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PERSPECTIVES

First ladies no more

A political organization aims to boost chances for female presidential candidates

My friend Camie's most coveted T-shirts is the one with Rosie the Riveter on it, flexing all she's got. The patriotic colors gleam, and across the top the words "WE CAN DO IT" thunder proudly and strongly.

Today there is no question; of course we can do it. Anybody can: scientists, doctors, teachers, governors, advocates and even stay-at-home moms.

Opinion



Amy Goldhammer

This is exactly what the men and women of the White House Project hope to communicate to the public: That you don't have to be a man to become president of the United States.

The White House Project is a campaign dedicated to changing the climate of American politics so women will be able to launch successful campaigns for the U.S. Presidency in the future.

The campaign has compiled a biographical list of 20 women who may be seriously considered for the position of president. The White House Project has placed ballots in numerous magazines and on the Internet, where the public may vote on women who they personally feel have the proficiency to lead the country.

These ballots give people the opportunity to not see just one woman, but 20 capable women from all over, with different backgrounds and life experiences.

The White House Project, a non-profit organization, is not endorsing these women but merely communicating to the public how broad and outstanding women's leadership is.

At ballot distribution time, however, the public has found the White House enveloped in sex scandals involving President Clinton, where the current lady in the White House is not having the best of times.

"This is not exactly the climate we expected when we started this," Marie Wilson, head of the White House Project, told the Washington Post.



Giovanni Salmeria/Emerald

As much as the scandal has dominated a large portion of recent political activity, the nation is ready for a change, and the White House Project could actually be emerging at the right time.

This serious, successful campaign to promote women leadership, which began planning in November of 1997 and was formally launched in June 1998, is on the verge of becoming one of the most talked about, controversial campaigns the United States has ever been introduced to.

Some people fear change and, after being raised in the mindset that a man is the only one who has the capacity to govern the United States, still feel a woman is not capable of leading the country. It may take some time, but the White House Project

hopes to change this mentality.

"There are so many options out there," said James Devitt, communications director for the White House Project. "If you can see it, you can be it."

More than 20 countries have had women prime ministers or presidents and unfortunately the United States is not part of that number.

Its goal of having a woman elected as President by 2008 may be some years away, but the White House Project is on the right track and paving the way for future campaigns.

A poll taken last November indicated that 76 percent of the public wanted to vote for a woman for president. If well

over half the nation wants to make history, what are we waiting for?

The White House Project's enthusiastic response from people may very well be the giant stepping stone in cultivating a female presidency.

The nation is apt to latch on to the idea of electing a woman President and The White House Project's professional approach presents the importance and seriousness of its campaign.

Rosie, we may just see you out there again — only this time, in the Oval Office.

Amy Goldhammer is a columnist for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.

Letters to the Editor

Election day information lacking

This is my third and final year at the University, and in all my time here I have never been so disappointed in the ASUO, the Emerald and the UO in general as I was on November 3. And that is saying a lot.

Not only were there no pre-election day reminders, but I awoke on election day to find one lonely sign along 13th Avenue advertising where to vote. I'll grant that it was neon orange, but it was hiding by the post office, which is not the most trafficked part of campus. The same complaint goes for the shabby set-up under the EMU — why was there no advertising up by Gilbert? The Emerald did have a small, unclear article regarding where I could vote (ODE, Nov. 3), but why wait until the day of elections to get the word out?

As a resident assistant, I am also concerned about the lack of publicity within the residence halls. My residents needed to vote in Agate Hall, a hall most freshman have never heard of. A map would have been nice. And hey,

ASUO — are you sure we're really registered?

Now, I realize that there has been a rise in the number of absentee ballots recently, but a little help for the rest of us would have been not only useful but responsible. If I had not felt that this year's ballot measures were very important, I would have given up long before hiking out to Agate Hall. In the University is really interested in raising student votes, they need to work on a little common sense preparation. There's more to voting than getting registered.

Megan Koster
Anthropology

The Clinton and Hyde affairs

Equity demands that attorney and House Judiciary Chairman Henry Hyde approach the mendacity and deceit of the Lewinsky case in the same manner as he approached the mendacity and deceit of the Snodgrass case — with a lawyerly motion for summary dismissal. After all, doesn't the "youthful indiscretions" of all randy, middle-aged men deserve equal absolution under the law? And doesn't the

chief executive of the United States merit the same justice as the grand inquisitor of the Starr Chamber?

Ron Black
Junction City

Parties bring police

In his letter (ODE, Nov. 2), Matthias Kubr asked an interesting question: Why don't rioters rip down signs and destroy lamps in their own homes? Well Mr. Kubr, the Eugene Police Department won't let them. Having a party with more than 15 people in Eugene virtually assures that the police will come. And if you want to have a keg or play music to dance to, you will certainly get some variety of ticket. I, for one, would love to destroy lamps in my own home as Mr. Kubr suggests, but I can't afford the ticket. Police crackdown, coupled with arrogant ignorance will certainly lead to greater clashes between students and the police.

Doug Flaherty
Political Science