

Hillary Clinton – Secretary of State

Hillary Clinton was born in 1947. She received her bachelor's degree from Wellesley College in 1969 and her law degree from Yale University in 1973. She did a year of post-graduate study at the Yale Child Study Center and served as a staff attorney for the Children's Defense Fund. In 1974, she advised the House Judiciary Committee during the Watergate scandal.

After moving to Arkansas in 1974, Clinton worked at Rose Law Firm, specializing in patents and intellectual property law, while doing pro bono work in child advocacy; she was eventually named partner. In 1977, she co-founded Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families. From 1978-81, she served on the board of directors of the Legal Services Corporation; she eventually became the first woman to chair that board.

Clinton also spent 12 years as First Lady of Arkansas (1979-81, 1983-92). During that time, she chaired the state's Rural Health Advisory Committee, as well as the Arkansas Educational Standards Committee, where she fought successfully for mandatory teacher testing and state standards for curriculum and classroom size. From 1987-91, she chaired the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession. She was also the first woman to sit on the board of directors for Wal-Mart.

Clinton was First Lady of the United States from 1993-2001. During that time, she most famously chaired the Task Force on National Health Care Reform, where she unsuccessfully fought for the establishment of universal health coverage in the United States. However, she did contribute to the creation of the State Children's Health Insurance Program in 1997, as well as the Office of Violence Against Women at the U.S. Department of Justice. She also pushed successfully for increased funding for adoption and foster care initiatives. Internationally, Clinton made a famous speech in September 1995 before the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, declaring that women's rights were tantamount to human rights. She also visited 79 countries.

In 2000, Clinton was the first woman ever elected as U.S. Senator from New York, and she was re-elected in 2006 with 67 percent of the vote. She and Senator Charles Schumer were instrumental in securing \$20 billion for New York following the 9/11 attacks. Among other key votes, she opposed the nominations of John Roberts and Samuel Alito to the United States Supreme Court.

Clinton ran for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, garnering roughly 18 million votes during the primary season before losing narrowly to Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL).

Sources:

Biography of Hillary Clinton, The White House: Past First Ladies, at http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/first_ladies/hc42.html (last visited Dec. 1, 2008).

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton: Biography, Office of New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, at <http://clinton.senate.gov/about/biography/index.cfm> (last visited Dec. 1, 2008).