

LEVELED BOOK • U

A professional portrait of Hillary Clinton. She is smiling warmly at the camera. She has short, light-colored hair and is wearing a dark blue blazer over a white collared shirt, paired with a pearl necklace. Her hands are clasped in front of her.

Hillary Clinton

MULTI
level
O·R·U

Written by Sean McCollum

Hillary Clinton



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Focus Question

Who is Hillary Clinton, and why
is she important?

Words to Know

campaigning nomination
Congress oath of office
conservative policy-making
diplomatic political science
first lady secretary of state
House of Senate
Representatives

Front cover: Hillary Clinton appears onstage for a 2016 Democratic presidential primary debate in Miami, Florida.

Title page: Hillary Clinton reads the book *Madeline* to children at a library in Bath, New York, while running for the U.S. Senate in 2000.

Page 3: Dorothy Rodham, Hillary's mother, adjusts her daughter's outfit before a public appearance in 1992.

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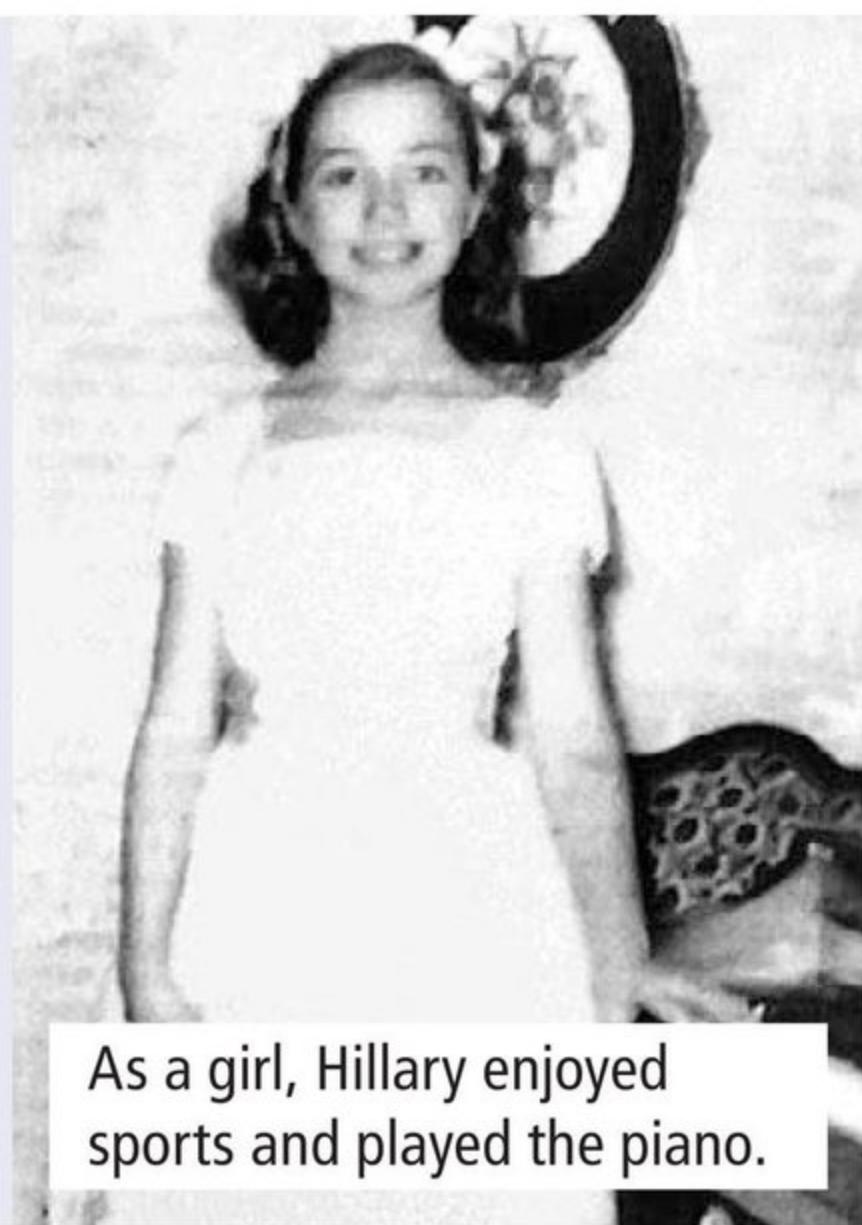
Big Dreams

From the time she was a girl, Hillary Rodham set her sights high. “When I was thirteen [in 1961], I wrote to NASA and asked what I needed to do to try to be an astronaut,” she remembered in a 2012 speech. “NASA wrote me back and said there would not be any women astronauts.” The news discouraged her at first, but it also fed her desire to succeed.

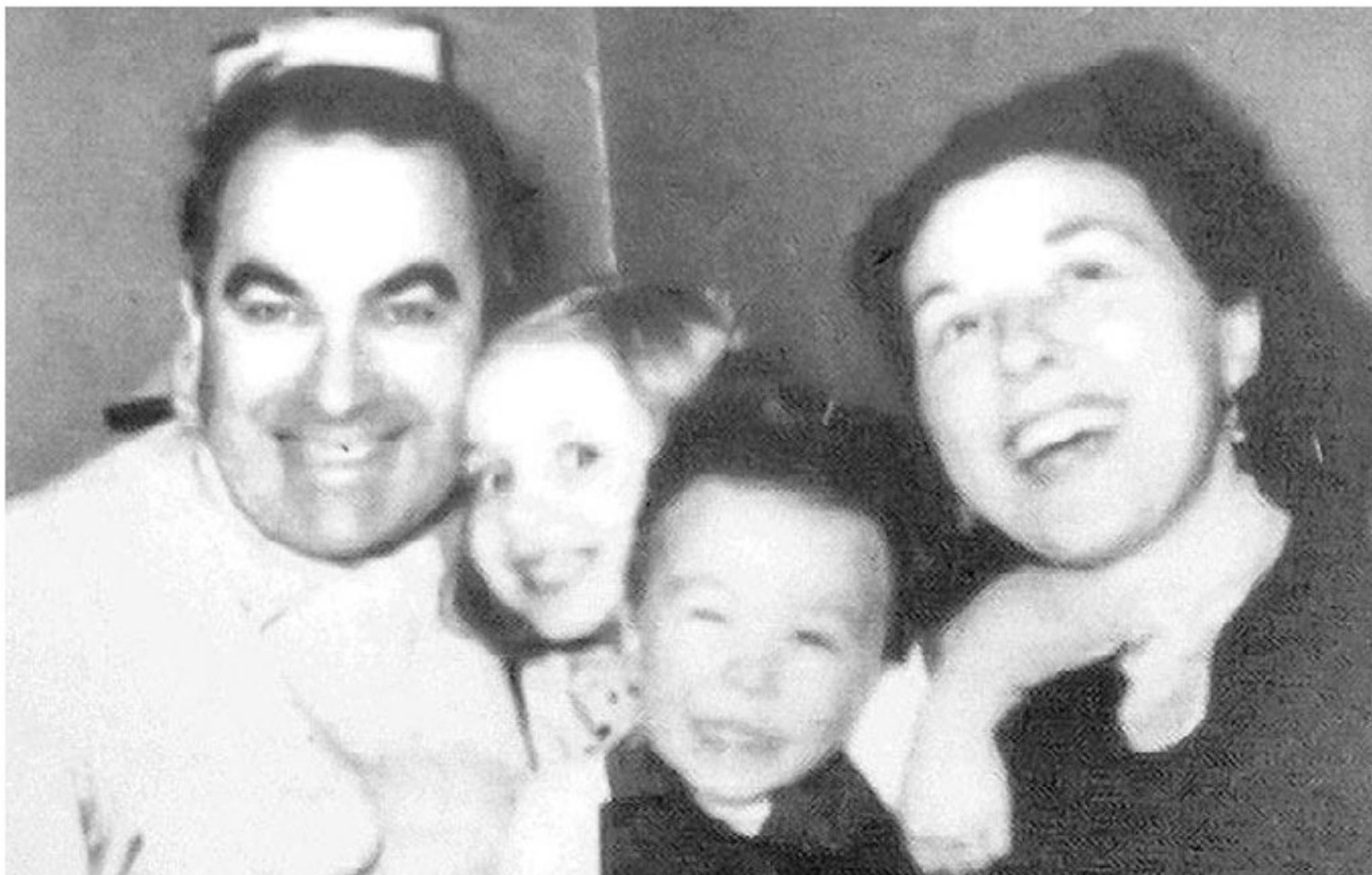
Attitudes in the United States were changing. Hillary Rodham was one of the people who helped change them, especially for women. She has achieved many firsts in her life and career. In 2016, she became the first female presidential nominee of a major U.S. political party.

Do You Know?

Though Hillary Clinton didn’t become an astronaut with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), many U.S. women have. Sally Ride became the first U.S. woman in space when she flew on the space shuttle in 1983. Since then, more than forty-five other U.S. women have flown in space and many more have trained as astronauts.



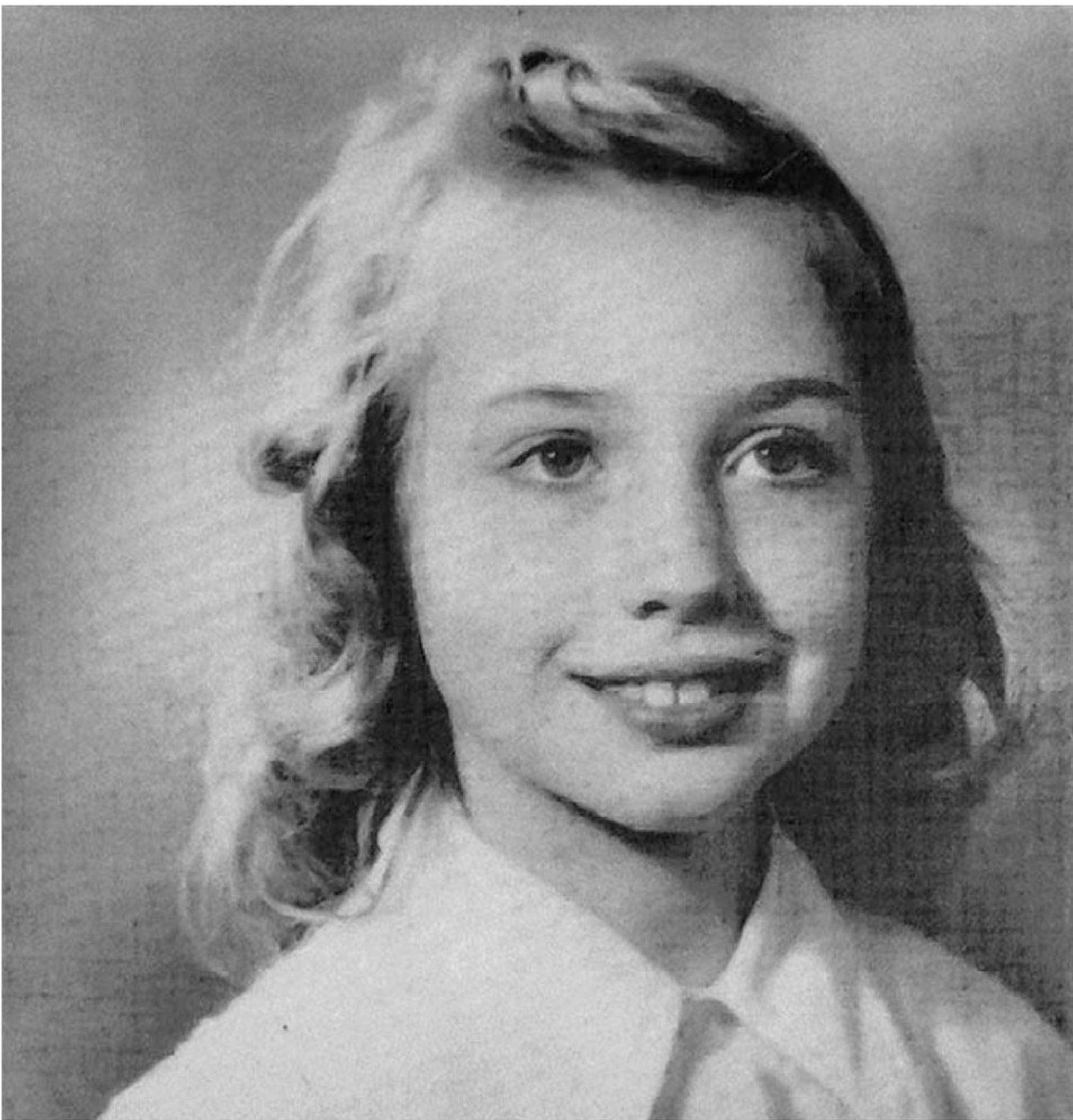
As a girl, Hillary enjoyed sports and played the piano.



Hillary Rodham smiles big in a family photo with her father, Hugh, mother Dorothy, and younger brother, Hugh Jr., in the 1950s.

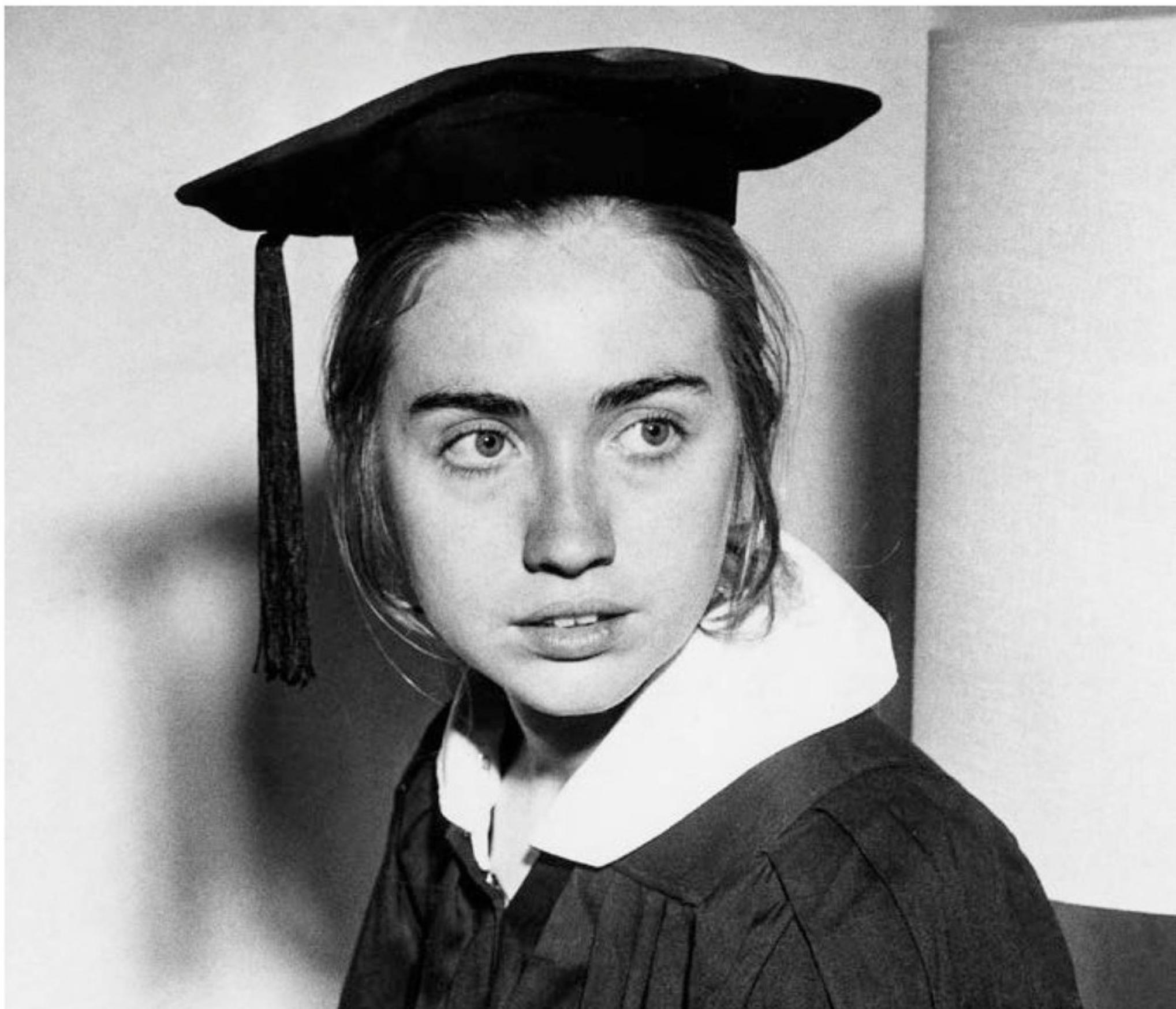
Hillary Rodham was born in Chicago on October 26, 1947. She was the oldest of Hugh and Dorothy Rodham's three children. When she was three, the family moved to Park Ridge, Illinois, where Hillary became a high achiever and top student. She won awards as a Girl Scout and worked on the newspaper and student council at her high school.

Hillary grew up at a time when many Americans believed that only men should pursue careers as firefighters, police officers, soldiers, pilots, and politicians. Men were supposed to be the head of the household in most families. Women were often expected to stay home and care for children.



Hillary Rodham went to Field Elementary School in Park Ridge, Illinois.

Hillary's father was a **conservative** man who believed many of these ideas. At the same time, he saw that his daughter was talented, smart, and ambitious. He wanted her to fulfill her potential. Her mother knew Hillary would have to be brave and tough to compete in a "man's world." "You have to stand up for yourself," she told her daughter. "There's no room in this house for cowards."



Hillary Rodham was selected by her classmates to give a graduation speech at Wellesley in 1969.

In 1965, Hillary went to Wellesley, a college in Massachusetts. She majored in **political science**. During her first year, she served as president of the Young Republicans at the school.

Hillary Rodham's views were changing, though. The more she learned about the world, the more she believed that the rights of women, children, African Americans, and other groups needed more protection. In 1968, she switched to the Democratic Party. After graduating from Wellesley, she was accepted to Yale Law School.

Lawyer, Wife, and Mother

In 1971, Rodham met someone special in the Yale law library. A young man with bushy hair and a beard kept looking at her. She walked up to him. "If you're going to keep looking at me and I'm going to keep looking back, we might as well be introduced. My name's Hillary Rodham. What's yours?" He was dumbstruck by her confidence.

His name was Bill Clinton, and he would one day become president of the United States. Clinton and Rodham started dating. She noted that he was one man who did not seem scared off by her intelligence and strong opinions.



Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham became friends while studying law at Yale in the early 1970s.



Hillary Rodham married Bill Clinton in 1975 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Both Rodham and Clinton had big ambitions. She planned to work in Washington, D.C., after earning her law degree. Clinton wanted to go back to his home state of Arkansas and go into politics.

Clinton proposed marriage to Rodham three times, and twice she said no. She was just starting out as a lawyer and wanted to build her career. Then in 1974 she changed her mind. "I chose to follow my heart instead of my head," she wrote later. She moved to Arkansas, and they were married the next year.

In 1978, Rodham became first lady of Arkansas when Bill Clinton was elected governor. She also went to work for Rose Law Firm, one of the top law offices in the state. Their daughter, Chelsea, was born in 1980. During Hillary's time as Arkansas's first lady, she became one of the state's most successful lawyers. She also worked hard to improve the education system for Arkansas children.

Bill Clinton served as Arkansas's governor from 1978 to 1980 and 1982 to 1992. By then, he had also started campaigning for a new position—president of the United States.

Bill and Hillary Clinton celebrate his victory in the Democratic primary on June 8, 1982, in Little Rock, Arkansas. Bill Clinton was re-elected for governor of Arkansas later that year.



Do You Know?

The *National Law Review* named Hillary Clinton one of the "100 Most Powerful Lawyers in America" in 1988 and 1991.



Hillary Clinton urges Congress to pass new health care laws in 1993.

First Lady of the United States

On January 20, 1993, Hillary Clinton held a family Bible on the steps of the U.S. Capitol. Her husband placed his hand on it and took the **oath of office**, becoming the forty-second president of the United States.

For the first time in history, the first lady of the United States had a postgraduate degree. She had already proven herself a successful lawyer. Her husband immediately named her to lead the Task Force on National Health Care Reform. Its goal was to develop a program to help more Americans afford good health care. **Congress** and many Americans distrusted the plan, though, and it did not win enough support. In 1994, the issue helped Republicans win control of both the U.S. **Senate and House of Representatives**.

Many conservatives took a dislike to Hillary Clinton. They felt that she was too outspoken and not traditional enough as first lady. After the health care task force failed, she shifted to less of a **policy-making** role.

Bill Clinton was re-elected president in 1996. The first lady put her energy into advocating for children and women's rights. She helped get laws passed to provide more support for foster children and reduce violence against women. She traveled to seventy-nine countries to represent the United States, the most ever visited by a first lady.

Bill and Hillary Clinton faced many political and personal challenges during their eight years in the White House. They weathered them together. While his political career was winding down, though, hers was ramping up.

Hillary Clinton speaks about women's rights in education as Olympic athlete Jackie Joyner-Kersee and astronaut Sally Ride look on in 1997.





Hillary Clinton greets supporters after winning a second term as a senator for New York in 2006.

Senator and Secretary of State

In 2000, Hillary Clinton ran in the election for U.S. senator for New York and easily won. The year before, she and Bill had bought a house there to make it possible for her to run for the office. She became the first female senator from New York.

After terrorists attacked New York City on September 11, 2001, Senator Clinton worked to get funding and resources to help the city recover. She also voted for U.S. military action in Afghanistan and Iraq. She was re-elected in a landslide in 2006.

The next year, Clinton announced that she was running for U.S. president in the 2008 election. Her chances seemed good to win the Democratic **nomination**. For months, she was in a close contest with Senator Barack Obama from Illinois. Obama narrowly beat her, then went on to win the presidency with Clinton's support.



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaks at the United Nations in 2010 in New York City.

President Obama named Hillary Clinton to be his **secretary of state**. This is one of the most important positions in the U.S. government. As secretary of state, Clinton oversaw **diplomatic** relations between the United States and other countries. She was only the third woman ever to hold the position and traveled to meet leaders in 112 countries—more than any other U.S. secretary of state. She emphasized how the United States needed to use “smart power” and not only military force to achieve its goals in the world.

Clinton left the position in 2013 after President Obama’s reelection. However, there was one more race she wanted to run.

A Woman of Many Firsts

In April 2015, Hillary Clinton announced that she was running for U.S. president in the 2016 election. She officially won the Democratic nomination in late July 2016. In November, Americans went to the polls to cast their votes for president. In the end Hillary Clinton lost to the Republican nominee, Donald Trump.

Throughout her life, Hillary Clinton has overcome barriers that have blocked women. She became a lawyer at a time when few women had law careers. She was elected the first female senator from the state of New York and became only the third female secretary of state in the country's history. She was the first woman ever to be a major party's nominee for president. Though she lost the presidential election, her life and work set a strong example for the girls and women who follow.



Hillary Clinton rallies a crowd of supporters during her 2016 run for president of the United States.

Glossary

campaigning (<i>v.</i>)	performing a series of tasks in order to produce a particular result (p. 10)
Congress (<i>n.</i>)	the highest lawmaking body of the U.S. government, which includes the Senate and the House of Representatives (p. 11)
conservative (<i>adj.</i>)	traditional and reluctant to change (p. 6)
diplomatic (<i>adj.</i>)	of or relating to the practice of maintaining strong relations with other countries (p. 14)
first lady (<i>n.</i>)	the wife of a president or other leader (p. 10)
House of Representatives (<i>n.</i>)	one of the two lawmaking houses of the U.S. Congress, containing representatives from each state (p. 11)
nomination (<i>n.</i>)	the act of selecting someone as a candidate for a job or position (p. 13)
oath of office (<i>n.</i>)	a promise by an elected official to perform certain duties faithfully (p. 11)
policy-making (<i>adj.</i>)	relating to the development of a planned course of action or a set of guidelines for an organization (p. 12)
political science (<i>n.</i>)	the area of study that examines the structures and workings of government (p. 7)
secretary of state (<i>n.</i>)	the head of the department in the U.S. government that handles relations with foreign countries (p. 14)
Senate (<i>n.</i>)	the smaller body of Congress, the branch of the U.S. government that makes laws (p. 11)

Hillary Clinton

A *Reading A-Z Level U Leveled Book*

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Connections

Writing

Research to learn about another female leader. Using a Venn diagram, compare her to Hillary Clinton. Then, write an essay describing how the leaders are similar and different. Be sure to include major accomplishments of both women.

Social Studies

Make a timeline of events from Hillary Clinton's life. Include at least five events on your timeline.

The logo for Reading A-Z features the word "Reading" in a large, bold, red sans-serif font. The letter "R" has a small sun-like icon with rays above it. To the right of "Reading" is a large, stylized red letter "A-Z".

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