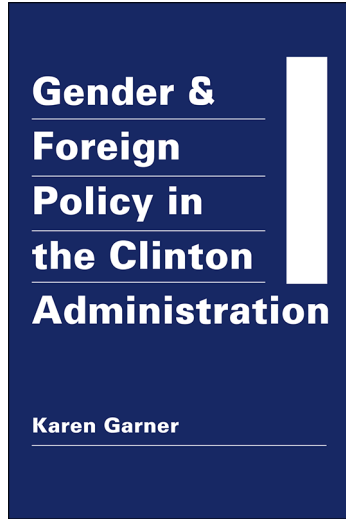


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Foreign Policy in the  
Clinton Administration

Karen Garner

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# 1

## Feminist Foreign Policy in the Clinton Administration

America's credo should ring clearly: A democracy without the full participation of women is a contradiction in terms. To reach its full potential, it must include all of its citizens. Clearly, whether we succeed in strengthening democratic values around the world is of special consequence to women, who in our country and elsewhere are still striving to attain, and even define their rightful place in government, the economy, and civil society, and to claim their rightful share of personal, political, economic and civic power.

~Hillary Rodham Clinton, March 12, 1997<sup>1</sup>

The William Jefferson Clinton Administration (1993 to 2001) broke many barriers to challenge global women's unequal status vis-à-vis men and to incorporate women's gendered needs into United States' foreign policy making and foreign aid programs. More so than in previous U.S. presidential administrations that had been in power since the 1970s when a second wave of American feminist activism moved women's rights and women's empowerment onto national social and political agendas, the Clinton Administration interjected feminist aims "into the mainstream of American foreign policy." As President Clinton asserted, "We cannot advance our ideals and interests unless we focus more attention on the fundamental human rights and basic needs of women and girls."<sup>2</sup>

President Clinton's words provide just one example of how officials at the highest levels of leadership in the White House, cabinet agencies, State Department, and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) raised the level of feminist rhetoric to unprecedented prominence in their foreign policy addresses. More importantly, the administration enacted institutional changes at the State Department and

USAID that empowered global women. That is, these institutional changes enabled women's more equitable access to social, political and legal power and to economic resources that allowed them to make independent decisions about their own lives.<sup>3</sup>

During the Clinton Administration's tenure the State Department and USAID increased the descriptive, or numerical, representation of women in foreign policy making roles. Madeleine K. Albright was the most visible woman within the administration's foreign policy ranks; she served as ambassador to the United Nations from 1993 to 1997 and as the nation's first female secretary of state from 1997 to 2001. Additionally, President Clinton appointed Alexis Herman, Hazel O'Leary, Janet Reno and Donna Shalala to lead cabinet agencies and increased the number and influence of women who occupied high-level positions and made day-to-day governing decisions that had both national and international scope and impact during his two terms in office.<sup>4</sup>

Feminists internationally have long argued that a true democracy does not exist if the female half of its adult population does not participate equally in the public realm.<sup>5</sup> If that premise is accepted, then, with more women holding key leadership positions within the Clinton Administration, the federal government became more democratic and more representative of the entire U.S. population during the Clinton presidency. While the presence of even a critical mass of women holding policy making positions does not guarantee that the nature of government will change to represent the substantive interests of women as women,<sup>6</sup> or that women occupying policy making positions in government can be singled out as the direct cause of any specific policy change,<sup>7</sup> this study also asserts that the substantive representation of women's interests in U.S. foreign policy making also expanded during Clinton's presidency.

The liberal feminist women that President Clinton appointed increased federal government attention to gender equity in policy and programs generally. They worked from within the state and sought to break down the U.S. government's patriarchal institutional structures in order to meet women's needs and to address women's interests. The women who served in foreign policy making posts consulted with U.S. feminist movement activists and organizations. They sought to incorporate feminist aims to expand women's legal, political, social and economic rights and to ameliorate women's unequal status through the nation's foreign policies and foreign aid allocations, especially as those policies and aid affected populations of global women. This study adopts "global women," an imperfect term, to refer to women living in countries that U.S. foreign policy initiatives targeted, that is, countries that were

engaged in international wars or civil wars or that were developing countries that received foreign aid.

To be sure, the meaning of feminism and what constitutes feminist policy are contested concepts. Indeed, by the 1980s many scholars and activists began referring to “feminisms” in the plural. This strategic term acknowledged fundamental theoretical disagreements regarding the sources and remedies for various women’s oppression.<sup>8</sup> It also facilitated political collaborations among those who could agree, in the most basic sense, “that ‘feminist’ indicates a challenge to patriarchy and ‘contests political, social and other power arrangements of domination and subordination on the basis of gender.’”<sup>9</sup> The feminists who worked inside the Clinton Administration represented a “liberal feminist” orientation. They employed mainstreaming strategies to integrate “new [feminist] frameworks, agendas, findings and strategies into mainstream policies, programs and projects.”<sup>10</sup> Although in some instances these feminist insiders may have been advocating for radical changes to the status quo, they did not represent a “radical feminist” perspective. This study employs the terms liberal feminist and radical feminist as historian Julie Ajinkya defined them in the context of the U.S. women’s movement. According to these definitions radical feminists rejected any collaboration with the U.S. government or other state systems that they believed perpetuated patriarchy, racism, classism, nativism and heterosexism.<sup>11</sup>

Although this study focuses on liberal feminists who worked from positions inside the state, and their feminist collaborators who occupied positions in movements and organizations outside the state, radical feminist and other critiques of the Clinton-era foreign policies that affected global women are not minimized or neglected here. While U.S. government actions that occurred during the 1990s are very recent history, and historic consequences are certainly still unfolding, this study attempts to evaluate whether the Clinton Administration’s foreign policies had a feminist or progressive outcome as the liberal feminist foreign policy makers intended, whether the rights of various populations of global women were expanded and whether their needs were met. This study pays attention to who defined feminist goals, which cohorts of women were advantaged and which were disadvantaged, which global gender issues were recognized as problems that warranted U.S. government attention and action and which issues were ignored.

### **Linking Foreign Policy to Feminist Goals during the Clinton Administration**

This study focuses on the years of Bill Clinton's presidency, when a post-Cold War moment focused U.S. government foreign policy goals on promoting democratization and expanding market economies globally.<sup>12</sup> These changes were connected to global historical transformations as the world experienced the end of the Cold War era (1945 to 1989). As the Cold War ended, the ideological, political, military and economic conflicts between Western democracies led by the United States and Eastern socialist bloc states led by the Soviet Union no longer dominated all intergovernmental relations. Beginning in the 1980s, U.S. government leaders grappled with new international challenges that grew out of specific historical developments. The Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact alliance in Eastern Europe both broke apart. It was unclear who controlled and managed the former Soviet Union's nuclear and conventional weapons arsenal. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization expanded its military alliance membership as other regional military alliances were reconfigured. Without a viable socialist economic model to provide competition, transnational corporations, financial institutions and Western governments supported the global expansion of a neoliberal capitalist economic system. Governments worldwide reduced national trade barriers and restrictions on private investment, weakened public sector protections for workers and cut social spending. At the same time, many newly independent nations, freed from a Cold War era East/West international relations system and "superpower" domination, established "democratic" and pluralistic political systems in which political rivals competed in ostensibly free elections. Some of these "free" elections put undemocratic and oppressive governments into power. Several unstable regions of the world erupted in ethnically-driven conflicts. Bitter internecine conflicts and genocidal warfare triggered humanitarian crises that threatened human security in the Caribbean, Southeastern Europe and East Africa.

A new international system defined by divisions between the global "haves" and "have nots," that is, the developed and wealthy nations of the global North and the underdeveloped and indebted nations of the global South, exposed the threats and benefits of all these transformations. In reaction to the new international order, the expansion of progressive global social movements that promoted human rights, environmental protections and women's rights to counterbalance various inequities that neoliberal economic policies caused also distinguished the end of the Cold War era, as did the rise of reactionary and politicized fundamentalist

Christian and Islamic movements that also opposed economic globalization and secular “modernization” models that emanated from the global North.<sup>13</sup>

As the Clinton Administration took office in 1993, it defined what it believed was necessary to achieve its foreign policy goals and to promote U.S. national security. Recognizing that the international arena had changed considerably since the bi-polar Cold War era, the administration focused its attention on global threats and challenges that jeopardized international security and by extension threatened U.S. national security. These threats and challenges included North/South competition for economic resources, international wars, civil conflicts, terrorism and other violent acts that displaced populations and abused human rights, preservation and protection of the environment and burgeoning global population growth. To deal with the new post-Cold War global conditions, the Clinton Administration State Department created a new bureau: the Office of Global Affairs led by Undersecretary of State Timothy Wirth.<sup>14</sup>

As attention to global issues redirected U.S. State Department activities, another historical development was underway simultaneously. A rising number of global organizations working outside formal government institutions—the nongovernmental organizations or NGOs who viewed themselves as representatives of “civil society”<sup>15</sup>—were engaged in global politics at the United Nations and in other global governance forums. During the 1990s, NGOs provided structure and defined leadership for a variety of global social movements across the political spectrum whose members shared a conscious group identity and a cause or a goal to challenge some aspect of the status quo “politics as usual.” In general, NGOs enabled and mobilized the global social movements, collected funding and other resources and made demands on governments and intergovernmental institutions on behalf of movement members.<sup>16</sup> The NGOs that worked on behalf of the global human rights movement, global environmental movement and the global feminist movement also emphasized their linked and common goals.

In the 1990s, global feminist NGO activism that coalesced around a series of United Nations conferences that marked the end of the Cold War era is often cited as the driving force that elevated gender consciousness among governments worldwide and stimulated the creation of a variety of national women’s policy offices to address social, political and economic inequalities between women and men, as well as an array of women’s human rights issues.<sup>17</sup> In terms of global gender policy making, the most significant of the 1990s UN conferences were the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the 1993

Human Rights Conference (HRC), the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the 1995 World Summit on Social Development (WSSD), the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women and the 2000 Special Session of the UN General Assembly called to address “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century,” or, as it was better known, the “Beijing + 5” conference. Global feminist NGOs actively lobbied U.S. government delegations to these UN conferences to incorporate their perspectives and used these forums to influence U.S. foreign policies that had a specific gendered impact on global women throughout the decade. Global feminist NGOs often invoked “women” as an untapped human resource whose productive and reconstructive potential was far from realized. They also identified “women” as key players in addressing global problems because of women’s supposed peace-loving and nurturing natures and their attention to building civil societies.<sup>18</sup> Over time, the Clinton Administration accepted the feminists’ assertions and came to believe that achieving U.S. national and global security goals required enlisting “the full participation of women in the political and economic lives of their countries.”<sup>19</sup>

The Center for Global Women’s Leadership, Equality Now, Human Rights Watch Women’s Rights Division, the International Women’s Health Coalition, the International Women’s Tribune Centre and the Women’s Environment and Development Organization, to name a few influential NGOs whose activism is highlighted in this study, focused the Clinton Administration’s attention on global gender policies to assert and defend women’s economic, educational, environmental, human, political and reproductive rights. These organizations represented global constituencies and realized they could not look to individual national governments to achieve global reforms; nonetheless, they were based in the United States and American feminists figured prominently among their leadership.<sup>20</sup> Although these feminist organizations worked through global arenas such as UN conferences and forums, they also collaborated productively with liberal feminists positioned inside the Clinton Administration, most visibly with First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright but also with many others whose efforts are examined in the chapters ahead.

Together, liberal feminist insiders and NGO outsiders convinced President Clinton and sympathetic U.S. government officials that making progress toward achieving global feminist goals was possible and desirable. They made strategic linkages that persuaded the White House, State Department and USAID to incorporate women’s human rights and gender equality goals into foreign policies and programs promoting U.S. national and global security interests. In order to redirect and utilize state



power to incorporate global women's needs and interests, and to address the global problems of violence against women and women's universally unequal political and economic status, these "feminist issues" were connected to post-Cold War U.S. security goals: to promote the growth of democratic governments and civil societies and to develop the global capitalist economy as the Cold War ended. Consequently, because feminist insiders and outsiders made these strategic connections, U.S. government foreign policy and foreign aid officers began to address global women's rights and women's empowerment in their rhetoric, policies and programs to a much greater degree than they had in the past.

### **Clinton Administration Global Gender Policy: A Synopsis**

In substantial ways, the Clinton Administration transformed its foreign policy and foreign aid rhetoric and programs based on feminist women's rights and women's empowerment prescriptions. Beginning in January 1993 when the administration took office, President Clinton reversed U.S. policy that the Ronald Reagan Administration established at the 1984 UN World Conference on Population. With an executive order, Clinton lifted restrictions that prohibited some family planning organizations from receiving U.S. government funding because of abortion-related activities.<sup>21</sup> At the UN Human Rights Conference held in June 1993, the United States delegation supported several policies promoted by U.S. and global feminist women's human rights advocates and signed the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. In the aftermath of the HRC, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs John Shattuck announced to Congress: "The Clinton Administration regards promoting the cause of women's rights as a key element of our overall human rights policy."<sup>22</sup> U.S. embassies abroad were instructed to include accounting of the state of women's human rights and to note any abuses of women's human rights that had occurred in their annual country reports.<sup>23</sup> Also following the HRC, feminist activists lobbied the U.S. Congress and the Clinton State Department to add appropriations for "women's human rights protection" to the Fiscal Year 1994 foreign aid bill.<sup>24</sup> The adoption of these provisions led to a significant institutional change at the State Department: the creation of the Office of International Women's Issues (OIWI) in 1994. These emphases on women's human rights, and on human rights generally, during the conflict-ridden decade of the 1990s also led to the Clinton Administration's support for punishing perpetrators of rape during genocidal wars that took place in the Balkans and in Africa and at International War Crimes Tribunals established in 1995 and 1996.

In November 1993, the administration announced that USAID would refocus its efforts on “enhancing ‘sustainable development’ and ‘promoting peace’ rather than supporting individual nations” as it had during the Cold War and would include nongovernmental organizations in USAID policy making and program planning processes.<sup>25</sup> The U.S. delegation to the 1994 UN International Conference on Population and Development exhibited strong leadership endorsing women’s health and reproductive rights outlined in the conference document,<sup>26</sup> earning the praise of feminists who joined in the conference preparations and served on the U.S. delegation<sup>27</sup> as well as the U.S. Religious Right’s and the Vatican’s condemnation.<sup>28</sup> At the 1995 UN World Summit on Social Development, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton announced the U.S. government’s support for microcredit initiatives that funded many small businesses started by poor women in developing nations<sup>29</sup> and new foreign aid resources dedicated to education programs for women and girls in developing nations.<sup>30</sup> Vice President Al Gore also announced the USAID’s “New Partnerships Initiative,” whereby 40 percent of the U.S. annual foreign aid allocation of \$10 billion would be distributed through NGOs with the goals to empower NGOs and small business people and increase democracy in countries at the local levels, with special considerations for directing aid to women.<sup>31</sup>

Prompted and assisted by feminist activists and NGOs, the State Department and the U.S. delegation to the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women also continued to express strong support for women’s human rights and for reproductive rights that had been incorporated into the HRC and ICPD conference documents, but that were under attack from fundamentalist religious organizations and predominantly Catholic and Muslim nations.<sup>32</sup> Hillary Clinton delivered a famous address to world governments and NGO delegates at the Beijing conference in which she popularized the feminist slogan that “human rights are women’s rights, and women’s rights are human rights.”<sup>33</sup> Her speech and repetition of this slogan by feminists working inside and outside government transformed government policy language, and women’s human rights issues gained more prominence in the United States and throughout the UN system. Feminist NGOs strongly supported the Australian government’s resolution that the Beijing conference be a “Conference of Commitments” that identified concrete government actions and established monitoring mechanisms to address women’s rights and empowerment issues,<sup>34</sup> and the Clinton Administration took this charge seriously. The administration identified seven commitments at the Beijing conference to promote working women’s economic issues and work and family life balance among U.S. employers, to expand

awareness regarding the problem of violence against women, to lobby the U.S. Senate to ratify the Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to promote microenterprise funding abroad and women-owned businesses domestically as avenues to women's economic security, to promote women's health programs and research at home and abroad through USAID and to promote global women's democratic political participation and legal rights and to fund education programs for women and girls through USAID.<sup>35</sup> In order to carry through on its Commitments to Women the administration created the President's Interagency Council on Women (PICW) in August 1995, made up of high-level administration leaders who promoted various government initiatives in their cabinet agencies in consultation with feminist NGOs.<sup>36</sup> Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala served as the PICW's first chair from 1995 to 1996; Secretary of State Madeleine Albright chaired the PICW from 1997 to 2000; First Lady Hillary Clinton served as PICW honorary chair from 1995 to 2000.<sup>37</sup>

J. Brian Atwood, the Clinton-appointed administrator of the US Agency for International Development, also directed new resources to the Women in Development office (WID) established in 1974 at USAID and initiated the practice of "gender mainstreaming" in USAID operations in 1996.<sup>38</sup> That is, USAID made "women's concerns integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs" in order to promote gender equality.<sup>39</sup> Following the takeover of Afghanistan by the Islamist Taliban regime in 1996, the U.S. government advocated non-recognition of the Taliban government among the international community to protest, in part, the Taliban's repression of Afghan women. Theresa Loar, who directed the State Department Office of International Women's Issues and who also directed the PICW, played a significant role in forwarding information on the Taliban's policy toward women from U.S. feminist organizations to Secretary of State Warren Christopher in 1996 and to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright after her appointment in January 1997.<sup>40</sup> With Secretary Albright's Senate confirmation, "advancing the status of women" became an even more pronounced U.S. foreign policy theme that further affected the Clinton Administration's global gender policy decisions.<sup>41</sup> Administration rhetoric focusing on women's empowerment also intensified. As Secretary Albright announced in honor of International Women's Day in March 1997 and repeated often, "Let me begin this morning with one very simple statement. Advancing the status of women is not only a moral imperative; it is being actively integrated into the foreign policy of the United States. It is our mission. It is the right thing to do, and, frankly, it is the smart thing to do."<sup>42</sup>

In July 1997, the Office of International Women's Issues coordinated with the Office of the First Lady at the White House, the U.S. Embassy in Austria and USAID to establish the "Vital Voices: Women in Democracy" conference. An original conference program facilitating networks of U.S. and Western and Eastern European women leaders took place in Vienna and became a model for subsequent Vital Voices conferences held in Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Iceland, Trinidad, Turkey and Nigeria from 1998 through 2000. In the State Department's institutional history, the Vital Voices initiative was recognized as one of the "most innovative" of the Clinton Administration's efforts to promote women's leadership and democratic participation worldwide.<sup>43</sup>

The Office of International Women's Issues also led interagency efforts to establish the U.S. government's anti-trafficking "prevention, protection, and prosecution" policy and programs that were announced in President Clinton's March 1998 Directive on Steps to Combat Violence Against Women and Trafficking in Women and Girls.<sup>44</sup> The OIWI coordinated efforts of the State Department bureaus of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, Consular Affairs, Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Diplomatic Security and Population, Refugees and Migration, along with the Department of Justice. These offices collaborated with the U.S. Congress to draft the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and to propose a Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children as a supplement to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime that the UN Millennium Assembly adopted in November 2000.<sup>45</sup>

At the Special Session of the UN General Assembly, "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century," held in New York City in June 2000, U.S. delegation co-chairs Madeleine Albright and Donna Shalala signaled the Clinton Administration's continuing commitments to global women by signing UN documents condemning global violence against women, encouraging participation of women in peace building and conflict resolution efforts, advancing women's status and role in civil society and combating the global HIV/AIDS epidemic and recognizing its gendered impact on women's health.<sup>46</sup> Secretary Albright addressed the UN Special Session and focused on the "fairness" of government support for women's equality. Secretary Shalala recounted the significant increases in U.S. government funding for women's health research, women's reproductive health initiatives that included global family planning programs and global efforts to combat HIV/AIDS since the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women.<sup>47</sup> In a popular address where she was interrupted repeatedly

by applause, Hillary Clinton asserted continued administration support for microcredit initiatives and other measures to promote women's equality at a symposium arranged by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).<sup>48</sup>

## **Methodology**

In order to make the historical argument that the Clinton presidency marked a watershed era in terms of its demonstrated awareness of global women's disadvantaged status, recognition of liberal feminist prescriptions to address global women's immediate and strategic needs and incorporation of those feminist prescriptions into U.S. foreign policy and foreign aid program design and outcome goals, this study begins with a survey of how American women have historically sought to influence U.S. foreign policy and an examination of the extent to which liberal feminist ideas have shaped U.S. foreign policy since the 1970s. Due to some early feminist interventions, the State Department, USAID and the executive branch of federal government began to pay attention to global women in regard to U.S. foreign policy in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, during the Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush Administrations. Analysis of these earlier presidential administrations provides historical context and locates the origins of specific global gender policies adopted by the Clinton Administration, which is the main focus of this study.

This contemporary history traces the origins of social and political concerns in the pre-formative stages of policy making and identifies the state and non-state actors, specific historical circumstances and particular feminist frames that led to global gender policy decisions and shaped policy implementation and outcomes. This policy tracing process adapted from the discipline of political science<sup>49</sup> is achieved through archival research into the manuscript collections of feminist organizations, the records of the National Commission for the Observance of International Women's Year and the personal papers of feminist activists. A variety of digitized and published primary sources including contemporary publications by feminist activists and their organizations that analyzed public policy and public policy documents and statements produced by government officials, the State Department, USAID, cabinet agencies and the White House, also provide rich source materials to trace the origins and evolution of global gender policy rhetoric and program development and implementation.

Finally, this study draws on semi-structured informational interviews with government officials and feminist activists who worked with the

Clinton Administration in the 1990s. Appendix A includes a list of interview subjects and their relationships to the Clinton Administration and the general topics covered in phone or face-to-face interviews. Following an initial interview conducted with Theresa Loar, a career foreign service officer, director of the President's Interagency Council on Women and the second appointed senior coordinator for the Office of International Women's Issues, interview subjects identified and referred others. Subjects discussed freely their specific roles in global gender policy making and identified and analyzed what they each believed were key events or developments affecting global women's rights and status during the decade of the 1990s. Interviewees provided valuable information regarding perceptions of policy makers and activists who sought to influence Clinton Administration global gender policy. The information was recorded, transcribed and then used as the basis for further research into the documentary record to corroborate interviewees' perceptions or as entry points for new lines of inquiry.

These varied archival sources, the contemporary published record, government documents and scholarly analyses, as well as points of information and the more impressionistic perspectives culled from one-to-one interviews, all analyzed in relation to one another, allow for a more holistic understanding of the emergence, evolution and outcomes of U.S. global gender policy during the 1990s. Clinton Administration policy can then be judged in terms of its feminist impact and legacy. Moreover, the global feminist movement's record of gaining government acceptance for their definitions of global women's needs, and the strategies that feminist NGOs adopted to persuade government officials to implement the movement's prescriptions for global women's empowerment and advancement, can also be evaluated.

### **Historiography**

Until the late twentieth century, the perception that women's direct involvement in U.S. foreign policy offices or indirect influence on U.S. foreign policy making had been marginal prevailed among scholars and the general public.<sup>50</sup> Beginning in the 1980s, political scientists and historians who contributed to the growing academic field of women's studies challenged those views. Feminist international relations scholars and historians began to study the impact of ideas about masculinity and femininity on U.S. foreign policy and intergovernmental relations.<sup>51</sup> Also beginning in the 1980s, various historical recovery projects asserted American women's long-running interests in the nation's foreign policy and international relations and illuminated their roles as "lobbyists, critics

and insiders,” as one historian, Edward Crapol, categorized women’s modes of engagement.<sup>52</sup> Most often, women’s interest in foreign relations and attempts to influence government foreign policy makers were wielded from positions outside government, and numerous histories have documented the influence of women who worked with the peace movement,<sup>53</sup> or with national and international organizations<sup>54</sup> or as individuals advocating for or against particular U.S. foreign policies.<sup>55</sup> A few histories have also documented the lives and contributions of the relatively few women who held leadership positions in the State Department or who influenced foreign policy making from other positions inside government. Prior to the 1990s, exceptional women such as Eleanor Roosevelt,<sup>56</sup> Jeane Kirkpatrick<sup>57</sup> and Bella Abzug<sup>58</sup> stand out among the cohort of American women with recognized foreign policy credentials, although numerous other women with international experience and influence worked from lower-profile locations within the U.S. government, as well.<sup>59</sup>

Although this study’s focus on the influence of feminist ideas and the implementation of global feminist organizations’ agendas for women’s advancement through U.S. government foreign policy making offices in the 1990s is new, it builds on the work of political scientists such as Georgia Duerst-Lahti and Lee Ann Banaszak. These scholars traced interactions between feminist activists who worked outside the state and feminist women who held positions inside U.S. government and highlighted their joint influence on public policy that addressed feminist issues such as equal employment, educational equity and women in development and in establishing women’s policy agencies that furthered women’s movement goals, beginning in the 1960s and continuing into the 1990s.<sup>60</sup> Duerst-Lahti and Banaszak both assert that feminist women working from positions within government furthered the progress of the U.S. feminist movement and its women’s equality goals. Various politics and policy scholars sometimes refer to feminist insiders who practiced a form of “state feminism,” that is, “the advocacy of women’s movement demands inside the state,”<sup>61</sup> as “femocrats.”<sup>62</sup> As Duerst-Lahti, Banaszak and others have argued, feminist insiders provided critical assistance to the U.S. feminist movement. Insiders mobilized support for the feminist movement among the general population and provided legitimacy for movement goals. They gave movement activists access to government information and directed public funding to movement causes.<sup>63</sup>

To be sure, the positive contributions that U.S. femocrats have made to the feminist movement have been limited. Feminist insiders have had to defer to broader government policy agendas that could overlap in some situational contexts with the women’s movement agenda. Nonetheless,

these agendas differed from one another. Moreover, Banaszak makes the important points that the feminists who most often worked within government structures were elite, white, educated women who faced fewer obstacles blocking their entry into the halls of power than other groups of women and therefore, “the part of the women’s movement that intersects the state is not representative of the whole movement” in terms of its demographic composition.<sup>64</sup> Nor were feminist insiders representative of the range of feminist theoretical locations, as “most were drawn from the many variants of liberal feminism.”<sup>65</sup> Nonetheless, while some feminist theorists and activists question the fundamental concept of “state feminism” and whether the state can ever be employed to achieve feminist ends<sup>66</sup> because government institutions are inherently “gender-biased,” that is, “either patriarchal or driven by organizational masculinism,”<sup>67</sup> this study, like the works of Duerst-Lahti and Banaszak, asserts that feminist insiders have the potential to undermine patriarchal ideology and relationships within state structures and to further feminist aims. Moreover, this study also agrees with political scientists who argue that the state cannot be understood as a “monolithic patriarchal entity oppressing women,”<sup>68</sup> and that more research on specific government actions and their impact on women’s status is needed to assess whether those government policies and programs further or act against women’s interests and progress toward equality.<sup>69</sup> This study contributes to that project and provides historical documentation to analyze insider-outsider collaborations during the 1990s in order to assess the degree of progress made incorporating feminist movement aims into U.S. global gender policy.

### **Learning from Recent History**

There is a re-energized focus on global women’s rights and women’s empowerment receiving widespread media attention in the United States and internationally. For example, a popular book, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, published in October 2009, argued persuasively that empowering women in developing countries through education and employment and incorporating those women into public life to achieve gender equality is “the paramount moral challenge” of the twenty-first century.<sup>70</sup> In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly established a new office, “UN Women,” with the goal of promoting global gender equality and women’s empowerment more effectively by merging the work of four former UN offices devoted to women’s social and political advancement, academic research on women, advising the UN Secretariat



on women's issues and the UN Development Fund for Women. Michelle Bachelet, former president of Chile, leads the new office to accelerate progress towards achieving gender justice. In October 2011, the Nobel Peace Prize Committee awarded three women, Tawakkol Karman of Yemen and Ellen Sirleaf Johnson and Lyemah Gbowee of Liberia, with the prestigious international honor, commending the women's pro-peace and human rights' activism and signaling support for global women's empowerment. The prize citation read: "We cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in the world unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society."<sup>71</sup>

While this recent attention to women's rights and women's empowerment is presented as a new phenomenon,<sup>72</sup> the Clinton Administration's institutional transformations had already shifted U.S. foreign policy makers' focus onto these global gender issues. Therefore, it seems critically important to understand the historical lessons that can be drawn from the Clinton Administration's attempts to revise U.S. foreign policy to incorporate the rights and needs of women, as various global gender policy initiatives originating in the 1990s have been revived and strengthened by some of the key gender policy makers of the 1990s who are now back in power. The former first lady, Hillary Clinton, led the State Department as secretary of state for the Barak Obama Administration's first term in office (from 2009 to 2013). Hillary Clinton's former White House chief of staff, Melanne Verwee, directs the State Department Office of International Women's Issues, which the Obama Administration has re-named the Office of Global Women's Issues, at the elevated rank of U.S. ambassador. In addition to various U.S. foreign policy statements of support for women's rights and women's empowerment issued in President Obama's first term,<sup>73</sup> as he began his second term in January 2013 the president issued a "Memorandum on Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women and Girls Globally" that recognized that "countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity. When those rights and opportunities are denied, countries lag behind."<sup>74</sup>

These recent developments beg the question: has the Obama Administration's global gender policy incorporated lessons from the Clinton Administration's successes and its failures? This pressing question is certainly significant, and current policy initiatives should be analyzed in the context of the historical record. Moreover, global feminist movement activists can also assess and apply the historic lessons of working with and through U.S. government offices, as they did in the 1990s, to further feminist aims in the world today. This study begins the

assessment of the Clinton Administration's global gender policy making in order to open a critical feminist conversation focused on activist strategies that might be employed to impact public policy making and government operations in ways that promote feminist interests.

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<sup>1</sup>Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, International Women's Day, Dean Acheson Auditorium, The State Department, March 12, 1997.

<sup>2</sup>"Human Rights Day Event, Remarks by the President," December 10, 1996, The President's Interagency Council on Women Archives.

<sup>3</sup>Mayoux, "Gender Equity, Equality and Women's Empowerment."

<sup>4</sup>"1999 Update: America's Commitment: Federal Programs Benefiting Women and New Initiatives as Follow Up to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women." According to the Clinton Administration's self-reporting in 1999: "The Clinton Administration has appointed more women to senior positions in the Cabinet and Administration than any other U.S. President, expanding the number of Presidential judicial nominees and nominating the second woman to serve on the nation's highest court. As of April 1999, under the Clinton Administration women held 27 percent of the top positions requiring Senate confirmation, 34 percent of the presidential appointments to boards and commissions, 40 percent of non-career senior executive service positions, and 57 percent of schedule C or policy and supporting positions."

<sup>5</sup>Lovenduski, *Feminizing Politics*, p. 22. Arguments for women's equal representation in democratic states can be based on "justice," that is, because it is fair to all members of society to be represented; or on "pragmatism," because women's essential "difference" from men in regard to their world views and their gendered ways of operating in the world provides a value-added component to the governing policies and process and it makes sense to incorporate women's value.

<sup>6</sup>McBride and Mazur, *The Politics of State Feminism*, pp. 165-6.

<sup>7</sup>Lovenduski, *Feminizing Politics*, p. 179.

<sup>8</sup>Miller, "Feminisms and Transnationalism," in *Feminisms and Internationalism*, p. 225. "'Feminisms' ... is intended to deny the claim of feminism by any one group of feminists and to signify the multiplicity of ways in which those who share a feminist critique may come together to address issues. 'Feminisms' acknowledged that specific historical and cultural experiences will differently construct understandings of gender at different times and places. 'Feminisms' is meant to create a discursive space in a fraught arena. It is quintessentially historical, resisting homogenization, generalization, nostalgia."

<sup>9</sup>Beckwith, "Mapping Strategic Engagements," p. 314.

<sup>10</sup>'Mainstreaming' defined by Antrobus, *The Global Women's Movement*, p. 122.

<sup>11</sup>Ajinkya, "Intersecting Oppressions: Rethinking Women's Movements in the United States," in *Women's Movements in the Global Era*, pp. 420-1 and 425.

<sup>12</sup>Christopher, "Budget Priorities for Shaping a New Foreign Policy."

<sup>13</sup>Cohen and Rai, eds., *Global Social Movements*, pp. 7-10.

<sup>14</sup>History of the Department of State during the Clinton Presidency.

<sup>15</sup>Ottaway and Carothers, "Toward Civil Society Realism," in Ottaway and Carothers, eds. *Funding Virtue*, p. 294.

<sup>16</sup>On the distinctions between social movements and nongovernmental organizations, see Stienstra, "Of Roots, Leave, and Trees: Gender, Social Movements and Global Governance" in Mayer and Prügl, eds. *Gender Politics in Global Governance*, pp. 263-4.

<sup>17</sup>Scholars note the significant impact of feminist activism at the United Nations conferences of the 1990s in shaping national government responses to feminist aims. For example: Antrobus, *The Global Women's Movement*; Martha Alter Chen, "Engendering World Conferences: the International Women's Movement and the UN," in *NGOs, the UN, and Global Governance*; Jane Connors, "NGOs and the Human Rights of Women at the United Nations," in *'The Conscience of the World,' the Influence of Non-governmental Organizations in the UN System*; Friedman, "Gendering the Agenda"; Meyer and Prügl, eds. *Gender Politics in Global Governance*; Moghadam, *Globalizing Women*; Jan Jindy Pettman, "Global Politics and Transnational Feminisms" in *Feminist Politics, Activism & Vision*.

<sup>18</sup>Douglas, "Eastern European, US Women Meet," 17; Tolchin, "Women as Policy Makers"; USAID, "The Participation Forum, Topic: Participation and Gender," November 17, 1994, KT, box 7.

<sup>19</sup>History of the Department of State during the Clinton Presidency.

<sup>20</sup>Stienstra, "Making Global Connections among Women, 1970-99," in Cohen and Rai, eds. *Global Social Movements*, p. 80.

<sup>21</sup>William Jefferson Clinton, "Family Planning Grants."

<sup>22</sup>Shattuck, "Violations of Women's Human Rights."

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Foreign Relations Authorization Act, 1994, Section 137 "Women's Human Rights Protection."

<sup>25</sup>Goshko and Lippman, "Foreign Aid Shift by Clinton."

<sup>26</sup>Wirth, "U.S. Statement on Population and Development."

<sup>27</sup>"US Gears Up for UN Conferences," *WEDO News & Views*; Higer, "International Women's Activism and the Cairo Conference" in Meyer and Prügl, eds. *Gender Politics in Global Governance*, 137.

<sup>28</sup>Danguilan, *Women in Brackets*, pp. 85-94.

<sup>29</sup>Hillary Rodham Clinton, "Remarks at special event to the World Summit for Social Development."

<sup>30</sup>Hillary Rodham Clinton, "Announcement of U.S. Initiative to Expand Girls' and Women's Education in the Developing World."

<sup>31</sup>Gore, "Remarks at UN World Summit for Social Development," and "Fact Sheet: The New Partnerships Initiative--Strengthening Grass-roots Political and Economic Institutions."

<sup>32</sup>"The UN Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace," *On the Road to Beijing* (April 1994), IWTC, Acc. #95S-69, box 11. The Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of State convened 10 official preparatory meetings across the nation with nongovernmental organizations, and the government produced a national report on the status of U.S. women based on information from government agencies and NGOs. See also: Sharon Kotok, Global Conference Secretariat, U.S. Department of State, "Development of the Platform for Action," *On the Road to Beijing* (October 1994), CWGL, IV World Conference on Women, Beijing, China 1995, box 1; Gracia Hillman, Senior Coordinator OIWI, "Report on Donor's Meeting The Ford Foundation/ Women and Philanthropy, on UN Fourth

World Conference on Women,” February 15, 1995, KT, box 7; Friedman, “Gendering the Agenda,” p. 324.

<sup>33</sup>Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Remarks to the United Nations Fourth World Conference in Women.”

<sup>34</sup>Bella Abzug, “Moving to the door of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *The Earth Times* (March 31-April 4, 1995), KT, box 6.

<sup>35</sup>“Follow-up on U.S. Commitments Made at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, September 4-15, 1995,” The President’s Interagency Council on Women Archives.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup>“The President’s Interagency Council on Women,” Women’s Health.Gov, A Project of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<sup>38</sup>“USAID initiatives relating to Women and Gender 1990s: Statement by J. Brian Atwood, Administrator for US Agency for International Development, Gender Plan of Action.”

<sup>39</sup>Mayoux, “Gender Equity, Equality and Women’s Empowerment.”

<sup>40</sup>Loar, The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project.

<sup>41</sup>Albright, “Advancing the Status of Women in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”; Gedda, “Albright Champions Women’s Rights”; Lippman, *Madeleine Albright and the New American Diplomacy*, pp. 285-90, 299-310.

<sup>42</sup>Albright and Clinton, “Remarks at special program in honor of International Women’s Day.”

<sup>43</sup>History of the Department of State during the Clinton Presidency.

<sup>44</sup>President William J. Clinton, “Memorandum on Steps to Combat Violence Against Women and Trafficking in Women and Girls,” March 11, 1998, The President’s Interagency Council on Women Archives.

<sup>45</sup>History of the Department of State during the Clinton Presidency.

<sup>46</sup>“Highlights from Women 2000: Beijing Plus Five June 2000 UN Meeting, June 5-9, 2000.”

<sup>47</sup>Shalala, “Building a Women’s Health Agenda that is Woman-Centered.”

<sup>48</sup>Singh, “Hillary Clinton Issues Call.”

<sup>49</sup>Mazur, *Theorizing Feminist Policy*, p. 33.

<sup>50</sup>For example, Joan Hoff Wilson wrote in 1987: “Most simply stated, women have played and continue to play, insignificant roles in determining U.S. diplomacy because they were (and are) not present in top policy-making circles.” Hoff Wilson, “Conclusion: Of Mice and Men” in Crapol, ed. *Women and Foreign Policy*, p. 174.

<sup>51</sup>For example, Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases*; Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*; Hoganson, *Fighting For Manhood*; Peterson, *Gendered States*; Zalewski and Parpart, *The Man Question in International Relations*.

<sup>52</sup>Crapol, ed. *Women and Foreign Policy*.

<sup>53</sup>For example, Alonso, *Peace as a Woman’s Issue*; Lynch, *Beyond Appeasement*; Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace*; Wilson, “Peace is a Woman’s Job: Jeanette Rankin’s Foreign Policy.”

<sup>54</sup>For example, Fraser, *The UN Decade for Women*; Garner, *Shaping a Global Women’s Agenda*; Laville, *Cold War Women*; Rupp, *Worlds of Women*; Snyder, “The Influence of Transnational Peace Groups on US Foreign Policy Decision-Makers During the 1930s.”

<sup>55</sup>For example, Garner, *Precious Fire*; Holzer and Holzer, *Aid and Comfort: Jane Fonda in North Vietnam*; MacKinnon and MacKinnon, *Agnes Smedley*; Strong, *I Change Worlds*; Van Vorhis, *Carrie Chapman Catt*.

<sup>56</sup>Black, *Courage in a Dangerous World*; Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*.

<sup>57</sup>Harrison, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Diplomat; Krasno, Interview with Jeane Kirkpatrick; Judith Ewell, "Barely in the Inner Circle: Jeane Kirkpatrick," in Crapol, ed. *Women and Foreign Policy*.

<sup>58</sup>Levine and Thom, *Bella Abzug*.

<sup>59</sup>For example, Calkin, *Women in the Department of State*; Crapol, ed. *Women and Foreign Policy*; Glen and Sarkees, *Women in Foreign Policy: The Insiders*; Jeffreys-Jones, *Changing Differences: Women and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy*.

<sup>60</sup>Duerst-Lahti, "The Government's Role in Building the Women's Movement; Banaszak, *The Women's Movement Inside and Outside the State*.

<sup>61</sup>Lovenduski, *State Feminism and Political Representation*, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup>Hernes, *Welfare State and Woman Power*; Mazur, *Theorizing Feminist Policy*, p. 27-8.

<sup>63</sup>Duerst-Lahti, "The Government's Role in Building the Women's Movement," pp. 250, 253, 255; McBride and Mazur, *The Politics of State Feminism*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>64</sup>Banaszak, p. 4.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>66</sup>Mazur, *Theorizing Feminist Policy*, 8. "For many feminist theorists, the state is highly problematic given that they see it as a product of systems of power based on male dominance or 'patriarchy.' From the assumption of the patriarchal nature of the state, whereby state actions, structures and actors seek to perpetuate the systems of gender domination that keep women in their inferior positions in the public and private spheres, many feminist analysts dismiss or are highly critical of the state as an arena for positive social change."

<sup>67</sup>Joni Lovenduski quoted in MacBride and Mazur, *The Politics of State Feminism*, p. 218.

<sup>68</sup>Mazur, *Theorizing Feminist Policy*, p. 9.

<sup>69</sup>McBride and Mazur, *The Politics of State Feminism*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>70</sup>Kristof and WuDunn, *Half the Sky*, p. xvii.

<sup>71</sup>Kasinof and Worth, "Among 3 Women Awarded Nobel Prize, a Nod to the Arab Spring."

<sup>72</sup>See themed issue, "Saving the World's Women," *New York Times Magazine*.

<sup>73</sup>See for example: Solis, "Remarks at International Women's Day Luncheon"; Obama, "Speech, Cairo University, June 4, 2009." The Obama Administration once again publicly asserts "women's empowerment" is a "central pillar" of U.S. foreign policy. In a speech President Obama delivered in Cairo, Egypt in 2009 to address contentious issues that divided the West and the "Muslim world," "women's rights" was specifically named. In his speech, the President publicly committed U.S. support for global women's and girls' education and economic rights and opportunities.

<sup>74</sup>Hillary Rodham Clinton, "Presidential Memorandum on Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women and Girls Globally."