



LIVE WITH DAN ABRAMS for February 4, 2008, MSNBC

Dan Abrams, Lawrence O'Donnell

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MSNBC: Live with Dan Abrams

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DAN ABRAMS, HOST: The polls could not be closer, but is the inside D.C. media ready to count Hillary out no matter what the results are tomorrow?

And since none of the Democratic primaries and caucuses are winner-take-all, meaning, the delegates are awarded proportionately, the race is still remain officially undecided after tomorrow. So, how the media assesses the results tomorrow could be as important if not more important than the numbers themselves. There's no doubt in my mind that many in the inside D.C. media are rooting against Hillary Clinton. Could be because she's old news, because her staff has developed testy relationships with the many of the press because she knows how to avoid making news, I've talked about this before, who knows why? But a recent study from the **Center for Media and Public Affairs** bears out exactly what I've been saying for weeks. From December 16th to January 27th, 84 percent of Obama's coverage has been favorable compared to just 51 percent for Clinton. If Obama wins, some of the major contested states like California, Massachusetts, Missouri or even New Jersey, can expect to hear him coronated the winner. If he's walking away with more of the significant wins that is entirely fair. He deserves it. What if Hillary Clinton has more significant wins? What if she wins in most of the major close races? I'm guessing you still hear the vast majority of commentators talking about how much progress Obama made, which is true. How much closer he came than he was months ago, it's an interesting discussion before the voters have spoken. But if she wins the vote and the delegate count in those 22 states tomorrow then, she wins the day, right? But don't count on hearing that from the inside D.C. media taking together their obsession with momentum and trends, their love on the horseshoe and disdain for Hillary Clinton will short of a blowout lead them to suggest she lost and that analysis, I think could unfairly impact future primaries.

SEKOFF: What is going on here is not a game and it's not a horse race. It's something remarkable and it's something noteworthy and I think that's what you're seeing here. What you're seeing is that wherever Obama has gone and has been able to contest, people have turned his way. Hillary was the presumptive nominee from the media. The media was anointing her; they're putting the crown on her head for a year now. So, what we're seeing is a remarkable thing and it is noteworthy. And I don't think it's some kind of fun and games. I think it's something that is inspiring and is worth us covering and that's what we're doing.

ABRAMS: Yes, what you know what? But again, when you are covering it unfairly a lot of the time and I'm again, now talking about Bill Clinton, again, same study, 74 percent of the coverage of Bill Clinton, negative. I mean, when you have 51 percent for Hillary is positive. You've gotten in the mid 80s for Barack Obama positive. I'm not making this stuff up. I mean, this to me is a reality and I feel like I'm going to be the only one calling this out tonight to say, look out tomorrow. Watch out how they cover it. Look at what the pundits are saying and how they're saying it and be careful. I mean Michelle, it's fair to say, is it not, be careful when listening to how they characterize it.

COTTLE: Sure. But the example you're using there, Bill Clinton's coverage being negative. I mean, let's not pretend that he didn't come out with some pretty trashy politics for the last couple of weeks. There's a reason he has gotten so much negative coverage and he has been playing hardball. So, I'm not sure why you would expect to be anything different than a controversial coverage.