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## **MADAM SECRETARY**

**Book Review: *Madam Secretary*, by Madeline Albright.**  
**Miramax Publishers, 2003; 576 pp.**

### *I. Introduction*

Madeline Albright's recently published memoirs<sup>1</sup> contain much of what one would expect from a departing U.S. Secretary of State:<sup>2</sup> a mix of brass-tacks foreign policy, an insider's view of American national politics, some apologetics pertaining to the main criticism of the President who appointed her, and a bit of misty-eyed reminiscing and reflection on the contributions made by the author's life and work. On all these points Albright does a wonderful job. Her book is balanced and fair (i.e., not distractingly partisan), insightful and clear. The foreign policy discussion is informative yet selective enough to be accessible to the average educated reader – she focuses on the most significant issues and international hotspots. Clinton himself receives the type of mixed-feeling eulogy Ms. Albright is almost obligated to give, at least for public relations purposes. She pleasingly avoids the narcissism that characterizes so many other books of

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<sup>1</sup> MADELINE ALBRIGHT, *MADAM SECRETARY* (2003).

<sup>2</sup> Madeline Korbel Albright served as Secretary of State under President Bill Clinton during his second term in office, succeeding Warren Christopher. She became the first United States Secretary of State in 1997. *See Senate Panel Gives Albright the O.K.*, USA TODAY, January 21, 1997, at 9A. For official information, see <http://www.secretary.state.gov>.

this genre. Somewhat surprisingly, the most troubling aspect of her autobiography is not her politics or views of America as the human-rights police for the rest of the world, but rather the implications of her book for feminist and women's concerns.

Schematically, the book begins with childhood memories of Albright's early years as a Czech immigrant in the Midwest.<sup>3</sup> This progresses into a flowing narrative of her college years and the beginning of her political career, mostly working on unsuccessful Democratic Presidential campaigns.<sup>4</sup> The topic receiving the greatest detail in this section is the story of meeting and marrying her husband, Joe Albright.<sup>5</sup> This background history, presented mostly anecdotally, is followed by a detailed and interesting account of her years at the United Nations,<sup>6</sup> which led into her appointment as Secretary of State.<sup>7</sup> Interspersed with subsequent lengthy sections on the Balkan crisis,<sup>8</sup> North Korea,<sup>9</sup> and the failed Israel-Palestinian negotiations<sup>10</sup> are accounts her painful divorce<sup>11</sup> and her awkward relationship to the Clintons (as a couple) during the Monica Lewinsky scandal.<sup>12</sup> The book focuses on a selected group of topics rather than offering a historian's event-by-event descriptive record; it reads more like a popular book than a history. The conclusion describes cleaning out her office in the White House, leaving a

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<sup>3</sup> Albright, *supra* note 1, at 21-30.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 65-76, 80 (discussing Madeline Albright's work and support of Edmund S. Muskie, Walter Mondale, and Michael Dukakis's presidential campaigns).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 36-47.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 127-212.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 223-224.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 177-193.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 455-72.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* at 288-319.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.* at 94-99, 105, 106, 107.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.* at 350, 355-57.

friendly, welcoming note for Colin Powell,<sup>13</sup> and reminiscing briefly about the legacy of her tenure under the Chief Executive.

## *II. Achievement vs. Accomplishment*

Madeline Albright opens and closes her book referring to how much she accomplished for the cause of women everywhere.<sup>14</sup> In fact, she cites few if any other accomplishments besides this, unless one counts as an accomplishment the fact that some international crises came and went under her watch, as they do under every Secretary of State.

Indeed, she arguably reached a higher political office than any other woman in American history; as Secretary of State, perhaps the only positions better would be President or Vice-President.<sup>15</sup> In that sense, her career was indeed a watershed. Albright speculates that future generations of young women can now have higher expectations for themselves, and possess greater opportunities for their careers.<sup>16</sup> Becoming Secretary of State of the lone superpower would be a significant achievement for anyone, and “especially for a woman,” Albright would say.

The phrase “especially for a woman,” however, can have a sense that is either pejorative or self-deprecating, and this feeling is reinforced after one reads through Albright’s (very well-written) account of her personal journey from being the daughter of

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<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at 508.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at xi–xii, 510–511.

<sup>15</sup> Of course, one could reasonably contend that being a Supreme Court Justice is every bit as significant, and two women have attained this office; Albright does not focus on the achievements of other women who were her contemporaries, except for passing references.

<sup>16</sup> Albright, *supra* note 1, at 510–511 (“But the encounters that mean the most to me are with women of various ages who recognize the real me and come up to say thank you. I especially treasure the young women who say that my example has inspired them to raise their sights so that they now feel that serving as secretary of state or in even higher office is a realistic goal.”).

Czech immigrant-refugees to her undergraduate years at Wellesley College,<sup>17</sup> culminating in the story of how she became an Albright.

She sets up the story about meeting Joe Albright almost defensively,<sup>18</sup> taking pains to make it clear that she knew nothing about his background or family – to the point of making the reader wonder if the narrative is building up to some shocking or embarrassing disclosure. It turns out, after (emphatically after) the couple had been in love for some time, that Joe Albright was a true blue-blood;<sup>19</sup> a nephew of the Guggenheims, the son of an internationally acclaimed artist, and potential heir of one of the major newspapers his extended family owned.

“Quite a catch” for a girl in the world of the 1960’s, and one realizes that the foregoing pages of “Madeline-in-love” are there partly to rebut any possible thought that she married for money or prestige. The story is convincing on this point – the romance is palpable enough that it makes the couple’s eventual divorce, after years of successful partnership and childrearing, a complete surprise. Yet there is something bittersweet about the fact that even today a woman must fend off such insinuations, just because a man who found her charming coincidentally happened to be rich and well-to-do.

So young Madeline married into privilege, though she insists this was through no fault of her own. This served her well; she was introduced into a circle of influential people. She worked on democratic presidential campaigns and made connections of her own that supplemented her family ties.<sup>20</sup> She obtained a Ph.D. from Columbia University

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<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at 30.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.* at 36.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.* at 37-38.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at 63-93

in Russian Studies<sup>21</sup> and worked for a time in the Carter White House.<sup>22</sup> President Clinton appointed her to be Ambassador to the United Nations during his first term,<sup>23</sup> and promoted her to the cabinet post of Secretary of State for his second term.<sup>24</sup> Albright was clearly qualified and ably carried out her duties. She brought an air of dignity to a White House that was otherwise racked with prurient scandals and accusations of rather adolescent misbehavior.

What is troubling about all this is that Albright seems to view her most important “accomplishment” to be the very fact that she was the first woman to become Secretary of State, not any particular feats she performed while in this position. It would be one thing if she claimed to have saved the world from nuclear war, or economic collapse, or even from one incidence of genocide. No such laurels adorn her memoirs; such situations were simply handled or managed, with the conclusion usually being frustration rather than triumph. The only triumph seems to be her claimed contribution to the feminist cause – and this was accomplished, in part, by the unfortunately stereotyped road of marrying the right man. Again, she cannot be faulted for this, and she was clearly independently qualified for the position and competent throughout her tenure. Yet it seems to undermine the greatness of what she identifies as her main life accomplishment, a feminist triumph. There is irony in the fact that her contribution to feminism depended in part on her marriage to Joe Albright, and it is unfortunate to think that we have made so little progress that this would have to be the case. It is also unfortunate, though, to find myself even thinking of it as an issue; to recognize that the voice of the old

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<sup>21</sup> *Id.* at 56.

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* at 81-82.

<sup>23</sup> *Id.* at 129-30.

<sup>24</sup> *Id.* at 223-24.

stereotypes still haunt,<sup>25</sup> even when there is no reason for them to remain audible in my mind. I am a fan of Madeline Albright and believe that she was an excellent Secretary of State; but slowly grasping the gender-bound trajectory of her career bothered me both objectively and subjectively.

This is, in part, the puzzle of achievement versus accomplishment.<sup>26</sup> This question is particularly confusing when celebrating successes of women or other historically subjugated groups.<sup>27</sup> Achievements are remarkable things to which we attain,

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<sup>25</sup> See Kenneth I. Spenner & David L. Featherman, *Achievement Ambitions*, 4 ANN. REV. SOCIOLOGY 373, 401 (1978) (discussing the conventional “mobility through marriage” view of women’s achievement).

<sup>26</sup> For a brief discussion of this distinction made by philosophers from Aristotle (*Metaphysics*) through Vendler and Kenny, see Daniel W. Graham, *States and Performances: Aristotle’s Test*, 30 PHIL. QUART. 117, 118-19 (1980). Graham focuses most of discussion, however, on Aristotle’s Greek syntax and the subsequent commentaries, rather than the implications for evaluating the careers of public officials. The philosopher Vendler himself makes much of the different semantic traits of “accomplishment” verbal statements from “achievement” verbs; the former use more continuous-past-action verbs, for example, than the former. See Zeno Vendler, *Verbs and Times*, 66 PHILOSOPHICAL REV. 143, 146-48 (1957).

Some sociologists see the distinction as a product of societal changes that affect the criteria for the development of self-esteem. See, e.g., David D. Franks and Joseph Marolla, *Efficacious Action and Social Approval as Interacting Dimensions of Self-Esteem: A Tentative Formulation Through Construct Validation*, 39 SOCIOMETRY 324, 338-39 (1976):

White, for example, quotes the “marketing orientation” described by Forman (1947) with its vast impersonal market, machine production, and business organizations which tend to shift the basis of self-esteem away from what accomplishes the objectives and towards how well one sells himself in the estimation of others [i.e., achievement]. Gouldner (1970) has also described social changes which shifted the focus away from autonomously given self-esteem inputs to inputs basically dependent on other people. Certainly bureaucracies, insofar as some of them tend toward appearance rather than task orientation, may encourage emphasis on outer self-esteem.

Of course, “achievement” and “accomplishment” are sometimes used interchangeably, especially in cases where precise definitions of these terms are of less significance. See, e.g., T.A. Wright & T.G. Bonett, *The Contribution of Burnout to Work Performance*, 18 J. ORGANIZ. BEHAV. 491, 494 (1997) (“The third burnout dimension, diminished personal accomplishment, denotes a decline in one’s personal feelings of competence and successful work achievement.”); see also Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, *Why Does Jane Read and Write So Well? The Anomaly of Women’s Achievement*, 62 SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION 47 (1989) (discussing the puzzle of exemplary female academic performance where rewards for such accomplishments or achievements are hindered by sexism in society); Richard A. Guzzo, *Types of Rewards, Cognitions, and Work Motivation*, 4 ACAD. MGMT. REV. 75, 78 (1979); Wagner A. Kamakura & Thomas P. Novak, *Value-System Segmentation: Exploring the Meaning of LOV (List of Values)*, 19 J. CONSUMER RESEARCH 119, 120-21 (1992) (defining the internal value of “achievement” as being comprised of social recognition as well as a feeling of “accomplishment”).

<sup>27</sup> For a survey of recent sociological literature on gender and achievement ambitions, see Spenner & Featherman, *supra* note 25, at 395-401. A psychological study on managerial “burnout” factors concluded that men and women in management experienced similar feelings about “personal achievement,” but their stress levels different corresponding to the level of position (men were more likely to find top

like titles and positions. Accomplishments could be defined as remarkable things we actually do.<sup>28</sup>

Achievements contain an element of exclusion; part of what makes them remarkable is that many people do not receive them, whether they are higher education degrees, certain awards, and positions – including political offices. Whether appointed or elected, those in positions of power were selected from a field of possible candidates. Of course, achievement usually includes some element of merit as well, recognizing either effort or ability. Merit, however, is almost always working in tandem with its conceptual opposite, *favor*, when eligibility considerations are at issue; and this makes it complicated to assess the true meaning or value of achievement.<sup>29</sup> Good achievements are partly creditable to the established decision makers, those already holding power, who identify and select candidates for positions, titles, and awards. Others function as patrons as they give recommendations, provide good references, offer tips about special opportunities, and supply moral and financial support.<sup>30</sup>

Accomplishments, on the other hand, are what we do, not what we win or what we become. They are the unique contribution we make to the world. Of course, accomplishments usually draw on our efforts and abilities, but are different from

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management stressful than women, while women were more likely to find “blue collar” positions stressful. See Grace M. H. Pretty, Mary E. McCarthy, & Victor M. Cantano, *Psychological Environments and Burnout: Gender Considerations within the Corporation*, 13 J. ORGANIZ. BEHAV. 701, 708 (1992).

<sup>28</sup> Vendler notes in a digression that one odd semantic difference between accomplishments and achievements in speech is that the former are actions where the helping verb “can” is added or removed without much change in meaning, while achievement-related verbs are drastically affected by the presence of “can” or “could.” See Vendler, *supra* note 25, at 148-49, whose example is the semantic equivalency of “I can believe that,” with “I believe that.”

<sup>29</sup> Luck, providence, or fortune also lurk in the background of all achievements, manifested especially through the opportunities afforded some individuals but not others; but the transcendent or mysterious nature of such benefits make their distribution inscrutable.

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of the “matrix of significant others” who influence one’s achievements (and preceding ambitions for achievement), see Spenner & Featherman, *supra* note 25, at 391 -94 (discussing the roles these individuals play, and the different sets of influential individuals that tend to affect adolescents of different genders or race).

achievements because they create merit rather than acknowledge it. Accomplishments are tricky because many triumphs constitute another's failure, defeat, or loss; most victories are subject to criticism or question as to their true value or significance. In addition, every triumph involves legions of unrecognized and unremembered individuals who contributed to the feat in some way. Like achievement, accomplishments sometimes utilize privilege; privilege or status attracts helpers and makes success in a venture more likely, but for some reason privilege does not seem to undermine the significance of an accomplishment as much as it undermines the value of an achievement. A queen who inherited her throne is still praiseworthy if she leads her country to prosperity, averts national disaster, or eliminates inequalities; but she can hardly brag about the fact that she became queen, if this was determined by birth. "Became president" is a less remarkable epitaph on a tombstone than "brought democracy to the Arab world," "forged lasting peace in the Balkans," or "ushered in unprecedented economic growth" (all of which seem far off at the moment). The last three hypothetical accomplishments, however, would necessarily depend in part on the resolve of the citizenry, the actions of the legislature, and the support of the executive cabinet and staff. Even so, each of these would constitute a credible moniker that one's life had been valuable or significant, at least more so than "attained a powerful position."

Applying this distinction to Madeline Albright's book forces the unfortunate conclusion that her purported greatest "accomplishment" was rather an "achievement." She implies that the history of excluding women from high government posts in itself transforms an achievement into an accomplishment, because it opens new doors for

others.<sup>31</sup> This is an interesting idea, and may be a valid point – that achievements attained by members of disadvantaged groups automatically count as accomplishments.<sup>32</sup> The paradox, then, is that this creates a special category of accomplishments, where merit looks not at the past or present (the efforts or abilities of the individual), but toward the future; it is an achievement that opens the possibility for accomplishments (in the regular sense of the word as we have described it) but other members of the identified group.<sup>33</sup>

### III. *All the President's Women*

While Albright seems to short-shrift her female peers in the White House, she cannot avoid talking about the two other women who dominated the news coverage during Clinton's presidency: Hillary and Monica. Bill Clinton's name came to be associated with "Monica" as nearly much as "Samson" goes with "Delilah."<sup>34</sup> Samson's original wife (who dies before Delilah enters the biblical story) remains nameless in history; we know only that both she and Delilah were "Philistine girls." Clinton's wife, in contrast,

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<sup>31</sup> Admittedly, Albright's "achievement" resulted in large part from her political activity, although it is not clear how much of her volunteer work for Democratic campaigns flowed from a feminist ideology as opposed to a liberal one. Interestingly, studies in the 1970's and 80's indicated that "moderate" feminism was more likely to generate political participation than more extreme versions, and is more likely to make the difference or political participation/nonparticipation for minority women than for non-minorities. See, e.g., Susan Ann Kay, *Feminist Ideology, Race, and Political Participation: A Second Look*, 38 WESTERN POLITICAL Q. 476 (1985).

<sup>32</sup> An assertion along these lines is made by Spenner & Featherman, *supra* note 25, at 399: "To the extent that female achievement orientations are sex-role based, one might conclude that they will only approximate the male pattern when the mitigating effects of conventional attributions about achievement are breached or reformulated."

<sup>33</sup> There is an older article asserting that business executives find their sense of "accomplishment" in the level that they "achieve," which seems to recognize the conceptual difference between the two but notes that certain individuals substitute one for the other. See Roland J. Pellegrin & Charles H. Coates, *Executives & Supervisors: Contrasting Definitions of Career Success*, 1 ADMIN. SCIENCE QUART. 506 (1957).

<sup>34</sup> "Delilah" in the original language means, interestingly, something like "weakness" or "personal flaw," as in, "I know I have a problem." See JUDGES ch. 16:4-18.

may make a bid for the White House in a few years, and still has a chance to make a greater mark on history than her husband.

Hillary Clinton was certainly in a different position regarding the Monica fiasco than Madeline Albright, but their brief descriptions of their own feelings about it at the time are strikingly similar. Both women published their memoirs within a year of each other;<sup>35</sup> both were expected by society to offer some comment on how it felt to be women who were close to the President as the scandal unraveled. Both offer a comment just long enough to be substantive, but short enough to give the air of being discreet.<sup>36</sup> Both describe feelings ranging from anger to embarrassment to pity, followed by a terse statement of principled disapproval, and then a calculated decision to stand by the President for the sake of the greater good, despite the sense of personal betrayal. From a traditional chauvinistic approach, both offered the perfect response for a woman close to the power source: emotional enough to be authentically feminine (lest Hillary or Madeline appear overly cold-blooded, masculine, or Reno-like),<sup>37</sup> but still distinctively able to subordinate her emotions to principle when making important decisions (lest they support the stereotype of “hysterical female”). Able to be womanly at heart but to still do

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<sup>35</sup> See HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, *LIVING HISTORY* 466 (2003):

I could hardly breathe. Gulping for air, I started crying and yelling at him, “What do you mean? What are you saying? Why did you lie to me?”

I was furious and getting more so by the second. He just stood there saying over and over again, “I’m sorry. I’m so sorry. I was trying to protect you and Chelsea.” I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. Up until now I only thought that he’d been foolish for paying attention to the young woman and was convinced that he was being railroaded. I couldn’t believe he would do anything to endanger our marriage and our family. I was dumbfounded, heartbroken and outraged that I’d believed him at all[. . .]. I desperately needed someone to talk to so I called a friend who was also a counselor to seek guidance. This was the most devastating, shocking and hurtful experience of my life. I could not figure out what to do, but I knew I had to find a calm place in my heart and mind to sort out my feelings.

<sup>36</sup> See Albright, *supra* note 1, at 354-57.

<sup>37</sup> For rather strange but thought-provoking sociological discussion of Hillary Clinton’s image problems in this regard, see Jeannie B. Thomas, *Dumb Blondes, Dan Quayle, and Hillary Clinton: Gender, Sexuality, and Stupidity in Jokes*, 110 *J. Amer. Folklore*, 277, 300-04 (1997).

the proper, “manly,” rational thing under stress, each attempts to allay the fears of those who fear women in power. Other women involved in the scandal wrote entire books rambling through the ordeal in a more stereotypically gossipy, impressionistic, and cathartic manner. The succinct, balanced treatment by the former First Lady and the Secretary of State seem almost contrived in contrast, designed to reassure those who still have nagging doubts about women in power.

It is unfortunate that women are still politically obligated to promise not to make decisions based on emotion or intuition. It is especially troubling compared to the President in the story, who found it politically expedient to blame his transgressions on things like a problematic sex drive or suppressed anger (the explanation he offered Madeline Albright and Donna Shalala in a private cabinet meeting).<sup>38</sup> The President with too much passion, interestingly, approached foreign policy and human rights essentially as a reactionary – so shocked by abuses that he could not help but take action, as characterized approvingly by Albright. He surely would not have recovered politically from the Monica scandal as well as he did if instead his explanation was an appeal to the economist’s rational choice model (“I derive greater utility from sex than from restraint or abstinence”). Albright is free to offer this on his behalf, however, without negative repercussion (given her own painful experience with a philandering husband, she was “not surprised when men lie about sex”).<sup>39</sup> This is not a mere double standard, but rather opposite standards; women in power are expected to project an image of remarkable self-control and wisdom, despite the silliness going on around them; men in power can excuse

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<sup>38</sup> Albright, *supra* note 1, at 355-356 (“Then he said that the reason he had done it was that he had been in a rage for the past four and a half years. He had been a good actor and had put on a smile but had been angry throughout.”).

<sup>39</sup> *Id.* at 357.

their most notorious failings by appealing to a pure lack of self-control, or too much stifled emotion.<sup>40</sup>

In the end, one of Albright's real "accomplishments" (as opposed to the "achievement" of her office in the White House) was her ability to function as a foil to Clinton at his worst moments. Where his escapades seemed puerile, Albright appeared eminently mature and serious; where the President appeared impulsive, she was unwaveringly principled; where he lapsed from debonair into casual, she remained stately. Through her an otherwise besmirched White House retained some air of dignity. Facing political undulations or even repeated embarrassments is part of the life of any cabinet member, in any administration; but in this Albright excelled.<sup>41</sup>

#### *IV. Foreign Policy, From The Heart*

Albright offers an insider's view of the great foreign policy events of her term: the Balkan crisis,<sup>42</sup> Iraq's inter-bellum antics,<sup>43</sup> the languished Israeli-Palestinian

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<sup>40</sup> In a fascinating psycho-sociological study of the history of the American Presidency (ending with Ronald Reagan) and the correlation between personal charisma and presidential effectiveness, a group of researchers demonstrated (among other things) that the need for a sense of personal achievement is actually inversely proportional to effectiveness as President; the less a President feels concerned about such matters, the more charismatic the leadership style will be, and the more effective the President will be in times of crisis or in making major decisions. See Robert J. House, William D. Sprangler, & James Woycke, *Personality and Charisma in the U.S. Presidency: A Psychological Theory of Leadership Effectiveness*, 36 ADMIN. SCIENCE Q. 364-96 (1991). This raises two interesting questions. First, one wonders whether Albright's strange confusion of accomplishments with achievement reflects a stronger or weaker need on her part for a personal sense of achievement. Did she have trouble identifying her actual accomplishments because such thinking was unusual for her, or conversely because she was so focused on achievement that she could not separate the concept from accomplishment? The second question or possible inquiry is the extent to which such traits reflect that of the Clinton administration in general; to what extent was Clinton himself obsessed with a need for personal achievement? A third question, contingent on the answer to the second, would be whether Clinton himself fits the pattern observed by the researchers – that effective leadership requires, in part, a lower emphasis on personal feelings of achievement.

<sup>41</sup> For a discussion of the relationship between ambition to fulfill perceived roles and "achievement," see generally Spenner & Featherman, *supra* note 25.

<sup>42</sup> *Id.* at 177-93.

<sup>43</sup> *Id.* at 272-87.

negotiations,<sup>44</sup> North Korea's bizarre posturing,<sup>45</sup> and the then-mysterious threat of Al-Qaeda.<sup>46</sup> The selection of topics corresponds to the amount of media attention on these areas, whether at the time, or as part of more recent retrospective scrutiny – especially the latter two areas. Readers are probably most interested in events they have seen in the news, so to this extent Albright's focus will satisfy many in her audience. Missing, however, are other equally important events like the foreign currency crisis that created global economic upheaval in the same period. It would also have been enriching to glean insights into lesser-known areas of global politics; Albright certainly possesses wide-ranging information the rest of us would find educational. For example, prescient views into the current Cypriot unification battles, civil unrest in Malaysia and Indonesia, and the ongoing turmoil in Congo and Burundi would have constituted a valuable addition to her book. Similarly, more academic questions like the proper ownership of the Faroe Islands (currently claimed by Denmark, to the consternation of the islanders, who identify more closely with Iceland), or the interesting chain of illegal migration of Haitians to the Dominican Republic, and of Dominicans to Puerto Rico, etc., might have found elucidation from someone with Albright's vantage point, but this opportunity was missed. It seems unlikely that Albright would have spent as many pages on Al-Qaeda or North Korea had these two receded into the pages of history after Clinton left office, instead of taking on their truly apocalyptic significance under the next administration. Other second-tier conflicts from the Clinton era could easily become the next global quagmire; unfortunately, Albright book will not furnish insights to policymakers at that time, as she focuses on issues that are currently newsworthy.

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<sup>44</sup> *Id.* at 288-319.

<sup>45</sup> *Id.* at 455-72.

<sup>46</sup> *Id.* at 361-77.

An interesting (but clearly unintended) feature of the book, however, is its confirmation of the theory that Clinton's policy decisions, though sometimes fortuitous, were driven by a type of intuitive, moral impulsiveness that is not inconsistent with his more notorious exploits. Henry Kissinger has criticized Clinton for constantly going with his gut in foreign affairs, embarking on moral crusades to right every wrong, rather than developing a consistent policy to identify and protect America's interests (Kissinger's ideal, in which he also sees the current administration as failing).<sup>47</sup> Albright described Clinton's decision making process about foreign interventions along similar lines, but approvingly, as one might expect.<sup>48</sup> This is not to say that intervention in the Balkans,

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<sup>47</sup> SEE HENRY KISSINGER, DOES AMERICA NEED A FOREIGN POLICY? : TOWARD A DIPLOMACY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY 251-252 (2001). Kissinger complains that this haphazard, sentimental foreign policy approach was unprecedented in recent American history:

The new dispensation in foreign policy combined a rejection of history with a turning away from traditional notions of security and geopolitics. Explicitly suggesting that America's failings were a contributing cause of the Cold War, implying that most international tensions were social in origin and that diplomacy should therefore concentrate on the so-called soft—that is, nonstrategic—issues, it expressed an unconcealed disdain for much of what had been accomplished in the half century following the Second World War.

Kissinger goes on to portray Clinton's humanitarian idealism in foreign affairs as unsustainable:

The new doctrine of humanitarian intervention asserts that humane convictions are so integral a part of the American tradition that both treasure and, in the extreme, lives must be risked to vindicate them anywhere in the world. No other nation has ever advanced such goals, which risk maneuvering the United States and its allies into the role of world policeman.

*Id.* at 253.

Similar criticisms of Clinton for his apparently inconsistent and quixotic foreign policy have been lodged by other commentators as well. See, e.g. Richard N. Haas, *Fatal Distraction: Bill Clinton's Foreign Policy*, 108 FOREIGN POL'Y 112-23 (1997) ("President Bill Clinton's foreign policy is less easy to define . . . it lacks a general framework."); Linda B. Miller, *The Clinton Years: Reinventing U.S. Foreign Policy?* 70 INT'L AFFAIRS 621-34 (1994) (If lack of vision, vague goals and ineffectual means are among the most frequently voiced criticisms of the Clinton administration's foreign policy, a third accusation often follows. It is that the White House has allowed places of less importance or conflicts of less magnitude to overshadow the more significant issues resulting from the end of the cold war in Europe.").

<sup>48</sup> For an interesting psychological analysis of Clinton's foreign policy approach that also depicts his inconsistencies in a positive light (i.e., more adaptive), see Stephen G. Walker, Mark Schaefer, & Michael D. Young, *Presidential Operational Codes and Foreign Policy Conflicts in the Post-Cold War World*, 43 J. CONFLICT RESOLUTION 610-25 (1999). The authors describe their findings as follows: [T]he Clinton administration's conflict response is more intense [than the previous administration's] in response to the opponent's conflict moves and less intense in response to the opponent's cooperation moves . . . The patterns of moves under Bush's leadership is less cooperative and less flexible – choosing a course of action, sticking

for example, was unwarranted, but rather that Clinton based his decisions on moral passions rather than cool calculations; and his passion got him into trouble on other occasions. This presents the real irony of Clinton: the President most associated with immorality (in recent memory) was overly sensitive to conscience in policy matters. On the surface this seems to be a simple contradiction, but the two behaviors have a common basis: emotional decision making.

## V. CONCLUSION

Given that the book is a memoir, Albright's own assessment of the worth of her life and career take on particular significance, and on this point the book opens a conundrum about the interplay between achievement and accomplishment, and the unique significance each of these takes on when the individual is a woman in power. As an author, she does not seem aware of the philosophical problem with claiming one's main accomplishment was being the first women Secretary of State, the first time "Madam Secretary" had to be uttered in the White House. She seems painfully aware of the wrinkle that her marriage to Joe Albright introduces into her asserted accomplishment; yet this seems less of an unresolved issue for the current social debate than the achievement-accomplishment dichotomy itself. "Madam Secretary" may indeed have paved the way for "Madam President;" the question that could be discussed in the

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with it, and disregarding the opponent's mechanism to alter the process no matter what. On the other hand, the Clinton administration is more cooperative and more flexible – responding more to both friendly and hostile moves by the opponent. These differences in administrations are sharper in more asymmetric conflict situations.

*Id.* at 621-22. The authors draw no conclusions about which policy approach is "better" in achieving nation goals, but focus instead on a description of behavioral patterns over time. For a study discussing the similarities and differences between ideological and emotion ("symbolic") foreign policy approaches, pre-dating the end of the Cold War, see Peter Hansen & Nikolaj Peterson, *Motivational Bases of Foreign Policy Attitudes and Behavior: An Empirical Analysis*, 22 INT'L STUDIES Q. 49, 52-54 (1978).

meantime, and which has received very little attention so far, is whether “Madam President” will deserve praise merely for being a Madam, or for what the Madam manages to do with the opportunities her position provides.

Albright’s memoirs are undeniably well-written, informative, and thought-provoking; the book would make a smart addition to any personal library. Her characterizations of Clinton reflect the views of an admirer, but could provide fodder for his critics – perhaps more significant criticisms in the long run than his moral lapses sensationalized in the media while he was in office. Albright’s discussion of the scandal itself offers little that is new, but is interesting from the standpoint of the messages between the lines – which say more about Albright herself than her President.