STOP HILLARY!
Vote No to a Clinton Dynasty
BY DOUG HENWOOD

HOW THE ISLAMIC STATE WAS WON
Interviews with Fighters, Enemies, and Potential Recruits
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OFF THE LAND
What Subsistence Really Looks Like
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How’s that hopey, changey stuff working out for you?” Sarah Palin asked American voters in a taunting 2010 speech. The answer: Not so well. We avoided a full-blown depression, but the job market remains deeply sick, and it’s become quite mainstream to talk about the U.S. economy having fallen into structural stagnation (though the rich are thriving). Barack Obama has, if anything, seemed more secretive than George W. Bush. He kills alleged terrorists whom his predecessor would merely have tortured. The climate crisis gets worse, and the political capacity even to talk about it, much less do anything about it, is completely absent. These aren’t the complaints Palin would make, of course. But people who voted for Obama in 2008 were imagining a more peaceful, more egalitarian world, and they haven’t gotten it.

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Hillary Clinton, then a senator, signs a poster during a 2008 presidential-campaign event at Wait Chapel on the Wake Forest University campus, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina © Joe Raedle/Getty Images
Politics has an amazing stability and continuity about it. Obama, widely viewed as a populist action hero during the 2008 campaign, made no bones about his admiration for Ronald Reagan. The Gipper, he said, changed the trajectory of America in a way that Richard Nixon did not and in a way that Bill Clinton did not. He put us on a fundamentally different path because the country was ready for it. I think they felt [that] with all the excesses of the Sixties and the Seventies, government had grown and grown, but there wasn’t much sense of accountability in terms of how it was operating.

Now, the “excesses of the Sixties and the Seventies” included things like feminism, gay liberation, the antiwar movement, a militant civil rights movement—all good things, in my view, but I know that many people disagree. In any case, coming into office with something like a mandate, Obama never tried to make a sharp political break with the past, as Reagan did from the moment of his first inaugural address. Reagan dismissed the postwar Keynesian consensus—the idea that government had a responsibility to soften the sharpest edges of capitalism by fighting recession and providing some sort of basic safety net. Appropriating some of the language of the left about revolution and the promise of the future, he unleashed what he liked to call the magic of the marketplace: cutting taxes for the rich, eliminating regulations, and whitewashing away at social spending.

What Reagan created, with his embrace of the nutty Laffer curve and his smiling war on organized labor, was a strange, unequally distributed boom that lasted through the early 1990s. After the caretaker George H. W. Bush administration evaporated, Bill Clinton took over and, with a few minor adjustments, kept the party going for another decade. Profits skyrocketed, as did the promise of the future, he unleashed what he liked to call the magic of the marketplace: cutting taxes for the rich, eliminating regulations, and whitewashing away at social spending.

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But there was a contradiction under it all: a system dependent on high levels of mass consumption for both economic dynamism and political legitimacy has a problem when mass purchasing power is squeezed. For a few decades, consumers borrowed to make up for what their paychecks were lacking. But that model broke down once and for all with the crisis of 2008. Today we desperately need a new political economy—one that features a more equal distribution of income, investment in our rotting social and physical infrastructure, and a more humane ethic. We also need a judicious foreign policy, and a commander-in-chief who will resist the instant gratification of air strikes and rhetorical bluster.

Is Hillary Clinton the answer to these prayers? It’s hard to think so, despite the widespread liberal fantasy of her as a progressive paragon, who will follow through exactly as Barack Obama did not. In fact, a close look at her life and career is perhaps the best antidote to all these great expectations. The historical record, such as it is, may also be the only antidote, since most progressives are unwilling to discuss Hillary in anything but the most general, flattering terms. Pundits who have written about her in the past dismissed my queries in rude and patronizing ways. Strangely, though, I was contacted out of nowhere by a representative of something called American Bridge, who wanted to make my acquaintance. At first I thought it was a new think tank—but I soon found out it was a pro-Hillary lobbying group formed by the G.O.P. apostate David Brock. I can’t prove it, of course, but it sure felt like the Hillary machine was subtly attempting to spin this piece. Brock himself declined to speak with me, as did a diplomat who had worked for Hillary at the State Department. Apparently you have to take a loyalty oath to get an interview.

Hillary Rodham grew up in the affluent Chicago suburb of Park Ridge, Illinois. In her child-rearing manual, It Takes a Village (1996), she recalls that her family “looked like it was straight out of the 1950s television sitcom Father Knows Best.”

Hillary has a long history of being economical with the truth. One can discuss her voluminous but minimally informative memoir Living History (2003), Carl Bernstein noted that it was mostly valuable for its “insight into how Hillary sees herself and wants the story of her life to be told. It is often at variance with my reporting, other books, and with newspapers and periodicals as well.”
forgive her reticence about sharing the traumas of her childhood, which included her father cutting down his brother's corpse from a noose. But it was not the stuff of sitcoms. As Gail Sheehy reports, Hugh Rodham was an "authoritarian drillmaster," a reaction-ary who demanded austerity, discipline, and self-reliance. Displays of emotion were regarded as signs of weakness. Her mother, Dorothy Rodham, fought loudly with her husband—but ultimately put up with him, as Hillary would with her future husband.

Hillary absorbed the conservatism of her father and her surroundings. In junior high, she fell under the influence of a history teacher, Paul Carlson, a frothing McCarthyite. As Carlson told Sheehy, the young Hillary was "a hawk."

Soon after, though, she found another guru, one she would stick with for years—a young minister at the First Methodist Church of Park Ridge named Don Jones. Jones was a dashing intellectual who helped open Hillary's mind. He got the church youth reading D. H. Lawrence, listening to Bob Dylan, and talking about Picasso. He took them to the South Side of Chicago to meet with black and Latino teenagers. In January 1963, Jones upped the ante further and brought Hillary to hear Martin Luther King Jr. speak in Chicago—and escorted her on stage to meet him. She was moved, but not enough to stop her from campaigning for Goldwater in 1964. Then she was off to Wellesley, where she eventually began to feel alienated from what she called "the entire unreality of middle-class America." Still, Hillary was not about to become a student revolutionary: identifying herself as an "agnostic intellectual liberal [and] emotional conservative," she stayed away from the protests and picket lines.

Hillary wrote her undergraduate thesis on the founder of community organizing, Saul Alinsky. Her academic adviser, Alan Schechter, told Bill's biographer David Maraniss that she "started out thinking community action programs would make a big difference," but later dismissed them as "too idealistic and simplistic" and compromised by their dependence on outside money and help. There's an interesting hint of Hillary's future in her characterization of Alinsky's thinking: "Welfare programs since the New Deal have neither redeveloped poverty areas nor even catalyzed the poor into helping themselves. A cycle of dependency has been created which ensnares its victims into resignation and apathy. While there's an element of truth to this, Alinsky's remedy was for poor people to claim political power on their own behalf. Hillary, as we have already seen, would instead support welfare "reform" in the 1990s, leaving single mothers at the mercy of the low-wage job market.

During Hillary's senior year, a movement arose to have a student speaker at graduation, and she was universally seen as the one for the job. Her remarks, though enthusiastically received, were meandering. What stands out, however, is this remarkable passage:

We are, all of us, exploring a world that none of us even understands and attempting to create within that uncertainty. But there are some things we feel, feelings that our prevailing, acquisitive, and competitive corporate life, including tragically the universities, is not the way of life for us. We're searching for more immediate, ecstatic, and penetrating modes of living.

That is not the Hillary we know today. But the practical Hillary has always had a gift for overruling the ecstatic and penetrating Hillary: when Alinsky offered her an organizing job after college, she rejected it in favor of law school. He said, "Well, that's no way to change anything." She responded: "Well, I see a different way from you. And I think there is a real opportunity."

It's widely known that Hillary and Bill met when they were students at Yale Law School; it's less known that their first date essentially involved crossing a picket line. Bill suggested they go to a Rothko exhibition at the university's art gallery, but it was closed because of a strike by unionized employees. After clearing away some garbage that had piled up during the strike, Bill convinced a guard to let them in. Hillary was impressed—and not for the first time—by his powers of persuasion. She found him "complex," with "lots of layers."

By Yale Law standards, Hillary was a conservative, which meant that she opposed the Vietnam War but still basically believed in American institutions. Despite looking like a hippie in her tinted glasses and candy-striped slacks, she had no patience for the utopianism of the time.

In 1973, the year after she graduated from law school, she published a paper in the Harvard Educational Review on the legal rights of children. She'd gotten interested in the topic when she heard Marian Wright Edelman—the first black woman admitted to the Mississippi bar—speak at Yale. After the lecture, she approached Edelman and ended up working at her D.C.-based public-interest law firm during the summer of 1970, focusing on the conditions of migrant farm laborers and their families.

Although the right would later denounce Hillary's paper as a radical anti-family screed, which supposedly advocated turning over the work of child-rearing to the state, it was anything but. In "Children Under the Law," she concluded that the state was obliged to intervene only in the case of actual harm to children—a standard that had to be extremely strict:

Only medically justifiable reasons for intervention should be acceptable. Parental behavior that does not result in medically diagnosable harm to a child should not be allowed to trigger intervention, however offensive that behavior may be to the community.

It was the first in a series of legal articles on children and families, and an early instance of what she would characterize as a lifelong interest in such issues. Hillary later chaired the board of Edelman's Children's Defense Fund (CDF)—though her rela-
tionship with her former mentor would be strained by Bill's 1996 welfare legislation, which Edelman angrily condemned, declaring that his "signature on this pernicious bill makes a mockery of his pledge not to hurt children."

Soon after his own graduation, Bill returned to Arkansas—first for a stint as a law professor, and then to run for Congress. He advised John Doar, who was putting together the legal team for the Nixon impeachment case, to hire Hillary, who was then at the CDF. Yet according to Maraniss, Bill also sounded out the Arkansas politician David Pryor for his thoughts on how this might affect his own political future. "He knew that his career would be in politics," Pryor told Maraniss, "and the question was whether Hillary's connection with the Watergate committee might have political ramifications."

In any case, she was hired. On the impeachment-committee staff, Hillary became friends with Bernard Nussbaum, who would later serve as Bill's White House counsel. She told him—and anyone else who would listen—that her boyfriend was destined to be president someday. Nussbaum, not surprisingly, thought this was delusional. In Sheehy's account, Hillary tore into him:

You asshole. Bernie, you're a jerk. You don't know this guy. I know this guy. So don't pontificate to me. He is going to be president of the United States.

Of course, expectations were high for her too. So what to do after the impeachment committee dissolved in 1974? She could go back to the CDF. She could go to Washington, work at a law firm, and get a feel for politics—a route complicated by her having failed the D.C. bar exam, an embarrassing fact she kept secret for thirty years. Or she could move to Arkansas to be with Bill. She had visited a few times, but moving to the sticks made her nervous.

She chose Arkansas, where Bill's 1974 congressional campaign was already under way. He lost. But he also made a name for himself, challenging an incumbent against long odds and almost beating him, and immediately began thinking of the next race. His eye was on the governorship, but he thought attorney general might be a better first step.

Hillary, meanwhile, was teaching law and running the school's legal-aid clinic. They spent lots of time together, but marriage was still an open question. She had political ambitions and worried that she would be a bad feminist if she took on family obligations. To gauge the wisdom of marrying Bill, who had already proposed several times, she went back East and canvassed her friends. When she returned to Arkansas, Bill greeted her with a house he had just bought and another marriage proposal. She accepted.

During his 1976 campaign for attorney general, Bill alienated the state's unions by refusing to support the repeal of Arkansas's right-to-work law. It was the first in a long line of gestures aimed at distancing himself from traditional liberal politics. This election he won—though everyone knew the office was just a stepping stone.

The young couple moved from the relatively bohemian Fayetteville to the more formal Little Rock. Hillary went from the legal clinic to the Rose Law Firm, which represented the moneyed interests of Arkansas. It did not hurt her prospects at the firm that her husband was the state's chief legal officer. Not that Bill planned to stay AG for very long. Less than a year after the election, his chief of staff called in a brash young political consultant from New York, Dick Morris, to evaluate Bill's next step—governor or senator? Morris urged a race for governor, beginning a twenty-year association, interrupted by occasional storms, between the crafty tactician and both Clintons.

While at Rose, Hillary's allegiances began to shift. The community-organizing group ACORN, then based in Arkansas and very much in the Alinsky tradition, got a ballot measure passed that would lower electricity rates for residential users in Little Rock and raise them for commercial users. Business, of course, was not pleased, and filed a legal challenge, with Rose representing them. Wade

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Rathke, the founder of ACORN and a friend of Hillary’s, was shocked to see her arguing the case in court. And not only did she argue the case—she helped to craft the underlying legal strategy, which was that the new rate schedule amounted to an unconstitutional “taking of property.” This is now a common right-wing argument against regulation, and Hillary was one of its early architects.

Bill won the 1978 gubernatorial election and embraced as one of his signature programs the improvement of the state’s miserable highway system. He chose to finance it by raising automobile license fees—which proved enormously unpopular and was a major reason he lost his bid for reelection two years later.

Almost as soon as the ballots were counted, Bill and his consigliere began plotting his comeback. Morris’s polling discovered that the people of Arkansas liked Bill, more or less, but saw him as someone who had gone astray at Yale and Oxford. Morris advised him to do a televised mea culpa, which he did. And Hillary, who’d been sticking with her maiden name like the feminist she was, now took Bill’s. He won. And he, Hillary, and Morris together decided that the best way to conduct politics was through a permanent campaign.

Policy and polling would be inseparable.

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his model of governance also depended on enemies. Bill & Co.—and Hillary was intimately involved with this choice from the beginning—picked the teachers’ union. A court had declared the Arkansas education-finance system unconstitutional: it was woefully unequal, with teachers in some districts paid so poorly that they qualified for food stamps. Raising taxes in any serious manner would be a political challenge. So the Clinton team paired a modest, one-point increase in the sales tax with a proposed competence test for teachers. The Arkansas public was not fond of the teachers’ union, Morris found, so Bill could present himself as doing it all for the kids. And, as Morris noted, it was a politically crafty break from the Old Democrat left.

As Bernstein recounts, the Arkansas State Teachers Association “was not exactly the antichrist, and in fact had done some pretty good things in a state where the legislature had typically accorded more attention to protecting the rights of poultry farmers to saturate half of Arkansas’s topsoil with chicken feces than providing its children with a decent education.” But setting them up as the enemy paid rich political dividends. Clinton got the tax increase and the competence test.

These measures did not, however, lead to any significant improvement in the state’s educational performance. A review of the reform efforts by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation later found “a serious, large demoralization of the teaching force. They feel constrained by what they perceive to be a stranglehold of mandates, needless paperwork and limited encouragement.” The problems of the educational system were so structural, so deeply rooted in the state’s poverty and backwardness, that it would require a wholesale overhaul of the political economy to fix them—and the Clintons weren’t about to take that on.

Instead, they were laying the groundwork for what would eventually hit the national stage as the New Democrat movement, which took institutional form as the Democratic Leadership Council. Teacher testing and right-to-work were nice ways to show his (their, really) distance from organized labor. Bill went light on environmental enforcement and spread around tax breaks in the name of economic development. Tyson Foods, the major producer of that aforementioned chicken shit, got nearly $8 million in such breaks between 1988 and 1990, at a time when the company’s budget was twice the state’s.

When she wasn’t busy doing political work for the Clinton enterprise, Hillary was defending the leading lights of Arkansas business at Rose and serving on corporate boards—including the viciously anti-union Walmart (though she did encourage the company to begin a recycling program). And inevitably, there were connections between Rose and the state government, from routine bond issues to more complex litigation. It was all a little smelly, and would later cause the couple no end of headaches.

The Clintons had outgrown Arkansas. Bill contemplated running for president in 1988 but decided not to, in part because he was terrified that one or more of his countless paramours would come forward. But four years later, he found his nerve. There were still plenty of skeletons in the closet, of course. An internal campaign memo from March 1992 listed more than seventy-five potential problems for the candidacy. Among them, needless to say, were Bill’s many women—but about two thirds of the sore spots involved both Bill and Hillary, and eighteen of them pertained to Hillary’s work at Rose.

He won anyway. It was the next stage of what they had earlier called the Journey—their joint venture to change the world. (Hillary’s private slogan was: “Eight years of Bill, eight years of Hill.”) They settled into something resembling a copresidency, with Hillary exercising an influence no previous First Lady ever had. And she caused trouble right from the start. Always suspicious of the media, she shut off reporters’ access to the West Wing of the White House. It ended up alienating the press to no good effect.

More substantively, Hillary was given responsibility for running the healthcare reform agenda. It was very much a New Democrat scheme. Rejecting a Canadian-style single-payer system, Hillary and her team came up with an impossibly complex arrangement called “managed competition.” Employers would be encouraged to provide health care to their workers, individuals would be assembled into cooperatives with some bargaining power, and competition among providers would keep costs down. But it was done in total secrecy, with no attempt to cultivate support in Congress or among the public for what would be a massive piece of legislation—and one vehemently opposed by the medical-industrial complex.

At a meeting with Democratic leaders in April 1993, Senator Bill Bradley suggested that she might need to compromise to get a bill passed. Hillary would have none of it: the White House would “deemon-
ize” any legislators who stood in her way. Bradley was stunned. Years later, he told Bernstein:

That was it for me in terms of Hillary Clinton. You don’t tell members of the Senate you are going to demonize them. It was obviously so basic to who she is. The arrogance… The disdain.

Health-care reform was a conspicuous failure, and most of the blame has to fall on Hillary. Dusting herself off, she soon reinvented herself as a free-wheeling “advocate.” In Living History, she recalls changing gears to focus on “children’s health issues, breast cancer prevention, and protecting funding for public television, legal services, and the arts.” She campaigned for changes in the adoption laws and for a bill to guarantee that newborns and their mothers wouldn’t be kicked out of the hospital sooner than forty-eight hours after the birth. It was all very high-minded, and good for her image, but of limited impact.

She did, however, throw her weight behind Bill’s controversial initiative to (as he put it more than once) “end welfare as we know it.” In Living History, she insists that welfare reform was designed to be “the beginning, not the end, of our concern for the poor.” Really? The whole point of welfare reform was disciplining the poor, not helping them. Still, she bragged that during the Clinton era, “welfare rolls had dropped 60 percent from 14.1 million to 5.8 million, and millions of parents had gone to work.”

Of course, those gains came during the strongest economic expansion of the past several decades, which was itself the byproduct of the unsustainable dot-com bubble. In August 2014, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities published a report on how the Clinton welfare regime, officially designated as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), had worked out over the longer term. They found that TANF is serving fewer families despite increased demand, that the value of benefits has eroded to the point where beneficiaries can’t meet their basic needs, and that it does far less to reduce poverty than its predecessor, AFDC. In addition, the report noted that almost all of the early employment gains for single mothers have since been reversed.

And then there were the scandals, many of them Hillary’s. The most famous was Whitewater, a word it pains me to type. Democrats love to say that there was nothing to that scandal. While it was certainly not the diabolical conspiracy Republicans made it out to be during the fevered days of the Clinton impeachment, it was not nothing. In short: A sleazy and well-connected pal of the Clintons, Jim McDougal, came to them in 1978 with a proposal to invest in a piece of undeveloped riverfront land in the Ozark Mountains that he hoped to turn into vacation homes. They took the bait—and paid almost no attention afterward, which turned out to be a mistake.

What happened was that McDougal then bought himself a savings and loan association, which he renamed Madison Guaranty and used to fund his real estate ventures, Whitewater among them. Speculators operating on borrowed money are always dangerous—doubly so when they’ve got their own bank to draw on. And Madison Guaranty, like hundreds of other S&Ls in the early 1980s, was bleeding money. By 1985, a desperate McDougal hired Rose to handle the bank’s legal affairs. That was malodorous in itself, since Madison was regulated by the state and a Rose partner was the governor’s wife. But the Clintons, of course, were also investors in McDougal’s schemes. The fact that they appear to have lost money on Whitewater, and were never convicted of any criminal behavior in connection with the scandal, hardly excuses this farcical round-robin of ethical conflicts.4

Yet Whitewater itself is of far less interest than how Hillary handled it: with lies, half-truths, and secrecy. She
initially claimed during the 1992 campaign that she hadn’t represented clients before state regulators. She then backpedaled and said that she had “tried to avoid such involvement and cannot recall any instance other than the Madison Guaranty matter in which I had any involvement, and my involvement there was minimal.” In fact, Madison wasn’t the only instance. Another was the Southern Development Bancorporation, which paid Rose more than $100,000 in fees and received $300,000 in state investments.

Hillary also claimed the Rose billing records for the Madison case, which were under multiple subpoenas, had disappeared. Then they suddenly reappeared, discovered by a personal assistant in a room in the residential quarters of the White House. When asked about this mysterious turn of events, Hillary responded as if she, too, were an injured party: “I, like everyone else, would like to know the answer about how those documents showed up after all these years.” The records showed that far from having a trivial role in representing Madison, she had actually billed for sixty hours of work.

Although it’s been more than thirteen years since the Clintons left the White House, it’s amazing how little there is to say about Hillary’s subsequent career. If she was going to follow through on the eight-of-Bill-eighth-of-Hill plan, she certainly needed a new political perch. Despite never having lived in New York—or, according to Dick Morris, ever having shown the slightest interest in the city or state—she decided to run for the Senate seat that Daniel Moynihan was vacating in 2000.

Hillary was plainly a carpetbagger. One way she sought that perception was by engaging in a “listening tour” early in her candidacy, crisscrossing the state that she barely knew, learning its physical and social geography, and trying to convince voters that she cared. But listening wasn’t the point—flattering voters was. As Elizabeth Kolbert wrote in The New Yorker, “Here was a woman who could be doing anything, and what she wanted to do was to expand broadband access in Cattaraugus County.”

And that was precisely the sort of issue that Hillary focused on after winning the election. In Condi vs. Hillary (2005), a strange book that Dick Morris wrote with his wife, Eileen McGann, there’s a list of her senatorial accomplishments. Drawing on Library of Congress records, the authors report that Hillary passed a total of twenty bills during her first five years in the Senate. Fifteen of them were purely symbolic: supporting Better Hearing and Speech Month, honoring Alexander Hamilton on the bicentennial of his death, congratulating the Le Moyne College men’s lacrosse team on a big win. Others encouraged the use of electric cars or high-efficiency lightbulbs.

Granted, this is the stuff of retail politics. But what of her more substantive legislative achievements? One of these, allegedly, is the passage of something called the Nurse Retention and Quality of Care Act, which she cosponsored with the Oregon Republican Gordon Smith. But a Senate staffer told Morris that the bill was going to pass anyway, and that to claim Hillary was “instrumental in passing it is pure puff.” There was also legislation extending unemployment benefits for victims of 9/11 (what New York senator wouldn’t have pushed for something like that?). And according to Steven Brill’s exhaustive After: The Rebuilding and Defending of America in the September 12 Era, it was the state’s senior senator, Chuck Schumer, who did most of the heavy lifting on those bills.

What Hillary did do was make friends with her Republican colleagues. While ideologically dubious, it did have the long-term benefit of softening potential opposition to her future campaigns for the presidency. As Daniel Halper (a smart, nonrabid conservative) writes in his recent book Clinton, Inc.: The Audacious Rebuilding of a Political Machine:

I spoke to many, if not all, of Senator Clinton’s biggest opponents within the Republican Party during her time as First Lady. On or off the record, no matter how much they were coaxed, not one of them would say a negative thing about Hillary Clinton as a person—other than observing that her Democratic allies sometimes didn’t like her.

She buddied up to John McCain and attended prayer breakfasts with right-wingers like Sam Brownback of Kansas. She befriended Republicans who had served as floor managers of her husband’s impeachment. Even Newt Gingrich has good things to say about her.

Oh, and she voted for the Iraq war, and continued to defend it long after others had thrown in the towel. She cast that vote without having read the full National Intelligence Estimate, which was far more skeptical about Iraq’s armaments than the bowdlerized version that was made public—strange behavior for someone as disciplined and thorough as Hillary. She also accused Saddam Hussein of having ties to Al Qaeda, which was closer to the Bush line than even many pro-war Democrats were willing to go. Alas, of all her senatorial accomplishments, this one arguably had the biggest impact. The rest were the legislative equivalent of being against breast cancer.

There was the debacle of 2008, in the course of which she squandered an initial two-to-one lead over her closest opponent for the Democratic nomination. And there was her ascension, once the hopey, changey tidal wave put Obama in the White House, to secretary of state. To be fair to Hillary, Obama never allowed her much power in that post. An unnamed “former high-ranking diplomat” told Halper that the president “brought her into the administration, put her in a bubble, and ignored her.” Foreign policy was run mostly out of the White House by people with little experience in the area, and Obama, fearful of appearing soft, often deferred to military and intelligence personnel.
For her own part, Hillary was less of a diplomat and more of a hawk, who had made a campaign-trail promise in 2008 to “totally obliterate” Iran in the event of an attack on Israel. Part of this may have been pure temperament, or an impulse to prove that she was tougher than a man. But she may also have been reacting against public perception of the job itself. As the feminist scholar Cynthia Enloe, who specializes in gender and militarism, told me in a 2004 interview, there’s a “long history of trying to feminize the State Department in American inner circles.” Diplomats are caricatured as upper-class pansies instead of manly warriors. Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld even attempted to feminize Colin Powell, she argued, “which is pretty hard to do with somebody who has been a general.”

But the problem becomes particularly acute with a female secretary of state—and Hillary countered it with a macho eagerness to call in the U.S. Cavalry. She backed an escalation of the Afghanistan war, lobbied on behalf of a continuing military presence in Iraq, urged Obama to bomb Syria, and supported the intervention in Libya. As Michael Crowley wrote in Time, “On at least three crucial issues—Afghanistan, Libya, and the bin Laden raid—Clinton took a more aggressive line than [Defense Secretary Robert] Gates, a Bush-appointed Republican.”

On the other hand, Hillary and her backers might well stress her skimpy résumé as a peacemaker. Correct the Record, a pro-Hillary PR organization also run by David Brock, informs visitors on its website that she traveled 956,733 miles as secretary of state. This fact then links to a list of her accomplishments at the State Department. For instance, she helped to restore America’s “leadership and standing in the world,” though the only metrics offered to support this are the miles logged and meetings taken with “foreign leaders in 112 countries.” She worked to avoid all-out war in Gaza (cops) and developed the “pivot to Asia” strategy, which “will probably be Obama’s most lasting strategic achievement” (though it would be hard to describe just what that is). She negotiated free-trade pacts with Colombia and South Korea, despite her newfound reservations about NAFTA during the 2008 campaign. She elevated the cause of women’s rights—which is entirely laudable, but seems to have had little impact in what the website refers to as “deeply reactionary cultures.”

Since leaving the State Department, Hillary has devoted herself to what we can only call (echoing Halper’s title) Clinton, Inc. This fund-raising, favor-dispensing machine is key to understanding her joint enterprise with Bill. Unlike the Bush family, an old-style WASP dynasty for all W’s populist bluster and blunder, the Clintons are arrivistes who approach politics in a highly neoliberal manner. That means nonstop self-promotion, huge book advances, and fat speaking fees (Hillary has now joined Bill in the six-figure club). It means the various Clinton foundations, which were led first by Bill, but now include Hillary and Chelsea. According to a Wall Street Journal investigation, they’ve collectively raised between $2 and $3 billion since 1992, three quarters of it from business interests, with finance the leading sector.

And with an eye to the presidency, Hillary has also kept up her line of neocon patter, while carefully separating herself from Obama. In a notorious interview with Jeffrey Goldberg, she declared her enthusiastic support for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and for Israel’s pummeling of Gaza. She claimed that she’s always been against Iran’s right to enrich uranium (though in 2010 she actually said otherwise). Prominent neocons such as Robert Kagan and Max Boot have made supportive noises about Hillary—and with an isolationist wing rising within the Republican party, advocates of a countervailing “muscular” foreign policy might do considerably more as 2016 approaches.

When I spoke to Dick Morris, I asked him how Hillary would differentiate herself from Obama during the 2016 campaign. His prediction: She would say that her predecessor had outlined a beautiful vision, but now voters “need someone who can get things done.” He added that she would criticize Obama for not having armed the Syrians rebels earlier. Two weeks later, in her conversation with Goldberg, Hillary did exactly that, while also suggesting that the president was to blame for the rise of ISIL. (In a revoltingly laudatory Washington Post review of Henry Kissinger’s new book, Hillary distinguishes between the president’s first term, during which they “laid the foundation” for a new approach to international relations—and the “crises of the second term,” as if the world suddenly changed when she strolled out of the State Department.)

Morris’s record as a political fortune-teller is hardly unspotted (he predicted a landslide for Mitt Romney the last time around), and who knows what sort of long game this Fox-friendly Republican could be playing? For what it’s worth, though, he’s assigned Elizabeth Warren the same sort of spoiler role he gave to Condeleeza Rice in the 2008 contest. Morris told me that if the Massachusetts senator “or some genuine figure from the new populist left of the Democratic Party” were to challenge Hillary, “they could upend her in much the same way that Obama did in 2008.” Warren, meanwhile, swears she doesn’t want to run, even as Hillary dons the mantle of inevitability for the second time.

Eight years of Hill? Four, even? To borrow her anti-McCain jab from the 2008 Democratic convention: No way, no how!
Hillary Clinton, with her seething contempt not only for the Constitution but for that irredeemable and deplorable half of all Americans, is a manifest danger to our country. I don’t want the world my book depicts to come true. That’s why we must stop her. And the only way to do that is to vote for Donald Trump. Share this on Facebook. Can Anyone Stop Hillary? On the stump with Governor Terry McAuliffe in Falls Church, Va. Yuri Gripas / Reuters. By David Von Drehle. January 16, 2014. Hillary Clinton has not decided whether to run for President again. I have this on good authority, despite a recent barrage of reports detailing the many moves that signal a campaign in the making. People close to Clinton and familiar with her thinking insist that she hasn’t made a decision.