

**Justyna Ball from 2**

was assigned to Patton's army, and marched across Europe. Back home, my grandmother raised their baby and went to work on a bomber assembly line. After the war, they studied on the G.I. Bill, bought a house through FHA, and later moved west all the way to Hawaii in search of opportunity." And he added:

"My parents shared not only an improbable love, they shared an abiding faith in the possibilities of this nation. They would give me an African name, Barack, or blessed, believing that in a tolerant America your name is no barrier to success."

**And when he caught my attention already, he continued;**

"Go into any inner city neighborhood, and folks will tell you that the government alone can't teach our kids to learn - they know that parents have to teach, that children can't achieve unless we raise their expectations and turn off the television sets and eradicate the slander that says a black youth with a book is acting white. No, people don't expect the government to solve all their problems. But they sense, deep in their bones, that with just a change in priorities, we can make sure that every child in America has a decent shot at life, and that the doors of opportunity remain open to all. They know we can do better. And they want that choice."

**Alleluia!**

His speech electrified me (a mother and an immigrant) as well as another mother in a distant town. My daughter was on the phone with her pen pal and I, as well as the other woman was telling her daughter, at the same time, to stop talking and listen to this man. The girls thought that was odd that we reacted the same way. Maybe because mothers have that extra sense that we know when history is in the making... And as the phone bill gets too high. I remember thinking that such an extraordinary character as this guy will not go away, I'm sure we will hear more about this senator from Illinois...

From that point, I started paying attention to his short appearances in media, which was rather overlooked in favor of the other candidates as at the beginning, it was Hillary and Rudi. Mainly Rudi, as the Man of The Year... for allowing the attack on the WTC.

Back then, when I asked a local Clinton supporter about Obama, he answered, "He is un-electable." As because of the color of his skin.

**I disagreed.**

Such opinion only makes sense if only white voters had a right to vote, as then they would probably split.

The truth is, that at the beginning, even blacks voted for white candidates, as Michelle Obama, Barack's wife, put it, because blacks did not see a possibility, and they did not believe that a black person might have a chance. That's really sad. "They will wake up," she said. And they did, when they realized that Obama received a lot of support from... white voters. Why? Because if you listen to any of his speeches from the beginning to the end, you'll know that color does not matter. It fades away as he speaks. It's not a subject. What matters is the message. His character seems to float above the races. Some see Dr. King in him, to others he reminds them of John Fitzgerald.

I did not know either, but now, I can understand the aura that shines around them. If this is what people felt back then...

I admit I was very pleased, that my predictions were confirmed when Caroline Kennedy and her uncle Ted, both endorsed Obama. So did Ethel and Patrick. But a couple of Bobby's children remained loyal to the Clintons.

Caroline Kennedy wrote, "I have never had a president who inspired me the way people tell me that my father inspired them. But for the first time, I believe I have found the man who could be that president - not just for me, but for a new generation of Americans."

Maria Shriver, the first lady of "California" came to UCLA to give her endorsement. Imagine the atmosphere at the Schwarzeneggers' that day at the dinner table! It was then that I knew, it's not just some candidate, and we have something

special going on here and I'm not the only one that can feel it. We are dealing with a historical moment that may change this country in a major better way. That if we pick the right man, our decision will help regain the world's respect and that the nation guided by fear fueled by propaganda, may be united again.

In the last several years, we went from being the most respected nation, to a police country whose misguided president, is living in his own world created for him by his advisors. And all he can talk about is "success in Iraq" and the "great economy." Our foreign policies, as someone put it, are of a "first world nation with a third world mentality."

We are in need of change, in need of Kaizen. Kaizen, as some may already know, is an old Japanese improvement philosophy, used by... Toyota in its production system. KAI means "change" or "the action to correct" and ZEN means "good."

This translates to "Always looking for ways to improve as we are never satisfied." Without spending too much money, getting everybody involved and using common sense. To see if it works, all you need to do is check Toyota's sales around the world.

**And our present government has plenty of room to improve.**

And that's what this country needs now and to do so, it would be unwise to hire for that job someone who is up to his/her eyebrows in the old system.

I guess, the "experience" argument was created for Hillary (as she won every poll), who accused Barack of being too young and inexperienced. But Bill and JFK were even younger. For the Republicans, Clinton seems like a better candidate to debate.

**So they, of course, attack him not her.**

Then FOX accused Obama of attending a Muslim school, "madrasa", and that his middle name was Hussein. Oh, and he carries nicotine gum.

Well, to be "fair and balanced," madrasa MEANS "school" in Arabic, and the one Obama attended in Jakarta was public and not religious. After two years there, he moved to a Catholic school but FOX's propaganda machine was in use already ("He is Muslim!"). In his book, Obama writes that he "was not raised in a religious household." His mother, who was raised by non-religious parents, in his eyes was "the most spiritually awakened person that I have ever known." Although his Kenyan father was "raised a Muslim," he was already a "confirmed atheist" by the time he arrived in Hawaii as a foreign student.

The Indonesian stepfather was "a man who saw religion as not particularly useful." Barack was ten when he moved in with his (white) grandparents. There goes FOX's "Muslim terrorist theory."

It was only when working in the African - American communities of South-Side Chicago, he realized what role religion plays among blacks. He and Michelle are both Christians.

Hillary claimed to be a better senator than Barack. Better known, yes, she became one in a flash of cameras, got the most media attention as an ex-First Lady. In the meantime, Obama went from being a Columbia University graduate, an unknown community organizer to Harvard Law School where he became, the first African-American president of Harvard's Law Review in its 104-year history. While others were cashing in after law school, Barack went to work in Chicago as a civil rights attorney, which led to his political career, and eight years in the US Senate. And only thanks to his two best selling books, that the Obamas are three years out of school loans.

At the UCLA speech, Oprah, his supporter, quoted the Nobel Prize winner, Toni Morrison who wrote in her letter to Obama: "In thinking carefully about the strengths of the candidates, I stunned myself when I came to the following conclusion: that in addition to keen intelligence, integrity and a rare authenticity, you exhibit something that has nothing to do with age, experience, race or gender and something I don't see in other candidates. That something is a creative imagination which coupled with brilliance equals wisdom. Wisdom is a gift; you can't train for it, inherit it, learn it in a class, or earn it in the

workplace--that access can foster the acquisition of knowledge, but not wisdom."

**Barrack Obama has a gift of wisdom.**

He is best described in his wife's words, and I'm telling you she is one smart and classy lady. This woman is also tough, and above all, she is honest, and we did not have such a mixture of qualities in our first ladies in some time now. Watch her on YouTube's "Be not afraid" speech when she addresses an all white crowd in Iowa. She has it all, what I would expect of the First Lady. And did I mention... beauty?

So, do not cross-out Barack Obama, without seeing his wife speak, and do not judge Michelle Obama without seeing her (on YouTube) speaking at UCLA, but make sure it's the full version.

When you look at her, she asked her listeners "I don't want you to see me as a First Lady, I want you to see what an investment in public education looks like!"

Cindy (McCain) cannot even compare to her. Did Cindy, in her world travels, publicly encouraged the local women in Africa to test for AIDS by taking a test herself? Nah. Michelle did.

It would be interesting having Cindy promoting... drug testing, John McCain advocates strict drug laws, but he could not keep Cindy out of drugs. She admitted to stealing from a charity to feed her "painkiller" addiction. But she did not serve time because she was a wife of a prominent man and a mother of small children. She, as a First Lady can write a book about it, and be a real-life inspiration.

Hillary, as the first female president in US history? To me, voting for a woman only because she is a woman means: I guess that it is ok for men to vote for other men only because of their gender. And I call that ridiculous. What are those women asking for? The fact is that there are much less women in politics, but I don't think it's the men's fault. I think it's the women's fault. They are, sorry to say, simply not interested in politics.

So a lonely Hillary Clinton, is desperately looking for ways on how to destroy Obama without destroying the Democratic party in general. And she wants to appear...likeable. But that's tough.

Hillary, after accused of being "soft on terror" voted against a ban on dropping cluster bombs, which are bombs that we use in Iraq in civilian areas. I guess it's ok since they are only harming foreign children and not ours.

Iraqi children that are, as The Rolling Stones magazine put it, "The only thing still trading lower than the dollar."

Hillary is investing her own money in the race (Obama has collected a record of \$32 million, mostly from "under \$200 supporters.") She set up an office in Puerto Rico after its governor endorsed Obama. It was a great gain for Obama after Hillary's claim that Latinos vote for her. Elderly and less educated - yes, but younger and better educated - no.

**Puerto Ricans cannot vote, but there are 63 delegates coming from the island.**

Bill is sweating too, rallying for his wife. He has a lot to lose - one being the opportunity to get a job of screening new interns.

Until now, the idea that the super-delegates (those if the race is too close, will

decide on the nomination) will aid Hillary is diminished. Rather than being loyal to the democratic (Clinton) dynasty, some amongst the delegates would want the Democratic Party to take over the White House at any cost. So since Obama has a better chance of winning over the Republican candidate John McCain in a debate, then, they should vote for Obama and not Clinton, so some are switching already.

For the Republicans in this election, whose race is much less exciting (they are all white and all men), endorsement by George W. would be like a kiss of death. So, they are keeping him away locked up in his bubble.

In Seattle Obama had the largest rally in the history of the state. Hollywood took a vote: George Clooney, Robert De Niro, and Tom Hanks were for Barack Obama. Steven Spielberg and Barbra Streisand were obviously for Hillary.

**And now the athletes' turn, Charles Barkley...Magic Johnson...and so on.**

Until we get the whole country interested, it's because of him, young people (black or white) more than ever registered and voted in primaries. Francis as an abroad student, proudly cast an absentee vote. And they all, repeat after him, "We are the ones we've been waiting for" until he gets to be the next President of United States.

The Civic Center was packed. Ted and Caroline shared the stage with Barack. We were there when he delivered one of those so, hated by Hillary speeches that she, nor John (McCain) can ever match. In history, those who possessed the ability to speak so freely about the problems of our times, to articulate their vision for the future so well, proved to be great presidents, and those lacking that talent, did not. Go figure. His speeches inspire many young Americans, both gender and races. I favor his approach of foreign affairs, solving conflicts by diplomacy not by bombing another country for someone else's benefit.

My local (Independent) Hillary supporter, seeing my Obama pin, just told me, "You know, we were Hillary supporters only because we thought she was the best thing we could get, but we may go with Obama."

And now, if he could only convince those among us who think their responsibility is to vote Republican because they were born Republicans, because they always voted Republican, because...

That would be Kaizen, American style!!!

□

**Danuta Delnitz, M.D., Ph.D.**

Diplomate of American Board  
*Of Family Practice*

**Family Medical Center, Inc.**  
**34052 La Plaza – Suite 102**  
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**Fax (949) 240-9040**

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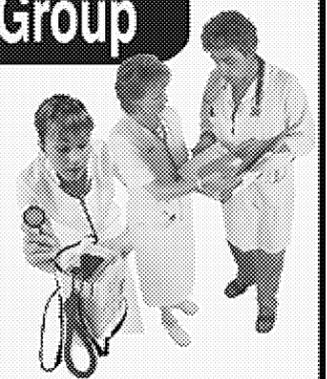
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