

She The People

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Book: Hillary Clinton kept a 'hit list'

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Then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Lima, Peru. (Karel Navarro/Associated Press)

An excerpt from a new book, "HRC: State Secrets and the Rebirth of Hillary Clinton," offers an inside glimpse of the waning days of Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign and shows Clinton's inner circle doing what the inner circles of political figures do — taking names and keeping score.

But rather than a more informal understanding of who was naughty and who was nice, Clinton aides developed a formal spreadsheet and points system. The scale went from 1 to 7, with 1s going to those who stuck by Clinton and 7s going to allies-turned-enemies.

Authors Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes write:

For Hillary, whose loss was of course not the end of her political career, the spreadsheet was a necessity of modern political warfare, an improvement on what old-school politicians called a "favor file." It meant that when asks rolled in, she and Bill would have at their fingertips all the information needed to make a quick decision — including extenuating, mitigating and amplifying factors — so that friends could be rewarded and enemies punished.

Read more at Politico.

The excerpt, coupled with former secretary of defense Robert Gates's book, "Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War," underscore something well-known about Clinton and most prominent politicians — they are intensely political creatures.

This isn't news. But this sort of behind-the-scenes look at a political campaign, even

one that was six years ago, is catnip to the political press.

More on the hit list:

There was a special circle of Clinton hell reserved for people who had endorsed Obama or stayed on the fence after Bill and Hillary had raised money for them, appointed them to a political post or written a recommendation to ice their kid's application to an elite school.

So who made the list? According to the book, a handful of Democrats were in such poor standing with the Clintons that they earned 7s. Among the most prominent were Sen. Ted Kennedy, whose endorsement of then-Sen. Barack Obama was seen as a crucial moment in the primary campaign, and Sens. John Kerry and Claire McCaskill, whose robust support of Obama proved to be particularly bothersome to Hillary Clinton.

In one colorful passage, the authors recount McCaskill's fear of bumping into Clinton:

"I really don't want to be in an elevator alone with her," McCaskill confided to the friend.

So does any of this matter to a potential 2016 bid for Clinton? The short answer is no. And the long answer is no. The Beltway will eat this stuff up, of course, and it does suggest that 2014 will be a year when Clinton's record is highly scrutinized, often in salacious detail. But much of this 2008 campaign drama is water under the bridge for Clinton supporters and for Clinton, who is steadily rebuilding and repairing relationships as she mulls whether to run.

Also worth noting: McCaskill was [one of the first senators to endorse](#) Clinton for 2016, saying in a statement in June:

"They aren't only reaching out to folks who supported Hillary in 2008. They're helping to show that regardless of who you supported for president back then, we can all agree today that there is nobody better equipped to be our next president than Hillary Clinton."



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