



Who Should Be First?: Feminists Speak Out on the 2008 Presidential Campaign

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Feminists speak out on race and gender in the 2008 presidential campaign.

Who should be first? With Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton as frontrunners, the 2008 Democratic primary campaign was a watershed moment in U.S. history. Offering the choice of an African American man or a white woman as the next Democratic candidate for president, the primary marked an unprecedented moment—but one that painfully echoed previous struggles for progressive change that pitted race and gender against each other. *Who Should Be First?* collects key feminist voices that challenge the instances of racism and sexism during the presidential campaign season, offer personal reflections on this historic moment, and trace the historic legacy of opposing issues of race and gender that informed debates and media representations of the 2008 Democratic primary. Over thirty leading feminists contribute to the book, including Patricia J. Williams, Gloria Steinem, Alice Walker, Carol Moseley Braun, Maureen Dowd, Katha Pollitt, Pearl Cleage, Robin Morgan, Erica Jong, Mark Anthony Neal, and M. Jacqui Alexander. Editors Beverly Guy-Sheftall and Johnnetta Betsch Cole deftly balance these charged conversations in the first collection on this key moment in contemporary U.S. history.

“...a valuable compilation of earnest, contemporary reactions to the candidacies of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, and to the campaigns they waged.” — *Women’s Review of Books*

“...a contemporaneous record of a riveting rhetorical battle, especially among the feminists, over the preeminence of race or gender. Guy-Sheftall and Cole’s compilation of the perspectives of journalists, professors, public intellectuals, students and bloggers—including such influential voices as Gloria Steinem, Katha Pollitt and Mark Anthony Neal—has captured the mood of this momentous event.” — *Ms. Magazine*

“While the media colored the 2008 campaign between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton for the Democratic presidential nomination as one of race vs. gender, feminists like Guy-Sheftall and Cole saw the nuances of this pivotal moment ... Balanced by contributions from supporters of both Obama and Clinton who are black and white, male and female, the collection brings to light the errors in binary thinking so prevalent in politics, and unavoidable in the American two-party system.” — *Publishers Weekly*

“This anthology of brilliant essays and reflections captures the passion and raw emotion of the 2008 dialogue about race, gender, and generational diversity among feminists. It furthers an important conversation about what it means to be a feminist in the twenty-first century.” — Wilma Mankiller, author of *Every Day Is a Good Day: Reflections by Contemporary Indigenous Women*

“Guy-Sheftall and Cole have performed an invaluable service. This is a timely and riveting compendium of perspectives on the most important election of our times. A must-read for anyone interested in how U.S. politics intersects with race and gender.” — Alison Bernstein, coauthor of *Melting Pots and Rainbow Nations: Conversations about Difference in the United States and South Africa*



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