Her resume is impressive: secretary of state, senator from New York, first lady of the United States, first lady of Arkansas, a practicing lawyer and law professor, activist, author of seven books and supporter and advocate for 57 charities. However, she might just be the most controversial woman in America.

I believe Hillary Rodham Clinton should be named *Time* magazine’s Person of the Century.

How am I qualified to campaign for Mrs. Clinton? I followed her path as First Lady, I have always paid attention when she has been in the news, I watched her presidential bid closely, I have read two of her books, and I spent several hours researching her via internet articles and interviews. I have the credibility to speak about her today as an advocate for her worthiness.

Hillary’s life story might sound like a fairytale. She grew up in a middle-class home in Park Ridge, a suburb of Chicago. Her dad, Hugh, was a World War II Navy veteran and a small-business owner who designed, printed, and sold drapes. Hillary’s mother, Dorothy, had a tough childhood. She was abandoned by her parents as a young child and shipped off to live with relatives who didn’t want to raise her. Her mother’s experience inspired Hillary to advocate for the needs of children everywhere.

Hillary’s childhood was very different from her mother’s. Her parents built a stable middle-class life. Hillary attended public school and was a Brownie and a Girl Scout. She was raised a Methodist, and her mother taught Sunday school. On a trip to Chicago with her youth ministry, Hillary got to see Martin Luther King Jr. speak—this sparked her lifelong passion to advocate for social justice.

After graduating high school, Hillary attended Wellesley College, where she became more involved with social justice activism. After college, Hillary enrolled in Yale Law School, where she was one of just 27 women in her graduating class. While attending Yale, Hillary began dating one of her classmates, Bill Clinton.

After law school, Hillary did not join a big law firm in Washington or New York. Instead, she went to work for the Children’s Defense Fund, going door-to-door in New Bedford, Massachusetts, gathering stories about the lack of schooling for children with disabilities. These testimonials contributed to the passage of historic legislation that required the state to provide quality education for students with disabilities. This commitment to public service and advocating for others—especially children and families—has stayed with her throughout her life.

On October 11, 1975, Hillary married Bill in a small ceremony in Fayetteville, Arkansas. As first lady of Arkansas, she was a forceful champion for improving educational standards and health care access. Bill was first elected president in 1992 and re-elected in 1996. As first lady, Hillary tenaciously led the fight to reform our health care system so that all families would have access to the care they need at affordable prices. When the insurance companies and other special interests defeated that effort, Hillary did not give up. She worked with Republicans and Democrats to help create the successful Children’s Health Insurance Program, which provides health coverage to more than 8 million children and has helped cut the uninsured rate for children in half.

In 1995, Hillary led the U.S. delegation to Beijing to attend the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, despite being told by some officials not to go. Like a modern-day Emmeline Pankhurst, she gave a groundbreaking speech, declaring that “human rights are women’s rights, and women’s rights are human rights once and for all”—inspiring women around the world.

In 2000, Hillary was elected to the U.S. Senate. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Hillary pushed the Bush administration to secure $20 billion to rebuild New York and fought to provide health care for responders who were at Ground Zero. Hillary worked across the aisle to expand TRICARE, giving members of the Reserves and National Guard and their families better access to health care.

In 2008, Hillary ran for president. When she came up short, she gave a powerful speech thanking her supporters and becoming an advocate for then-Senator Barack Obama. She campaigned hard to make sure there was a Democrat in the White House.

And when President Obama asked Hillary to serve as his secretary of state, she put aside their hard-fought campaign and answered the call to public service once again. After eight years of Bush foreign policy, Hillary was instrumental in the effort to restore America’s standing in the world. Even former Republican Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said she “ran the State Department in the most effective way that I’ve ever seen.”

She built a coalition for tough new sanctions against Iran that brought them to the negotiating table and she brokered a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas that ended a war and protected Israel’s security. She was a forceful champion for human rights, internet freedom, and rights and opportunities for women and girls, LGBT people, and young people all around the globe.

One might argue that Mrs. Clinton has been involved in scandal and controversy throughout her career and that for this reason she is not qualified to win this award. In response to that, I ask you: “What effective leader has not faced some accusations and bad press?”

Hillary Clinton is a North Star to guide us into the future. Please vote for Hillary Rodham Clinton to win *Time* magazine’s Person of the Century Award.

Thank you.