HILLARY CLINTON FOR PRESIDENT.
A SECOND ANTHOLOGY OF CRITIQUES PRO AND CON PUBLISHED DURING HER CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT 2014-16.

http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/2016/02/hillary-clinton-for-president-pro-and.html

Compiled by Dick Bennett. February 19, 2016.

Evaluation for 2016 Democratic Presidential Potential Contenders:

Hillary Clinton

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2 2015
Henwood, My Turn (“argument against” –D)
Hillary Clinton Won the Democratic Debate, Poll Finds
http://time.com/4078484/hillary-clinton-won-democratic-debate-poll/

A majority of Democrats who watched last week’s debate said that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton won in her first head-on encounter with Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, according to a CNN poll.

Fully 62% of Democrats polled said that Clinton was the winner, while 35% said that Sanders won. Just 1% each said former Maryland Gov. Martin O’Malley and former Virginia Sen. Jim Webb won.

Clinton had prepared for weeks for the first debate of the Democratic presidential primary contest, and firmly attacked Sanders’ record on gun control early, saying he had not gone far enough on the issue. She also criticized his admiration for Denmark, saying, “We are not Denmark. I love Denmark. We are the United States of America and it’s our job to rein in the excesses of capitalism so it doesn’t run amok.”

Many Sanders supporters believe he won the debate, and Sanders’ campaign has argued he did important work in putting economic issues front and center on the stage in Las Vegas last
Despite the consensus that Clinton won the debate, national polls of the Democratic primary do not appear to have moved significantly, with Clinton’s margin over Sanders shrinking by one percentage point. Clinton leads Sanders in national polls, 45% to 29%.

The results for who won the debate have a margin of error of 7.5%, and the overall primary poll has a margin of error of 5%.

II. Foreign Policy

Zunes articles #187: a comprehensive overview of Hillary Clinton’s Middle East policy

Stephen Zunes via uark.edu

Looking for a comprehensive critical overview of Hillary Clinton’s Middle East policy but unable to find one, I responded positively to a solicitation from the Cairo Review of Global Affairs—an independent journal published by the American University of Cairo—to write one.

I look not only at her vote to authorize the Iraq War, but her continued defense of her vote and support for the war long after even many former war supporters had apologized and were calling for a withdrawal of U.S. forces. I examine her hawkish views towards Iran, her double-standards on nuclear non-proliferation, and her support for Arab dictatorships even in the throes of popular pro-democracy uprisings. I note her support for the right-wing Israeli government and her defense of Israeli settlements, as well as her attacks on the World Court, reputable international jurists, and human rights groups which have challenged Israeli violations of international humanitarian law. And I examine her role as Secretary of State in pushing for military intervention in Libya, Syria, and elsewhere, as well as her backing of Morocco’s illegal occupation and annexation of Western Sahara.

In short, I make the case that a Hillary Clinton presidency means a shift to the right from President Obama’s more moderate approach and the likelihood of increased U.S. support for repression, occupation, and war in the greater Middle East.
This may be the most important article I’ve written in years, so please consider circulating it as far and wide as you can.
http://www.thecairoreview.com/essays/hillary-the-hawk/

You can find additional articles of mine and other information at: www.stephenzunes.org

Hello Rafi - 2-15-16

I dearly hope the Democrats nominate Bernie Sanders, not Hillary Clinton. Hillary is a long-time hawk, on Iraq, Syria, Israel, Libya, Ukraine, Iran, and other places. She should be classified as a “neo-conservative,” similar in her views to George W. Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, [Rice], John McCain, et al. Here is a comprehensive, detailed essay about her foreign policy, by Stephen Zunes, distinguished author and professor of international studies:

Bernie’s foreign policy views are far more dovish than Hillary's, but even he is too hawkish in some ways. The USA is simply a very hawkish nation. Obama is trying to end our 15-year-policy of “eternal war.” Hillary will not only continue this policy, but strengthen it. I’m copying several local friends. Peace – Art

HC FOREIGN POLICY: INTERNATIONAL ARMS INDUSTRY

Clinton Tops List of Arms Company Donations

Hillary Clinton has a close relationship with the world's top arms companies. |
Photo: Reuters

14 December 2015

[This content was originally published by teleSUR at the following address:

"http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Clinton-Tops-List-of-Arms-Company-Donations-20151214-0002.html". If you intend to use it, please cite the source and provide a link to the original article. www.telesURtv.net/english]
U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton was also a favorite of the arms producing giants during her 2006 senate campaign.

**Hillary Clinton has received more money from arms and military service companies than any other candidate during the 2016 presidential campaign, data from Open Secrets shows.**

All but one of the world’s 10 biggest arms producers have contributed to Clinton’s previous campaigns, giving her — along with the top Republican receiver Ted Cruz — a significant margin over the other candidates.

The numbers, collected by the Federal Election Commission and compiled by Open Secrets, also reveal that Rand Paul and Bernie Sanders make the list of top 20 senators and top six presidential candidates to receive money from arms and defense companies.

**ANALYSIS: Report: US Still Sells over Half the World's Arms**

Most of the funding is channeled through Political Action Committees, which have no limits to how much they donate. About 18 percent comes from individual contributions, totaling almost US$10 million between all of the companies.

The biggest donors — Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman and Boeing — devote about a third of their funds to Democrat candidates. In the last presidential elections, Barack Obama won more funding than his contender John McCain, though McCain is the top-earning senator this year.

**OPINION: Clinton Presidency Would Fuel the War Machine**

A report released Sunday by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute showed that while U.S. arms sales have slowed, U.S.-based Lockheed Martin’s profits soared in 2014. Overall sales rose steadily until the financial crisis of 2008, when they mostly stabilized.
Sunday’s report also indicates that the U.S. accounts for a staggering 54 percent market share of the global arms market. The United Kingdom has the second largest market share, with 10.4 percent. Russia has a market share of 10.2 percent, while France has a market share of 5.6 percent.

The world’s top 10 arms companies are based in the U.S. and Western Europe, according to the report. Among these are Lockheed Martin, Boeing and BAE Systems, who make up the top three companies in terms of global market share.

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(Video and Transcript) Hillary Clinton’s Iraq War Speech

C-Span

http://www.c-span.org/video/?c4484024/voting-resolution-vote-war

Video:

http://www.c-span.org/video/standalone/?c4484024/voting-resolution-vote-war&popoutPlayer

Transcript:

Mrs. CLINTON: Mr. President, I thank the Senator from West Virginia for his courtesy. By far beyond that, I thank him for his leadership and his eloquence and his passion and commitment to this body and to our Constitution. I join with the remarks by both the Senators from Michigan and Maryland, expressing our appreciation for the way in which he has waged this battle on behalf of his convictions. It is a lesson to us all.

Today, Mr. President, we are asked whether to give the President of the United States
authority to use force in Iraq should diplomatic efforts fail to dismantle Saddam Hussein's chemical and biological weapons and his nuclear program.

I am honored to represent nearly 19 million New Yorkers, a thoughtful democracy of voices and opinions who make themselves heard on the great issues of our day, especially this one. Many have contacted my office about this resolution, both in support of and in opposition to it. I am grateful to all who have expressed an opinion.

I also greatly respect the differing opinions within this body. The debate they engender will aid our search for a wise, effective policy. Therefore, on no account should dissent be discouraged or disparaged. It is central to our freedom and to our progress, for on more than one occasion history has proven our great dissenters to be right.

I believe the facts that have brought us to this fateful vote are not in doubt. Saddam Hussein is a tyrant who has tortured and killed his own people, even his own family members, to maintain his iron grip on power. He used chemical weapons on Iraqi Kurds and on Iranians, killing over 20,000 people.

Unfortunately, during the 1980s, while he engaged in such horrific activity, he enjoyed the support of the American Government because he had oil and was seen as a counterweight to the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran.

In 1991, Saddam Hussein invaded and occupied Kuwait, losing the support of the United States. The first President Bush assembled a global coalition, including many Arab States, and threw Saddam out after 43 days of bombing and hundreds of hours of ground operations. The United States led the coalition, then withdrew, leaving the Kurds and the Shiites, who had risen against Saddam Hussein at our urging, to Saddam's revenge.

As a condition for ending the conflict, the United Nations imposed a number of requirements on Iraq, among them disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction, stocks used to make such weapons, and laboratories necessary to do the work. Saddam Hussein agreed and an inspection system was set up to ensure compliance. Though he repeatedly lied, delayed, and obstructed the inspectors' work, the inspectors found and destroyed far more weapons of mass destruction capability than were destroyed in the gulf war, including thousands of chemical weapons, large volumes of chemical and biological stocks, a number of missiles and warheads, a major lab equipped to produce anthrax and other bioweapons, as well as substantial nuclear facilities.

In 1998, Saddam Hussein pressured the United Nations to lift the sanctions by threatening to stop all cooperation with the inspectors. In an attempt to resolve the situation, the U.N., unwisely in my view, agreed to put limits on inspections of designated sovereign sites,
including the so-called Presidential palaces--which in reality were huge compounds, well suited to hold weapons labs, stocks, and records which Saddam Hussein was required by U.N. resolution to turn over.

When Saddam blocked the inspection process, the inspectors

left. As a result, President Clinton, with the British and others, ordered an intensive 4-day air assault, Operation Desert Fox, on known and suspected weapons of mass destruction sites and other military targets.

In 1998, the United States also changed its underlying policy toward Iraq from containment to regime change and began to examine options to effect such a change, including support for Iraqi opposition leaders within the country and abroad. In the 4 years since the inspectors, intelligence reports show that Saddam Hussein has worked to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons stock, his missile delivery capability, and his nuclear program. He has also given aid, comfort, and sanctuary to terrorists, including al-Qaida members, though there is apparently no evidence of his involvement in the terrible events of September 11, 2001.

It is clear, however, that if left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capability to wage biological and chemical warfare and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons. Should he succeed in that endeavor, he could alter the political and security landscape of the Middle East which, as we know all too well, affects American security.

This much is undisputed. The open questions are: What should we do about it? How, when, and with whom?

Some people favor attacking Saddam Hussein now, with any allies we can muster, in the belief that one more round of weapons inspections would not produce the required disarmament and that deposing Saddam would be a positive good for the Iraqi people and would create the possibility of a secular, democratic state in the Middle East, one which could, perhaps, move the entire region toward democratic reform.

This view has appeal to some because it would assure disarmament; because it would right old wrongs after our abandonment of the Shiites and Kurds in 1991 and our support for Saddam Hussein in the 1980s when he was using chemical weapons and terrorizing his people; and because it could give the Iraqi people a chance to build a future in freedom.

However, this course is fraught with danger.

We and our NATO allies did not depose Mr. Milosevic, who was responsible for more than a
quarter of million [Page: S10289]
people being killed in the 1990s. Instead, by stopping his aggression in Bosnia and Kosovo, and keeping the tough sanctions, we created the conditions in which his own people threw him out and led to his being in the dock and being tried for war crimes as we speak.

If we were to attack Iraq now, alone or with few allies, it would set a precedent that could come back to haunt us. In recent days, Russia has talked of an invasion of Georgia to attack Chechen rebels. India has mentioned the possibility of a preemptive strike on Pakistan. What if China should perceive a threat from Taiwan?

So, for all its appeal, a unilateral attack, while it cannot be ruled out, is not a good option.

Others argue that we should work through the United Nations and should only resort to force if and when the United Nations Security Council approves it. This too has great appeal for different reasons. The United Nations deserves our support. Whenever possible we should work through it and strengthen it, for it enables the world to share the risks and burdens of global security and when it acts, it confers a legitimacy that increases the likelihood of long-term success. The United Nations can lead the world into a new era of global cooperation. And the United States should support that goal.

But there are problems with this approach as well. The United Nations is an organization that is still growing and maturing. It often lacks the cohesion to enforce its own mandates. And when Security Council members use the veto on occasion for reasons of narrow national interest, it cannot act. In Kosovo, the Russians did not approve the NATO military action because of political, ethnic, and religious ties to the Serbs.

The United States, therefore, could not obtain a Security Council resolution in favor of the action necessary to stop the dislocation and ethnic cleansing of more than a million Kosovar Albanians. However, most of the world was with us because there was a genuine emergency with thousands dead and a million more driven from their homes. As soon as the American-led conflict was over, Russia joined the peacekeeping effort that is still underway.

In the case of Iraq, recent comments indicate that one or two Security Council members might never approve forces against Saddam Hussein until he has actually used chemical, biological, or God forbid, nuclear weapons.

So, the question is how do we do our best to both diffuse the threat Saddam Hussein poses to his people, the region, including Israel, and the United States, and at the same time, work to maximize our international support and strengthen the United Nations.
While there is no perfect approach to this thorny dilemma, and while people of good faith and high intelligence can reach diametrically opposing conclusions, I believe the best course is to go to the United Nations for a strong resolution that scraps the 1998 restrictions on inspections and calls for complete, unlimited inspections, with cooperation expected and demanded from Iraq.

I know the administration wants more, including an explicit authorization to use force, but we may not be able to secure that now, perhaps even later. If we get a clear requirement for unfettered inspections, I believe the authority to use force to enforce that mandate is inherent in the original 1991 United Nations resolutions, as President Clinton recognized when he launched Operation Desert Fox in 1998.

If we get the resolution the President seeks, and Saddam complies, disarmament can proceed and the threat can be eliminated. Regime change will, of course, take longer but we must still work for it, nurturing all reasonable forces of opposition.

If we get the resolution and Saddam does not comply, we can attack him with far more support and legitimacy than we would have otherwise.

If we try and fail to get a resolution that simply calls for Saddam's compliance with unlimited inspections, those who oppose even that will be in an indefensible position. And, we will still have more support and legitimacy than if we insist now on a resolution that includes authorizing military action and other requirements giving other nations superficially legitimate reasons to oppose Security Council action. They will say, we never wanted a resolution at all and that we only support the U.N. when it does exactly want we want.

I believe international support and legitimacy are crucial. After shots are fired and bombs are dropped, not all consequences are predictable. While the military outcome is not in doubt, should we put troops on the ground, there is still the matter of Saddam Hussein's biological and chemical weapons. Today he has maximum incentive not to use them or give them away. If he did either, the world would demand his immediate removal. Once the battle is joined, with the outcome certain, he will have maximum incentive to use weapons of mass destruction and give what he can't use to terrorists who can torment us with them long after he is gone. We cannot be paralyzed by this possibility, but we would be foolish to ignore it. According to recent reports, the CIA agrees with this analysis. A world united in sharing the risk at least would make this occurrence less likely and more bearable and would be far more likely to share the considerable burden of rebuilding a secure and peaceful post-Saddam Iraq.

President Bush's speech in Cincinnati and the changes in policy that have come forth from
the administration since they first began broaching this issue some weeks ago have made my vote easier.

Even though the resolution before the Senate is not as strong as I would like in requiring the diplomatic route first and placing highest priority on a simple, clear requirement for unlimited inspections, I take the President at his word that he will try hard to pass a United Nations resolution and seek to avoid war, if possible.

Because bipartisan support for this resolution makes success in the United Nations more likely and war less likely, and because a good faith effort by the United States, even if it fails, will bring more allies and legitimacy to our cause, I have concluded, after careful and serious consideration, that a vote for the resolution best serves the security of our Nation. If we were to defeat this resolution or pass it with only a few Democrats, I am concerned that those who want to pretend this problem will go way with delay will oppose any United Nations resolution calling for unrestricted inspections.

This is a difficult vote. This is probably the hardest decision I have ever had to make. Any vote that may lead to war should be hard, but I cast it with conviction. Perhaps my decision is influenced by my 8 years of experience on the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue in the White House watching my husband deal with serious challenges to our Nation. I want this President, or any future President, to be in the strongest possible position to lead our country in the United Nations or in war. Secondly, I want to ensure that Saddam Hussein makes no mistake about our national unity and support for the President's efforts to wage America's war against terrorists and weapons of mass destruction. Thirdly, I want the men and women in our Armed Forces to know that if they should be called upon to act against Iraq our country will stand resolutely behind them.

My vote is not, however, a vote for any new doctrine of preemption or for unilateralism or for the arrogance of American power or purpose, all of which carry grave dangers for our Nation, the rule of international law, and the peace and security of people throughout the world.

Over 11 years have passed since the UN called on Saddam Hussein to rid himself of weapons of mass destruction as a condition of returning to the world community.

Time and time again, he has frustrated and denied these conditions. This matter cannot be left hanging forever with consequences we would all live to regret. War can yet be avoided, but our responsibility to global security and the integrity of United Nations resolutions protecting it cannot.

I urge the President to spare no effort to secure a clear, unambiguous demand by the United
Nations for unlimited inspections.

Finally, on another personal note, I come to this decision from the perspective of a Senator from New York who has seen all too closely the consequences of last year’s terrible attacks on our Nation. In balancing the risks of action versus inaction, I think New Yorkers, who have gone through the fires of hell, may be more attuned to the risk of not acting. I know I am.

So it is with conviction that I support this resolution as being in the best interests of our Nation. A vote for it is not a vote to rush to war; it is a vote that puts awesome responsibility in the hands of our President. And we say to him: Use these powers wisely and as a last resort. And it is a vote that says clearly to Saddam Hussein: This is your last chance; disarm or be disarmed.

Clinton 'sees merit' in Obama's decision to send troops to Syria

http://www.cnn.com/2015/10/30/politics/hillary-clinton-obama-syria/index.html

By Dan Merica, CNN

Updated 9:18 PM ET, Fri October 30, 2015

- Clinton has long been more hawkish on Syria than President Barack Obama or other Democrats
- Clinton’s position is more supportive than that of Bernie Sanders

Charleston, South Carolina (CNN) Hillary Clinton on Friday cautiously supported President Barack Obama's decision to authorize the use of special forces in Syria.
Clinton "sees merit in the targeted use of special operations personnel to support our partners in the fight against ISIS, including in Syria," according to a statement released by her campaign spokesman, Nick Merrill.

"Of course she opposes the U.S. getting into a ground war in the Middle East," Merrill said. "And she strongly supports ongoing diplomatic efforts to end the conflict, address the suffering, and bring all of Syria’s communities together to confront ISIS."

White House spokesman Josh Earnest announced Friday that the U.S. would be deploying less than 50 Special Operations forces to the war-torn country, and they will be sent to Kurdish-controlled territory in northern Syria. The American troops will help local Kurdish and Arab forces fighting ISIS, also known as ISIL, with logistics and are planning to bolster their efforts.

RELATED: Obama redefines his legacy on Syria

"The President does expect that they can have an impact in intensifying our strategy for building the capacity of local forces inside of Syria for taking the fight on the ground to ISIL in their own country," Earnest said. "That has been the core element of the military component of our strategy from the beginning: building the capacity of local forces on the ground."

Clinton has long been more hawkish on Syria than Obama or other Democrats. During her time as secretary of state, she advocated for a no-fly zone over the country and more work to arm rebels against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Clinton's position is also more supportive than that of Bernie Sanders, the independent senator from Vermont and Clinton’s most prominent 2016 challenger, who expressed concern about the decision on Friday.

"Sen. Sanders expressed concern about the United States being drawn into the quagmire of the Syrian civil war which could lead to perpetual warfare in that region," spokesman Michael Briggs said in a statement. "The senator believes that the crisis in Syria will be solved diplomatically, not militarily."

Walmart of War

The New York Times recently published a story titled, "Criminal Inquiry Sought in Hillary Clinton's Use of Email." Regardless of whether it was criminal or not, why hide governmental email? The only plausible rationale would be to shield communications from Freedom of Information Act requests.

That something to hide could be found in a more alarming story. It was titled, "Clinton Foundation Donors Got Weapons Deals From Hillary Clinton's State Department," published by International Business Times.

The article finds: "Under Clinton's leadership, the State Department approved $165 billion worth of commercial arms sales to 20 nations (including Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar) whose governments have given money to the Clinton Foundation... (that figure is) nearly double the value of American arms sales... during the same period of President George W. Bush's second term... governments and corporations involved in the arms deals approved by Clinton's State Department have delivered between $54 million and $141 million to the Clinton Foundation as well as hundreds of thousands of dollars in payments to the Clinton family..."

The more pressing question beyond the scandalous odor is: Why in the f**k are we selling billions of dollars in war machines to hyper-repressive dictatorships at all? The top importer is Saudi Arabia, with one of the worst human rights and women's rights records on the planet. Remember that next time Hillary blathers about women's rights. Additionally, the Saudis regularly publicly behead far more people than ISIS for political reasons and petty crimes, including by tortured confessions.

We are spending trillions fighting wars in the Middle East superficially because of 9-11. Yet, none of the hijackers came from Iraq; a majority came from Saudi Arabia. A leaked Clinton memo even found Saudi donors were "the most significant source of funding to Sunni terrorist groups worldwide."

Why not invade Saudi Arabia? Instead, Bush holds hands with dictator King Abdullah, while Hillary and Obama sell more war machines to them. Why make the world more dangerous by strengthening repressive regimes?
Comedian Bill Hicks said, “You know we armed Iraq...’How do you know that?’ ‘Uh, well ... we looked at the receipts. But as soon as that check clears, we’re goin’ in...for God and country and democracy and here’s a fetus and he’s a Hitler. Whatever you f**king need, let's go!'...I'm so sick of...arming these little countries, then we go and blow the sh*t out of them.”

In the context of the upcoming anniversary of our nuclear bombing of Japanese civilians and the Iran "deal," question. What moral authority do we have to tell any country they cannot have nuclear weapons when Obama recently approved a plan to spend $1 trillion to upgrade our nuclear arsenal? We have also invaded more countries than anyone since WWII, unlike Iran.

We have a trillion dollar annual military budget, and a thousand foreign military bases, which has little to do with security of American citizens. The primary purpose is to advance the interests of multinational corporations with no allegiance to any nation. It should be called the **Subsidized Corporate Security Complex**.

Smedley Butler, the most decorated Marine General in history, told this truth: “I spent (over) 33 years...(in) military service...as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street...I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico...safe for American oil interests in 1914...I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street...I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents.”

President Eisenhower's warnings about the influence of the Military Industrial Complex materialized. Virtually no elected politician is immune. The problem is weapons manufacturing and military-related jobs exist in every state. In Arkansas recently, a new Lockheed Martin plant has been approved, making our politicians even more controllable.

Hillary, Obama and Bush are obvious handmaidens for the Complex. On the other finger, Bernie Sanders criticizes the Complex, but alas, even he too is under the influence by Lockheed’s $1.5 trillion F-35 warplane project. Bernie surely justifies it on the basis of jobs, but still.

However, Bernie remains the biggest proponent of improving democracy. Perhaps if he can
do this, we can then elect leaders with more complete integrity. Dismantling the Complex cannot happen overnight.

Until we stop arming dictatorships and invading for profit, and begin eliminating our WMD too, we must stop kidding ourselves. We are the greatest obstacle to peace.

Moreover, our leaders are intelligent, and surely know when we kill civilians, we create terrorists. Terrorism is "good" for business. Jimmy Carter said, “War may sometimes be a necessary evil. But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn to live together in peace by killing each other's children."

Television lies about a noble and exciting war machine. The truth is psychologically crippled and bawling orphans and refugees. It is mothers and fathers driven blind with madness by their child's brains not in school, but spilled in their red hands.

Jesus spoke of loving one another and said, "Blessed are the Peacemakers." Surely, he did not mean the missile with that name being exported to the Holy Land for profit.

Please pray with action for U.S. to cease being the Walmart of War.

CLINTON AND ISRAEL—AND SANDERS AND STEIN

foreign policy vision test: jill stein - green party prez
candidate only one passing

David Druding

Jill Stein announced on Democracy Now this past Monday, Jun 22 that she is running for president with the Green Party. I hope you'll take a look:

http://publish.dvlabs.com/democracynow/ipod/dn2015-0622.mp4?&start=2752.0

Amy Goodman, in their interview, asked Dr Stein how her platform was different from Bernie Sanders.
Candidate Stein responded that on most issues her position would be very similar to Sanders’ BUT on some foreign policy issues their positions vary broadly. Her statement generally paraphrased was:

"my administration would definitely be more critical of regimes like that of Netanyahu's govt that are clearly war criminals. We would not be funding (providing) the weapons used in the massacre in Gaza."

Both more "mainstream" but "progressive" Democratic office holders, Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, have chosen to remain silent to the internationally recognized war crimes that have been repeatedly committed by the heavily US funded Israeli military. For this significant reason and her entire progressive campaign I hope you will join me supporting Dr Jill Stein’s Green Party campaign and vote for her in the next presidential race in 2016. for REAL CHANGE to a just and equitable presidency, support Jill Stein, her website: jill2016.com/  david druding


http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/Hillary-Clinton-Elizabeth-Warren-Bernie-Sanders/2015/01/14/id/618515/

One of the few areas of agreement between Republicans and the Obama administration is trade, but it is an issue that is engendering strong opposition from congressional Democrats and labor unions, and could prove problematic for one potential presidential candidate — Hillary Clinton.

Two of the most outspoken critics of President Barack Obama's pursuit of trade pacts with Europe and Asia, as well as trade promotion authority, are Independent Sen. Bernie Sanders and Democrat Sen. Elizabeth Warren, both of whom have been eyed as possible candidates in 2016.

Hillary Clinton comes out against TPP trade deal

By Dan Merica and Eric Bradner, CNN
Updated 5:24 PM ET, Wed October 7, 2015 | Video Source: CNN

(CNN)Hillary Clinton came out against the Trans Pacific Partnership in an interview Wednesday, breaking with President Barack Obama and his administration, which has forcefully promoted the deal.
In an interview Wednesday with PBS's Judy Woodruff in Iowa, Clinton said, "As of today, I am not in favor of what I have learned about it."

The former secretary of state and 2016 Democratic presidential front-runner cited the "high bar" she set earlier in the year as the reason she was giving the deal a thumbs down.

"I have said from the very beginning that we had to have a trade agreement that would create good American jobs, raise wages and advance our national security and I still believe that is the high bar we have to meet," Clinton said.

She added: "I don't believe it's going to meet the high bar I have set."

**Festering question**

Clinton's position on the massive 12-nation trade deal -- a staple of the Obama administration's foreign policy in the region -- has been a festering question ever since she launched her bid for the White House.

Clinton's staff gave the White House a heads-up about her decision before going public, a White House official told CNN.

Earlier this year, Clinton told reporters that she didn't want to comment on the trade deal until it was finalized, something that happened earlier this month.

**As secretary of state, Clinton actively advocated for the TPP. In fact, she did so 45 times between 2010 and 2013.**

[RELATED: 45 times Secretary Clinton pushed the trade bill she now opposes](#)

In July, Clinton told CNN that she never worked directly on the deal.

"I did not work on TPP," Clinton said Thursday. "I advocated for a multi-national trade agreement that would 'be the gold standard.' But that was the responsibility of the United States trade representative."

While technically true -- Clinton's State Department was not the lead negotiator on the deal -- the former secretary of state regularly trumped up trade deals, including what would become the TPP.

"We need to keep upping our game both bilaterally and with partners across the region through agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership or TPP," Clinton said during a 2012 trip to Australia. "This TPP sets the gold standard in trade agreements to open free, transparent, fair trade, the kind of environment that has the rule of law and a level playing field. And when negotiated, this agreement will cover 40% of the world's total trade and build in strong protections for workers and the environment."
While Clinton has not outright come out against the Trans Pacific Partnership until today, she had signaled over the summer that she was worried about the deal.

"There are some specifics in there that could and should be changed," Clinton said of the Pacific Rim pact at a June press conference in Iowa. "So I am hoping that's what happens now -- let's take the lemons and turn it into lemonade."

On Wednesday, Clinton argued that those lemons had not, in fact, been turned into lemonade.

"For me, it really comes down to those three points that I made and the fact that we have learned a lot about trade agreements in the past years," Clinton said. "Sometimes they look great on paper."

Clinton specifically cited currency manipulation enforcement, benefits for pharmaceutical companies and impacts on American workers as the reasons she was disapproving the deal.

Departure from the Clinton legacy
It's also a departure from the Clinton legacy: It was President Bill Clinton who, two decades ago, signed the first mega-regional pact: the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership was sold by the Obama administration as a way to right NAFTA's mistakes -- particularly by adding chapters requiring improved labor conditions and implementing environmental standards in the countries involved in the deal.

It was also the economic underpinning of the so-called "pivot to Asia" that Clinton had championed as America's top diplomat.

RELATED: 5 times Clinton broke from Obama

But the deal is strongly opposed by liberals -- particularly labor unions that fear it would cause the United States to bleed more jobs and wages to countries that pay workers less.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders has highlighted his opposition to the deal on the Democratic presidential campaign trail. And a liberal icon, Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, has hammered its inclusion -- like most other trade deals -- of a provision that would allow companies to challenge whether countries' laws and regulations live up to their international trade commitments.

Former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, her Democratic rival in the presidential race who came out against the TPP earlier this year, quickly blasted Clinton's comments.

"Wow, that's a reversal," he said in Washington. "I believe we need to stop stumbling backwards into bad trade deals and Secretary Clinton can justify her own reversal of opinion on this, but I can tell you that I didn't have one opinion eight months ago and switch that
Sanders also took a shot at Clinton for waiting to take a position on the deal.

"To be very frank with you, it would have been more helpful to have her on board a few months ago," he said -- a reference to June, when congressional Democrats were attempting to block trade promotion authority legislation that greased the wheels for the deal's passage on Capitol Hill.

According to the vice president's office, Joe Biden, who is also considering a run for the White House, backs the deal and will work to get it through Congress.

Skepticism

Clinton first expressed skepticism toward the deal on the campaign trail this summer -- pointing to Warren's criticism as well as the lack of language within the agreement hammering countries like Japan (and China, were it ever to join) for currency manipulation.

Her position aligns Clinton with most Democrats on Capitol Hill.

They first turned on their own party's president when he joined with Republican congressional leaders to push a measure called "trade promotion authority" in June. That legislation -- key to getting other countries to sign off on a final agreement -- allowed Obama to seal the deal and send it to lawmakers for an up-or-down vote with no amendments.

Clinton dismissed that bill as procedural, and said she'd weigh in on the deal once it became final.

Because of the timing -- it will take trade negotiators several months to finish ironing out the final text and translating it into each participating country's language -- the Trans-Pacific Partnership likely won't see votes on Capitol Hill until 2016, meaning the deal will only become more enmeshed in presidential politics.

Most Republicans support the deal -- and, ideologically, back free trade. But front-runner Donald Trump has taken a populist stance, opposing not just the Trans-Pacific Partnership but its forefather, NAFTA -- even saying he'd re-negotiate it.

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush said that the plan is "probably a good thing for the country."

"My guess is this deal is going to create real opportunities to open up markets that are fast growing," Bush said at a campaign event. "I haven't looked at the specifics of the deal but my natural inclination is to support trade where barriers are taken down and then we need to fix the things that make it harder for us to compete at home."

CNN's Jim Acosta and Ashley Killough contributed to this report.
DES MOINES, Iowa – Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Rodham Clinton declared opposition to the proposed Keystone XL pipeline on Tuesday, ending a long and politically uncomfortable silence on an issue that has become a touchstone for environmentalists and liberal voters.

“I think it is imperative that we look at the Keystone pipeline as what I believe it is – a distraction from the important work we have to do to combat climate change,” Clinton said at a community forum here.

The debate over Keystone “interferes with our ability to move forward,” Clinton said.

“Therefore I oppose it.”

Clinton had long insisted she must remain on the sidelines of an Obama administration decision about the proposed Canada-to-United States oil pipeline because she had been involved in negotiations over the pipeline when she was secretary of state. For her to weigh in
now, as a political candidate, would put the White House and the State Department in a
difficult position, Clinton had said.

But while she stayed mum, progressive challenger Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) won significant
liberal support for a straightforward denunciation of the project. Democratic challenger Martin
O'Malley, a former Maryland governor, and Clinton's own senior campaign adviser, John
Podesta, also oppose the pipeline.

Pope Francis, who arrived in the United States Tuesday, has also sought to make climate
change a moral issue.

Clinton said Tuesday that the administration review is taking too long, and she must make her
position clear. She was responding to voter questions following a healthcare event at an
elementary school. It had become untenable to refrain from speaking any longer, Clinton told
a young woman who asked her about Keystone.

Sanders' issued a statement almost immediately.

“As a senator who has vigorously opposed the Keystone pipeline from the beginning, I am
glad that Secretary Clinton finally has made a decision and I welcome her opposition to the
pipeline,” Sanders said. “Clearly it would be absurd to encourage the extraction and
transportation of some of the dirtiest fossil fuel on the planet.”

Sanders is leading Clinton in many polls in New Hampshire and running even with or only
slightly behind her in Iowa, largely on the strength of liberal positions that have struck an anti-
establishment chord among Democrats.

Clinton has always struggled to rouse sustained enthusiasm from the far left of her party.
Keystone became a symbol for some liberal leaders of Clinton’s perceived distance from their
priorities.

In an interview with the Des Moines Register later Tuesday, Clinton expanded on her position.
"I don’t think we need to have a pipeline bringing very dirty oil," over the border, Clinton said.

She said she will soon release a plan to knit together energy production and distribution across North America.

As to why she is speaking now, Clinton told the newspaper that "it's been a long time" since she left the State Department in early 2013, and she had thought the administration decision would be made by now.

She had signaled recently that she felt an imperative to speak out soon, and her campaign said the White House was informed ahead of time about her position. Clinton said she had no plan to speak out Tuesday, but got a direct question and so went ahead.

The news had the effect of overshadowing her announcement here of a new proposed $250 monthly cap on patients' out-of-pocket prescription drug costs.

Democratic environmental activist Tom Steyer, a major party donor, called Clinton's position "a clear example of people power overcoming the special interests."

Clinton made her position known seven years after the Canadian company, TransCanada, proposed the 800,000 barrel-a-day pipeline to carry thick bitumen from Alberta's oil sands, or tar sands, to refineries on the Gulf Coast in Texas. The project has become a touchstone for the environmental movement, which has argued that blocking construction would slow down development of the oil sands, whose extraction is more energy intensive than most types of crude oil and therefore emits more greenhouse gases.

"Our focus remains on securing a permit to build Keystone XL," said TransCanada spokesman Davis Sheremata.

"The fundamental argument for Keystone XL has been and remains - the U.S. imports millions of barrels of oil every day, so where do Americans want their oil to come from?" Sheremata said. "Do they want it from Iran and Venezuela – where American values of
freedom and democracy are not shared - or do they want Canadian and American crude oil transported through Keystone XL."

The State Department is the agency responsible for issuing a cross-border permit for pipelines, and the project application was pending throughout Clinton's tenure as secretary of State. In mid-October 2010, Clinton told an audience at San Francisco’s Commonwealth Club that she and others in the administration were “inclined” to give TransCanada the permit, adding, “We’re either going to be dependent on dirty oil from the Gulf or dirty oil from Canada.”

Paul Bledsoe, a former Clinton White House aide on climate change, said Clinton "is in a tough primary battle, and opposing Keystone has direct appeal to many Democratic activists she is courting, so this is no surprise. It's hard to see her taking any other position politically at the moment, despite Keystone's relative un-importance as a substantive climate and emissions issue." MORE


Clinton and Sanders on Health Care

Bloomberg News. “Presidential Hopefuls Hold to Party Line on Ruling.” Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (June 26, 2015, p. 26). Article compares Clinton and Sanders on Health Care. C: “Health insurance should be affordable & available to all. –H.” S: “Access to affordable health care should not depend on where you live….health care is a right of citizenship. A Medicare-for-all, single-payer system would provide better care at less cost for more Americans.’’

1. Hillary Runs to the Left of Bill on Immigration Reform - WSJ


May 13, 2015 - Hillary Clinton speaks at Rancho High School on May 5, 2015 in Las Vegas, ... As of last week, we can add immigration reform to the list. Bill...
Hillary Clinton Says She'll End Private Prisons, Stop Accepting Their Money

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hillary-clinton-private-prisons_562a3e3ee4b0ec0a389418ec

Her campaign says she wants to "end the era of mass incarceration."

Elise Foley Immigration & Politics Reporter, The Huffington Post

WASHINGTON -- Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton pledged Thursday to ban the use of private prison companies if elected president, and in the meantime will stop accepting campaign contributions from those corporations and the lobbyists who work for them. All previous donations will be given to charity, the former secretary of state's campaign said.

"Hillary Clinton has said we must end the era of mass incarceration, and as president, she will end private prisons and private immigrant detention centers," campaign spokeswoman Xochitl Hinojosa said in a statement Thursday night. "She believes that we should not contract out this core responsibility of the federal government, and when we're dealing with a mass incarceration crisis, we don't need private industry incentives that may contribute -- or have the appearance of contributing -- to over-incarceration."

Hinojosa said the policy against accepting contributions tied to private prison companies "is only one of many ways that she believes we need to rebalance our criminal justice and immigration systems."

Lobbying firms that work for two major private prison giants, GEO Group and Corrections Corporation of America, gave $133,246 to the Ready for Hillary PAC, according to Vice. Those companies operate a number of criminal and immigrant detention facilities, some of which have been plagued by allegations of abuse and poor treatment of detainees.

Immigrant and civil rights groups have urged Clinton to stop accepting contributions from donors with ties to GEO and CCA. Earlier Thursday, in announcing its co-founder Cesar Vargas was moving to the campaign of Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), the advocacy group Dream Action Coalition singled out Clinton for accepting those contributions.
Sanders **recently introduced a bill** to ban government contracts for private prisons, including immigrant detention centers.

Clinton said in May that immigrant detention shouldn't be based on profit concerns. "People go out and round up people in order to get paid on a per-bed basis," she said. "That just makes no sense at all to me. That's not the way we should be running any detention facility."

Her campaign and PAC are not the only ones to take money with private prison connections. VICE reported that the PAC and campaign of Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) had received $133,450 from private prison companies and their lobbying groups, while former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush (R) and his PAC had received $21,700 from lobbying groups that work for GEO and CCA.

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**Hillary Clinton says there is 'no excuse' for violent school arrest**

By **Dan Merica**, CNN
Updated 3:58 PM ET, Tue October 27, 2015

Hillary Clinton denounced on Tuesday the violent arrest of a South Carolina student

> There's "no excuse for violence inside a school," Clinton said in a tweet

(CNN)Hillary Clinton responded to the violent arrest of a South Carolina high school student on Tuesday, arguing that there is "no excuse for violence inside a school."

"There is no excuse for violence inside a school," Clinton tweeted. "The #AssaultAtSpringValleyHigh is unacceptable — schools should be safe places. -H"

Video of the arrest, which shows an officer tipping a female student over in her desk and yanking her backwards, has sparked outrage.

**RELATED: Outrage after South Carolina officer throws, arrests student in classroom**

After flipping the student over, the officer doesn't let go and sharply tugs the student toward the front of the classroom. The video shows the student flying from her desk and sliding across the floor.
According to Lt. Curtis Wilson, a spokesman for the Richland County Sheriff's Department, the instructor in the classroom had asked the student "to leave the class several times" and the officer was called to remove the student.

The FBI and local U.S. Attorney's Office have opened a civil rights investigation to determine if federal laws were violated during the student's arrest, a Justice Department spokesperson said.

Clinton has been quick to comment on issues of police brutality during her campaign, often using Twitter, especially, to get her viewpoint out quickly.

Clinton's first speech as a candidate was on criminal justice reform, and the candidate is scheduled to speak at a NAACP event in Charleston, South Carolina on Friday, where the topic of criminal justice reform is expected to come up.

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**Clinton's Superdelegate Tipping Point**

AUG 28, 2015 2:25 PM EDT

By Jonathan Bernstein

Mark Halperin and Jennifer Epstein, at Bloomberg Politics, report that Hillary Clinton’s campaign is claiming commitments from as many as 440 superdelegates, perhaps giving her an insurmountable lead in the race for the approximately 2,250 delegates needed to win the Democratic nomination.

There is both more and less to this story.

For starters, superdelegates are formally unpledged delegates to the Democratic National Convention who are chosen by position, not through votes in primaries and caucuses. The two big groups are elected officials (members of Congress, governors) and party officials.

Superdelegates were added in the 1980s for two reasons. One was practical: It was the only way to ensure that those party leaders could get to the convention, at least as delegates. The other was political: Democrats were concerned that their new system didn't place enough weight on electability, and believed a larger voice for politicians and formal party leaders would tilt the nomination in that direction.
In the event, the “supers” have never tilted the nomination; they always line up with the candidate who won the most delegates in the caucuses and primaries. That’s essentially what happened in 2008: Clinton had an early lead in superdelegates, but as Barack Obama started winning caucuses and primaries, he wound up picking up almost all the undecided supers and even some defectors from Clinton.

And the supers will go with the winner in 2016, too. It’s technically possible for Clinton to win the nomination by dominating the superdelegate count even if she (narrowly) loses every state: Thanks to strict proportional allocation on the Democratic side, a candidate only gains a small delegate advantage for a small edge in primary votes. Realistically, however, politicians and formal party leaders would never go against a clear decision by voters. If Clinton lost every state, she would lose her superdelegates, too.

At best, the supers would serve as tiebreakers should Clinton and Bernie Sanders (or Joe Biden) wind up tied after the primaries.

In other words, Clinton’s impressive haul of supers won’t make any direct difference at the convention. So in terms of pure delegate counts, this isn't that big a story.

And yet, Clinton’s appeal to superdelegates demonstrates her huge lead among party actors -- the politicians, campaign and governing professionals, formal party organization officials and staff, activists and donors, party-aligned interest groups and media. And that matters.

Yes, Clinton also had an early lead in the 2008 cycle, but this is different. The AP reported in early December 2007 that Clinton had 169 supers, only a few more than the 130 or so that have publicly committed to her so far, three months earlier in the process. In August 2007, however, Obama was a solid second with 63 supers, and other candidates had 86, meaning Clinton only had 53 percent of publicly committed superdelegates. We don’t have a full public count this time, but given the tiny number of politicians supporting other candidates, it's likely Clinton has close to 90 percent or more of declared supers. And that’s not even counting her campaign’s larger claim, which includes private commitments, of 440 supers -- more than three times as many as she amassed in 2007.

Could all of this support disappear? Sure. But it will hold as long as Clinton keeps her large polling advantage; nor are party actors likely to panic while Clinton is leading.
in head-to-head trial ballots against each of the Republican candidates.

I'll stick with what I've been saying since January. Clinton has essentially wrapped up the Democratic nomination.

1. Regular delegates are allocated based on the results of primaries and caucuses; basically, to be selected, a delegate must already be supporting the candidate who wins those delegates. So politicians who want to remain neutral (or who support a losing candidate in their area) couldn't be delegates.

2. Are those early polls meaningful? Absolutely not. But party actors may look at them anyway! And if they do, they aren't going to see a reason to abandon their candidate.

This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Tomlinson: 2008 Column on Superdelegates

It still applies. Hillary is leading the delegate count at somewhere around 400 to 40 even though only about 60-80 delegates came from Iowa and New Hampshire. It's like she won 20 Iowas already before one vote was cast. Superdelegates can switch but it is still a serious assault on democracy.

http://m.uatrav.com/opinion/article_ad1ea95d-5baf-59f1-8baf-357f5ae97023.html?mode=jqm


http://billmoyers.com/2014/11/12/hillary-clinton-wall-streets-pick-2016/

Conventional wisdom holds that the Democratic Party is due for a serious debate between its business-friendly “neoliberal” wing and those who embrace a more populist economic message.

During the Obama era, this longstanding division has simmered just below the surface as the party tried to present a united front in the face of tea party attacks and unprecedented obstruction from congressional Republicans. But with the end of the Obama presidency near, many expect the rift to create a major struggle over the party’s future. . . .
But what of Hillary Clinton’s own recent flirtation with populist rhetoric? In May, she gave a speech slamming income inequality that would have made the Occupy Wall Street movement cheer.

In Tuesday’s Politico, William D. Cohan, author of Money and Power: How Goldman Sachs Came to Rule the World, wrote that Wall Street’s movers and shakers don’t take Clinton’s newfound populism seriously:

Down on Wall Street they don’t believe it for a minute. While the finance industry does genuinely hate Warren, the big bankers love Clinton, and by and large they badly want her to be president. Many of the rich and powerful in the financial industry—among them, Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein, Morgan Stanley CEO James Gorman, Tom Nides, a powerful vice chairman at Morgan Stanley, and the heads of JPMorganChase and Bank of America—consider Clinton a pragmatic problem-solver not prone to populist rhetoric. To them, she’s someone who gets the idea that we all benefit if Wall Street and American business thrive. What about her forays into fiery rhetoric? They dismiss it quickly as political maneuvers. None of them think she really means her populism.

Although Hillary Clinton has made no formal announcement of her candidacy, the consensus on Wall Street is that she is running—and running hard—and that her national organization is quickly falling into place behind the scenes. That all makes her attractive. Wall Street, above all, loves a winner, especially one who is not likely to tamper too radically with its vast money pot.

According to a wide assortment of bankers and hedge-fund managers I spoke to for this article, Clinton’s rock-solid support on Wall Street is not anything that can be dislodged based on a few seemingly off-the-cuff comments in Boston calculated to protect her left flank. (For the record, she quickly walked them back, saying she had “short-handed” her comments about the failures of trickle-down economics by suggesting, absurdly, that corporations don’t create jobs.) “I think people are very excited about Hillary,” says one Wall Street investment professional with close ties to Washington. “Most people in New York on the finance side view her as being very pragmatic. I think they have confidence that she understands how things work and that she’s not a populist.”

There’s much more to the story — including the key role a MorganStanley exec is playing in her all-but-official campaign. Read the rest at Politico.
The Hole in Hillary’s Flip-Flop Excuse

She keeps saying new information makes her change her mind on policy. But what new information?
By JACK SHAFER
October 14, 2015

Updated October 14, 2015
Hillary Clinton has a propensity to change her mind on big issues. She has reversed her positions on gay marriage, immigration, gun control, the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact, mass incarceration and the Iraq War, and some believe her recent stand on the Keystone XL pipeline constitutes a flip, too.

When CNN moderator Anderson Cooper called Clinton on her flip-floppery in Tuesday night’s presidential debate (“Will you say anything to get elected?” he asked), she defended her policy somersaults as expressions of political thoughtfulness rather than weakness.

“Well, actually, I have been very consistent,” Clinton said, arguing her unyielding fealty to “the same values and principles” over her entire life. “But like most human beings—including those of us who run for office—I do absorb new information. I do look at what’s happening in the world.” It is the information that changes, she led her questioner to understand, and when that new information surfaces, she folds it into her existing “values and principles.”

Clinton’s response, which portrayed changed views as consistency, mirrored the one she gave Chuck Todd two weeks ago on Meet the Press. Todd asked Clinton whether her positions change “out of political expediency.” She answered:

I don’t think it reflects how people who are thoughtful actually conduct their lives. I mean, if we don’t learn, if we don’t, you know, make decisions based on the best information we have available, well, you know, that’s regrettable. And what I’ve always tried to do is to say, “OK, what is the best decision that I can think about making?”

Everybody agrees that changing facts can justify a change in one’s view. But Clinton’s insistence that learning about “new” or “better” information propels her reassessments prompts this question: What was the new information?
To my knowledge, no new “information” about gay marriage emerged from the day she endorsed civil unions for same-sex couples to the day she demanded the right to same-sex marriage. The immigration, gun control and mass-incarceration issues have been similarly unrippled by shocking new findings. Likewise, the information required to make a stand against the Iraq War was not hidden. Other senators found it and took that position!

Perhaps the anti-war information escaped Clinton’s notice—in which case, bad on her—or
perhaps she viewed it and decided not to act on it—in which case, double-bad on her. And who among us had a better vantage from which to assemble an encyclopedic view on the Trans-Pacific Partnership than Clinton? She praised it endlessly while secretary of state, but pulled a moonshiner’s turn last week to skedaddle away from it. If Clinton lived in Gobles, Michigan, had no library card and no Internet connection, we could accept her new-information excuse. But for the past 25 years, Clinton has had some of the best researchers at her disposal—a private staff, a campaign staff, the wizards at the State Department staff, a senatorial staff, the busy beavers from the Congressional Research Service and the White House staff. And, in fact, every indication and story we know about Hillary Clinton’s policy work belabors just how much she studies and learns. So if new or better information has been the impetus for her policy shifts, she must concede that she has a fat history of taking the wrong position in the early going and then requiring a re-do. The constant need for re-dos appears to indicate that she’d make a lousy surgeon and a bad 3 a.m. president.
Is Clinton lazy? Inattentive? Cognitively impaired? Of course not. Nor does she really view the major issues as uncharted continents that require additional exploring. She knows what she thinks about most things, and what she thinks is heavily guided by what the “new information” contained in polls and political pressure tell her to think. In this regard, she’s more like other politicians than unlike them. Politics demands malleable mathematics from its practitioners. During President Bill Clinton’s administration, political flexibility was associated with triangulation—that is, taking a position that was above right or left and allowed Clinton to cherry-pick from his foes’ ideas and incorporate them into his own. Instead of triangulating, Hillary Clinton shapeshifts, guided less by a grand ideology and more by grand ambition. What good is consistency if it doesn’t bring you to power?
Every politician flip-flops. (Every politician except Bernie Sanders, that is.) But Clinton flip-flops so frequently that course changes have become her signature move. As long as there is new or better information to consult—and when isn’t there?—none of Clinton’s positions can be considered fixed or even rooted. Reversing the Beats, who preached “First Thought, Best Thought,” Clinton has built a campaign on the mantra “Last Thought, Best Thought.” No slave to ideology—even her own progressive ideology—she promises to make every day of her presidency a surprise. Unless, of course, new information intrudes.
******
“When my information changes, I alter my conclusions. What do you do, Sir?” Who said it? Not John Maynard Keynes! I recently changed my mind about Yankees fans. You? Send your flip-flops via email to Shafer.Politico@gmail.com. My email alerts are composed by John Maynard Keynes, my Twitter feed is consistently good, and my RSS feed is not yet repaired. Sorry.

Hillary Clinton’s Leftward Flip-Flops
July 22, 2015

Faced with a populist surge in favor of Sen. Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton has tacked strongly to the left and – in so doing – is leaving in her wake many long-held positions on crime, trade, same-sex marriage, etc., to such a degree that it’s hard to know what she’d do as president, says Evan Popp. [The following cites mainly domestic issues, but trade and the Iraq War are included too. –Dick]


As a strong challenge from the Left emerges in the form of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton, who was once thought to be headed for a coronation in the Democratic presidential primary, has tried to recast herself as a progressive champion. However, in her mad dash to the left, Clinton cannot escape her history of supporting, as the First Lady and then as a senator, the decidedly centrist and corporate-friendly policies of her husband, President Bill Clinton.

The contrast in views espoused by First Lady/ Sen. Clinton, versus 2008, and to a greater extent, 2016 presidential candidate Clinton, could emerge as a major problem for her campaign. Although Clinton has been extremely close-lipped to the media thus far in her latest bid for the Democratic nomination, by attempting to portray herself in speeches as a progressive during a time in which the political winds of the millennial generation are blowing left, Clinton has unwittingly shown herself to be a consummate flip-flopper who takes the positions that are most likely to return her to the White House.

A run-through on a litany of issues important to progressives reveals a candidate in Clinton who once held decidedly anti-progressive views on many of the important questions of the day.

**Same-Sex Marriage**

Few issues in recent memory have prompted as great a reversal of public opinion in as short a time as same-sex marriage. Between 2003 and 2013, the proportion of Americans supporting marriage equality rose 21 points nationwide, from 32 percent to 53 percent. As recently as May 2015, before the historic Supreme Court ruling that made same-sex marriage legal across the country, 57 percent of Americans were supportive of marriage equality.

Clinton came out in favor of marriage equality in 2013, after a majority of Americans had already indicated their support. To be fair, she was not the only prominent politician to withhold their approval until it was clear public opinion had shifted. President Barack Obama waited until 2012 to come out in favor of marriage equality, following Vice President Joe Biden’s comments supporting same-sex marriage.
But it is telling what Clinton’s views on the issue were back in 2000 when the electorate was still squarely against marriage equality. Clinton stated gay couples had no place in the institution of marriage, and said she would have voted for the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, which defined marriage as between a man and a woman.

“Marriage has got historic, religious and moral content that goes back to the beginning of time and I think a marriage is as a marriage has always been, between a man and a woman,” Clinton said in 2000.

Even as recently as 2014, despite having come out in favor of same-sex marriage the year before, Clinton was hesitant to endorse efforts for nationwide marriage equality, hiding behind the favorite Republican Party talking point of states’ rights.

“Marriage had always been a matter left to the states. And in many of the conversations that I and my colleagues and supporters had, I fully endorse the efforts by activists who work state-by-state,” she said.

But just a year later, with an ever increasing number of people supportive of establishing nationwide equality for same-sex couples, Clinton changed her tune. She advocated that the Supreme Court rule in favor of same-sex couples, in a clear contrast with her states-based approach from the previous year.

Clinton will say she, like many politicians, has evolved on the issue of marriage equality. But the evolution of her views very conveniently follows the change in public opinion on the issue and falls in line with her overall move to the left to combat the appeal of Sanders — who was one of a minority of members of Congress to vote against the Defense of Marriage Act — to progressive Democrats. And it’s not the only issue she has surreptitiously “evolved” on.

Trade

One of Clinton’s most conspicuous and recent flip-flops is on the issue of “free trade.” As President Obama sought fast track authority from Congress to pursue the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal — TPP — Clinton was pressured by Sanders to take a stance on the deal, one that Sanders and many progressive activists and labor groups are vehemently opposed to.

In a move consistent with her attempt to portray herself as progressive, Clinton said she had doubts about the trade deal and stated if she were voting, she would most likely not have supported the trade package moving through Congress at the time, which gave Obama fast track trade authority to negotiate the deal.

“At this point, probably not,” she said when asked if she would have voted to give Obama fast track authority. However, in 2012, while serving as Secretary of State, Clinton spoke about the TPP in much more glowing terms.

“We need to keep upping our game both bilaterally and with partners across the region through agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership or TPP,” Clinton said “This TPP sets the gold standard in trade agreements to open free, transparent, fair trade, the kind of environment that has the rule of law and a level playing field. And when negotiated, this agreement will cover 40 percent of the world’s total trade
and build in strong protections for workers and the environment.”

With the TPP coming under intense scrutiny from progressives and potentially representing a dividing issue between her and Sanders, Clinton flipped her script on the trade deal by stating she probably wouldn’t vote for it, just three years after expressing strong support for the TPP.

And it’s not the first time Clinton has flip-flopped on the issue of free trade agreements. While First Lady, she was a supporter of the North American Free Trade Agreement — NAFTA — which was championed by President Bill Clinton. Speaking about NAFTA in 1996, Hillary Clinton said, “I think everybody is in favor of free and fair trade. I think NAFTA is proving its worth.”

Later she discussed NAFTA in a 2003 memoir, writing “Creating a free trade zone in North America — the largest free trade zone in the world — would expand U.S. exports, create jobs and ensure that our economy was reaping the benefits, not the burdens, of globalization. Although unpopular with labor unions, expanding trade opportunities was an important administration goal.”

By 2007, however, Clinton’s views on NAFTA had changed. In a 2007 debate during the race for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, Clinton contrasted her previous statements, saying in the debate NAFTA was the wrong course of action.

“NAFTA was a mistake to the extent that it did not deliver on what we had hoped it would, and that’s why I call for a trade timeout,” she said.

On trade, as with many other issues, Clinton has demonstrated a startling propensity to change her mind, most recently flip-flopping in the direction of progressive advocates on an issue she has spoken quite clearly in favor of in the past.

Iraq War

Clinton, and to be fair many Democrats, flip-flopped on the Iraq War, but her change of view is indicative of her tendency to take the politically popular view of the time. In 2002, when Clinton voted to give President George W. Bush the authorization to use military force in Iraq, public opinion was still squarely in support of the war.

In a 2002 speech on the floor of the Senate, Clinton said she supported the measure to authorize force because of Iraq’s dictatorial ruler Saddam Hussein.

“Intelligence reports show that Saddam Hussein has worked to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons stock, his missile delivery capability, and his nuclear program. He has also given aid, comfort, and sanctuary to terrorists, including al-Qaeda members,” Clinton said.

Clinton went on to say in her Senate floor speech that if left unchecked Hussein would “continue to increase his capacity to wage biological and chemical warfare, and will keep trying to develop nuclear
weapons.”

In a meeting with CODEPINK in 2003, Clinton also furthered the since debunked storyline that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

“There is a very easy way to prevent anyone from being put into harm’s way and that is for Saddam Hussein to disarm and I have absolutely no belief that he will,” Clinton said. “The very difficult question for all of us is how does one bring about the disarmament of someone with such a proven track record of a commitment, if not an obsession, with weapons of mass destruction?”

However, by 2007, as public sentiment cooled on the Iraq War, Clinton’s view of her vote to authorize the use of force had shifted. In September 2007, in the midst of her campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, Clinton said of her war vote, “Obviously, if I had known then what I know now about what the President would do with the authority that was given him, I would not have voted the way that I did.”

Then in her 2014 memoir *Hard Choices* with the war in Iraq increasingly remembered as a colossal foreign policy blunder, Clinton went even further in her opposition to the war. “I thought I had acted in good faith and made the best decision I could with the information I had,” Clinton said of her Iraq vote. “And I wasn’t alone in getting it wrong. But I still got it wrong. Plain and simple.”

Clinton is right to say she got it wrong, as the war in Iraq represented a dark chapter in American foreign policy. But the trouble arises with the fact that she supported the war when it was popular with the American people and only expressed her opposition to it once public opinion turned against the conflict. On this, and these other issues highlighted, it appears that Clinton is much more concerned with pandering to the widest swath of voters than to upholding any personal beliefs.

**Crime**

Crime is another policy area in which Clinton’s rhetoric has changed dramatically from her days in Bill Clinton’s White House. In fact, Clinton has made a new approach to dealing with those who commit crimes a central part of her campaign, calling for an “end to the era of mass incarceration.”

During her latest campaign, Clinton has been an outspoken critic of the current criminal justice system. “We have allowed our criminal justice system to get out of balance, and these recent tragedies should galvanize us to come together as a nation to find our balance again,” Clinton said.

Clinton is right, the current criminal justice system and approach to dealing with crime is inherently counterproductive. But she hasn’t always felt that way. Back when the more popular political school of thought was to be “tough on crime,” Clinton displayed a much more aggressive approach to punishing those who commit crimes.

During Bill Clinton’s presidency, Hillary Clinton supported his tough on crime policies and a 1994 law “that among other things, has increased untold numbers of prison sentences by encouraging states to drastically reduce or eliminate parole and early release.”
In 1994, Hillary Clinton’s quotes about crime sound very different from her 2016 campaign when she talks about the problem of mass incarceration. “We need more and tougher prison sentences for repeat offenders,” she said in 1994. “We need more prisons to keep violent offenders for as long as it takes to keep them off the streets.”

Candidates are allowed to change their minds and it is possible that Clinton’s perspective on crime and these other issues has indeed shifted. However, the sheer volume of issues that Clinton has flip-flopped on, and the progressive territory she is trying to stake out with these switches as a mechanism for stemming Sanders’ momentum, tells a story of a candidate willing to say whatever it takes to win the presidency.

**Driver’s Licenses for Undocumented Immigrants**

A clear and recent example of a Clinton flip-flop is her stance on providing driver’s licenses to undocumented immigrants. During her quest for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, Clinton generated headlines when she said she would not support a proposal put forward by then-New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer to provide driver’s licenses to undocumented immigrants that pass a driving test. This came after criticism that her position on the issue was not clear.

When Spitzer eventually abandoned the driver’s license proposal, Clinton praised the decision. “I support Governor Spitzer’s decision today to withdraw his proposal,” she said in a statement. “As President, I will not support driver’s licenses for undocumented people and will press for comprehensive immigration reform that deals with all of the issues around illegal immigration, including border security and fixing our broken system.”

This put her in clear contrast with then Sen. Barack Obama, who was supportive of the idea of providing driver’s licenses to undocumented immigrants who passed a driver’s test. However, in her second bid for the Democratic nomination, Clinton has done a 180 on the issue. Clinton indicated the change in her position through a campaign spokesperson who said “Hillary supports state policies to provide driver’s licenses to undocumented immigrants. This is consistent with her support for the president’s executive action.”

Clinton didn’t say what prompted her to switch her position on the issue, but in a primary where she is running in a full sprint to the left, it isn’t surprising that she has changed her tune in a way that appeals to progressives.

**Ethanol**

Perhaps the most egregious Clinton flip-flop came on an issue that’s not on most of the country’s radar screen: ethanol. However, this issue tends to come up time and time again in presidential primaries/caucuses because of its importance in Iowa and the sway that state holds in the presidential primary process.

An examination of Clinton’s rhetoric on ethanol indicates her support for the controversial fuel source has
changed at politically convenient times. An article by The Daily Beast explored Clinton’s position on ethanol and examined how, and likely why, she flipped so dramatically on the issue.

“In 2002, Clinton opposed the mandated use of just two billion gallons of ethanol per year,” the article stated. “But a mere five years later, after seeing that she had to go through Iowa — which produces more ethanol than any other state — to return to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, she was advocating the use of 18 times that quantity of biofuel.”

Additional proof of her anti-ethanol history is Clinton’s participation in writing a 2002 letter about mandates in ethanol use. The letter stated that an ethanol mandate would add “an astonishing new anti-consumer government mandate — that every US refiner must use an ever-increasing volume of ethanol.” The Daily Beast also reported that while serving in the Senate, Clinton voted against measures supportive of ethanol 17 times.

Fast forward to 2007, when Clinton was seeking the Democratic nomination for President, and as her first step in that journey, a win in the Iowa caucuses. While on a campaign stop in Iowa, Clinton stressed the importance of the corn-based energy product, saying the U.S. needed to work on “limiting our dependence on foreign oil. And we have a perfect example right here in Iowa about how it can work with all of the ethanol that’s being produced here.”

The fact that Clinton flip-flopped on ethanol while campaigning for President in Iowa after she had consistently voted against ethanol related measures as a senator is telling of her tendency to take the politically convenient stance, rather than uphold any convictions. It shows that her predominate interest is getting elected, rather than adhering to principle.

Conclusions

So what do all these flip-flops say about Hillary Clinton? The takeaway message is that while she is angling to appeal to the more liberal wing of the Democratic party, progressives should not trust Clinton to follow through if she is elected President, as she has a history of changing her mind on issues at politically convenient times.

I’m not saying that politicians should never be allowed to change their mind, of course political figures’ views are allowed to evolve and shift. But the problem comes when a politician changes their mind so frequently that it becomes difficult to trust them to follow through on what they’re campaigning on.

Such is the case with Hillary Clinton. She may cast herself as a progressive, but her prior history and propensity to flip-flop say otherwise.

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COMPARING HC TO DEMS AND REPUBS ON VARIOUS ISSUES

Dick,

Happy Labor Day! Here’s where the 2016 presidential candidates stand on some big issues for workers.

$15 minimum wage: Bernie Sanders and Martin O’Malley are for a $15 federal minimum wage. Hillary Clinton is for $12 -- and $15 in some cities. Jeb Bush would eliminate the federal minimum wage. Scott Walker "doesn't think it serves a purpose." Donald Trump would keep it, but would not increase it much, if at all.

Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal: Bernie Sanders and Martin O'Malley oppose the TPP. Hillary Clinton has said there are some elements that should be changed, but hasn't outright opposed it. Jeb Bush, Scott Walker, and Marco Rubio support the TPP. Donald Trump, Rand Paul, Ted Cruz, Mike Huckabee, Carly Fiorina, and Bobby Jindal oppose the TPP, or at least opposed giving President Obama “fast track” authority earlier this year.

Equal pay for women: Hillary Clinton was the lead sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act in the Senate. Bernie Sanders voted for it. Martin O'Malley signed equal pay protections into law in Maryland. Donald Trump says, “If they do the same job, they should get the same pay.”

Rand Paul, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, Chris Christie, Rick Perry, and Bobby Jindal all vetoed or voted against equal pay protections. Scott Walker repealed an equal pay law already on the books in Wisconsin!

Expanding Social Security benefits: Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton, and Martin O'Malley all support expanding Social Security benefits. All of the Republican presidential candidates would cut Social Security except Donald Trump and Mike Huckabee. Ben Carson is not on record one way or the other.

As you celebrate Labor Day, please tell us how recent events have affected your opinions on the 2016 presidential race.

Dick, you have taken our survey in the past, but we are monitoring changing opinions over time. Will you update your answers on our very short survey about the 2016 presidential race?

Every week brings new opportunities for progressives in the presidential race. Help us keep a finger on the pulse -- moment to moment and week to week -- of how progressives think candidates are doing.

Past survey results have strengthened our work on the 2016 race -- helping select and time our efforts for maximum impact. Your latest opinion matters a lot as we plan next steps together.

Update your answers on the very short 2016 presidential survey.

Take the very short survey.
Thanks for being a bold progressive.

-- Jack Hilson, PCCC Organizer

P.S. You may have noticed that Harvard professor Lawrence Lessig is exploring a presidential run. He is now included in the survey.

Paid for by the Progressive Change Campaign Committee PAC (www.BoldProgressives.org) and not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. Contributions to the PCCC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

GENERAL: 4 BOOKS

TWO 2007 BOOKS REVIEWED IN NYT BOOK REVIEW (July 15, 2007) by Jennifer Senior, “Good Hillary, Bad Hillary.” “After 16 years on the national stage, Hillary Clinton is still a bafflement.”


Hillary Clinton in the News

Gender and Authenticity in American Politics

How the media helped construct political gender norms—and critiqued Hillary Clinton for violating them

The charge of inauthenticity has trailed Hillary Clinton from the moment she entered the national spotlight and stood in front of television cameras. Hillary Clinton in the News: Gender and Authenticity in American Politics shows how the U.S. media created their own news
frames of Clinton's political authenticity and image-making, from her participation in Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign through her own 2008 presidential bid.

Using theories of nationalism, feminism, and authenticity, Parry-Giles tracks the evolving ways the major networks and cable news programs framed Clinton's image as she assumed roles ranging from surrogate campaigner, legislative advocate, and financial investor to international emissary, scorned wife, and political candidate. This study magnifies how the coverage that preceded Clinton's entry into electoral politics was grounded in her earliest presence in the national spotlight, and in long-standing nationalistic beliefs about the boundaries of authentic womanhood and first lady comportment. Once Clinton dared to cross those gender boundaries and vie for office in her own right, the news exuded a rhetoric of sexual violence. These portrayals served as a warning to other women who dared to enter the political arena and violate the protocols of authentic womanhood.

"Shawn J. Parry-Giles has written an insightful, exhaustive, and historically rooted analysis of Hillary Rodham Clinton's numerous media permutations. The book will be useful to non-academics as well as academic researchers as we seek to understand the role news media play in constructing the public personae of women."--Mary Douglas Vavrus, author of Postfeminist News: Political Women in Media Culture

Shawn J. Parry-Giles is a professor of communication and director of the Center for Political Communication and Civic Leadership at the University of Maryland and the coauthor of The Prime-Time Presidency: The West Wing and U.S. Nationalism.

TWO 2015 BOOKS


“My Turn is compulsively good reading—not only for its glimpse into Hillary Clinton's mind but for its insights into the entire Clinton political-philanthropic machine. Doug Henwood is both smart and—almost uniquely for this campaign season—sane.”—Barbara Ehrenreich, author of Nickel and Dimed
“Doug Henwood sums up the argument against Ms. Clinton well.” —New York Observer

“Doug Henwood… twisted the facts to argue that Hillary was a corporatist wolf in sheep’s clothing.” —David Brock

“I represented Wall Street, as a senator from New York.” —Hillary Clinton, October 2015, during the first Democratic TV debate

ABOUT THE BOOK

Hillary Clinton is running for the presidency with a message of hope and change. But, as Doug Henwood makes clear in this concise, devastating indictment, little trust can be placed in her campaign promises. Rigorously reviewing her record, Henwood shows how Clinton’s positions on key issues have always blown with the breeze of expediency, though generally around an axis of moralism and hawkishness. Without a meaningful program other than a broad fealty to the status quo, Henwood suggests, “the case for Hillary boils down to this: she has experience, she’s a woman, and it’s her turn.”

Publication February 1, 2016 • 200 pages

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Doug Henwood is a journalist and financial analyst, who publishes two newsletters, Left Business Observer and (together with Philippa Dunne) The Liscio Report. He is a contributing editor at The Nation and the author of three previous books: The State of the USA Atlas, Wall Street and After the New Economy. His writing has appeared in Harper’s Magazine, Grand Street, the Village Voice, Newsday, the Los Angeles Times, and The Guardian. Henwood is host of the nationally-syndicated KPFA radio show “Behind the News.”

THE MY TURN COLLECTION

Working with artist Sarah Sole, OR Books is pleased to announce a line of merchandise accompanying the new book My Turn by Doug Henwood. Even prior to the book’s release, its cover attracted widespread media attention including items in the The Washington Post, the New Republic and on MSNBC. Now, alongside the book, you can purchase “My Turn” tote bags, limited edition prints, and a 2016 calendar with a stunning new portrait of HRC by Sarah Sole for every month. More

READ AN EXCERPT http://www.orbooks.com/catalog/my-turn-by-doug-henwood/

False Choices: The Faux Feminism of Hillary Rodham Clinton. Edited by Liza Featherstone. VERSO (40 years of radical publishing), 2015.

http://www.versobooks.com/books/2121-false-choices

Hillary Clinton presents her campaign for the presidency and her long career in public life as a triumph of feminism. But an all-star lineup of American feminists here says, "It's not that simple." In a history of proposals and policies on welfare, Wall Street, crime and policing, immigration, international health, and war, Clinton has advanced ideas and laws that have actually hurt women--and restricted the powerful idea of feminism itself. From leading feminist figures like Laura Flanders, Moe Tkacik and Medea Benjamin to a new generation of young women writers and thinkers, this book restores to feminism its revolutionary meaning and outlines how truly robust feminist policies could transform the United States and its relation to the world.

Includes essays from prominent feminist writers Liza Featherstone, Laura Flanders, Moe Tkacik, Medea Benjamin, Frances Fox Piven and Fred Block, Donna Murch, Kathleen Geier, Yasmin Nair, Megan Erickson, Tressie McMillan Cottom, Catherine Liu, Amber A'Lee, Magpie Corvid, Belén Fernández, Zillah Eisenstein, and others.

3 BOOKS FOR YOUTH 2016

Hillary's new star turn: heroine of children's books - The ... https://www.washingtonpost.com/.../books/...books...h...

The Washington Post

Jan 7, 2016 - Three new books use the presidential hopeful's life as an inspiration for kids. ... This month three children's books about one candidate — Hillary Clinton ... Clinton's struggle with admitting mistakes, such as her support, as a ...
TWO VERY SHORT ESSAYS by SOCIALIST FEMINISTS FOLLOW, THE FIRST PRO-HC, THE 2ND CON-

- ELECTION 2016
- FEMINISM
- HILLARY CLINTON
- JANUARY 25–FEBRUARY 1, 2016 ISSUE

Why This Socialist Feminist Is For Hillary

_The stalled revolution for gender equity won’t be won simply by installing a woman in the White House—but it can’t hurt._

By Suzanna Danuta Walters _THE NATION, JANUARY 5, 2015_

At first glance, you’d probably guess that I would proudly don a “Feel the Bern” T-shirt and make a generous donation to the democratic socialist firing up the Democratic Party. Born to leftists themselves born to leftists, I am what is known in some circles as a “red-diaper baby.”

My immigrant Jewish grandparents met in New York City, at a meeting of the Young People’s Socialist League on the Lower East Side, and I grew up more familiar with the words to labor anthems than to those of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” My mother was an activist in the civil-rights movement who later engaged with feminism, antiwar activism, and the vast panoply of progressive issues that ebbed and flowed through our national politics over the past half-century. [http://www.thenation.com/article/why-this-socialist-feminist-is-for-hillary/](http://www.thenation.com/article/why-this-socialist-feminist-is-for-hillary/)
In other words, I come by my democratic socialism organically and deeply. And truth be told, I am not immune to the gruff charms of Bernie, which are as familiar to me as the radical Passover seders that punctuated my childhood. His sharp critiques of wealth inequality and unfettered corporate control of the political process were articles of faith at my own family's dinner-table debates. And his Brooklyn cadence and pedantic self-righteousness remind me of... everyone I knew growing up.

For those of us on the left, the pressure to join the Bernie Express is intense. Friends and colleagues, casual Facebook acquaintances and lifelong political allies alike, all throw up their hands in despair or sneer in disgust if you don’t pledge allegiance to the candidate whose strength and broad appeal in the primary has been both surprising and energizing to progressives used to “holding our noses” and voting for the lesser of two evils. Never mind that I will gladly vote and work for Bernie if he is the nominee, and I applaud the way he has pushed Hillary to the left. For refusing to back Bernie in the primary, I’m a dupe and a traitor; I’m a tool of (take your pick) imperialist, war-mongering, militaristic, in-the-pocket-of-Wall-Street corporate hacks.

So why do I support Hillary—and in the fairly resolute manner that I do? (Because, at the very least, serious leftists and feminists are supposed to carry our support with heavy hearts, wishing she were more like Elizabeth Warren and less like Margaret Thatcher.) Yes, I’ve read most of the critiques of her, and, yes, I’m aware of her record and her complex, often vexing history. But I am no more ambivalent about her than I am about any American politician who will inevitably be found wanting in any number of crucial ways.

It is not clear to me that a gridlocked leftist vision would be better for women than actually having a woman in the Oval Office.

Here’s why: I want a woman president—and, no, not any woman president. Hillary is not, as her detractors would have it, Margaret Thatcher or Carly Fiorina—or Sarah Palin or Michelle Bachmann, or some other female candidate whose platform rests on antipathy to any feminist concerns. Like most in the Democratic Party, she is a centrist. In her political orientation, deep intelligence, and policy wonkishness, she is similar to Obama—and not as dissimilar to Bernie as one might imagine. Still, I support her less for her specific political positions (some of which I agree with, many of which I do not—all of which are far superior to the racist/sexist/xenophobic sideshow that is the Republican primary field) than for the iconic value of electing the first woman president of the United States.
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Dick Bennett

Blog: http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/
For research purposes, specific subjects can be located in the following alphabetized index, and searched on the blog using the search box. The search box is located in the upper left corner of the webpage.
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