

Hattie and Huey: A Re-examination of the Arkansas Senatorial Primary of 1932

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Abstract: The election of Hattie Caraway to the United States Senate in 1931 stands as one of the more remarkable events in Arkansas electoral history. The dominant view of the election credits her victory to the active intervention of Senator Huey P. Long and his extraordinary whirlwind speaking tour of Arkansas on behalf of Mrs. Caraway. Utilizing multiple regression techniques, this paper derives estimates of the impact of Long's campaign on the outcome of the 1932 primary and concludes that Mrs. Caraway would have won a narrow victory without the active support of Long.

In 1932, the voters of Arkansas conferred upon Hattie Caraway the distinction of becoming the first woman ever elected to serve a full six-year term in the United States Senate. If for no other reason, this milestone in American feminist political history would make the 1932 Arkansas Senate race an object worthy of scholarly examination. But when one adds that the victorious female candidate was the beneficiary of the vigorous support of Senator Huey P. Long of Louisiana, the election of Hattie Caraway acquires even greater interest.

The remarkable story of Hattie Caraway's political career begins with the death of her husband, Senator Thaddeus Caraway, on November 6, 1931.¹ The death of Thad Caraway confronted the Arkansas political establishment with a particularly thorny problem. If Thad Caraway had died only three days later, the governor could have simply appointed a successor for the duration of Senator Caraway's term. Although a brief interim appointment was possible, state law required that a

special election be held to fill the vacancy until March, 1933. The election for the full six-year term would take place as normally scheduled during the summer of 1932.

Rivalry among various contenders for the vacant seat led Governor Harvey Parnell to name Hattie Caraway as the interim appointee on November 13, 1931. While Parnell's appointment of Mrs. Caraway was greeted with general praise, opposition to Hattie's nomination by the Democratic State Committee for the special election set for January 12, 1932 arose rather quickly.

Frank Pace, once a law partner of former Governor Jeff Davis, launched a serious bid to secure the Committee's nomination for himself. Despite Pace's efforts, a coalition of Mrs. Caraway's friends, politicians from Hattie's hometown of Jonesboro, and others who hoped to protect their own chances of winning the full six-year term in the summer of 1932 was successful in obtaining the nomination for Hattie.

Now that she was officially the Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate in the special January 12, 1932 election, Mrs. Caraway had to overcome one final obstacle. Two Independents had filed as candidates in the special election. While there was little doubt that solidly Democratic Arkansas would support even a female Democrat against male Independent opposition, the mere logistics of the special election created substantial problems. Once it became clear that the special election would be contested, Governor Parnell began to hear from county officials who complained that the counties could not afford to finance the costs of what everyone saw as merely a pro forma election.

At this point, the male Democratic Party establishment presented the problem of inadequate county funding for the election as "a challenge to Arkansas womanhood."² If the women of Arkansas wanted a woman in the United States Senate, women would have to bear the burden of conducting the election and campaigning for the Democratic candidate. The Democratic State Committee named a special seven-woman committee to turn out the female vote, and the Arkansas Women's Democratic Club was founded as a mechanism to recruit the

required number of volunteer election officials.

The election of January 12 was a major success for both Hattie Caraway and Arkansas' female political activists. Volunteer election officials, primarily women, provided sufficient labor to conduct the election in seventy-two counties, and Mrs. Caraway received 31,133 votes to less than 3,000 for her two male opponents combined.³

With the special election behind her, Hattie Caraway returned to her duties in Washington. Back in Arkansas, a number of the state's politicians began to make their plans for the August 10 Democratic primary which would nominate the party's candidate for a full six-year term. On May 10, 1932, the last day before the filing deadline, the six announced male candidates discovered that a seventh candidate had entered the field. Hattie Caraway had decided to run for a full term.

One last surprise was hovering in the future. On July 19, Senator Caraway announced that Senator Huey P. Long of Louisiana was coming to Arkansas to campaign personally in Hattie's behalf. On August 1, 1932, Huey charged into Arkansas. In seven days, Senator Long delivered thirty-nine speeches, traveled over two thousand miles, and addressed approximately two hundred thousand people in an extraordinary campaign which utilized many of the campaign techniques which had carried the Kingfish to incredible political successes in Louisiana.⁴ On August 10, Hattie Caraway defeated her six male opponents by garnering over 44 per cent of the votes cast and outdistancing her nearest rival by a margin in excess of two to one.

Previous Studies

Not surprisingly, the dominant interpretation of Hattie Caraway's victory portrays Hattie as merely a vivid example of the tremendous voter appeal of Huey Long. Hattie is seen as a lackluster candidate with little voter appeal whose stunning victory was largely the work of that charismatic champion of the common man, Huey P. Long.

This view of the 1932 Arkansas Senate race is evident in the two serious scholarly studies of the campaign. The first such

study is the work of Stuart Towns, who, in his 1966 *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* article, concluded that “there is little question but what the Kingfish . . . was responsible for Mrs. Caraway’s return to Washington.”⁵ A more prominent historian, T. Harry Williams, described the Kingfish’s campaign for Hattie as “a circus hitched to a tornado” and concluded that “if he [Huey] had not entered the campaign Mrs. Caraway would not have been elected. . . .”⁶

Regrettably, the works both of Towns and Williams are dependent to a remarkable degree upon Hermann B. Deutsch’s contemporary account of the campaign, published in the October 5, 1932 issue of *Saturday Evening Post*. For example, Williams notes that “observers predicted that Mrs. Caraway would finish a poor last, that out of a total of 250,000 she would be lucky to get 3,000 votes from dedicated feminists and devoted followers of her husband.”⁷ Williams does not specify the identity of these “observers” and offers no direct references to substantiate his contention. This writer has been able to find but one possible source for Williams’ observation: Hermann Deutsch’s *Saturday Evening Post* article. Deutsch’s account of the campaign contains the following evaluation:

Six mighty champions [apparently a reference to Mrs. Caraway’s senatorial opponents] cheerfully conceded that out of a total of possibly 250,000 votes Mrs. Caraway would poll some 3000 at the outside. There would be among them the few professional feminists who would vote for a woman as a matter of principle. There would be old schoolmates and intimate personal friends. There would be those who were still deeply devoted to the memory of Thad Caraway and who would cast a sentimental ballot for the Caraway name.⁸

Deutsch offers no documentation of his claims. It would appear quite unlikely that Mrs. Caraway’s six opponents would have issued a joint statement to this effect or that each in individual interviews with Deutsch reached exactly the same conclusion as to Hattie’s electoral strength. The rather loose

journalistic style of Deutsch and the heavy reliance upon his account of the race by both Towns and Williams would suggest that the role of Huey Long in the election of Hattie Caraway could profit from a systematic re-examination.

The recent publication of Hattie Caraway's journal provides a second reason for a fresh look at the Caraway-Long campaign. The publication of **Silent Hattie Speaks** has created a new portrait of Hattie Caraway as "a much stronger, more complicated, and more interesting woman than has been generally supposed."⁹ In addition, the journal contains new material which sheds some interesting new light on previous accounts of Hattie's remarkable victory.

Deutsch, Towns, and Williams view Hattie's six male opponents as being singularly unconcerned about Mrs. Caraway's intentions toward the August, 1932 primary. Williams goes so far as to portray Hattie's opposition as remaining unconcerned even after Hattie announced her plans to seek a full term and even after the announcement of Huey Long's planned intervention in the campaign.¹⁰ Yet material in Hattie's journal casts substantial doubt on the alleged indifference of Arkansas politicians toward a Caraway candidacy in the summer of 1932.

For example, a January 24, 1932 **New York Times Magazine** article entitled "A Woman Treads New Paths as Senator" noted that Mrs. Caraway had refused to make an agreement which would have extracted her promise not to seek a full term in exchange for her interim appointment.¹¹ On January 27, her journal records a visit from Leslie Biffle, the aide to Senator Joseph Robinson. According to Hattie's journal, the primary object of Biffle's visit was to inquire about Mrs. Caraway's plans for the 1932 campaign.¹² This incident is but one of what Kincaid alludes to as a "steady stream of inquiries" about Hattie's intentions.¹³ As Kincaid notes:

There is something almost ludicrous, and logically inconsistent, about all these politicians seeking so strenuously for a promise to step down from a woman who was simultaneously being characterized as a wholly domestic woman who wanted no part of public life.¹⁴

Kincaid could have gone on to add that there is something logically inconsistent in the continuous efforts of Arkansas politicians to discern the intentions of Hattie toward the 1932 race if they were convinced that she would not be a major and significant contender for a full term.

The existing historical scholarship not only views Hattie's candidacy as of little concern to her opponents, but also characterizes Hattie's six male opponents as major Arkansas politicians with significant popular followings. Mrs. Caraway's male opposition is seen as a rather formidable array of candidates. Williams, for example, notes that:

Four of them [Mrs. Caraway's opponents] were among the most prominent men in the state — a former governor, a former national commander of the American Legion, a justice of the supreme court who had also served a term in the Senate, and the present Democratic National Committeeman. It would be a battle of giants, political observers predicted gleefully.¹⁵

Hattie Caraway, however, had a distinctly different perspective on the political prowess of her opponents. In her journal, Hattie enters a number of observations about her potential rivals as she wrestles with the decision to run for a full term. Hattie speaks:

The way I figure Kirby's backing will be good, but not too popular. He has slipped into the Senate once over a dead man's body. Did not prove very well fitted and was repudiated by 50,000 votes. Vincent has not strength much. Martin is little and unknown. Brough a back number.¹⁶

Towns as well introduces evidence that would appear to describe a set of opponents who were not exactly political "giants"; that is, if one assumes that a contest involving political giants would generate at least some modicum of public interest and enthusiasm. Towns notes, "As the spring turned into summer, the campaign began rolling along fairly smoothly, albeit rather apathetically."¹⁷ Even after Hattie's entry, the

campaign lacked "much excitement and luster."¹⁸

None of Hattie's opponents managed to strike a particularly exciting campaign theme among the electorate.¹⁹ Vincent Miles, the state Democratic National Committeeman, based his campaign on his long record of service to the Arkansas Democratic Party and portrayed himself as the candidate with the greatest access to Franklin D. Roosevelt. W. G. Hutton, the little known former sheriff of Pulaski County, was the only anti-Prohibition candidate and argued that the best solution to unemployment was the repeal of the 18th Amendment and the rejuvenation of the Arkansas liquor and wine industries. Melbourne M. Martin, the former national commander of the American Legion, advocated the immediate payment of the bonus to World War I veterans. O. L. Bodenhamer, a prominent El Dorado businessman engaged in the oil industry, ran against the bonus payment and called for federal relief for farmers. Former Governor Charles H. Brough resigned his lectureship at the University of Arkansas, emphasized his formal training in economics, and called for early relief for veterans, the continuation of prohibition, and a return to bimetallism. Former U.S. Senator W. F. Kirby was virtually inactive as a candidate. Kirby's resounding defeat by Thad Caraway in 1920 and his advancing age appear to have made him less than a credible candidate.

One final modern development also contributes to the need for a re-evaluation of the existing historical treatment of Hattie Caraway's election to the U.S. Senate. The re-birth of feminist politics has brought renewed interest in feminine political figures of the past and, more importantly, has brought increased attention to the problem of sexism in both the political and scholarly arenas.

Kincaid's preface to Hattie's journal documents one particularly revealing anecdote. In preparing her preface, Kincaid interviewed a large number of Hattie's contemporaries. Kincaid notes:

... I interviewed many men, all of whom said they were surprised, astonished, shocked when Sen. Caraway

announced she would seek election to the full term. A female friend of Sen. Caraway's said that she was not. "But virtually all of the politicians I've talked to were dumbfounded," I pointed out. "Of course," she replied, "They are all men."²⁰

Hattie's quiet demeanor, her gender, and the contrasting dynamism and acknowledged political savvy of Huey may have made it rather difficult for observers of the 1932 Senatorial primary to take Hattie Caraway seriously or to give her much credit for her electoral success. To view her election as a fluke, to give credit for her victory to Huey Long, to see her male opponents as consummate politicians, and to downplay Hattie Caraway's significance in Arkansas and American political history would have come all too easily.

Analysis I: Difference in Means

With the need for a re-examination of Hattie Caraway's 1932 Senatorial triumph established, we must now move on to the more difficult task of actually conducting such an analysis. The major question is whether Mrs. Caraway could have been elected to the U.S. Senate without the intervention of the dynamic Senator Long of Louisiana. Such a question is obviously a difficult one. Fortunately, however, modern statistical methods allow us to approach the question in a systematic manner and to utilize methods and data other than testimonials of observers or the recollections and hyperbole of journalists.

From the newspaper accounts of the 1932 campaign, it is possible to reconstruct Huey's whirlwind tour of Arkansas and to identify those counties in which Long actively campaigned for Hattie Caraway. Equipped with this data, one can begin to inquire whether Huey's efforts aided Hattie, and if so, to assess the extent of Huey's contribution to Hattie's victory.

A search of Arkansas newspaper accounts of the 1932 campaign resulted in the identification of 30 counties in which Huey Long was reported as having campaigned for Mrs. Caraway.²¹ Although it is possible that Huey's active participation in the campaign influenced the outcome in counties in which he did

not make a personal appearance, it would appear prudent to assume that Huey's greatest influence would be felt in those counties in which he actually appeared. This assumption is strengthened by the emphasis placed by virtually all observers of Huey Long on his extraordinary effectiveness as a stump speaker.²² Given the absence of significant radio coverage and the absence of a medium which could convey the dynamic visual aspects of a vintage Long performance, the power of Huey's charismatic style could be expected to be limited to a significant extent to those counties in which he actually spoke.

The initial question is whether the counties in which Huey appeared supported Hattie Caraway to a greater degree than those counties in which Huey did not appear and whether, if such a difference exists, the magnitude of Huey's influence was such that Hattie would have been incapable of winning without it. This initial question is approached most easily by a simple difference-in-means test using a one-tailed t-test.²³ A glance at Table One reveals that the mean percentage vote for Mrs. Caraway was 53.1 in the counties in which Huey campaigned and only 40.0 in the other 45 counties. The value of t obtained by the analysis is statistically significant at the .001 level. In other words, the mean vote for Mrs. Caraway in the counties in which Huey campaigned could have been expected to be this much higher than her mean vote in the other 45 counties by sheer chance in less than one case out of a thousand. It appears clear that Hattie Caraway fared significantly better in those counties in which she received the Kingfish's active support.

Table One
Difference in Means Test

Group	n	Mean Vote for Caraway (%)	Standard Deviation
Counties in which Long appeared	30	53.1	9.8
Counties in which Long did not appear	45	40.0	13.0

$t = 4.46$ (one-tailed t significant at the .001 level)

While Hattie fared significantly better in those counties in which Huey campaigned, one must also note that Mrs. Caraway was also the leading vote getter in the 45 counties in which Huey did not campaign. Table Two presents the results of the August 10 primary as well as the aggregate vote totals in the counties in which Huey campaigned and those in which he did not.

Table Two
1932 Senatorial Primary Results

State-Wide Results		Results in Counties Where Huey Appeared		Results in Counties Where Huey Did Not Appear	
Caraway	127,702 (44.7)	Caraway	78,662 (52.5)	Caraway	49,040 (36.0)
Bodenhamer	63,858 (22.3)	Bodenhamer	30,422 (20.3)	Bodenhamer	33,436 (24.5)
Miles	30,423 (10.6)	Miles	14,089 (9.4)	Miles	16,334 (12.0)
Brough	26,207 (9.1)	Brough	13,344 (8.9)	Kirby	15,988 (11.7)
Kirby	21,488 (7.5)	Kirby	5,500 (3.6)	Brough	12,863 (9.4)
Hutton	8,922 (3.1)	Hutton	5,131 (3.4)	Martin	4,425 (3.3)
Martin	6,961 (2.4)	Martin	2,436 (1.6)	Hutton	3,791 (2.7)

At this point, one could still argue for the centrality of Huey's contribution to Hattie's victory by positing that although Huey did not campaign in the other 45 counties, his influence would still have been felt through word-of-mouth and by media coverage of his whirlwind campaign. On the other hand, one could also contend that while the difference between support for Hattie in the two groups of counties is indeed real and statistically significant, the difference might well reflect influences other than the efforts of Huey Long.

By simply dividing the counties into those in which Huey campaigned and those in which he did not and then comparing the average vote for Mrs. Caraway, one is making the implicit assumption that the difference between the resultant means is solely the result of the appearance or non-appearance of Huey Long. This is obviously problematical. For example, Mrs. Caraway carried her home county of Craighead with 64.5 per cent of the vote and Huey campaigned for Hattie in Craighead county. Certainly at least some portion of Mrs. Caraway's strength in Craighead county should be attributed to the normal "friends-and-neighbors" phenomenon rather than arbitrarily being assigned to the influence of the Kingfish.²⁴

Analysis II: Multiple Regression

A more sophisticated approach to the questions raised above is available through the use of multiple regression analysis.²⁵ Any number of factors could have contributed to Hattie's victory in addition to the active support of Huey Long. The prior pattern of support for Senator Thad Caraway, the traditional cleavage between Delta counties and the mountain counties, socioeconomic characteristics of the white voting population, and the level of voter turnout could all have been expected to have some relationship to the vote for Hattie Caraway registered in any particular Arkansas county.

From an original field of 32 selected socioeconomic and political variables,²⁶ a multiple regression equation using only three independent variables was found to have substantial predictive capacity. This simple three variable model posits that the percentage of the vote cast for Hattie Caraway in a county is

a function of three variables: 1) the percentage of black population, 2) the percentage of voter turnout, and 3) a dummy variable representing whether Huey Long campaigned in the county.²⁷ The results of the multiple regression analysis are presented in Table Three.

Table Three
Three Variable Regression Model

Dependent Variable = Percent Vote for Hattie Caraway

Independent Variables	Simple Correlation	Unstandardized Beta	Beta Coefficient
% Black	.33	.03	.05
Turnout	.33	2.84	.28
Long	.48	12.46	.46

Multiple Correlation = .58

Coefficient of Determination = .33

The simple three variable model achieves a multiple correlation coefficient of .58, indicating that these three variables combined can explain 33 per cent of the variance in the county-by-county vote for Hattie Caraway. Given the small number of variables employed, this represents a rather satisfactory level of explained variance. The addition of other variables, such as the strength of Thad Caraway in previous races, adds little in explanatory power.

More important than the overall explanatory power of the multiple regression equation is the fact that the analysis allows one to make statements about the independent influence of each of the three explanatory variables. The relatively high importance of the Huey Long variable is particularly striking. The unstandardized beta for the Long variable tells us that the presence of Huey Long in a county produces an average increase of approximately 12.5 percentage points in the vote for Hattie Caraway.

Using this estimate derived from regression analysis, we can begin to more systematically examine the overall importance of Huey Long's efforts on behalf of Hattie Caraway. First, however, we must note that the regression methodology

employed operates with the assumption that Huey had absolutely no impact in the counties in which he did not campaign. For the time being, this problematical assumption will be maintained and the analysis continued. Later, the assumption will be relaxed and the impact of such a relaxation will be explored.

Before the analysis can continue, one more difficulty must be addressed. If we arrive at an estimate of the percentage of the total electorate swayed to vote for Hattie as a result of Huey's efforts, we must also deal with the question of how those electors would have behaved if they had not cast a vote for Hattie. Would they have stayed at home and abstained? Would they have voted for Hattie's strongest rival, O. L. Bodenhamer? Or would they have distributed themselves across the field of candidates in some other manner? Obviously, there is no way to arrive at a definitive answer to such a question. However, it is possible to conduct an analysis in which a number of different assumptions about the distribution of the Huey-influenced vote are made and the results examined in order to see what impact differing assumptions would make on a simulated election in which Huey did not appear.

The initial attempt to arrive at an estimate of how Hattie would have fared without Huey's help is based on the following assumptions: 1) Huey added 12.5 percentage points to Hattie's vote in the 30 counties in which he campaigned; 2) Huey added nothing to the Caraway vote in the other 40 counties; and 3) the Huey-influenced vote would have gone in its entirety to Bodenhamer. While there is no sound reason for the last assumption, assumption three obviously makes it more difficult to arrive at the conclusion that Hattie could have won the 1932 election on her own. The results of an analysis operating under the three assumptions mentioned above are reported in Table Four.

Table Four

**Estimates of Primary Results Assuming Long's Impact
Limited to 30 Counties**

Results Assuming All Long-Influenced Votes Would Have Gone to Bodenhamer			Results Assuming Long-Influenced Votes Distributed Proportionally		
Candidate	Vote	%	Candidate	Vote	%
Caraway	109,004	38.1	Caraway	109,004	38.1
Bodenhamer	82,556	28.9	Bodenhamer	71,412	25.0
Others	94,001	32.9	Others	105,145	36.8

As Table Four reveals, Hattie Caraway still wins a substantial victory under this set of assumptions. Her percentage of the total vote falls from its actual level of 44.7 per cent to a predicted level of 38.1 per cent and her lead over Bodenhamer drops from 63,844 to 26,448 votes. The reduction in Hattie's lead, however, would be much less drastic if one assumed that either some portion of the Huey-influenced vote would have abstained and/or that the Huey-influenced vote would have been distributed in some more reasonable manner across the entire field of candidates.

As noted earlier, this analysis is still operating under the assumption that Huey's activity on behalf of Mrs. Caraway had no impact at all on the votes cast in the 45 counties in which Huey did not campaign actively. While there is no method which could be employed to derive estimates of the degree to which voters in such counties were influenced by Senator Long, for the sake of this analysis it will be assumed that Huey had half as much impact in the counties in which he did not campaign as he did in the counties in which he did campaign. This assumption would lead to assigning to Huey credit for a 6.25 percentage point increase in the Caraway percentage of the vote in these 45 counties. If merely having Huey's endorsement and presence in the state would have added 6.25 percentage points to Hattie's share of the total vote in counties in which Huey did not campaign, and if Huey's actual presence was worth another 12.5 percentage points in the counties in which he actively cam-

paigned, we must now increase the proportion of the Huey-influenced vote to 18.75 per cent in the 30 counties which experienced the actual touch of the Kingfish.

At this point, new estimates of the results of the 1932 primary *sans* Huey can be derived. Table Five displays the resultant estimates using two different assumptions concerning the distribution of the Huey-influenced vote. If one assumes that the Huey-influenced vote would have been distributed across the field of candidates in the same proportions as the actual votes cast for candidates other than Hattie Caraway, Hattie still clings to her victory. Her percentage of the total vote drops to 31.9 per cent and her margin over Bodenhamer falls to 12,030 votes. Only if one assumes that every Huey-influenced vote would have been cast and that every one of those ballots would have been cast for Bodenhamer does Hattie lose. Under these assumptions, Bodenhamer defeats Caraway by a vote of 100,404 to 91,156. In other words, in order to predict a Bodenhamer victory over Hattie Caraway, one must assume: 1) that Huey added 18.75 percentage points to Hattie's vote in the 30 counties in which he campaigned; 2) that Huey added 6.25 percentage points to Hattie's showing in the other 45 counties; and 3) that all of the Huey-influenced voters would have voted in the 1932 primary whether Huey had campaigned or not; and 4) that all of the Huey-influenced vote would have gone to Bodenhamer in the absence of Huey's endorsement of Hattie Caraway. These last two assumptions are obviously difficult to accept. Even with these assumptions in place, the size of Bodenhamer's predicted plurality is a less than overwhelming 9,248 votes.

Table Five

Estimates Of Primary Results Assuming Long's Impact Not Limited To 30 Counties

Results Assuming All Long-Influenced Votes Would Have Gone to Bodenhamer			Results Assuming Long-Influenced Votes Distributed Proportionally		
Candidate	Vote	%	Candidate	Vote	%
Caraway	91,156	31.9	Caraway	91,156	31.9
Bodenhamer	100,404	35.1	Bodenhamer	79,126	27.7
Others	94,001	32.9	Others	115,279	40.3

Conclusion

This paper has been devoted to an assessment of the degree to which Hattie Caraway's election to the United States Senate could be attributed to the assistance brought to her campaign by Huey P. Long. Utilizing aggregate election data at the county level and multiple regression techniques, estimates were derived of Huey's impact on the vote distribution in the counties in which he campaigned. By examining various combinations of different assumptions concerning: 1) the influence of Long in the 45 counties in which he did not campaign, 2) the degree to which the Huey-influenced vote would have participated in the primary in the absence of Huey's intervention, and 3) the distribution of the Huey-influenced vote among Mrs. Caraway's rivals, the analysis concludes that it is highly unlikely that Senator Long's intervention elected Hattie Caraway.

Obviously such a conclusion is not an indication that Senator Long had no impact on the outcome. Any politician who can be credited with adding over 10 percentage points to the electoral tally of another candidate has had a substantial influence. Clearly, however, Mrs. Caraway was a more formidable candidate in her own right than many of her contemporaries thought or that previous historical analyses would have led us to believe.

Williams, in *Huey Long*, notes that Mrs. Caraway would not have been a particularly weak candidate without Huey's aid. Williams states:

Huey had achieved a stunning success in Arkansas, but not quite a miracle. If he had not entered the campaign, Mrs. Caraway would not have been elected, but she would have run better than the observers predicted. She had a bedrock support that a progressive candidate in some other Southern states would not have had. But then Arkansas was not a typically Southern state. It had a predominantly small-farmer economy, and its farmers, pinched hard by the depression, were in a restive mood. They remembered that Thad Caraway had been at least a vocal champion of farm interests, and they knew that his widow had supported farm-relief measures in the Senate. Many of them would have voted for Mrs. Caraway in any case, which would have put her, probably, around the midpoint or even above it in the final standings of the candidates. What Huey had done . . . was to arouse into a full fury this resentment vaguely felt by the farmers, to weld it, really, into a genuine class protest. The task was made easier for him because there was no one strong, organized faction to oppose him; the petty Arkansas chiefs had no chance against the Long efficiency, and they fell almost without a struggle.²⁸

While Williams concludes that Hattie would have finished "around the midpoint or even above it," this analysis concludes that without Huey Mrs. Caraway would probably have won a rather narrow victory over Bodenhamer and that the effect of Huey's contribution was to turn a narrow victory into an overwhelming landslide. Prior analyses have not paid sufficient attention to the size of Hattie's victory or to her strength in the counties in which Huey did not appear.

Williams, however, may have hit upon the crucial factor in Hattie's victory when he refers to the lack of any strong, organized opposition to the Hattie candidacy. The key to Hattie Caraway's victory may well lie not in the support from Huey Long, but rather in the failure of the Arkansas political establishment to settle upon a single challenger to Hattie Caraway or to field a candidate who could generate any significant public enthusiasm.

Notes

1. The following account of Mrs. Caraway's ascension to office and her victory in the January 12, 1932 special election relies heavily upon the work of Diane D. Kincaid, **Silent Hattie Speaks: The Personal Journal of Senator Hattie Caraway** (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), pp. 6-8.
2. Quoted in Kincaid, p. 7.
3. The official vote totals for the January 12, 1932 special election show: Mrs. Hattie Caraway, 31,133; Rex Floyd, 1,752; and Sam D. Carson, 1,095. See Alexander Heard and Donald S. Strong, **Southern Primaries and Elections: 1920-1949** (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1950), p. 31.
4. T. Harry Williams, **Huey Long** (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 591.
5. Stuart Towns, "A Louisiana Medicine Show: The Kingfish Elects An Arkansas Senator," **Arkansas Historical Quarterly** 25 (Summer, 1966), p. 127.
6. Williams, **Huey Long**, p. 592.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 585.
8. Hermann B. Deutsch, "Hattie and Huey," **Saturday Evening Post** (October 15, 1932), p. 7.
9. Kincaid, p. 4.
10. Williams, pp. 585-586.
11. R. L. Duffus, "A Woman Treads New Paths As Senator," **New York Times Magazine** (January 24, 1932).
12. Kincaid, p. 68.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.
15. Williams, p. 585.
16. Kincaid, p. 87.
17. Towns, p. 118.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
19. The following description of the campaign themes of Mrs. Caraway's opponents relies heavily upon the account of Towns, pp. 119-120.
20. Kincaid, p. 19.
21. Towns and Williams both report that Huey Long campaigned in 31 counties during the summer of 1932. Neither Towns nor Williams lists the counties. My examination of Arkansas newspaper coverage, Deutsch's **Saturday Evening Post** article, and other sources uncovered only 30 such counties. Towns and Williams also report that Mrs. Caraway carried 29 of the 31 counties in which Huey appeared. My analysis revealed three counties in which Huey campaigned and which Mrs. Caraway failed to carry. These three counties were Crittenden (carried by Bodenhamer), Scott (carried by Bodenhamer), and Sebastian (carried by Miles). The other 27 counties in which Huey campaigned were: Arkansas, Clark, Clay, Columbia, Craighead, Cross, Dallas, Garland, Greene, Independence, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lee, Miller, Mississippi, Monroe, Montgomery, Ouachita, Phillips, Poinsett, Polk, Pope, Pulaski, St. Francis, Union, and White.
22. See Williams, pp. 416-418.
23. For an unusually clear presentation of the differences in means technique employed here, see Theodore H. Poister, **Public Program Analysis: Applied Research Methods** (Baltimore, Md.: University Park Press, 1978), pp. 226-229.
24. See V. O. Key, **Southern Politics** (New York: Vintage Books, 1949), pp. 37-41, 192-193, 302.
25. For an explanation of multiple regression analysis, see Poister, pp. 509-550.
26. Other variables in the original analysis included: measures of Thad Caraway's strength in previous elections, voter turnout in the January, 1932 special election, and a wide variety of socioeconomic measures including farm tenancy measures, white adult illiteracy measures, and various measures of economic activity such as non-agricultural employment and size of farms.
27. For a discussion of the use of dummy variables in regression analysis, see Poister, pp. 563-564.
28. Williams, pp. 592-593.