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[Despite Hillary, Kamala & Haley's Near Misses, and Both Parties' Current Reluctance, a woman could still win the presidency](#)

By Katherine White and Robert Weiner



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New York Magazine was right in the 1991 Issue (Cover and story of November 4, 1991) that despite 89% popularity from stopping Saddam in Iraq, "Beating Bush Could Happen." Now, despite Hillary, Kamala & Haley's Near Misses, and Both Parties' Current Reluctance from Fear of Loss, a counterintuitive is also true-- a woman could still win the presidency!

With women as the [majority](#) of people and voters, in both registration and voter turnout, a woman can still do it in the primaries and the general -- don't forget how close all three came. As Joe Klein [said](#) after George H.W. Bush's [high](#) popularity in dealing with foreign affairs: "Beating Bush: it could happen!" Everyone thought Klein was off his rocker, but it did happen. Bill Clinton beat Bush in 1992.

Countries like Mexico, Israel, Pakistan, India, and Philippines have all elected female heads of state before, despite long-standing cultural or religious stigmas that could limit a woman's place in society. Currently, there [28 female](#) heads of states across the world. Our neighbor Mexico, has elected its first female President Claudia Sheinbaum in 2024. Italy has its first female PM, Giorgia Meloni -- despite her authoritarian ties it still shows that globally across all political spectrums the can continue to elect and maintain female heads of state.

Just because Hillary and Kamala lost, Democrats shouldn't be afraid to nominate a female president. Similarly, just because MAGA hates Nikki Haley, it doesn't mean the GOP shouldn't elect a female candidate. Britain too has had two female Prime Ministers, a country who influenced the creation of our own democracy. While Liz Truss was certainly no role model during her short tenure, Margaret Thatcher had a profound impact on UK politics. While we learned many lessons from Britain, the US still hasn't learned how to elect a woman president.

When Hillary Clinton ran against Donald Trump in the 2016 primary elections, it was clear Clinton had more governmental experience than Trump. A renowned lawyer, former New York Senator, and former Secretary of State, Clinton's decades of experience made her a top contender compared to Trump, a [six-time](#) bankrupt businessman with extreme political views who was seemingly popular with Republicans. Controversy with Clinton emerged over using her personal email account for both work-related and personal correspondence, including sensitive information. But similar controversy followed Trump during his campaign. His leaked [conversations](#) of lude behavior towards women, his [alleged](#) sexual assaults and

misconduct, and [accusations](#) against the media and "the political establishment." Was it that America was not yet ready for a female president?

When Kamala Harris ran against Donald Trump in the 2024 primary elections, it was a different situation than the last time Trump ran against a woman. Harris, the current Vice President, against Trump, who had been impeached twice during his last presidency, full of controversies and errors. Polls were similarly very close to the 2016 election, across several [polls](#) Harris was slightly in the lead. Despite strong efforts from the Democratic party, Trump still won the election. Again, was America ready for a female president, but just not Kamala?

Nikki Haley too had strong GOP support. She was a strong contender against Trump, and especially versus Biden in the 2024 election, where she had a [18 point](#) poll lead against Biden. She [polled](#) better than other GOP candidates like DeSantis and Trump against Biden early 2024. Even after suspending her presidential campaign, she managed to win [13-22%](#) of GOP voters in the primary against Trump. When Trump is no longer a contender by the Constitution or actual loss, she may have a strong campaign in 2028.

Both Clinton and Harris were highly qualified individuals to contend for president. Could it be that Harris or Clinton would have won the primary if they were men?

We will likely know our answer in the next presidential election in 2028, when Trump will be ineligible to run (if our Constitution holds). We may see prominent female Democrats like Gretchen Whitmer, Amy Klobuchar, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and on the Republican side, Nikki Haley again, Elise Stefanik, Kristi Noem or others put their name in the race.

One of us (Bob) remembers being invited to speak to the Women's Veteran's Auxiliary in 1971, who were the wives of veterans, and thought that he could change these women's minds with this question he asked for a show of hands: "Who would vote for a woman for President who was equal to a man in every respect?" Bob recalls that astonishingly to him, only 1/3 of the women there raised their hands. This has changed some in the present day, but not completely.

A 2019 Gallup poll highlighted that 92% of Americans would vote for a female president -- maybe they didn't mean it, or perhaps it has to be the right person. But, women have had statistically [higher voting](#) records than men since the 1980s. Most recently 66.9% of women reported [voting](#) in the 2024 election, compared to 63.7% of men.

It is not just about having a woman president for the sake of having a woman in office. It is a representation of equity and of opportunity. The U.S. has had 24 women run for President of the United States, all of which being sidelined time and time again. Some commentators are skeptical if the U.S. will see a female president soon, especially the Democrats. With two highly qualified women running against the same man in the primaries and losing, some may have anxiety about not winning again.

It is clear right now that the U.S. has a way to go in fighting for a woman to be at the top office in the country -- but the parties must not be afraid to try. We can have a woman president, for as Klein provided, "it can happen!"

Robert Weiner was the first National Youth Voter Registration Coordinator at the DNC, a former spokesman in the Clinton and Bush White Houses, and senior staff for Congressmen John Conyers, Charles Rangel, Claude Pepper, Ed Koch, Sen. Ted Kennedy, and 4-Star Gen. Barry McCaffrey.

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HEADSHOT LINKS (if desired)

Robert Weiner <https://weinerpublic.com/rweiner.jpg>

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