

Abstract

The thesis is a case study of the Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and the role that gender played in the 2008 Democratic primaries. The aim of the work is to demonstrate that gender played a significant role and functioned as a discriminatory factor. The research is based on the analysis of secondary and in lesser extent also primary sources. The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter one briefly describes the situation of women in American politics and the political climate prior to Clinton's candidacy. This part includes also a short but comprehensive summary of the most common types of gender prejudice and specific challenges that female candidates encounter when entering American high politics. Chapter two studies the phenomenon of Hillary Clinton as the most polarizing woman on the American political scene and explains how gender prejudice and traditional gender stereotypes contributed to the formation of this image. Chapter three analyses Clinton's gender strategy during the campaign and shows how she was able to cope with challenges which for her as a woman arose out of the masculine conception of presidency and how she presented her own gender. The last fourth chapter shows how the American media perceived gender. It demonstrates that the media produced often and quite systematically gendered messages; in some gender was conspicuous while in others it could be traced just on a very subtle level. The conclusion of the work is that Clinton did not manage to successfully resolve challenges posed by masculine nature of presidency and her own gender and that this failure could have too contributed to her loss of the nomination.