



Hillary's Hawkeye Return

Hillary Clinton Returns To The Site Of Her Most Stinging Political Defeat

This Weekend, Hillary Clinton Makes Her First Return To Iowa, "The State That Undid Her Seemingly Inevitable Candidacy Six Years Ago." "All eyes will be on Hillary Clinton Sunday when she makes her much-anticipated return to Iowa. The former secretary of state will appear at a Democratic event hosted by retiring Sen. Tom Harkin, which many are viewing as the unofficial kickoff of Clinton's second attempt at the White House. But the appearance will be a perfect chance for Clinton to cede the spotlight and reintroduce a humbled version of herself to the state that undid her seemingly inevitable candidacy six years ago. ... But even with all the stars seemingly aligning in her favor, don't expect Clinton to risk anything Sunday on her first visit to Iowa in 2,446 days." (Alex Seitz-Wald, "Hillary Clinton's Perfect Opportunity To Do Nothing," [MSNBC](#), 9/9/14)

- **Clinton "Has Not Stepped Foot In Iowa Since She Came In Third In The Iowa Caucuses."** "But the most formidable candidate of all hasn't been to either state in ages. Hillary Clinton has not stepped foot in Iowa since she came in third in the Iowa caucuses on Jan. 4, 2008 -- 2,401 days ago." (Jonathan Karl, "It's Been 2,401 Days Since Hillary Clinton Visited Iowa," [ABC News](#), 8/1/14)

AS SHE LAUNCHES HER "UNOFFICIAL START" OF A 2016 BID, THE GHOSTS OF 2008 CONTINUE TO HAUNT CLINTON

Clinton Will Be Headlining Harkin's Annual Steak Fry Fundraiser In Iowa, "One Of The Most Important Events Of The Year In Democratic Politics In The State." "Hillary and Bill Clinton are headlining a major fundraiser in Iowa this fall, marking the potential presidential candidate's first return to the early primary state in over five years, spokespeople for both confirmed. The annual Steak Fry, hosted every September by long-term Democratic Sen. Tom Harkin, who is retiring this year, is considered one of the most important events of the year in Democratic politics in the state. This will be its final year." (Alex Seitz-Wald, "Hillary Clinton Makes Big Move In Iowa," [MSNBC](#), 8/18/14)

- **Clinton's Attendance At The Event Could Be "The Unofficial Start" Of Her Second Presidential Campaign.** "And Harkin's steak fry, an event that draws thousands of grassroots activists each year, and future presidential campaign staff and volunteers, could be among the biggest, potentially serving as the unofficial start of Clinton's second presidential bid. Early polls show her as the leading candidate to succeed President Barack Obama, her onetime rival." (Catherine Lucey and Ken Thomas, "Eyes On 2016? Clinton Goes To Iowa Next Month," [The Associated Press](#), 8/18/14)

The Trip Is A Chance For Clinton To Try To “Reintroduce A Humbled Version Of Herself To The State.” “All eyes will be on Hillary Clinton Sunday when she makes her much-anticipated return to Iowa. The former secretary of state will appear at a Democratic event hosted by retiring Sen. Tom Harkin, which many are viewing as the unofficial kickoff of Clinton’s second attempt at the White House. But the appearance will be a perfect chance for Clinton to cede the spotlight and reintroduce a humbled version of herself to the state that undid her seemingly inevitable candidacy six years ago.” (Alex Seitz-Wald, “Hillary Clinton’s Perfect Opportunity To Do Nothing,” [MSNBC](#), 9/9/14)

“It’s A Great Opportunity For Her To Do Nothing,’ Said Norm Sterzenbach, The Former Executive Director Of The Iowa Democratic Party.” (Alex Seitz-Wald, “Hillary Clinton’s Perfect Opportunity To Do Nothing,” [MSNBC](#), 9/9/14)

- **No One Should Expect Clinton To “Risk Anything” On Her Iowa Visit This Weekend.** “But even with all the stars seemingly aligning in her favor, don’t expect Clinton to risk anything Sunday on her first visit to Iowa in 2,446 days.” (Alex Seitz-Wald, “Hillary Clinton’s Perfect Opportunity To Do Nothing,” [MSNBC](#), 9/9/14)

But As Clinton Touts Herself As The Likely Presidential Candidate, Her Popularity Takes A Nose Dive

“The More Hillary Clinton Looks Like A Candidate, The Less Invincible She Appears.” (Patrick O’Connor, “Hillary Clinton’s Approval Numbers Return To Earth — WSJ/NBC Poll,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 9/9/14)

- **Clinton’s Approval Ratings “Have Returned To Earth Since She Traded Her Perch As The Nation’s Top Diplomat For Her Current Role As The Democrats’ Top Presidential Prospect In 2016.”** “The former first lady and New York senator enjoyed sky-high approval ratings during her tenure as President Barack Obama’s secretary of state, but her numbers have returned to earth since she traded her perch as the nation’s top diplomat for her current role as the Democrats’ top presidential prospect in 2016.” (Patrick O’Connor, “Hillary Clinton’s Approval Numbers Return To Earth — WSJ/NBC Poll,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 9/9/14)

Clinton’s Decline Is Driven, In Part, By Falling “Out Of Favor With Some Democrats And Independents.” “But Ms. Clinton has also fallen out of favor with some Democrats and independents, as well. In 2009, 87% of Democrats viewed her positively, compared with a meager 3% who viewed negatively. In the latest poll, 72% of Democrats view Ms. Clinton positively, while 13% harbor negative views. Independents were twice as likely to view her positively as negatively in 2009. Now, they are more evenly split, with 40% holding positive views and 35% viewing her negatively.” (Patrick O’Connor, “Hillary Clinton’s Approval Numbers Return To Earth — WSJ/NBC Poll,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 9/9/14)

Clinton Is Viewed Positively By 43 Percent Of Americans And Viewed Negatively By 41 Percent – “A Steep Drop” From Her Time As Secretary Of State. “The latest Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll found 43% of registered voters view Ms. Clinton positively, compared with the 41% who harbor negative views. That’s a steep drop from February 2009 when 59% viewed the newly confirmed secretary of state positively and just 22% held negative views.” (Patrick O’Connor, “Hillary Clinton’s Approval Numbers Return To Earth — WSJ/NBC Poll,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 9/9/14)

- **Clinton’s Favorability Is At Its Lowest Point Since 2008.** ([NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll](#), 1,000 RV, MoE 3.1%, 9/3-7/14)

IN A SECOND PRESIDENTIAL RUN, CLINTON WILL BE FORCED TO FACE THE “MEMORIES OF 2008”

If Clinton Runs In 2016, She Will Have To Overcome The “Memories Of 2008” That Were More “Off-Putting Than Impressive To Voters.” “One thing Clinton would have to overcome in Iowa is memories of 2008, among them a leaked strategy memo recommending she skip the caucuses; a helicopter tour across the state — ‘a pickup truck might have been a little more effective,’ David Nagle, a former congressman and Iowa Democratic chairman, suggested dryly; and the large entourage and other trappings that proved more off-putting than impressive to voters.” (Mark Z. Barabak, “Democrats Again Look To Clinton, But Hurdles From 2008 Remain,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 3/1/14)

Beneath The Surface In Iowa Today, “Familiar Pitfalls Might Await Clinton Should She Decide To Run.” “But beneath the surface here, familiar pitfalls might await Clinton should she decide to run: A restive and emboldened progressive base long suspicious of Clintonian moderation, a hunger for fresh Democratic voices, and a caucus electorate that boasts a cherished tradition of voting with its heart rather than its head.” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

- **“Clinton Is Also Susceptible To Some Of The Same Whimsical Democratic Impulses That Propelled Obama To His Stunning Iowa Victory In 2008.”** (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

In 2008, Iowa Voters Were Insulted When A Leaked Memo Showed Clinton’s Team Wanted To Skip The State’s Caucuses

In One Misstep, A Leaked Campaign Memo Urged Clinton To Skip The Iowa Caucuses – “Further Offending Some In The State, But Ultimately Forcing The Campaign To Publicly Recommit Itself To Campaigning In Iowa Once The Memo Was Rejected.” “The chief concern, one person with immediate knowledge of the campaign said, was that Clinton simply did not visit Iowa enough over the summer and early fall -- a common complaint in national campaigns, but one that the Clinton team was unaccustomed to. No one on her senior staff has ever been through the grueling caucus process, which emphasizes direct contact with voters and is difficult to measure through traditional polls. In one infamous incident, a campaign memo from deputy director Mike Henry floated the idea of skipping the caucuses altogether -- further offending some in the state, but ultimately forcing the campaign to publicly recommit itself to campaigning in Iowa once the memo was rejected.” (Anne E. Kornblut, “In Iowa, A Scrambling Lesson For Clinton,” [The Washington Post](#), 12/13/07)

- **“When The Story Appeared, Clinton Felt Compelled To Publicly Recommit, Thereby Upping Iowa’s Significance Even Further.”** (Joshua Green, “The Front-Runner’s Fall,” [The Atlantic](#), 9/1/08)

Clinton’s Campaign Was “Severely Damaged” By The Memo, With Voters Taking “Even The Idea Of Passing On Iowa As An Insult.” “The then-senator’s campaign had struggled in a state that prizes grassroots organizing, but was severely damaged when an internal memo suggesting the campaign skip the state altogether was leaked to the press. In a state that prides itself on its first-in-the-nation status and values retail politicking, voters took even the idea of passing on Iowa as an insult.” (Alex Seitz-Wald, “Hillary Clinton Makes Big Move In Iowa,” [MSNBC](#), 8/18/14)

As Clinton’s Allies Are Working Up “An Air Of Inevitability,” She Should Remember That That Strategy Was Disastrous For Her In The 2008 Iowa Caucuses

Clinton’s Allies “Have Worked To Whip Up An Air Of Inevitability That Threatens To Prevent Others From Joining The Race.” “While Clinton-world has kept its distance from Iowa and other early voting states -- she has no leftover campaign structure on the ground here -- her allies have worked to whip up an air of inevitability that threatens to prevent others from joining the race.” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

But The Structure Of The Iowa Caucus Gives Underdogs A Chance To Upset Frontrunners, Which Is What Happened To Clinton In 2008. “Iowa’s caucus format gives underdogs with committed followings a chance to upset better resourced frontrunners. That’s what happened to Clinton in 2008, when she came in an embarrassing third place behind Barack Obama and John Edwards. And it’s a danger that underscores her potential second run.” (Alex Seitz-Wald, “Hillary Clinton’s Perfect Opportunity To Do Nothing,” [MSNBC](#), 9/9/14)

- **“Some Party Leaders Warned Clinton Against Reprising The Same Kind Of Heavy-Handed Front-Running Behavior That Rankled So Many Iowa Activists—Not To Mention The Media—During Her 2008 Effort.”** (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

Iowa Democrat Party Leader, Jean Pardee: Clinton’s Team Thought “That They Were All Sort Of Higher Class Than The Mere Peasants That They Had To Campaign With.” “‘I don’t know if she has learned that lesson,’ said Jean Pardee, the Iowa Democratic Party’s 2nd District vice chair. ‘The problem with so much of her staff was that they were all sort of higher class than the mere peasants that they had to campaign with. Everyone was kept at arm’s length by the staff, although a couple of key ones were pretty good. That’s a lesson that should be hopefully learned. But when it comes to human nature, maybe that’s not possible.’” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

- **Pardee, On Clinton’s Assumption Of Inevitability: “I Don’t Know If She Has Learned That Lesson.”** “‘I don’t know if she has learned that lesson,’ said Jean Pardee, the Iowa Democratic Party’s 2nd District vice chair. ‘The problem with so much of her staff was that they were all sort of higher class than the mere peasants that they had to campaign with. Everyone was kept at arm’s length by the staff, although a couple of key ones were pretty good. That’s a lesson that should be hopefully learned. But when it comes to human nature, maybe that’s not possible.’” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

FLASHBACK: IOWA DEALT CLINTON AN “EMBARRASSING” SETBACK IN HER 2008 PRESIDENTIAL BID

“In 2008, Clinton Was The Overwhelming Democratic Favorite, Nationally And In Iowa, With An Aura Suggesting The Actual Tabulation Of Ballots Was Little More Than A Formality.” (Mark Z. Barabak, “Democrats Again Look To Clinton, But Hurdles From 2008 Remain,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 3/1/14)

But On January 3, 2008, “Clinton’s Once-Inevitable Campaign Juggernaut Went Off A Cliff” As Obama Won The Iowa Caucuses. “New York Sen. Hillary Clinton’s once-inevitable campaign juggernaut went off a cliff Thursday night when rookie Sen. Barack Obama won the Iowa Democratic caucuses - making history as the first black candidate to win an overwhelmingly white state.” (Helen Kennedy, “Barack Obama Wins The Iowa Caucuses Over Hillary Clinton, John Edwards,” [NY Daily News](#), 1/4/08)

- **“Clinton, The Former First Lady Who Once Looked Ready To Coast To A Coronation, Limped In A Narrow Third To Populist Former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards.”** (Helen Kennedy, “Barack Obama Wins The Iowa Caucuses Over Hillary Clinton, John Edwards,” [NY Daily News](#), 1/4/08)

And After Her “Embarrassing” Third Place Finish, Clinton “Never Fully Recovered From Her Iowa Setback.” “But others believe the effort is driven in significant part by supporters of Clinton, who want to coax her into the 2016 race and ensure a better Iowa performance than in 2008, when she finished an embarrassing third, behind Barack Obama and John Edwards. Clinton, once the prohibitive front-runner for the Democratic nomination, never fully recovered from her Iowa setback.” (Mark Z. Barabak, “Clinton Achieves An Iowa Victory,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 7/1/14)

- **“One Of The Most Striking Features” Of The 2008 Primary Was That “So Much Damage” Was Done To Clinton’s Hopes Of Winning In “Such A Short Spell.”** “It loomed so large for Clinton because she had fallen so far behind in the contests of winter. One of the striking features of the drawn-out Democratic race is that so much damage was done to her chances in such a short spell. After Obama’s big win in the leadoff Iowa caucuses, a reporter asked Clinton as she campaigned in New Hampshire whether she felt Obama was a phenomenon that she just couldn’t overcome, no matter what she did. Clinton didn’t acknowledge it publicly at the time, but months later said privately that she often thought of that question and sometimes felt it had some truth. By that thinking, the notion of inevitability had been turned on its head. Maybe he was the chosen one all along.” (Calvin Woodward and Nancy Benac, “Clinton Goes From Inevitable Nominee To On The Ropes,” [USA Today](#), 5/11/08)

Perhaps Clinton’s Biggest Mistake Of Her 2008 Campaign Was Her Decision “To Forgo The Tradition Of Visiting Early States Like Iowa.” “Decisions made before her 2006 reelection to the Senate were to have important consequences downstream. Perhaps the biggest was Clinton’s choosing to forgo the tradition of visiting early states like Iowa and New Hampshire. Even if she was presumed to be the heavy favorite, Clinton needed to win Iowa to maintain the impression of invincibility that she believed was her greatest advantage.” (Joshua Green, “The Front-Runner’s Fall,” [The Atlantic](#), 9/1/08)

AND THE HAWKEYE STATE STILL MAY NOT BE QUITE SO READY FOR HER THIS TIME AROUND

There Is A “Common Theme” In Conversations With Democrats In Iowa About Clinton: While There Is Great Respect For Her, “Widespread Passion For Clinton Remains Wanting.” “A common theme emerged in conversations about Clinton with more than two dozen Democratic activists, strategists and elected officials during a recent winter week in Iowa: Respect for her within the party runs deep, burnished since 2008 by her tour of duty at the State Department, but widespread passion for Clinton remains wanting.” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

- **Democrat Iowa State Senator Janet Peterson: “Iowans Haven’t Really Changed Between 2008 And Today.”** “‘Iowans haven’t really changed between 2008 and today,’ said Janet Petersen, a state senator from Des Moines who attended an Iowa kickoff last month by the pro-Clinton group Ready for Hillary, but remains far from committed. ‘They still want to engage in a conversation ... and get to know the candidates for president.’” (Mark Z. Barabak, “Democrats Again Look To Clinton, But Hurdles From 2008 Remain,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 3/1/14)

Iowa’s Democrat Operatives “Note A Lack Of Pervasive Grass-Roots Enthusiasm For Clinton.” “The state’s Democratic operatives reveal a curious paradox when handicapping the 2016 race. They note a lack of pervasive grass-roots enthusiasm for Clinton, while at the same time waving off the suggestion that she could lose to another Democrat.” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

Progressives In Iowa Are Still Not Convinced Of Clinton

“And At A Time When Progressives Feel Emboldened ... [Clinton] Is Perceived By Some As Too Close To The Deficit-Obsessed Worlds Of Wall Street And Official Washington.” “And at a time when progressives feel emboldened to confront issues like income inequality and wage stagnation, Clinton, who delivered paid speeches last year to two prominent private equity firms as well as a group that actively lobbied against the Affordable Care Act, is perceived by some as too close to the deficit-obsessed worlds of Wall Street and official Washington.” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

- **“[T]here Remains A Palpable Sense Of Unease With Clinton In Grass-Roots Corners Of The Party...”** “Yet despite having the Democratic establishment at her back, there remains a palpable sense of unease with Clinton in grass-roots corners of the party, even as those very same activists promise to support her if no one else runs.” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

Iowan George Appleby Said That “Liberals Are Suffering From An Acute Case Of ‘Clinton Fatigue.’”

“George Appleby, an attorney and lobbyist in Des Moines who supported Bradley and copped to a ‘pristine record of picking the wrong guy’ in every caucus since 1976 until he backed Obama in 2008, described Clinton as ‘strong’ and ‘brilliant.’ But he said liberals are suffering from an acute case of ‘Clinton fatigue.’ He named O’Malley, Virginia Sen. Mark Warner and Secretary of State John Kerry, the 2004 Iowa caucus winner, as Democrats he’s keeping an eye on.” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

- **Appleby: “I Don’t Think She Is Necessarily Going To Be The Nominee, Or Going To Win Iowa. Sometimes People Have Been Around Forever, And There Is Time For Some New Blood.”** “‘Hillary would make a great president,’ Appleby said. ‘She is the odds-on-favorite. But I don’t think she is necessarily going to be the nominee, or going to win Iowa. Sometimes people have been around forever, and there is time for some new blood.’” (Peter Hamby, “Hillary Clinton’s Iowa Problem,” [CNN](#), 1/14/14)

Democrats, Including Some Of Obama’s Inner Circle, Are Already Nervous About The “Out Of Touch And Elitist” Clinton In 2016

Time’s Joe Klein: “Inevitability Is Reality’s First Casualty.” (Joe Klein, “The Myth Of Inevitability,” [Time](#), 6/5/14)

- **Clinton Has “Real Vulnerabilities.”** “She has real vulnerabilities and, yes, hard choices to make on policies she is assumed to have inherited from her husband, especially regarding the primacy of Wall Street and free trade.” (Joe Klein, “The Myth Of Inevitability,” [Time](#), 6/5/14)

An Obama Adviser Characterized Clinton As “Completely Out Of Touch And Elitist.” “Still, a second Obama adviser said Clinton is falling into the same traps as Romney. ‘She seems completely out of touch and elitist,’ the adviser said.” (Philip Rucker, “Some Democrats Fear Clinton’s Wealth And ‘Imperial Image’ Could Be Damaging In 2016,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/22/14)

“Influential Democrats,” Including Former Obama Advisers, Have Said “They Fear That Clinton’s Personal Wealth And Rarefied, Cloistered Lifestyle” Could Undercut The Democrats In 2016.

“Some influential Democrats — including former advisers to President Obama — said in interviews last week they fear that Clinton’s personal wealth and rarefied, cloistered lifestyle could jeopardize the Democratic Party’s historic edge with the middle class that powered Obama’s wins.” (Philip Rucker, “Some Democrats Fear Clinton’s Wealth And ‘Imperial Image’ Could Be Damaging In 2016,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/22/14)

- **Obama Adviser: “It’s Going To Be A Massive Issue For Her.”** “‘It’s going to be a massive issue for her,’ one Obama adviser said. ‘When you’re somebody like the secretary of state or president of the United States or first lady, you’re totally cut off [from normal activity], so your perception of the middle-class reality gets frozen in a time warp.’” (Philip Rucker, “Some Democrats Fear Clinton’s Wealth And ‘Imperial Image’ Could Be Damaging In 2016,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/22/14)
- **“Asked What Democrats Should Do, The Adviser Said: ‘Panic.’”** (Philip Rucker, “Some Democrats Fear Clinton’s Wealth And ‘Imperial Image’ Could Be Damaging In 2016,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/22/14)