

2008 Democratic Campaign: Perceptions of the Obama-Clinton Nomination Struggle

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Abstract: *The 2008 nomination battle between Senator Hillary Clinton and Senator Barack Obama was the closest in modern Democratic Party history, and attracted the close attention of the public. There seemed to be so little difference between the candidates in terms of issues and policy, and the split among voters appeared to be related to the perceptions of the candidates by these voters. Were voters motivated in their choice by Senator Clinton's "experience," Senator Obama's "judgment," ties to the administration of Bill Clinton, "post-partisanship," gender, race, "electability," or some other factors?*

A strategy was thus employed to exploit the advantages of Q methodology in order to reveal a structure to these subjective viewpoints. Ultimately, a 45-statement Q sample was culled from internet blogs maintained by pundits and administered to participants in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania (27 respondents) and Syracuse, New York (24 respondents). Factor analysis revealed three distinct viewpoints in Pennsylvania and two distinct viewpoints in New York. A second-order factor analysis was undertaken to determine the degree of similarity between these factors.

Introduction

The 2008 United States Democratic Party presidential nomination contest proved to be historic for several reasons: it represented the first serious pursuit of a major party's presidential nomination by a female, the first successful nomination of an African-American, and the most closely contested nomination in modern political history. The battle lines were quickly drawn between the supporters of Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Senator Barack Obama (D-IL), and a prolonged struggle emerged that was not settled until after the last of the primaries contested. Policy differences between the two were minimal, so Clinton

stressed her experience and ties to her husband's administration (widely seen as successful on many fronts by the party faithful), whereas Obama pointed to his judgment (he was an early opponent of the Iraq War, which Clinton initially supported), and his call for a new generation of leadership that would move beyond the partisanship of the previous decades.

While those were the overt campaign themes, there were underlying elements that faced the Democratic electorate in this primary season: issues of race and gender, Clinton's polarizing personality—and thus potential electability, Obama's ties to his controversial pastor, the tone of the campaign, and worries that a divided party could lead to a Republican victory, among others.

The nomination process began with Obama's victory in the January 2008 Iowa Caucus, a harbinger of future successes in caucus states (which require organizational strength by the campaign) by the Illinois senator. Next was the pivotal New Hampshire primary. Polls leading up to New Hampshire indicated an Obama victory, but Clinton managed a win and thus the stage was set for an epic battle for the Democratic Party nomination that would last until June of 2008, when Obama would lay claim to a majority of the delegates. Along the way, Obama ran off a series of victories, only to see a late surge by Clinton in populous states such as Texas, Ohio and Pennsylvania. At the end of the primary/caucus stage, neither Clinton nor Obama had enough pledged delegates to claim the nomination. Pressure was brought to bear on Clinton, who trailed in delegates, to suspend her campaign and endorse Obama. Initially, she resisted those calls, but did eventually follow that course of action. Table 1 shows the state-by-state results of the pre-convention process:

Table 1: Democratic Party Primary/Caucus Results

<i>Date</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>Obama</i>
1-3-08	Iowa	29.5	37.6
1-8-08	New Hampshire	39.1	36.5
1-19-08	Florida*	49.7	33.0
	Michigan**	55.3	
	Nevada	50.7	45.2
	South Carolina	26.5	55.4
2-5-08	Alabama	41.7	55.8
	Alaska	25.4	74.4
	Arizona	50.5	43.1
	Arkansas	69.7	26.6
	California	51.9	42.4
	Colorado	32.4	66.6

Date	State	Clinton	Obama
2-5-08	Connecticut	46.6	50.7
	Delaware	42.3	53.1
	Georgia	31.1	66.4
	Idaho	17.2	79.5
	Illinois	32.9	64.6
	Kansas	25.8	74.0
	Massachusetts	56.2	40.8
	Minnesota	32.1	66.5
	Missouri	48.0	49.2
	New Jersey	53.8	44.0
	New Mexico	48.8	48.0
	New York	57.4	39.9
	North Dakota	36.5	61.1
	Oklahoma	54.8	31.2
Tennessee	53.8	40.5	
Utah	39.2	56.6	
2-9-08	Louisiana	35.6	57.4
	Nebraska	32.2	67.6
2-10-08	Maine	39.9	59.5
2-12-08	Washington, D.C.	24.0	75.2
	Maryland	36.5	60.0
	Virginia	35.4	63.6
2-19-08	Hawaii	23.6	75.7
	Vermont	38.7	59.3
	Washington	46.0	51.0
	Wisconsin	40.7	58.1
3-4-08	Ohio	54.3	44.0
	Rhode Island	58.4	40.4
	Texas	50.9	47.4
3-11-08	Mississippi	36.7	61.2
4-22-08	Pennsylvania	54.7	45.3
5-06-08	Indiana	50.7	49.3
	North Carolina	41.5	56.2
5-13-08	West Virginia	67.0	25.7
5-20-08	Kentucky	65.5	29.9
	Oregon	41.3	58.7
6-03-08	Montana	41.2	56.4
	South Dakota	55.3	44.7

Source: <http://demconvention.thehill.com/content/blogcategory/20/83>
 *Neither candidate campaigned in Florida; **Obama not on the ballot in Michigan

The country was gripped by the drama of this historic battle, as Democrats took sides, and much conversation ensued through the media and across the fence. What was striking to trained political observers was the degree to which this dialogue focused on matters unrelated to policy differences among the contenders. In fact as Ceasar, et al, wrote about the challenge facing the little-known Obama leading up to the 2008 election season against his two chief rivals, the better known Senators Hillary Clinton and John Edwards: "There were no major philosophical differences among the three: all cast themselves as progressive problem solvers" (2009, p. 91). Rather the focus was on electability, experience, judgment, etc.

Literature Review and Method:

The authors decided to exploit the advantages of Q methodology in order to gain insight into the structure of the subjectivity associated with this campaign. Statements were gathered from various internet sources: (a) columns by political pundits on the leading news and opinion sites, (b) public responses posted to those columns, (c) established political blogs, and, (d) comments posted in response to blog entries. These statements are in their natural language. Brown, 1980, summarizes the advantages to the use of Q Methodology in inquiries of this sort:

The Q-methodological approach to public opinion remains very close to the actual facts of a situation in controversy and in these respects has affinity with the logic of naturalistic inquiry (Denzin, 1971). The Q sample is composed of statements which persons have actually made in the course of expressing their opinions publically; although edited, Q items are in no way revamped, as is done with scale items, so as to eliminate the kinds of ambiguities, conflicts, and inconsistencies that naturally occur in ordinary language. The factors are likewise natural, representing actual categories of thinking that are operant with respect to the issues under consideration. Factors, of course, must be interpreted, but the investigator is not given a completely free hand in this: each interpretation must be congruent with the entire array of factor scores, and the investigator's interpretive behavior is thereby governed. Explanations are another matter, and it is at the stage of explanation that the researcher is more free to draw on those theories with which he is most familiar; however, the explanation must still square with the known facts. Observers may differ over their explanations of phenomena—e.g., in terms of psychoanalytic, learning, and other brands of theory; the existence of these factors nevertheless remains inviolate" (p. 70).

This research continues in the tradition of using Q-methodology as a means by which to study political attitudes. Previous examples include: Brown's (1981) look at attitudes toward the 1980 U.S. presidential contenders—Carter, Reagan, and Anderson; Carlson, Blum & McKeown (1995-96) investigating attitudes of foreign policy elites toward America's role in a post-Cold War world; Rhoads & Brown (2002) examining reactions to the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal; Thomas & Baas (1996) studying public constructions of the meaning of the 1992 Clinton victory; and Thomas & Baas (2007, 2008) studies of attitudes toward Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

Also, instructive were articles by Stephenson (1964) on the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon televised debates, and Thomas, McCoy and McBride (1993) on the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill controversy as both studies were concerned with a political confrontation, playing out before the public—similar to the Clinton-Obama nomination showdown.

Ultimately, a Q sample of 45 statements was selected by the authors as representing the major areas thought to be of interest to observers of the campaign. It was decided that Q sorts would be administered both at Westminster College and Syracuse University initially, and analyzed separately. The sorts were administered in the days leading up to the pivotal Pennsylvania Primary. A second-order factor analysis was then undertaken to determine the degree of similarity between the results independently discovered at both institutions.

The Westminster College Study

Q-sorts were administered to 27 self-identifying Democrats (both students and faculty), and data analyzed, using the PQMethod program. (Atkinson, 1992). Centroid factor analysis was used and the factors were judgmentally rotated, to maximize the factor loading for Q sort 10 on Factor A. Person 10 is a devoted Obama activist—in fact, at the time of the sorting he was a paid staffer for Obama. Factors B and C were rotated to maximize factor loadings. Factor loadings are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Factor Loadings

Q sort	A	B	C
1	(.57)	-.12	.13
2	(.50)	-.01	.16
3	(.76)	-.10	-.05
4	(.53)	-.10	.08
5	(.64)	.12	.10
6	(.50)	.28	.20
7	(.56)	.16	.03
8	(.57)	-.05	.15

Q sort	A	B	C
9	(-.57)	.34	.31
10	(.71)	.11	.16
11	(.65)	.02	.34
12	(.59)	.24	.21
13	(.44)	.03	.01
14	(.46)	-.16	-.02
15	(.75)	.11	-.31
16	-.08	(.45)	-.09
17	-.23	(.64)	.21
18	.02	(.41)	-.08
19	.27	-.02	(.45)
20	-.16	.20	(.50)
21	.68	-.33	.46
22	.50	.16	-.45
23	.22	-.22	-.01
24	.26	.10	-.12
25	.39	.37	-.22
26	.32	.24	.12
27	.38	.35	.02

Loadings in parentheses are significant at the .01 level

Factor A: Pro-Obama – “Yes We Can”

Fifteen of the 27 sorters are associated with the Factor A view (albeit one sorter is negatively associated). The positive end of Factor A is clearly pro-Obama and is responding strongly to his message of hope and change. As can be seen by those statements which are most strongly endorsed (+4, +3), Factor A types support Obama because they believe that he can rise above the partisan atmosphere in Washington, and that he possesses the qualities that can transform the politics of the status-quo.

+4 Statements

10. I think that part of what people are looking for right now is somebody who’s going to solve problems and not resort to the same typical politics that we’ve seen in Washington.

13. Obama offers the experience and judgment to make America a better nation. Obama has more experience standing by the principles the Democratic Party has lost. Principles, judgment, these are the things that make a GREAT president.

36. Both having strong faith in the power of government, but I believe Mr. Obama’s poetic message of hope has trumped Mrs. Clinton’s prosaic command of the issues.

+3 Statements

15. It was Obama's all-encompassing message that got to me. I feel uplifted by him.

42. We must end the rancor and partisanship that has mired Washington in gridlock. In my view, Sen. Obama represents our best hope of replacing division with unity.

39. The choice in this election is not between regions or religions or genders. It's not even about rich versus poor, young versus old, and it's not about black versus white. This election is about the past versus the future.

27. The movement that Obama has created is more important than the man himself. He is giving voice and space to an awakening beyond his wildest expectations, a social force that may lead him far beyond his modest policy agenda.

Turning to those statements most disagreed with by Factor A types, there is strong rejection of the notion that Obama's relative inexperience is disqualifying, and that Obama's supporters are swept up in an emotional attachment to the man. Additionally, they reject the idea that Obama's pastor, Rev. Wright, and his controversial remarks will ruin the Senator's chances.

-4 Statements

38. How in Hades can anyone think that less than 2 years experience is solid training for the presidency? Hell, Obama was in diapers when Clinton was changing the world.

11. Obama wants you to feel, not think. Because if you vote based on your emotions, you may pick Obama, but if you use your rational judgment, you can only choose Hillary.

21. The controversy regarding Rev. Wright will stay with Obama through the primaries and if nominated through the general election. He will not be President, no matter what he says or does because of the things said by his pastor.

The statements next most disagreed with by Factor A types (-3), for the most part, revolve around the idea that Hillary Clinton would make a stronger nominee and president. Factor A also rejects the idea that former Vice-President Al Gore should be the nominee of a splintered Democratic Party.

-3 Statements

28. It took a Clinton to clean up after the first Bush. It may take another Clinton to clean up after the second Bush.

3. Obama spends time talking about the laments of average Americans he has met along the way; then he dives into a litany of solutions he has proposed to address the laments. But those are not as convincing as Clinton's versions of the same.

29. Everyone knows that John McCain will make the election about national security. This is a given. And it will be imperative that we have a nominee who is able to stand on that stage with Sen. McCain, and I believe Hillary is the person best able to do that.

44. I hope that a brokered convention produces Al Gore as our nominee.

Those associated with Factor A were both students and faculty. An interesting theme of this Factor is that it is overwhelmingly pro-Obama without being attacking Clinton. These sorters appear to be firm believers in the promise of Barack Obama.

Factor B: Pro-Clinton – Tough & Experienced

Three sorters were Factor B types (both students and faculty), who endorse the candidacy of Hillary Clinton. In examining the statements most agreed with (+4), it can be seen that those associated with Factor B are responding to Clinton's perceived strength and ability to fight for what she believes in and that she might be the Democrats best choice to stand up to Sen. McCain.

+4 Statements

31. Hillary Clinton has been fighting for children, families and healthcare for years. She has more experience than Obama and she really wants to take this country in a different direction. I just want people to stop judging her and give her a chance. Hear what she has to offer and then judge her.

1. Hillary Clinton has proven herself tough, specific and reliable—qualities that become increasingly important as the economy teeters and as worries about the future gather in the land.

29. Everyone knows that John McCain will make the election about national security. This is a given. And it will be imperative that we have a nominee who is able to stand on that stage with Sen. McCain, and I believe Hillary is the person best able to do that.

In looking at the statements that Factor B types next most agreed with (+3), there is a sentiment of concern with where the split in the Democratic Party might be leading. Although Factor B types endorse Clinton's right to fight on, they are worried that a prolonged contest might endanger Democratic Party prospects in November.

+3 Statements

9. Clinton's plans on the big domestic policy issues—health care and energy—have been courageous and detailed, more sophisticated than her opponents'—and very, very smart

politically.

20. We must remember at the end of the day our target, our eye, must be on the prize in November.

43. Sen. Clinton has said she will fight on—and she’s right to do so. Simply put, this fight isn’t over.

34. Once again, the Democrats seem determined to steal defeat from the jaws of victory.

The statements most disagreed with by Factor B types include a sharp criticism of Obama for hypocrisy, as well as criticisms of Clinton on the issues of “experience” and whether she is the “right” candidate to be the first female president.

-4 Statements

33. Obama condemned Don Imus for spewing hate speech and vowed never to appear on his show again. Yet this same indignation about his pastor’s hate speech fails to materialize. This exposes Obama’s hypocrisy.

7. Clinton would be a fine president, but I don’t think she is the right first female president. The first female president should be a fresh face.

26. Apart from what she acquired through marriage, Mrs. Clinton has no more “experience” than Mr. Obama.

Additionally, Factor B types disagree with the claim that a Clinton nomination based on the support of party “superdelegates” would amount to a stolen nomination. There is also disagreement expressed with the idea that the Clintons themselves pose a problem for the Democrats—a so-called “Clinton fatigue.” Finally, Factor B types disagree with Obama offering the right kind of experience and judgment to make a GREAT president.

-3 Statements

32. If superdelegates choose Clinton over Obama, Hillary will have “stolen” the nomination. This will do long-term damage to the Democratic Party.

37. We don’t need to keep trading the presidency between these two weird families.

13. Obama offers the experience and judgment to make America a better nation. Obama has more experience standing by the principles the Democratic Party has lost. Principles, judgment, these are the things that make a GREAT president.

35. I believe that there is a whole group of Democrats out there who are secretly enjoying being able to vote against a Clinton. They can take out their frustrations and still vote for a Democrat.

Like Factor A+, Factor B’s support of their candidate (in this case,

Clinton) is largely uncritical of the opponent for the nomination. However, there is a subtle sentiment that Obama may lack the “toughness” necessary to battle the Republicans and to achieve long-standing Democratic Party goals if elected. Factor B types are impressed by Clinton’s willingness to fight for what she believes in, and this may be especially appealing to a segment of the Democratic Party that believes that their party has too often been unwilling to stand up forcefully for its principles.

Factor C: Worried and Not Satisfied

Factor C is defined by two sorters (both students), who seem both worried that the intra-party struggle will damage the Party’s electoral chances in the fall and are not satisfied with either of the leading candidates. Factor C types are looking to move beyond our current politics (sharing some affinity with the Obama supporters), but are uncertain that Obama is the right candidate – they hope for Al Gore, as seen in the statements most agreed with (+4):

+4 Statements

39. The choice in this election is not between regions or religions or genders. It’s not even about rich versus poor, young versus old, and it’s not about black versus white. This election is about the past versus the future.

10. I think that part of what people are looking for right now is somebody who’s going to solve problems and not resort to the same typical politics that we’ve seen in Washington.

44. I hope that a brokered convention produces Al Gore as our nominee.

The next most-agreed with statements (+3) continue with the theme, as support is given to the idea that party infighting might well damage party prospects in the general election. Statement #37 is critical of Clinton, while there is a belief expressed that the battle over the nomination is revealing a demographic split in the party.

+3 Statements

20. We must remember at the end of the day our target, our eye, must be on the prize in November.

37. We don’t need to keep trading the presidency between these two weird families.

2. This is not a struggle for the ideological soul of the party. It may, however, be a struggle for the party’s demographic soul—older vs. younger, information-age workers vs. industrial and service workers, wine vs. beer.

22. This would all be good sport, to be sure, were it not for the gathering impression that the two-way battering is taking a toll on the Democrats' prospects in the fall.

The statements most disagreed with (-4) by Factor C types center around Obama. Factor C types seem unconvinced that Obama has the experience and judgment to make a great president, though they seem to reject the idea that Clinton's experience is far greater than Obama's.

-4 Statements

38. How in Hades can anyone think that less than 2 years experience is solid training for the presidency? Hell, Obama was in diapers when Clinton was changing the world.

15. It was Obama's all-encompassing message that got to me. I feel uplifted by him.

13. Obama offers the experience and judgment to make America a better nation. Obama has more experience standing by the principles the Democratic Party has lost. Principles, judgment, these are the things that make a GREAT president.

The next most-disagreed statements (-3) by Factor C types offer critiques of both candidates—they reject again, Obama's charismatic appeal (#30), but also reject Clinton's plans (#3). The position of Statement #12 seems to reinforce the disenchantment with both candidates that seems central to Factor C.

-3 Statements

12. I do not care if they like each other or not—the Democratic Party needs both of them, both need to be on the ticket. Let the voters decide in the next few months, but the decision for November seems clear to me now—Obama and Clinton, Clinton and Obama—we need both in November.

30. I like Hillary, but she doesn't make my heart skip like Obama.

19. Every day, Mrs. Clinton and her surrogates make it more difficult for me to be able to vote for her in a general election. I say this as a strong Democrat who would've done anything to vote for Bill.

3. Obama spends time talking about the laments of average Americans he has met along the way; then he dives into a litany of solutions he has proposed to address the laments. But those are not as convincing as Clinton's versions of the same.

One of the sorters associated with this factor indicated an intention to vote for John McCain, perhaps another sign of the dissatisfaction of Factor C types with either Clinton or Obama. She may also be turned off with the long intra-party struggle.

Conclusions

In this study, three factors emerged concerning the Democratic presidential nomination contest in 2008. Factor A seems reflective of the supporters of the post-partisan movement that Barack Obama has sought to inspire. Factor A types believe in Obama and his message, and, while they clearly prefer Obama, there is not an overtly anti-Clinton sentiment expressed. Factor B supports Clinton, primarily based on her perceived “toughness,” and is less persuaded that Obama will stand up to his Republican opponent. Factor C is dissatisfied with both candidates (apparently would prefer former Vice-President Al Gore), and is worried about the prospects for the Party in November.

The Syracuse University Study

Let’s now turn our attention to the Syracuse University study. A convenience sample of 24 participants sorted the 45-statement Q sample to reflect their views concerning the Democratic presidential nomination contest in 2008. Demographic information including age, sex, marital status, religion, education, political philosophy, occupation as well as candidate of choice was collected. Q-sorts were administered to self-identified Democrats (n=8), Republicans (n=3), Independents (n=6), “Other” (n=3) and “none” (n=4). Ages ranged from 22 to 60 with a mean age of 30. Education level ranged from high school graduates to Ph.Ds. Fourteen participants were female; liberals (n=12), moderates (n=11) and one conservative participated; occupations included administrative assistant (n=2), associate director (n=1), cook (n=1), director of financial aid (n=1), educator (n=1), IT (n=1), retired elementary teacher (n=1), student (n=15) and one “no answer.” The break down for the candidate-of-choice question was Obama (n=9), Clinton (n=6), Obama/Clinton (n=1), Other (n=4), Undecided (n=3) and no answer (n=1).

Data were analyzed using PCQ. The Westminster College study used the PQMethod program for data analysis. Data from the Westminster study and the Syracuse study was collected and analyzed independently by the researchers at each location. The different programs used in the analysis reflect the programs of choice by the separate researchers. However, both programs use the same centroid extraction procedure. The Westminster College study used judgmental rotation in order to maximize the factor loading of a particular Q sort (a devoted Obama activist). The Syracuse University study did not have a particular Q sort’s factor loading to maximize so varimax rotation was used.

Two bi-polar factors emerged in the Syracuse University study with 22 of 24 participants significantly loaded on at least one factor. Factor loadings are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Factor Loadings

Q sort	A	B
1	(.85)	-.13
2	(.77)	.34
3	(.70)	-.07
4	(.68)	-.02
5	(.56)	(.44)
6	(.51)	.16
7	(.48)	.00
8	(.47)	-.01
9	(.47)	(.47)
10	(-.52)	.03
11	(-.56)	-.28
12	(-.60)	-.15
13	(-.65)	.02
14	(-.66)	(.48)
15	(-.81)	-.09
16	.15	(.38)
17	.14	(.76)
18	-.06	(.43)
19	-.09	(.55)
20	.07	(-.39)
21	.07	(-.50)
22	-.18	(-.52)
23	-.33	-.30
24	.16	.16

Loadings in parentheses are significant at the .01 level

Factor A: Obama v. Clinton

Fifteen of the 24 sorters are significantly loaded on Factor A. The positive end of this bi-polar factor is pro-Obama. The negative end is pro-Clinton. Eight out of nine positive loaded participants indicated that Obama was their "candidate of choice" (the other sorter didn't answer this question). Five out of six negatively loaded participants indicated that Clinton was their candidate of choice (one was undecided).

As the scores (+4, +3) for the following statements indicate, the positive loaded Factor A types support Obama because of his message of hope, positive judgment and potential to be one of the "great" presidents. He has rekindled a belief in the promise of government for Factor A types that they have not felt in a long time. They believe that he can solve problems and move beyond the uninspiring politics that Factor A types have come to expect. The pro-Obama supporters think

if the superdelegates award Clinton with the nomination over and above the popular vote the Democrats will lose those inspired voters.

The pro-Clinton supporters loaded on the negative end of this factor are, of course, rejecting these statements. Obama's principles and judgment are not prized by them. They do not feel uplifted by Obama and they do not believe that superdelegate support for Clinton will drive young and independent voters away from the Democrats.

+4 Statements

13. Obama offers the experience and judgment to make America a better nation. Obama has more experience standing by the principles the Democratic Party has lost. Principles, judgment, these are the things that make a GREAT president.

15. It was Obama's all-encompassing message that got to me. I feel uplifted by him.

18. The Democrats may be in real trouble now. If the superdelegates award Clinton with the nomination over and above the popular vote and delegates elected through the caucuses and primaries the Democrats will lose young and independent voters.

+3 Statements

8. Obama's appeal is not to be found in the nuances of trade or health or tax policy. Mr. Obama wants to be president of the US. Mrs. Clinton wants to capture the government for her faction.

10. I think that part of what people are looking for right now is somebody who's going to solve problems and not resort to the same typical politics that we've seen in Washington.

27. The movement that Obama has created is more important than the man himself. He is giving voice and space to an awakening beyond his wildest expectations, a social force that may lead him far beyond his modest policy agenda.

36. Both having strong faith in the power of government, but I believe Mr. Obama's poetic message of hope has trumped Mrs. Clinton's prosaic command of the issues.

Turning to those statements most disagreed with by the pro-Obama Factor A types (-4), there is strong rejection of the notion that Obama's relative inexperience is disqualifying, and that Clinton's solutions are more convincing.

-4 Statements

3. Obama spends time talking about the laments of average Americans he has met along the way; then he dives into a litany of solutions he has proposed to address the laments. But those are not as convincing as Clinton's versions of the same.

11. Obama wants you to feel, not think. Because if you vote based on your emotions, you may pick Obama, but if you use your rational judgment, you can only choose Hillary.

38. How in Hades can anyone think that less than 2 years experience is solid training for the presidency? Hell, Obama was in diapers when Clinton was changing the world.

The statements most next disagreed with by the pro-Obama Factor A types (-3) all revolve around the idea that Hillary Clinton would make a stronger nominee and president because of her more sophisticated stance on domestic issues and her respectable and comparable (with McCain) national security profile.

-3 Statements

9. Clinton's plans on the big domestic policy issues—health care and energy—have been courageous and detailed, more sophisticated than her opponents'—and very, very smart politically.

25. Hillary Clinton inspired an even greater frenzy because she was a gender revolutionary, transforming the cotton-candy role of First Lady into a power position.

28. It took a Clinton to clean up after the first Bush. It may take another Clinton to clean up after the second Bush.

29. Everyone knows that John McCain will make the election about national security. This is a given. And it will be imperative that we have a nominee who is able to stand on that stage with Sen. McCain, and I believe Hillary is the person best able to do that.

Of course, the pro-Clinton Factor A types see Clinton as inspiring, able to "clean up" after Bush, push her important health care and energy plan, and as more capable to stand toe-to-toe with Senator McCain on "his issue" of national security.

Factor B: Win-Win v. Lose-Lose

Ten sorters were Factor B types. Seven were positively loaded and 3 were negatively loaded. The seven positively loaded sorters were split on their "candidate of choice": 3 for Obama, 2 for Clinton, 1 indicated Obama/Clinton, and 1 was undecided. None of the negatively loaded sorters indicated Obama or Clinton for their candidate of choice (2 indicated "other" and 1 was undecided).

The positively loaded Factor B types are in a "win-win situation." They like both Democratic candidates and find both inspiring and uplifting. Conversely, the negatively loaded Factor B types are in a "lose-lose situation." They dislike both Democratic candidates and find neither one inspiring nor uplifting.

+4 Statements

15. It was Obama's all-encompassing message that got to me. I feel uplifted by him.

25. Hillary Clinton inspired an even greater frenzy because she was a gender revolutionary, transforming the cotton-candy role of First Lady into a power position.

30. I like Hillary, but she doesn't make my heart skip like Obama.

In looking at the statements that the positively loaded Factor B types next most agreed with (+3), there is a distinction and recognition of differences between the candidates such as Clinton's command of the issues versus Obama's inspiring message of hope. Additionally, Factor B types are not worried about Obama's "lack of experience." They compare him to candidate Bill Clinton in this regard. Factor B types also are sure that Hillary Clinton can "clean up" after President George W. Bush just as Bill Clinton "cleaned up" after President George H. W. Bush.

+3 Statements

13. Obama offers the experience and judgment to make America a better nation. Obama has more experience standing by the principles the Democratic Party has lost. Principles, judgment, these are the things that make a GREAT president.

28. It took a Clinton to clean up after the first Bush. It may take another Clinton to clean up after the second Bush.

36. Both having strong faith in the power of government, but I believe Mr. Obama's poetic message of hope has trumped Mrs. Clinton's prosaic command of the issues.

45. Bill Clinton had way more skeletons in his closet than Obama and not a great deal more experience. He defeated a sitting president who had won a popular war only a short time before. Anyone who thinks Obama is a weak candidate has missed the past 50 years of American political life.

The statements most disagreed with by the positively loaded Factor B types include the criticism of Obama for his association with Rev. Wright, as well as the criticism of Clinton on the issue of not being the right or "fresh" first female president. The negatively loaded Factor B types hold the opposite view from the win-win perspective. These participants criticize Obama for his association with Rev. Wright, and criticize Clinton on the issue of not being the right or "fresh" first female president.

-4 Statements

5. As this campaign progresses, their weaknesses—the reasons for their inability to put away this nomination—are going to become more apparent than their strengths.

7. Clinton would be a fine president, but I don't think she is the right first female president. The first female president should be a fresh face.

21. The controversy regarding Rev. Wright will stay with Obama through the primaries and if nominated through the general election. He will not be President, no matter what he says or does because of the things said by his pastor.

Additionally, the positively loaded Factor B types disagree with the claim that a Clinton nomination based on the support of party "superdelegates" would amount to a stolen nomination or that she is "unelectable." There is also disagreement expressed with the idea that the Clintons themselves pose a problem for the Democrats—a so-called "Clinton fatigue." Finally, these Factor B types disagree with the statement that includes a sharp criticism of Obama for hypocrisy. Again the negatively loaded Factor B participants hold the opposite view (e.g., they criticize Obama for his hypocrisy, believe Hillary is unelectable, etc.).

-3 Statements

16. The fact is that Hillary is unelectable against almost any Republican, including McCain.

32. If superdelegates choose Clinton over Obama, Hillary will have "stolen" the nomination. This will do long-term damage to the Democratic Party.

33. Obama condemned Don Imus for spewing hate speech and vowed never to appear on his show again. Yet this same indignation about his pastor's hate speech fails to materialize. This exposes Obama's hypocrisy.

37. We don't need to keep trading the presidency between these two weird families.

Conclusions

In this study, two bi-polar factors emerged concerning the Democratic presidential nomination contest in 2008. Factor A reflected a split between the Obama and the Clinton supporters. Obama supporters are moved by his judgment, principles and uplifting message of hope. Clinton supporters believe Obama lacks the experience and judgment to be president. They believe Clinton's solutions to domestic and international problems are more convincing. The positively loaded Factor B participants find themselves in a "win-win" situation. That is, either candidate is more than acceptable to them for different reasons. The negatively loaded Factor B participants want neither Obama nor Clinton.

Comparison of the two studies

The three factors from the Westminster College study and the two factors from the Syracuse University study were correlated and factor analyzed. The correlation matrix (Table 4) indicated the similarity between the factors.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix Between Two Study Sorts

	W-A	W-B	W-C	S-A	S-B
West. Fac. A	-	-.21	.00	.88	.32
West. Fac. B		-	.09	-.31	.43
West. Fac. C			-	-.06	-.09
Syr. Fac. A				-	.18
Syr. Fac. B					-

The Westminster Factor A and the Syracuse Factor A are positively correlated ($r = .88$). The two Factor B sorts from each study are also correlated with each other ($r = .43$). Factor C, from the Westminster study, is uncorrelated with any other factor.

A second order factor analysis, of these five factor arrays, confirms the similarity of the results. The factor matrix (Table 5) shows a new Factor A consisting of the Westminster Factor A and the Syracuse Factor A. A new Factor B consists of the two separate Factor B arrays. Factor C stands alone.

Table 5: Factor Matrix – Second-Order Factor Results

	Factor A	Factor B	Factor C
Westminster Factor A	.97	.07	.01
Syracuse Factor A	.96	-.07	-.04
Westminster Factor B	-.32	.84	.13
Syracuse Factor B	.31	.85	-.13
Westminster Factor C	-.01	.00	.99

The correlations and second-order factoring revealed that two of the three views discovered in the Westminster study were also present in the Syracuse study. Both studies found a Pro-Obama point of view (the Westminster Factor A and the positively scored Syracuse Factor A). This was the strongest link between the two studies as demonstrated by the strong correlation between factor arrays ($r = .88$).

The two studies also found similar views among their Factor B participants. Westminster’s Pro-Clinton Factor B has much in common with Syracuse’s positively loaded “Win-Win” Factor B perspective regarding Clinton. However, the Syracuse Factor B includes positive Obama statements that are not as evident in the Westminster’s Factor B.

This explains why the correlation between these factor arrays is not quite as high ($r = .44$) as with the Factor A correlation.

The Westminster's Factor C was not significantly correlated with either of the Syracuse Factors although one might think that it represents the same view as the Syracuse negatively loaded Factor B "lose-lose" participants. However the Westminster Factor C participants' focus seems more on the intra-party struggle, a possible demographic split in the party, and electoral chances in the fall. The "lose-lose" participants from the Syracuse study are not concerned about what these two candidates might or might not do to the Party. They simply do not like either one.

The second-order factoring of the results from the two studies highlights the robust nature of the methodology. When a factor is identified through Q methodology, that factor "exists." This study has demonstrated that not only do these factors exist, but they exist within different samples of people and across different geographic areas.

Additionally, this study also points to the fact that no Q-methodological study can claim to have identified "all" the factors that exist. One factor in the Westminster study (Factor C: Worried and Not Satisfied) was not revealed in the Syracuse study.

Summary

By way of summary two studies concerning the Democratic presidential nomination contest in 2008 were conducted independently using the same Q sample. Three factors emerged from the Westminster study and two bi-polar factors emerged from the Syracuse study. The results from each study were analyzed and interpreted separately. A second-order factoring was conducted on the 5 factor arrays from the two studies revealing that two of the three views discovered in the Westminster study were also present in the Syracuse study.

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Appendix A: Q-Sample Statements with Factor Arrays

Scores for factors A, B & C, respectively, are in parentheses for the Westminster College Study. The Syracuse Study scores for factors A & B, respectively, are outside and to the right of the parentheses.

01. Hillary Clinton has proven herself tough, specific and reliable—qualities that become increasingly important as the economy teeters and as worries about the future gather in the land. (-2, +4, -1) -2, -1

02. This is not a struggle for the ideological soul of the party. It may, however, be a struggle for the party's demographic soul—older voters vs. Younger, information-age workers vs. industrial workers and service-workers, wine vs. beer. (+1, +1, +3) +2, +2

03. Obama spends time talking about the laments of average Americans he has met along the way; then he dives into a litany of solutions he has proposed to address the laments. But those are not as convincing as Clinton's versions of the same. (-3, +1, -3) -4, 0

04. It is a sad but inescapable fact of this election that Bill and Hillary Clinton have now become the "same old thing" they once railed against. (0, -2, +2) +1, -1

05. As this campaign progresses, their weaknesses—the reasons for their inability to put away this nomination—are going to become more apparent than their strengths. (-1, -2, 0) -1, -4

06. Obama's early opposition to the war, coupled with Clinton's vote to authorize the war, is the main reason why people are supporting him. (0, 0, 0) -1, +1

07. Clinton would be a fine president, but I don't think she is the right first female president. The first female president should be a fresh face. (-1, -4, +1) 0, -4

08. Obama's appeal is not to be found in the nuances of trade or health or tax policy. Mr. Obama wants to be president of the US. Mrs. Clinton wants to capture the government for her faction. (-1, -2, -3) +3, -1

09. Clinton's plans on the big domestic policy issues—health care and energy—have been courageous and detailed, more sophisticated than her opponents'—and very, very smart politically. (-2, +3, -1) -3, +2

10. I think that part of what the people are looking for right now is somebody who's going to solve problems and not resort to the same typical politics that we've seen in Washington. (+4, +2, +4) +3, +1

11. Obama wants you to feel, not think. Because if you vote based on your emotions, you may pick Obama, but if you use your rational judgment, you can only choose Hillary.

(-4, +1, -1) -4, -1

12. I do not care if they like each other or not—the Democratic Party needs both of them, both need to be on the ticket. Let the voters decide in the next few months, but the decision for November seems clear to me now—Obama and Clinton, Clinton and Obama, we need both in November. (+1, +1, -3) -1, -1

13. Obama offers the experience and judgment to make America a better nation. Obama has more experience standing by the principles the Democratic party has lost. Principles, judgment, these are the things that make a GREAT president. (+4, -3, -4) +4, +3

14. Since 1980 a Bush or Clinton has been in the executive office, either as vice-president or president. The United States is not about dynasties. That's one reason we fought a revolutionary war. (+2, -1, +1) +2, -2

15. It was Obama's all-encompassing message that got to me. I feel uplifted by him. (+3, -1, -4) +4, +4

16. The fact is that Hillary is unelectable against almost any Republican, including McCain. (+1, -2, -2) +1, -3

17. At the end of the day, I believe whoever the Democratic nominee is will win, but those who think that, if Obama is the nominee, he won't have Clinton-like negatives by Election Day are naïve. (+1, 0, -2) 0, 0

18. The Democrats may be in real trouble now. If the superdelegates award Clinton with the nomination over and above the popular vote and delegates elected through the caucuses and primaries the Democrats will lose young and independent voters. (+2, +1, 0) +4, -1

19. Every day, Mrs. Clinton and her surrogates make it more difficult for me to vote for her in a general election. I say this as a strong Democrat who would've done anything to vote for Bill. (0, -1, -3) +1, -2

20. We must remember at the end of the day our target, our eye, must be on the prize in November. (+1, +3, +3) 0, +1

21. The controversy regarding Rev. Wright will stay with Obama through the primaries and if nominated through the general election. He will not be President, no matter what he says or does because of the things said by his pastor. (-4, -1, +1) -2, -4

22. This would be good sport, to be sure, were it not for the gathering impression that the two-way battering is taking a toll on the Democrats' prospects in the fall. (0, 0, +3) 0, 0

23. What I've heard from Sen. Clinton is not the politics of personal destruction; it's legitimate criticism and contrasts. (-2, +2, -1) -1, 0

24. Obama's record is not as long as Clinton's, or as potentially rich, for an opponent looking for damaging votes or quotations. (-1, +2, -1) -1, 0

25. Hillary Clinton inspired an even greater frenzy because she was a gender revolutionary, transforming the cotton-candy role of First Lady into a power position. (-1, 0, +2) -3, +4

26. Apart from what she acquired through marriage, Mrs. Clinton has no more "experience" than Mr. Obama. (+2, -4, -1) +1, -1

27. The movement that Obama created is more important than the man himself. He is giving voice and space to an awakening beyond his wildest expectations, a social force that may lead him far beyond his modest policy agenda. (+3, 0, -2) +3, +2

28. It took a Clinton to clean up after the first Bush. It may take another Clinton to clean up after the second Bush. (-3, +2, +2) -3, +3

29. Everyone knows that John McCain will make this election about national security. That is a given. And it will be imperative that we have a nominee who is able to stand on that stage with Sen. McCain, and I believe Hillary is the person best able to do that. (-3, +4, +1) -3, 0
30. I like Hillary, but she doesn't make my heart skip like Obama. (0, -1, -3) +1, +4
31. Hillary Clinton has been fighting for children, families and healthcare for years. She has more experience than Obama and she really wants to take this country in a different direction. (-2, +4, 0) -2, +2
32. If superdelegates choose Clinton over Obama, Hillary will have "stolen" the nomination. This will do long-term damage to the Democratic Party. (+2, -3, 0) +2, -3
33. Obama condemned Don Imus for spewing hate speech and vowed never to appear on his show again. Yet this same indignation about his pastor's hate speech fails to materialize. This exposes Obama's hypocrisy. (-2, -4, +2) -2, -3
34. Once again, the Democrats seem determined to steal defeat from the jaws of victory. (-1, +3, 0) -1, -2
35. I believe that there is a whole group of Democrats out there who are secretly enjoying being able to vote against a Clinton. They can take out their frustrations and still vote for a Democrat. (0, -3, 0) 0, -1
36. Both have strong faith in the power of government, but I believe Mr. Obama's poetic message of hope has trumped Mrs. Clinton's prosaic command of the issues. (+4, +2, 0) +3, +3
37. We don't need to keep trading the presidency between these two weird families. (+1, -3, +3) 0, -3
38. How in Hades can anyone think that less than 2 years experience is solid training for the presidency? Hell, Obama was in diapers when Clinton was changing the world. (-4, 0, -4) -4, -2
39. The choice in this election is not between regions or religions or genders. It's not about rich versus poor, young versus old, and it's not about black versus white. This election is about the past versus the future. (+3, +1, +4) +2, +1
40. Hillary Clinton's experience is with partisanship—how in the world will she form all these "bipartisan commissions" she keeps touting? I doubt the "vast right-wing conspiracy" will be lining up to work with her. (+1, -1, +1) +1, 0
41. Whether or not she wins the nomination, Hillary has already given noble service as a sophisticated political tutor for Obama, providing her much younger colleague with much needed seasoning. If she wins the nomination, this primary battle wins the nomination, this primary battle will make Obama a stronger candidate. (0, +1, +2) 0, +1

42. We must end the rancor and partisanship that has mired Washington in gridlock. In my view, Sen. Obama represents our best hope of replacing division with unity. (+3, 0, -2) +2, +2

43. Sen. Clinton has said she will fight on—and she's right to do so. Simply put, this fight isn't over. (-1, +3, +1) -1, +1

44. I hope that a brokered convention produces Al Gore as our nominee. (-3, -2, +4) -2, -2

45. Bill Clinton had way more skeletons in his closet than Obama and not a great deal more experience. He defeated a sitting president who had won a popular war only a short time before. Anyone who thinks Obama is a weak candidate has missed the past 50 years of American political life. (+2, -1, -1) +1, +3