lack of charisma. Unlike her rival Senator Barack Obama, Rodham Clinton does not deliver speeches and talks as rivetingly or interestingly. She sometimes has problems in her communication and stutters, occasionally even saying the wrong things. This has caused misunderstandings and has shown to have lowered her favorability among the public and is a problem for her in the race. Due to this, she does not do very well in debates with other presidential candidates and it affects her chances to be nominated.

Other than that, her weakness would be her affiliation with her husband, Bill Clinton, former president of the United States. Due to some unfavorable

publicity on him, she has received negative response from some sectors of the public. Her ties with several other people have also hampered her chances of being president. Therefore it can be said that her social ties are also a weakness.

iii. Personal Traits

One of Clinton's best traits is her honesty. In her career, she has not committed any crime and has shown others that not all politicians indulge in negative things. She was involved in many scandals but she was never guilty in any of them. Recently, due to pressure from the public, she has even released her entire schedule and contact lists of the past 20 years to the public, so that they can see by themselves that she has been an honest person.

Her ability to execute tasks and work is also extremely good. She is capable of getting what she wants when she wants it. When she is dissatisfied with something, she will work hard to fix it even if it's of a large scale. One of the examples for this is the way she pushed the Wal-Mart chain to be more environmental-friendly when she learnt of the damage it has done to the environment. She has shown persistence in achieving her goal and this is an invaluable asset as a leader.

Another thing is she never neglects any particular group of people. She fights for everyone to achieve a better life, not just a certain part of the community. She has fought for the rights of black people while in college, the rights of children while in law school, and the rights of the underprivileged and the middle-class communities of America. This shows that she isn't

biased or prejudiced and is willing to cooperate with all members of the community for peace and better living conditions.

Lastly, her ability to inspire also makes her a great leader. Rodham Clinton's career is full of ups and downs and it's not something everyone has the chance to go through. The fact that she has done so much in her life and have fought for what she has believed in is inspiring to everyone. She is capable of motivating people by showing that she is human and doing mundane, ordinary tasks. For example, she once went to a regular diner and did an interview there. She shows everyone that nothing is impossible, and that a woman is capable of achieving anything a man can do.

iv. Influence Tactics

Hillary Clinton uses many tactics of influence. Among these are rational persuasion. In fact, all politicians would use this tactic. Basically, it is trying to convince someone by using reason, logic, or facts. She does this in debates and speeches to explain why she is the best candidate for presidency. One of the facts she uses in her speech would be her stand on healthcare and living.

Another tactic she employs would be inspirational appeals. It is a way to build enthusiasm and confidence by appealing to others' emotions, ideals or values. This is another tactic often used by leaders. One of the situations in Rodham Clinton's career that demonstrates this would be her teary speech in New Hampshire in 2008. She cried while speaking for the first time, and it helped boost her likeability and improved her chances of winning the state, which she did.

Rodham Clinton has also used pressure tactics at least once in her bid for presidency. Democrats don't often resort to this tactic which is using demands, threats or intimidation to gain compliance. She used this when she aired advertisements which were deemed scary by the general public to depict the situation that might arise from the public's choice of the American president.

She is also no stranger to personal appeals which she has used a few times during the presidential elections. She has referred to her friendship and loyalty when requesting that the public choose her as president. This has helped her win over New York, where she has been a senator, and Arkansas, where she has been First Lady for a number of years. However, even rival Senator Obama has used this to appeal to the black community for their votes.

v. Remarkable Contributions and Effectiveness

One of Rodham Clinton's most remarkable contributions would be the fact that she was a force behind passage of the State Children's Health Insurance Program in 1997, a federal effort that provided state support for children whose parents were unable to provide them with health coverage, and conducted outreach efforts on behalf of enrolling children in the program once it became law. She works hard to improve the health conditions of the people and also strives to make it possible for everybody to have better living conditions and family environments.

In 1999, she was instrumental in passage of the Foster Care Independence Act, which doubled federal funding for teenagers aging out of foster care. As

First Lady, Clinton hosted numerous White House Conferences, including ones on Child Care, Early Childhood Development and Learning, and Children and Adolescents, and the first-ever White House Conferences on Teenagers and Philanthropy. Hillary Clinton traveled to 79 countries during this time, breaking the mark for most-travelled First Lady held by Pat Nixon.

She was twice named by the National Law Journal as one of the 100 most influential lawyers in America, in 1988 and in 1991. She is the first First Lady of the United States to be a candidate for elected office. She was the first First Lady to hold a post-graduate degree and to have her own professional career up to the time of entering the White House. She has been ranked among the world's most powerful people by Forbes magazine and Time magazine.

She is largely effective as a leader, seeing as she has been able to fight for the people's demands and secure them in the end. This is shown through her ability in college, law school and in the government. Throughout her life she has been endlessly helping the country and the people to grow. Even though her favorability and approval ratings have been low at times throughout the years, she has continued to soldier on and improve herself.

Another proof of her effectiveness as a leader is that she has been appointed to a large amount of positions in the government of the United States. She has been doing a lot of important tasks and she is considered one of the most powerful humans in the world currently. She has achieved all this being a woman, despite the fact that stereotyping and prejudice against women is a common thing in fields of high power and control.

d. Conclusion

The most important lesson that leaders today can learn from Hillary Diane Rodham Clinton would be to never give up. We should always strive hard to go ahead even when times are tough. Barriers and obstacles will always be present but we should overcome them all and get up again when we fall. Despite low approval ratings and negative publicity during some of her years, she has stayed strong and went ahead with her schedule, never giving up.

We should also always take into account everybody and not exclude minorities from our judgement. Everyone is human and not to be neglected. Fair treatment should be given to everybody, whether they are upper-class or middle-class people. Rodham Clinton has given attention to middle-class communities because she believes everyone should be treated equally and this is admirable.

She has shown us that nothing is impossible. Any dream can be achieved with hard work and resolve. If Rodham Clinton is elected for presidency, it will be a big benchmark in human history. She has already achieved so much being a woman, and it is a truly inspiring thing. Once considered the underdog, now she is one of the main players in today's political landscapes.

In addition, we must fight for our beliefs. This is extremely important to survive in today's world because our beliefs gives us our identity. Hillary Clinton has fought hard to improve the healthcare of people in her country and has not given up despite repeated rejection, and there is an important lesson to be learnt here.

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