Hillary Rodham Clinton is a political figure as well as a public one. Campaigning for presidential office in 1992, she and her husband effectively promised joint leadership. Bill Clinton advertised openly, "Buy one, get one free," and his wife was equally open in stating that "if you vote for him, you get me" (quoted in Troy 1997, p. 346). The widely drawn conclusion was that "voters had chosen to send both Mr. and Mrs. Clinton to the White House. Once there, Hillary Rodham Clinton reclaimed her birth name and became the point person in the most important proposed piece of domestic legislation (health care reform) of her husband’s first term. The break from the past was seismic. A decade and a half earlier First Lady Rosalynn Carter had stirred controversy by merely attending cabinet meetings" (Jamieson 1995, p. 45). The part played by the president’s wife in shaping his public image and the policies he pursues has increasingly become the object of both academic and journalistic attention and scrutiny (Burrell 1997; Guy 1995; Mughan and Burden 1995, 1998; O’Connor, Nye, and Assendelft 1996). Still, the first lady as a public figure is by no means a new phenomenon. Troy (1997) traces the emergence of the presidential couple to Franklin Roosevelt’s assumption of the office in 1933. Her public visibility notwithstanding, however, his wife, Eleanor, was not expected to play a political role in the White House. “Despite her doddering façade, she understood that First Ladies were to be seen at social galas and by their husbands’ sides, not heard in policy debates” (Troy 1997, p. 7). Times have clearly changed.

If there has been a move in the direction of a joint presidency, what
are its implications for the dynamics of American political opinion? Two scenarios suggest themselves. First, the husband and wife occupants of the White House are seen as two sides of the same coin so that their popularity levels are interdependent. Second, the first lady has emerged as a force in her own right so that the question of what drives her public popularity is still a puzzle to be solved. This article puts these contrasting scenarios to the test by examining the dynamics of public opinion toward Hillary Rodham Clinton during the first 5 years of the Clinton administration.

The Background

Hillary Clinton has been a controversial figure since she first emerged onto the national political scene at the time of her husband’s bid for the presidency in 1992. She potentially offended female homemakers by appearing to deprecate lifestyles other than the careerist one she had chosen for herself with the now-infamous words, “I suppose I could have stayed home and baked cookies and had teas.” The controversy surrounding her did not stop with the end of the campaign and her husband’s accession to the presidency. Instead, she became the only first lady to have an office near the president in the West Wing of the White House and, just one week after his inauguration, was appointed to lead the Task Force on Health Care Reform charged with the task of developing an ambitious national health insurance program. Some 9 months later she skillfully testified about the plan on Capitol Hill and, although the health care plan failed the next year, she continued to play a prominent role in her husband’s administration (Gould 1996; O’Connor, Nye, and Assendelft 1996).2

At about this time she also became embroiled in scandal. One of her alleged improprieties was the instigation of the unwarranted firing of White House Travel Office staff to make way for friends from Arkansas. Another was improper involvement in the Whitewater Development affair, which lead her in January 1996 to be the only presidential spouse to be called on to testify before a federal grand jury. The net result of her misfortunes was that her role in the administration was recast. She moved from the center of the political stage and took on the more benign public image of a spouse whose overriding concern was now the welfare of children. She began, like Eleanor Roosevelt before her, to write a syndicated column about “the human dimension of our lives.” In short, the remade Hillary Clinton eschewed controversy (see Troy 1997, pp. 344–72).

2. Rosalyn Carter and Eleanor Roosevelt were the only other first ladies to testify before Congress.
A sign of Hillary Rodham Clinton’s public visibility, or perhaps notoriety, is that she is the only first lady to have been given sustained attention by polling organizations. Americans have regularly been asked whether they have a “favorable” or “unfavorable” opinion of Hillary Clinton. From the pattern of responses plotted in figure 1, it is immediately obvious that Mrs. Clinton’s turbulent Washington career is reflected in her opinion poll ratings.

The variation in these ratings is not random fluctuation (Burrell 1997). After her husband’s inauguration, around 70 percent of respondents saw Hillary Clinton favorably, a figure that would not be reached again in the 5 years of our analysis. We interpret this as a sort of first lady “honeymoon” effect, akin to the favorable treatment that new presidents receive. Soon after moving into the White House, her public standing quickly fell about 10 points. This was around the time that revelations about the Whitewater deal were being made public. It was also when she was ap-

3. Since no single time series is available for the whole period of this analysis, we have pooled 138 nationally representative CBS, Gallup, and Yankelovich surveys and taken the mean when more than one survey asked the favorability question in any one month. A total of 60 observations between January 1993 and December 1997 resulted. The question wording of the three agencies is different, and the precise question asked by each is given in appendix A (also Burrell 1997). Several researchers have argued that monthly aggregation of opinion poll data is methodologically preferable to quarterly and annual aggregation (Beck 1991; Brace and Hinckley 1991). It should also be pointed out that we eliminated all respondents who are not favorable or unfavorable to create a measure of relative favorability (a la Stimson 1976) so that differences in response rates will have little effect on our measures.
pointed by President Clinton to head the Health Care Reform Task Force and when the administration’s approval rating fell as well. After a rebound in late 1993, her favorability suffered noticeably due to further scandal and the decline of her health care initiative. It slid further and reached equilibrium around 50 percent, where it remained through the 1996 elections. She then became more popular in early 1997 as her husband’s second term began; evaluations wobbled a bit throughout that year and ended it just below 60 percent. Her mean monthly favorability rating for the entire 5-year period is 57 percent.

### Presidential and First Lady Approval

To determine whether public evaluations of the president and his wife are interdependent or independent, we have assembled monthly approval measures for the two political actors spanning the period January 1993 to December 1997. With the bivariate correlation between the two series being only .12 ($p = .37$, two-tailed test), the initial evidence suggests that the president and his wife are distinctive actors in the public eye and that her popularity is moved by different forces than his. But even though the simultaneous correlation between the two time series is negligible, it might still be that one affects the other by preceding it in time. The president’s approval rating may, for example, be exogenous to the first lady’s and be determined largely by economic and foreign policy issues of concern to the public. This being the case, the first lady’s standing in public opinion might change in response to evaluations of the president spreading to the rest of his administration. Alternatively, the flow of influence could run from wife to husband as citizens punish or reward the president by ‘‘blaming’’ him for his wife’s actions. In short, influence can plausibly flow in either direction.

To test the hypothesis that presidential approval affects his wife’s rating (or the reverse), we use Granger (1969) causality tests. We estimate regressions with lags as long as 3 months to be conservative. This lag window should be large enough to detect meaningful relationships while being small enough to provide the necessary statistical power. This makes a total of six equations, one for each lag up to three for both series.

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4. As mentioned earlier in the text, the time series for Hillary Clinton taps ‘‘favorability’’ toward her, while the series for her husband is the traditional presidential approval item. Though question wording differences matter (Schuman and Presser 1981), the two measures are comparable for two reasons. First, we know that the two types of question produce similar response distributions. Gallup has been asking both of them of President Clinton somewhat regularly since his inauguration in January 1993, and the 40 observations of them are highly correlated at 0.84 ($p < .01$). Second, the job approval item is not as theoretically appropriate for the first lady as it is for her husband since she has no constitutionally defined role in American government (Burrell, 1999).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hillary Clinton Favorability&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Presidential Approval&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton favorability&lt;sub&gt;t-1&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>.847*</td>
<td>.697*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.054)</td>
<td>(.137)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton favorability&lt;sub&gt;t-2&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.129)</td>
<td>(.170)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton favorability&lt;sub&gt;t-3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.135)</td>
<td>(.154)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential approval&lt;sub&gt;t-1&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.059)</td>
<td>(.123)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential approval&lt;sub&gt;t-2&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>−.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.128)</td>
<td>(.164)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential approval&lt;sub&gt;t-3&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.132)</td>
<td>(.151)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.041)</td>
<td>(.044)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial $F$</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value for partial $F$</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Dependent variable.
<sup>b</sup> Number of lags.
<sup>*</sup> p < .001, two-tailed test.

Table 1 presents the causality test results. The findings are unambiguous. In each equation the only statistically significant explanatory variable is the dependent variable lagged one month. More importantly, the $F$-tests on the other series’ coefficients never reach the critical values needed to reject the null hypothesis that one does not cause the other. In other words, Hillary Clinton’s favorability does not drive presidential approval and, likewise, presidential approval does not cause the first lady’s favorability ratings. Hillary Clinton is her own person in the eyes of the American public and not a pale reflection of a highly visible husband.

**Understanding Hillary Clinton’s Popularity**

The analysis to follow looks at public attitudes toward Hillary Clinton as first lady from January 1993 to December 1997. Comparable data do not exist for her predecessors, so the question of how to handle administration-specific characteristics need not be considered here. Our
first task is to assess the degree of autocorrelation in the first lady series. The Granger causality tests indicated that it can be captured with a single lag. The quick disappearance of the autocorrelation function is also consistent with a first-order autoregressive process. Most of the persistence in the series can probably be captured with a one-period lag structure and the incorporation of meaningful explanatory variables.

Having established a general view of the Hillary Clinton series as a dependent variable, attention now turns to the forces shaping her popularity ratings. The explanatory variables fall into three general categories: general political attitudes, the economy, and patterns of media coverage. Details on their operationalizations can be found in appendix B. Media coverage can be expected to be important since recent work shows that the quantity and tone of media coverage affect presidential approval, and there is little reason to think that his wife should be unaffected by it (Ragsdale 1997; Winfield 1997). The battery of media variables assesses the amount and nature of coverage of the first lady in newspapers and on television. Our measure of the amount of coverage is a simple count of the monthly number of stories about Hillary Clinton in four national newspapers and on the three major network news programs. The nature of coverage of her is determined by separating out stories associating her with scandal. While we have not explicitly coded the stories for tone, the scandal-oriented stories are almost always negative while the others tend to be positive (Bystrom, McKinnon, and Chaney 1998). There are four media variables: a count of scandal and nonscandal stories in each of two media, newspaper and television. Figure 2 details trends in each of these four variables over the 5-year period stretching from January 1993 to December 1997. It offers some preliminary insight into the explanation of the decline in her popularity. In particular, the number of routine, nonscandal stories about her decreases over time, especially in newspapers; the correlation between the incidence of this type of story and time is $-0.71$ for newspapers and $-0.24$ for television. Scandal-laden coverage, by contrast, does not vary systematically with time. It hovers at low levels and shoots upward sporadically. The two biggest spikes coincide with initial revelations about Whitewater in March 1994 and, in January 1996, with the discovery of

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Mrs. Clinton’s fingerprints on files as well as with reports that she met with a psychic.

Our second set of potential influences on approval of the first lady is economic in character. There is no evidence yet that national economic performance has the same direct effect on the public’s rating of the president’s wife that it has on his own public standing. It may be, however, that generalized positive or negative indicators of the health of the economy spill over to affect the president’s spouse, and especially one like Hillary Clinton, who has had an unusually prominent role in policy matters. To allow for this possibility, we examine two central macroeconomic performance measures: monthly changes in inflation and unemployment.

The major attitudinal variable in our analysis is a measure of “macro-partisanship,” and it is included to take account of long-standing predispositions in favor of the Democratic and Republican parties in the electorate and their likely effect on the first lady’s popularity. It is measured as the proportion of self-identified partisans who are Democratic and has been shown to be dynamic as well as both influencing and responding to changes in the political environment (MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1989). A second attitudinal variable is presidential approval. While not a significant influence in table 1, it is included primarily to convince readers who remain skeptical that it is not an important explanatory factor.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics on the range of explanatory variables. Interestingly, the first lady, with a mean monthly rating of 57 per-
Table 2. Variables and Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton favorability</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>[0, 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential approval</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>[0, 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation (Δ)</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>(−∞, +∞)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (Δ)</td>
<td>−.04</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>(−∞, +∞)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macropartisanship</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>[0, 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV scandal stories</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>7.64</td>
<td>[0, +∞)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV nonscandal stories</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>[0, +∞)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper scandal stories</td>
<td>11.83</td>
<td>20.26</td>
<td>[0, +∞)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper nonscandal stories</td>
<td>26.63</td>
<td>17.34</td>
<td>[0, +∞)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.—N = 60 for all variables. See appendix B for operationalizations.

cent, may be seen to have been more popular than her husband, whose average monthly approval rating was 52 percent. As is only to be expected, the proportion of Democratic identifiers hovers around these figures at 54 percent. The media coverage scores are more variable, with television scandal stories involving her averaging out at 2.5 per month. The matching figure for nonscandal stories is about four per month. Newspapers follow a similar pattern, containing about twice as many nonscandal as scandal stories (Bystrom, McKinnon, and Chaney 1998). The bulk of the media coverage of Hillary Clinton is uncontroversial, dealing with such facets of her life as formal receptions, overseas trips, and speeches delivered at conferences and other gatherings. It is also noticeable that the variability in the number of scandal stories in both media is greater than that for nonscandal stories. In other words, because scandals are themselves rare, media stories about them are heavily covered in a small number of months, whereas nonscandal stories appear at a relatively constant rate.

Table 3 regresses Hillary Clinton’s monthly favorability rating on this range of variables together with a dummy variable scored zero for the period up to the month of the 1994 congressional elections and one thereafter. This crude indicator is intended to take account of the redefinition of presidential approval traditionally incorporate dummy variables to capture the effects of noteworthy, one-off events as well (Brace and Hinckley 1991). Following this tradition, we experimented with dummies for events including Hillary Clinton’s grand jury testimony, her prime time speech to the 1996 Democratic National Convention, and her participation in the controversial World Conference on Women in Beijing. None proved to predict significantly to her popularity so we have eliminated them from the model for simplicity of presentation.
Table 3. Determinants of Opinion toward Hillary Clinton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Hildreth-Lu Regression Without Approval</th>
<th>Hildreth-Lu Regression With Approval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TV scandal stories</td>
<td>.087* (0.060)</td>
<td>.089* (0.060)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV nonscandal stories</td>
<td>-.059 (0.065)</td>
<td>-.057 (0.066)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper scandal stories</td>
<td>-.101** (0.026)</td>
<td>-.101** (0.026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper nonscandal stories</td>
<td>.041* (0.024)</td>
<td>.039* (0.025)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation (Δ)</td>
<td>2.59 (2.42)</td>
<td>2.10 (2.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (Δ)</td>
<td>-2.76* (1.78)</td>
<td>-2.90* (1.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macropartisanship</td>
<td>2.81 (13.93)</td>
<td>2.63 (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential approval_{t-1}</td>
<td>— (—)</td>
<td>8.52 (10.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-1994</td>
<td>1.07 (2.39)</td>
<td>1.15 (2.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>52.1** (7.86)</td>
<td>47.8** (9.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ρ</td>
<td>.876** (0.044)</td>
<td>.878** (0.043)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durbin-Watson (transformed)</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**—Dependent variable is $100 \times ($percent favorable)/($percent favorable + $percent unfavorable). Estimated standard errors are in parentheses.

* $p < .10$, one-tailed test.

** $p < .05$, one-tailed test.

... of Mrs. Clinton’s public role after the Democratic defeat in these elections and the simultaneous termination of the health care reform initiative.\(^7\)

\(^{7}\) The dummy variable, which affects the intercept and not the slope of the regression, is not an altogether satisfactory way of dealing with potential change between the two periods since change that does take place could be a function of other variables. One alternative explanatory candidate, for example, is the divided government that came with the Republicans winning control of Congress in the 1994 election. As it turns out, the dummy is insignificant so its interpretation is not at issue here.
There are many ways to model time series such as this one (e.g., Beck 1991). Because we believe that a first-order autoregressive model explains levels of our dependent variable, the estimator must produce consistent estimates in the presence of simple serial correlation. The equation we wish to estimate is of the form $Y_t = x_t + u_t$, where the error term, $u_t$, follows the first-order autoregressive process $u_t = u_{t-1} + e_t$ and $e_t$ adheres to standard linear regression assumptions. The appropriate technique will estimate all of the substantive parameters of interest as well as $\rho$, the degree of autocorrelation in the data. We therefore use the Hildreth-Lu estimator (Hildreth and Lu 1960), a regression technique for estimating linear models while correcting for serial correlation.

Table 3 presents the results of this regression exercise. In it, the dependent variable, Hillary Clinton’s favorability rating, has been multiplied by 100 to make the coefficients more interpretable. The model is estimated with and without presidential approval to highlight how little this variable adds to the explanation of the first lady’s public standing. In terms of findings, the first noteworthy feature of the table is that in both cases $\rho$ is positive significantly different from zero, which confirms that autocorrelation would have jeopardized inferences drawn from ordinary least squares regression. The transformed Durbin-Watson statistics indicate that first-order autocorrelation is not a problem for these models. Since fully specifying the model does not alter the explanatory unimportance of lagged presidential approval, the discussion will focus on the model without this variable.

Immediately striking is the insignificance of mass partisanship. When taken together with the similar fate for the inflation variable, this finding indicates that her public standing is not rooted in the same long-term partisan attachments or performance considerations that approval of the president is (MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1989). The exception is the negative effect of rate of change in unemployment, which suggests that a point decline in the proportion of jobless is associated with a ratings increase of nearly three percentage points for Hillary Clinton. This effect could be the result of a real impact, rooted perhaps in her representing the liberal wing of the Democratic party for many voters and thus being directly rewarded for the employment growth that characterized her husband’s administration (Mughan and Burden 1998). An alternative, and simpler,
explanation, however, is that the relationship is not direct, but reflects a
generalized goodwill toward the Clinton administration for its employ-
ment record and from which Hillary Clinton benefits by her close associa-
tion with the president. In view of the fact that the table shows the major
force driving her popularity to be the transient one of her prominence in
the media, this latter explanation would seem the more plausible.

Newspaper coverage has the expected effects in that the larger the num-
ber of scandal stories in the printed press, the lower the approval for Mrs.
Clinton. Interestingly, the scandal stories’ coefficient is twice the size of
the nonscandal stories’ one, indicating that negative coverage in the na-
tion’s leading newspapers has a greater impact on the public than does
positive coverage. Thus, the clear rise in newspaper scandal coverage in
1994 probably explains much of Hillary Clinton’s popular free fall during
that period.

The fact that newspaper coverage has the expected effects makes the
findings for television all the more puzzling. For a start, the first lady’s
visibility in the form of nonscandalous broadcast stories has no effect on
her popularity. In addition, and again contrary to expectations, scandal-
based television coverage actually boosts her standing with the public.
This would seem to be another example of the television image carrying
more weight with the public than the content of the story. One is reminded
here of the well-known incident involving journalist Leslie Stahl and Ron-
ad Reagan. During the 1984 presidential campaign, Stahl did a long piece
on the president’s brilliant use of television, interspersing videos of him
with biting comments on his duplicity. She then unexpectedly received a
phone call from one of his advisors thanking her for the coverage. Reply-
ing to her puzzlement at this reaction, he said, “They don’t hear what
you are saying if the pictures are saying something different” (quoted in
Schram 1987, p. 23). In other words, with television network news provid-
ing relatively little substantive information and focusing more on head-
lines and visuals, viewers’ opinions of the first lady may be responsive
to exposure to her rather than to the voice-over content of stories about
her. This finding is consistent with studies of media effects in campaigns
that have similarly found that frequent television viewers do not have
much information beyond visual images, perhaps due to priming (Iyengar
and Kinder 1987; Jamieson 1992; Patterson and McClure 1976). The
problem with this explanation, of course, is that its logic would lead us
to expect publicity in the form of nonscandal stories to be translated into
popularity as well. In the absence of more detail on the specific content
and length of the two types of television stories, however, we can only
speculate that perhaps scandal-based stories are longer or are aired earlier
in the news broadcast, and it is in such distinctive characteristics that the
explanation of their effect lies.
Conclusion

What, then, can be concluded about the relationship between public opinion and the president’s wife? The evidence is suggestive, but ultimately inconclusive. On the one hand, it is remarkable that Hillary Clinton’s popularity is independent of her husband’s, and vice versa. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing whether mutual independence was the norm before the Clinton presidency since polling organizations rarely asked the public for its evaluation of the president’s wife in her role as first lady. But perhaps the more telling observation is that Hillary Clinton’s favorability ratings are driven less by durable forces such as macropartisanship and national economic performance and more by her ability to attract publicity, both good and bad. It would seem, therefore, that for her successors to continue enjoying an independent identity in the public eye minimally requires them to be equally adept at getting themselves, deliberately or otherwise, in the newspapers and on television. Failure to do so will likely erode their public visibility and make their standing among citizens dependent on that of their president-spouses.

Prediction is, of course, a hazardous activity, but it is safe to say that few first ladies have been, or are likely to be, as controversial a public figure as Hillary Clinton. Few have been, or are likely to be, as dogged by scandal and charges of wrongdoing both in and out of office. It would seem to follow that this particular president’s wife has attracted a volume and kind of publicity that few, if any, of her successors will be able, and probably will not even want, to match. This being the case, Mrs. Clinton would seem to be the exception rather than the rule and cannot be assumed to represent what will be the norm in an American society characterized by unprecedented gender equality.

Appendix A

Below are the wordings for the favorability questions from three survey organizations. Responses other than “favorable,” “not favorable,” and “unfavorable” were removed before computing overall percentages. Thus the measure is an indicator of “relative favorability” akin to Stimson’s (1976) “relative approval.”

CBS/New York Times: Is your opinion of Hillary Clinton favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven’t you heard enough about Hillary Clinton yet to have an opinion?

Gallup/USA Today/CNN: I’d like your overall opinion of some people in the news. In general, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Hillary Clinton?

Yankelovich/Time/CNN: Please tell me whether you have generally favorable or generally unfavorable impressions of [Hillary Clinton], or whether or not you are familiar enough with [Hillary Clinton] to say one way or the other.
Appendix B

All of the variables are observed monthly. With a few exceptions for missing data, all have 60 total observations (January 1993 to December 1997). The Hillary favorability series was missing 10 observations, and macropartisanship was missing nine. In those cases where a variable has a missing observation at time $t$, the value was imputed with the mean of the observations at $t - 1$ and $t + 1$. When a question is asked multiple times in a single month, the observations are averaged to create monthly observations.

**Hillary Clinton favorability.** The proportion of respondents in Gallup, CBS/New York Times, and Fox News polls who report viewing Hillary Clinton favorably: percent favorable/(percent favorable + percent unfavorable).

**Presidential approval.** The proportion of respondents in Gallup and CBS/New York Times polls who report approving of the way President Clinton is handling his job as president: percent approve/(percent approve + percent disapprove). This operationalization is Stimson's (1976) measure of ‘‘relative approval’’ (also Brody 1991). It also mirrors the measurement of the first lady’s favorability by dividing the number of positive responses by the total number of responses.

**Macropartisanship.** The proportion of all party identifiers in CBS/New York Times polls who are Democrats: percent Democrat/(percent Democrat + percent Republican).

**Newspaper coverage.** The number of stories each month in the New York Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, and Los Angeles Times that primarily cover Hillary Clinton. We have separated the stories into those that involve “scandal” (reporting accusations of legal or ethical wrongdoing) and nonscandal stories. Scandals include topics such as Whitewater, the Travel Office firings, income earned from investments in the commodities market, and the death of Vince Foster. These data were acquired through Lexis/Nexis.

**Television news coverage.** The number of stories each month on ABC, CBS, and NBC broadcast that primarily cover Hillary Clinton. We have also separated these stories into scandal and nonscandal stories. These data were provided by the Vanderbilt Television News Archives (http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu).

References

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