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**U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright & Europe Women's Growing Role in Foreign Policy: Madeleine Albright’s Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy in Europe and on Women in Foreign Policy.**

**U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright & Europe [[1]](#endnote-1)**

Madeleine Albright was the first woman to hold the important post of Secretary of State in the U.S. The position had long been a male dominated posting, not only in the U.S. but also in most nations around the world. She came into office after having served as the U.S. Ambassador to the UN during the first Balkan wars, and at a time of increasing tensions between the United States and the Europe. As a refugee from Europe with fluency in several European languages, a diplomatic family background and experience in UN diplomacy, she was considered to be particularly well qualified for the State Department position. As Secretary of State from 1997 to 2001, she worked with a changing NATO and the Bosnian crisis as the EU and Europe faced difficult times. The paper explores how Secretary Albright’s expertise on Europe influenced her positions and interactions on U.S. foreign policy in Europe. What special insights into European affairs was she able to contribute to US/EU/Europe relations, and did she have any lasting effect on how U.S./EU/Europe policies changed during her era as U.S. Secretary of State? Did she face obstacles as a woman or as a representative of the US that may have diminished her impact on foreign policy orientations?

When Madeleine Albright became the first U.S. Secretary of State in 1997, it seemed as if women might finally be able to breech the remaining barriers they faced in their quest to achieve higher positions in foreign policy. She herself stated, “After 63 male Secretaries of State, I have been determined to make a difference.”[[2]](#endnote-2) Many speculated that once a few women gained top-level, foreign policy positions, and at least reasonably acquitted themselves in office, it would be easier for other women to follow their career paths, even though foreign policy leadership has been a hard field for women to crack. This case study is a part of a larger study of women in foreign policy and the barriers they face in gaining parity in the upper levels of foreign policy making. It looks at the career of Madeleine Albright and her capacity to influence American foreign policy toward Europe and toward women, while she was US Ambassador to the United Nations, and also the first U.S. female Secretary of State. Because she was a path-setter, and highest-ranking American woman in politics up to that time, researchers have analyzed her and her policy-making style in order to identify ways in which more women could achieve higher political offices and thus have greater influence on foreign policy decisions. Tracking the careers of women who have been “Firsts” and have made notable contributions is an important contribution to the field because it makes women and gender issues more visible.

Since her tenure as U.S. Secretary of State (1997-2001), two other women have held the same position. However, despite three successful women Secretaries of State[[3]](#endnote-3), other realities and statistics demonstrate that American women still face considerable obstacles to reaching the top ranks of diplomacy and foreign policy making. Albright’s career in office demonstrates the complexity of factors facing studies of women leaders in foreign policy. Despite acquitting herself admirably while in public office, Albright also managed to navigate the mostly male environment fairly successfully.[[4]](#endnote-4) Yet, the field of foreign policy remains largely in the hands of men. Whether this lack of parity in the field is due to women’s political leadership style, their personal or gender characteristics or backgrounds, conditions of beliefs existing in the countries where they serve – for example a foreign policy based on hardline, realist policies, or an uneven playing ground, where rules are different for men and women - these are important questions to consider. Using Albright’s career as an example of female leadership, this study questions whether she was an exception who was able to successfully adapt to a male-dominated, realist diplomatic foreign service or whether she was someone able to change the playing field so that it would be more accepting of female leadership in the future?

**Literature Review**

The literature of this study as well as the theories are attempts to bridge and combine three disparate literatures – gender studies, historical diplomatic studies and foreign policy political research. There are a few different types of research, as well as several relevant paths for conducting research into the significance of Albright’s impact on U.S. foreign policy and/or on women going into foreign policy leadership positions. There are also women and gender studies’ researchers who study women’s different leadership styles, and whether their styles are conducive to making foreign policy decisions.[[5]](#endnote-5)

Biographical and psychological studies and gender studies are also important avenues of research. As more women enter into political leadership and especially into positions where they can influence both domestic and foreign policy decisions, it becomes increasingly important to understand what qualities and personalities women need to succeed, and to ask if gender might also play a role in the types of policy decisions women would be likely to take, or in the strategies they utilize in achieving their political positions or in making their decisions? Studying the biographies of women, such as Albright, Jeanne Kirkpatrick and other female “firsts” in foreign policy and how they managed as they worked in institutions controlled by men, yields both historical and psychological information about gender issues, feminism and personalities in how women gain entry into foreign policy making, and about the challenges they encounter in a field still dominated by men.[[6]](#endnote-6) Until Albright’s appointment as both the U.S. Ambassador to the UN and later as Secretary of State, there were very few women participating in foreign policy leadership positions [[7]](#endnote-7) despite a growing number of women working in the field and also holding leadership positions in other areas. This situation and Albright’s acknowledged leap forward for women have made re-examining her biography and leadership style important topics for feminist research.

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.[[8]](#endnote-8) 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.”[[9]](#endnote-9)

The study of foreign policy and women in foreign policy and in leadership in the United States has developed through various stages[[10]](#endnote-10). At first, women were seen as too sentimental, deliberative and pacifist and, thus, not as capable as men of taking the tough, decisive positions needed for political leadership.[[11]](#endnote-11) Lasher states that’ “while the evidence is ambiguous, there has certainly been much speculation that women might bring a less aggressive approach to the foreign policy process.”[[12]](#endnote-12) Recent studies[[13]](#endnote-13) now show that women rank very high on many qualities people view as important for leadership – higher than men on most every leadership indicator. Another study ranking the *World’s Greatest Leaders*, indicated that women exemplify a new model of leadership because they do as well - or better - than men when it comes to influencing far-ranging groups over which they have no direct authority, and when, at the same time, the groups have individual power and ability to communicate with others.[[14]](#endnote-14) It appears now that women are better at showing empathy[[15]](#endnote-15) and are more cooperative and collaborative and also value reciprocal relationships more than men, and these characteristics are more needed in foreign policy making today than ever before. Despite these more positive indicators, including a growth of Women’s organizations designed to promote women in leadership positions in foreign policy - such as Women in International Security (WIIS); other groups - the Council on Foreign Relations and the Harvard Business Review - conducted surveys that indicated the majority of leaders are still men (64%)[[16]](#endnote-16) and that women are underrepresented in foreign policy and national security positions in government, academia and think tanks.[[17]](#endnote-17) To be sure, women are gaining influence in foreign policy positions and their numbers have increased in all areas of the Foreign Service. In the late 1990s, women held 22% of Ambassadorships,[[18]](#endnote-18) and by 2016, under President Obama, this number had grown to 31.6% - yet that increase showed that 68% of U.S. Ambassadors were still men.[[19]](#endnote-19) In fact, overall, only 9% of U.S. Ambassadors have been women, and many of these women have served in countries that are “less central to U.S. foreign policy”.[[20]](#endnote-20)

Albright’s term as Secretary of State ended in 2001 when President Clinton left office and George W. Bush became President. She was Secretary of State when the Kosovo crisis occurred and during the implementation of the Dayton Accords. To better understand her actions in foreign policy decisions, we must examine her life as a foreign policy diplomat. We can carry out this aspect of the study - by researching historical and political documents, historians’ accounts, biographies and also her autobiography.[[21]](#endnote-21) Often perceptions about the role of Secretary of State have evolved based on external factors such as whether or not various crises, or economic upturns or downturns have occurred. However, it is also necessary to examine the history of foreign policy, including internal factors such as leadership and personality and compare Albright’s leadership to the styles of men who held the same (or similar) foreign policy positions – and then compare the effectiveness of these different styles to the complexity of making high-level decisions. There have been studies about the influence of gender and foreign policy in the Clinton Administration that chronicle and assess Albright’s foreign policy approaches.[[22]](#endnote-22) It was during the Clinton Administration that the gender gap in women’s participation in government began to narrow. President Clinton actively campaigned on gender equality issues, took more notice of women as an important voter group and promoted women to higher level of government jobs once in office. Research has also been done on foreign policy leadership and has examined decisions from both historical and psychological perspectives and questioned whether women are having an effect on foreign policy decisions, and if so what kinds of effects? Some researchers have credited policy changes – in Europe and on women’s issues in particular - to Albright whereas others have attributed the change in foreign policy direction to a change in the political climate and the growing influence of women in government. One large analysis, which compared transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles of men and women found that women tended to be more transformational than men, but men displayed more transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. Nevertheless, all three of these leadership styles have produced effective leaders.[[23]](#endnote-23)

**Theories: Realism vs. Constructivism and Feminist Theories**

There are also several theories about foreign policy making that might shed light on Albright’s foreign policy career. It is important to understand the policy-making and diplomatic style of Albright, and to put it in some theoretical perspective. “A country's foreign policy, also called foreign relations or foreign affairs -policy, consists of self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve goals within its international relations milieu. The approaches are strategically employed to interact with other countries.”[[24]](#endnote-24) How different were her policies from those of her male predecessors? Did Secretary Albright display a female style of policy-making that was different from a man’s style, one that might be well suited to foreign policy? Did she promote certain policies that differed in any significant ways from the policies of her predecessors? What sort of a role model did she establish for the two women who followed her? Finally, did she influence specific policies with regard to Europe, the EU or NATO that differed from foreign policy makers that either preceded or succeeded her in office or that differed from the policy ideas of President Clinton? Was she the main instigator behind the foreign policy of the Kosovo war – sometimes called “Madeleine’s War”[[25]](#endnote-25) – and bringing NATO into the equation - or was President Clinton? A major issue for consideration here is whether Albright’s influence on foreign policy and on the women leaders who followed her, was because of her unique personality and personal history or did she succeed in transforming the playing field for future women by altering the nature of foreign policy making?

There are several different ways to analyze foreign policy making to explain the development of certain policies. The dominant international relations theory is the realist approach, which takes hard line or hawkish policy stands and whose adherents are more prepared to commit troops when threatened by outside forces. It assumes that power is the primary reasoning for political action, whether in the domestic or international arena. Realist theories insist that states will act rationally and in their own best interests. They view alliances as “arrangements between states based on shared interests,”[[26]](#endnote-26) or as Hans Morgenthau said as matters of expediency or need.[[27]](#endnote-27) President Reagan, Nixon and Secretary Kissinger were realists by this definition. Realist theorists perceive the foreign policy field as constructed with a masculine perspective that expects states to act forcefully to counter any aggression from other states. In the past, women have not conformed well in this context and have been trying to broaden the playing field to include more feminist issues. Men, historically and traditionally, tend to understand foreign policy from a realist and rational perspective and are interested in foreign policy at the macro level, whereas women are expected to be more involved with human rights and the micro level of foreign policy and they often recognize that states, like people, might not act rationally. Realism, as an international politics theory does not prohibit women, but its policy expectations appear to be a factor in hindering women’s ability to reach top-levels of foreign policy leadership. Studies and experience show that women can act rationally, and, like men, are making a difference in foreign policy as long as they take forceful policy positions and understand its masculine orientation and act accordingly.[[28]](#endnote-28) What does Albright’s career offer to the theoretical dilemma posed by realist theories indicating - despite relative success in office, and making tough, realist policies, the field of foreign policy leadership has yielded limited success for women? As UN Ambassador Albright “proved an aggressive advocate of U.S. interests. At home, she showed a talent for explaining complex foreign policy to ordinary Americans.”[[29]](#endnote-29)

Constructivist theories,[[30]](#endnote-30) from which feminist theories derive[[31]](#endnote-31), view foreign policy making from a different perspective. In the field of international relations, constructivism offers a major attempt to understand why states act the way they do, with the understanding that they may not always act rationally. Constructivists claim that significant aspects of international relations are historically and socially constructed and depend on the historical time periods and societies in which they exist, rather than being inevitable consequences of a rational human nature, which will act in its own best interests. Constructivists and feminists do not think that states always act rationally but rather may act according to traditions, such as anti-feminism, which may not be rational or even in the best interests of the country or of other essentials of world politics. States may not always act rationally, and policy makers must be able to act within the context of history and the confines of existing conditions, including those situations, which preclude rationality. Women’s policy positions may often appear more pacifist and sentimental. In office, Albright advocated for women’s issues - at the time seen as “soft issues”- but she was able to elevate them to “hard policy” concerns and to get public opinion to view women’s issues as important for the well-being and security of the state. Many of the recent women in leadership in foreign policy around the world (Albright, Rice, Ashton, Clinton, Thatcher) have worked effectively within the realist perspective, but at the same time, they have helped to construct and enlarge the playing field to accommodate more “feminist” foreign policy perspectives. “It has been said of Albright that she “managed to balance her femininity with a ‘macho’ style.”[[32]](#endnote-32) Feminist theorists and constructivists blame the limited success of women in foreign policy leadership to an uneven and masculine-oriented playing field and a restricted foreign policy agenda. Albright herself often said that “proving it could be done” was one of the hardest tasks she faced as the first female Secretary of State.

**Albright’s Personal Story and Influences: Biography and Career**

We study Madeleine Albright to try to understand, and perhaps re-evaluate her legacy. There were several studies and books on foreign policy leaders and leadership styles and on Albright in the early 2000s right after she left office. Many of these articles looked especially on her leadership qualities and her uniqueness, but seemed to indicate that she was successful in office because she was tough and decisive, qualities usually – earlier - attributed to men. Historically, behaviors associated with good leadership have been considered masculine traits.[[33]](#endnote-33) Since her tenure in office (1997-2001), more studies on gender and women in foreign policy[[34]](#endnote-34) have indicated that “women are every bit as capable of being good political leaders as men.”[[35]](#endnote-35) In fact the study finds that Americans think women are very similar to men on important leadership traits like intelligence and capacity for innovation, and they found women better in terms of compassion and organization.[[36]](#endnote-36) So why are so few women in leadership positions in foreign policy when there have been good examples of women’s ability to lead starting with Secretary Albright? With fifteen years of research on this issue since Albright’s tenure in office, it is again important to look at her leadership qualities to see if we can identify new insights, now that several years have passed, which might shed light on her policies, and which may help more women as they enter foreign policy careers. Analyzing Albright’s life story and her experience as U.S. Ambassador to the UN and as Secretary of State should yield important insights as to how foreign policy is made and how women leaders contribute to this field. Albright’s experiences in office from - 1992-2001 - and her policy making style studied from both the realist view of international politics and from a feminist perspective shed light on the obstacles women face in this field as well as on the possibilities for future policy development if women can gain a larger of leadership positions.

As a pre WWII European refugee from Czechoslovakia and the daughter of a well- respected Czechoslovak diplomat from the era of the country’s democratic government, Albright was raised valuing diplomacy and freedom and recognizing the importance of using foreign policy to forge good relations with other countries and to promote democratic values. She twice fled Europe with her family, first before WWII and the second time to escape the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948. She was a welcomed refugee in the U.S. and attended school there, including the prestigious Wellesley College in Massachusetts, where she gained some long-lasting and supportive friends, later the basis of her “old girls’ network, which grew to include women in political office such as Barbara Milulski and Geraldine Ferraro. Because of her positive experiences of being welcomed in the U.S., she was, by all accounts,[[37]](#endnote-37) very patriotic, and her devotion to American values of democracy and protection of human rights became hallmarks of her foreign policy throughout her career. She went on after college, having gained much experience in political and community volunteer work and fundraising, advising Senator Muskie and Geraldine Ferraro on foreign policy, to earn a PhD in International Relations from Columbia under the tutelage of the well-known Polish-born political scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski. Brzezinski was an International Relations and Russian/Soviet politics professor, a “hawk”, who later became a Presidential advisor, and who viewed international politics and foreign policy making from a realist and hardline perspective. Albright later worked with him when he served as President Carter’s National Security Adviser.

Thus, before becoming UN Ambassador, Albright had extensive service in foreign affairs and in political campaigns, in fund raising and in targeting women’s issues. Her “circuitous path to politics was typical of her time and remains common for women today”, says Susan Carroll, senior scholar at the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University. She also taught at Georgetown University and headed the Women in Foreign Service program. She had volunteered on several democratic Presidential campaigns such as for Senator Muskie and Michael Dukakis, through whom she met Bill Clinton, and later advised both Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro on their foreign policy platforms when they ran for President and vice-President respectively. Albright’s divorce from Joseph Medill Patterson Albright, in 1983 toughened her and made her more aware of women’s vulnerability. During most of this time and up to her appointment by President Clinton in 1993 as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Sec. Albright advocated a liberal foreign policy and spoke against some of the hawkish and aggressive policies of President Reagan, especially the Iran-Contra affair and was also against the Gulf War. “She never missed a chance to tweak Reagan and his team for their unreasonable muscularity.”[[38]](#endnote-38)

To be successful, women have to be respected by men around the world and be able to stand up to them and hold their own in tough situations while representing the US. They also have to have opportunities for gaining leadership positions and a clear path to leadership. There was some opposition to Clinton’s nomination of Albright to Secretary of State, with several advisers using her gender as a reason not to appoint her as well as questioning her ability to handle mostly male foreign leaders.[[39]](#endnote-39) Until Ronald Reagan appointed Jeanne Kirkpatrick as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations in 1981, no women had served in the top, government appointed leadership positions. Starting in the 1970s, a growing number of laws to promote women’s access to equal facilities and training in foreign policy and lawsuits charging discrimination on the job or in training have passed that protect women in schools (Title IX) and in the workplace, including the State Department.[[40]](#endnote-40) The Obama Administration (2008-2016) made great strides, yet although women were 43% of the Senior Executive Service, they were only 31% of the Senior Foreign Service, despite the fact that 45% of entering Foreign Service Officers and 44% of State Department employees are women.[[41]](#endnote-41)

As Secretary of State, Albright voiced her foreign policy opinions forcefully, but diplomatically, and she carefully courted the press and made friends with members of Congress. While she pursued tough, hardline policies on military deployment, and security issues, as her own personal convictions and training had led her, she also discussed feminine issues concerning family and women’s issues with abuse and participation in development projects. **Albright was tough, but decidedly** feminine.[[42]](#endnote-42) She also gave frequent public talks to educate the public about the importance of foreign policy issues, and she was open and charming to the press and to the legislators with whom she would have to be able to formulate policies. It might be said that she actively worked to be an effective leader in a masculine, realist world while also trying to change the realist perspective of foreign policy making so that it would be more amenable to feminist perspectives and - more open for participation from women. Her views for 1998 were: “From the streets of Sarajevo to the Korean demilitarized zone to village squares in Africa to classrooms in Central America to boardrooms in central Europe and courtrooms at The Hague, the influence of American leadership is as deeply felt in the world today as it has ever been. That is not the result of some foreign policy theory; it is a reflection of American character.”[[43]](#endnote-43) Many people asked both during her tenure in office as well as afterwards, what accounted for her strong policy attitudes regarding Europe, as opposed to her advocacy of stronger peace efforts in other parts of the world? They also wondered what experiences in office or in her life had made her comfortable with realist policies in some regions but not in others, and how/if her policies differed from what a male Secretary of State would have done in similar situations?

**Albright, Europe and The Balkans, in Perspective**

Even before becoming Secretary of State, Albright had established herself as a defender of democracy and an enemy of Communism, and she forcefully pressed her views in UN discussions and other public forums. After becoming UN Ambassador, Albright took many hardline positions, with regard to Europe. During the Balkan Wars, and especially the Kosovo war, she become very hawkish in the policies she advocated. “She had a well-publicized tussle over Bosnia with Colin Powell, **then** chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during which she asked, "What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about if we can't use it?"[[44]](#endnote-44) In 1998, as Secretary of State, Albright outlined her fast and upcoming foreign policy agenda at the Center for National Policy in Washington D.C., “In Europe, NATO invited new members and prepared for new missions, while forging historic partnerships with Russia and Ukraine. In Bosnia, we reinvigorated efforts to fulfill the Dayton accords so that the hard-earned peace will last, and the investment and sacrifices we have made will not have been in vain.” These are strong and tough policies. Madeleine Albright had fled Europe two times as a child, and her father had taken a hardline as a diplomat, when it came to standing up to dictators, so Madeleine, who greatly admired her father and his policy views did not want any kind of appeasement policy in Europe under her watch. The following statement she made to outline her policy agenda for 1998 presents both sides of her approach to foreign policy making - the hardline against authoritarianism and the softer line in defense of human rights and democracy, “As the elements of a new Bosnia come together, the evidence is growing that if we persevere, peace will be sustained. But if we were to leave now, as some urge, the confidence we are building would erode, the fragile institutions of democracy would become embattled, the purveyors of hate would be emboldened, and a return to war and possible renewed genocide would be likely.”[[45]](#endnote-45) She strongly advocated supporting and strengthening the Dayton Accords and advocated for a renewed and growing NATO to defend and help integrate Europe.

Many experts saw the conflict in Kosovo, between the Serbs and the Albanians in 1998-1999, as the type of international and European conflict that fit into Secretary Albright’s personal world view developed from her own experience of fleeing European oppressive governments. She believed that the US and its allies had to stop Serbia from attacking Kosovo immediately as it would have implications for the whole region.[[46]](#endnote-46) She urged NATO to begin thinking about a bombing campaign. [[47]](#endnote-47)It was a conflict she understood, and one she felt must be faced head on with force and determination, characteristics previously associated with a foreign policy based on realism, and pre-supposing a masculine orientation. “The Kosovo conflict is often referred to, by both her fans and foes, as Madeleine's War.”[[48]](#endnote-48) Albright wanted a stable Europe and saw that policy as a vital U.S. interest.[[49]](#endnote-49) She also followed a policy of supporting women’s and refugee rights during her tenure as Secretary of State and viewed opposition to ethnic cleansing as a central part of American values. “ -- because of the world-view bred into her bones and seared into her heart growing up, she believes that America's interests cannot be easily separated from its values.”[[50]](#endnote-50) Kosovo and Albania are pro- American Muslin states. “The Albanians of Kosovo have expressed undiluted appreciation for the actions of the Clinton administration, represented by then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and former General Wesley Clark as Supreme Allied Commander for Europe at NATO”, that saved them from Serbian repression. “Thus arose the Albright Doctrine that has held sway since her ascension to Secretary of State: a tough-talking, semimuscular interventionism that believes in using force--including limited force such as calibrated air power, if nothing heartier is possible--to back up a mix of strategic and moral objectives.”[[51]](#endnote-51) She stated at the time, "We are reaffirming NATO's core purpose as a defender of democracy, stability and human decency on European soil."[[52]](#endnote-52)

Even after she left office and up through 2016, Albright has not totally discontinued her involvement with Eastern Europe. She strongly supports democracy in the region and around the world and pushes for market economies through work teaching international politics at Georgetown University, heading the National Democratic Institute, and giving speeches all around the world, including at places such as the Aspen Institute. In many talks around the US, and including a fall 2015 event in Des Moines, Iowa in preparation for the Iowa Caucuses, she championed the Presidential candidacy of Hillary Clinton as another path-finding woman capable of acting in a “man’s world” and making tough decisions, but also as a person who would expand the field of foreign policy making to include more diverse issues and help open this field of leadership to more women. Albright has continued to work on projects in Eastern Europe, some involving foreign policy education efforts and others on economic development and democracy promotion. Some of her policies are controversial. In 2012, Albright and others began new efforts at involvement in Kosovo that left local people concerned about the intentions of their benefactors, including Albright and her associates. In *The New York Times* on December 12, 2012, Matthew Brunwasser wrote under a page-one headline, "That Crush at Kosovo's Business Door? The Return of U.S. Heroes." The *Times* account described Albright and James W. Pardew, a special envoy sent to the Balkans by President Bill Clinton, offering competing bids for privatization of the Kosovo state postal and telecommunications agency, known as PTK (from its Albanian and Serbian initials).”[[53]](#endnote-53)”

The paper contends that many of these aspects of Albright’s personal history, her European background and escape from both fascist and communist regimes, her limited involvement with the anti-militarism of Vietnam sentiments, and her positive experience as a refugee in the US, determined the tactics and policies she followed while she served as Secretary of State.[[54]](#endnote-54) In office, and contrary to what many expected a woman in a foreign policy position to do, Albright often advocated for realist programs and policies, especially in dealing with NATO, Europe and fascist, nationalist leaders in the Yugoslav region, dispelling ideas that women could not take tough positions against international leaders. Many witnessed the toughness of Albright, as America’s first female Secretary of State and her influence on policy decisions. As foreign policy leader during the Clinton years, she had a say on many foreign policy issues especially concerning Europe, which experienced enormous change during her years in office. Some of these policies included – U.S. and European relations, the Balkan Wars and Treaties, Bosnian affairs, promoting The Dayton Accords, revamping and revitalizing NATO, catching war criminals from Serbia and Croatia and bringing them before international tribunals for war crimes, sharing resources and spreading democracy and free trade issues, among others. She was always a forceful voice, speaking in favor of democracy, freedom and human rights and backing up her rhetoric with action. Europeans listened to her because she had come, with her family, from Czechoslovakia fleeing Europe before WWII. Her father was a diplomat for the democratic government of Czechoslovakia before the Nazis took over, and she had grown up admiring him and watching diplomacy being made from an early age.

Despite many women serving in Congress and in the Foreign Service, until Albright became Secretary of State in 1997, the United States had not entrusted a senior foreign policy job, outside of the United Nations, to a woman. There were several myths that Jeffreys-Jones had earlier identified as holding women back such as: the "Iron Lady"--too masculine; the "lover of peace" - too "pink"; the weak or the promiscuous. These are to name only a few.[[55]](#endnote-55) Other researchers had also demonstrated a “gender gap in foreign policy attitudes” in the 1990s.[[56]](#endnote-56) Madeleine was able to overcome many stereotypes and operate in a “man’s world” and often used what was considered “realist” international policy effectively, especially pushing Europe and NATO policies as vital to American security policy. At the same time, she began policies – later continued by Hillary Clinton while she was Secretary of State - that had longer term visions and included women’s issues – trafficking, abuse, health – as key points of her foreign policy agenda.

**Human Rights, Women’s Issues and other Continuing Policy and Future Impact**

“Lessons learned from various sources—commercial negotiations; psychology experiments; and studies of Congress, other democracies, and international relations—are remarkably consistent. They show that when polarization and negotiation myopia pose major problems, deliberative negotiation is a good solution. In deliberative negotiation, the parties share information, link issues, and engage in joint problem-solving. Only in that way can they discover and create possibilities of which they had no idea before beginning the process. Only in that way can they use their collective intelligence constructively, for the good of citizens of both parties and for the country.”[[57]](#endnote-57) Albright utilized these techniques of deliberative negotiation, which she developed during her tenure as UN Ambassador, in dealing with foreign diplomats and in her dealings with Congress and the Senate,[[58]](#endnote-58) but she also used realist tactics and could be a tough negotiator.

Albright still has some economic connections in Eastern Europe, with which she is currently involved, notably in Kosovo, but no longer as a US Government official. She is operating as a U.S. citizen who runs several private groups - Albright Capital Management and Albright Stonebridge Group, a global strategy firm. Her experience as U.S. Secretary of State has given her both the skills and the “clout” to deal at high levels in international organizations. “General Wesley Clark, chairman of Envidity, a Canadian firm interested in Kosovo's coal mines and potential for synthetic fuel production, has also gone to Kosovo in search of financial advantage. But Albright's involvement has given her the highest profile in the discussion of Kosovo's economic future. According to the *Times*, "Albright Capital Management, founded by Ms. Albright, has been shortlisted in the bidding for a 75 % share in… PTK." The *Times* estimates the probable payout to Kosovo political leaders for PTK, if a deal is consummated, at "between $400 million and $800 million.".[[59]](#endnote-59) So Albright’s name still carries some power and influence, but some of these deals have not been well accepted, and she has faced considerable criticism for her recent hardline positions in the Europe arena. In addition to founding the Albright Stonebridge Group and the Madeleine Korbel Albright Institute for Global Affairs at Wellesley; she has served on the board of the Council on Foreign Relations, as chair of the NATO Strategic Concept Expert Group and as chair of the National Democratic Institute, and has written five books.

**Conclusions**

Despite these appropriate leadership traits and her ability to function effectively in a male dominated arena and including a successful career at the UN and as the first female Secretary of State, Albright’s legacy has not led to parity in the field of foreign policy leadership.

Sometimes the influence of Madeleine Albright seems to be dimming as time passes. In 2017, although we have had two more female Secretaries of State and two female Attorney Generals, women have not achieved even near parity in the top levels of U.S. government and, in early 2017, women no longer even hold positions as Secretary of State or Attorney General. Some have noted that although the U.S. has had three female Secretaries of State, the U.S. has never has a female Secretary of Defense, and that perhaps the position of Secretary of State has become feminized. “Kevin Lasher states: “When Madeleine Albright took over, it was a really big deal. Now it’s not such a big deal. Secretary of state is almost becoming a woman’s position.”[[60]](#endnote-60) Studies have shown that women are making big strides heading NGOs, businesses and as social reformers, but they lag behind men as government officials and in holding political power.[[61]](#endnote-61) It was not until the 1990s – and after 2 court cases - that discrimination against women in the State Department was acknowledged and changes were made. In 1985, 80% of the Foreign Service “Professional staff (including FSOs and Foreign Service Specialists) was male, and 72.5% was white male. Among the minorities, 5.2% were African American, 3.4% Hispanic, and 0.7% Asian American.  Twenty years later, in 2005, the male/female ratio was 66/34, and white males constituted 54% of the total.[[62]](#endnote-62)  In 2012, women still made up less than 30% of senior positions across U.S. foreign policy making institutions.[[63]](#endnote-63) “There’s still a long way to go to achieve equal representation. Putting a woman in charge “hasn’t statistically” altered the gender disparity in the State Department”, says Micah Zenko. a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, “Overall,” he says, women make up “less than a fifth—and at most, a quarter” of policy-related positions in Washington, DC.”[[64]](#endnote-64) There remains a proportional underrepresentation of women in U.S. foreign policy and national security leadership positions. What then is the relevance of Albright on U.S. society and on women in the field of foreign policy if her example as an accomplished foreign policy leader, has not generated the expected increase of women’s influence on foreign policy decision-making? Madeleine fought for women’s voices to be heard, acknowledging that they bring different and needed perspectives to the table. In her European policies she showed that she could be as tough and realist as men, yet could also be feminine and delve more deeply into the different perspectives of problems and relationships. With her expertise in foreign affairs, she showed that women could perform under fire and take tough decisions. Despite some failures – not responding to the Rwanda crisis fast enough - Albright was able to demonstrate her competence throughout her tenure at the UN and as Secretary of State. Her biggest successes were in Europe, where her knowledge was also the greatest.

Albright has a significant place in American history. Her accomplishments are even more remarkable when you consider that at the time President Clinton nominated her in 1997, fewer than half the seats in the Congress and Senate were filed by women, there had never been (and still has not been) a female Vice President or President of the U.S., or Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, so her position as Secretary of State was one of the highest positions women had reached in the U.S. at that time.[[65]](#endnote-65) In the late 1990s, there were also very few women in other countries who held such high positions with the ability to influence foreign policy. Albright took her jobs as UN Ambassador and US Secretary of State very seriously and appeared to have recognized the significance to be the one of the few American women to reach such positions of foreign policy making power. She faced “a Congress controlled by the opposition and an unruly world where the rules of the Cold War no longer applied,”[[66]](#endnote-66) yet she remained tough and maintained one of highest profiles of any Cabinet official in the Clinton Administration.

By all accounts, she played on her femininity, and especially the fact she was a mother and grandmother, and she had success in promoting international women’s issues and in getting these concerns to be recognized as part of U.S. foreign policy. Albright also had considerable speaking skills and took it as her responsibility to educate the American public about foreign policy in general and then about making specific foreign policies. One can certainly see from this story that women are capable of acting effectively and authoritatively in a male environment, but it is less clear whether they have changed the playing field enough to enable more women to successfully enter the foreign policy making debate. Lippman, a reporter from the *Washington Post* remains skeptical about the lasting effect of Albright’s foreign policy legacy: he “does not believe that Albright's post-WWII view of international politics as a struggle between good (the U.S.) and evil (the U.S.'s opponents) could have remained influential in a more complex world for an extended period of time.”[[67]](#endnote-67) Albright’s case demonstrates that exceptional women, with certain skill sets, which may include exposure to the field, personal characteristics such as toughness, a particular type of education and also a personal history connected with foreign policy or international experience have been able to surmount obstacles and work successfully in a male-dominated field. We have also seen, however, that the success of these women does not guarantee that women will gain parity in foreign policy making any time soon. The successes of “exceptional” women do not, necessarily promote the case that more women should be involved in foreign policy making.

This case study is a part of a larger unit, which will contain valuable information about many more women who are leaders in foreign policy. This study of Madeleine Albright is only a beginning but hopefully will add some content and insight into women as foreign policy leaders. Perhaps, it was Albright’s personal characteristics and fit for the job as an ambassador that led to her success, in which case, her achievements will be harder to replicate, and give us less ability to predict if more women will follow in her footsteps. However, it could be that when this case story is combined with other studies of women in foreign policy, some patterns emerge or some comparisons become apparent, and there is a theoretical fit between Albright’s personal story and the events that occurred during her tenure as UN Ambassador and U.S. Secretary of State that shed new light on foreign policy making or add to her continuing influence on US foreign policy and women in foreign policy studies.

1. This paper is part of a larger study of women in foreign policy leadership roles and their affect on their country’s foreign policy making. One of the first ways researchers can make gender visible in foreign policy is by spotlighting the presence and contributions of the many women who have shaped American foreign policy. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Remarks at the White House Project Forum, September 2000. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Madeleine Albright (1997-2001); Condoleezza Rice (2004-09) and Hillary Clinton (2008-2014) [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Many accounts of her tenure in office have indicated she was generally successful while in office despite some setbacks (in the Middle East). See: Madeleine Albright, *Madeleine Albright: Madam Secretary, A Memoir*, New York: Harper Collins, 2003; Kevin J. Lasher, “The Impact of Gender on Foreign-Policy Making: Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice”, paper delivered at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 1 - September 4, 2005. Copyright by the American Political Science Association; and at least one of her biographers; Thomas Blood, *Madam Secretary: A Biography of Madeleine Albright*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1999. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Cheryl de la Rey, “Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity,” *Women and Leadership*, No. 65, 2005, pp. 4-11. See also earlier studies that focused on sameness versus difference, including the empirical studies on leadership styles conducted by Alice H. Eagly in 1990. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Kevin J. Lasher, “The Impact of Gender on Foreign-Policy Making”, American Political Science Association. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Albright, “Advancing the Status of Women in the 21st Century”; Gedda, “Albright Champions Women’s Rights”; Lippman, Madeleine Albright and the New American Diplomacy, pp. 285-90, 299-310. From Karen Garner, *Gender and Foreign Policy in the Clinton Administration*, Bolder, CO. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Albright and Clinton, “Remarks at special program in honor of International Women's Day.” [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. This overall project of “Women in Foreign Policy” (Federiga Bindi) consists of case studies of various women from around the world who have impacted foreign policy in their countries or on the international stage. The information from all the studies will be combined to see if there are any similarities or theoretical trends that might guide understanding of the field. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Early literature on Women in Politics and Women in Foreign Policy include Jane Jaquette, Cynthia Enloe, Angela Davis, Meredith Sarkees and many more. See also Nancy McGlen and Meredith Sarkees, The Status of Women in Foreign Policy, Ithaca, N.Y. Foreign Policy Association. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Lasher, p. 44. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. PEW Case Study, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Geoff Colvin, March 27, 2015 [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Madeleine Albright often stated that women were better at understanding the perspectives of others. TED Talk, 2010. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman, “Are Women Better Leaders Than Men?” *Harvard Business Review,* March 15, 2012. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Isobel Coleman, Senior Fellow and Director of the Civil Society, Markets and Democracy Initiative; Director of the Women and Foreign Policy Program at the Council on Foreign Relations. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Nanette Levinson and Pauline Baker, Leading By Example: US Women Leaders in International Affairs, The Women’s Foreign Policy Group report, 1998. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. “What Role do Women Play in The Foreign Service?” *Discovery Diplomacy* *Diplopundit*, Office of the Historian, April 17, 2015. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Hani Zainulbhai, “Few American Women Have Broken the Glass Ceiling of Diplomacy,” Pew Research Center, July 22, 2016. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. One way to get information about her life is through her biography. See Madeleine Albright, biography, 2005. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Karen Garner, *Gender and Foreign Policy in the Clinton Administration*, First Forum Press, a division of Lynne Rienner, 2013. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Alice H. Eagly, Mary C. Johannesen-Schmidt and Marloes L. van Engen, “Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire Leadership Styles: A Meta-Analysis Comparing Women and Men,” Psychological Bulletin, Vol 129 (4), July 2003, pp. 569-591. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.4.569> [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Baker Spring, “Who Makes American Foreign Policy?” F.M. Kirby Research Fellow in National Security Policy, The Heritage Foundation, April 29, 2011. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Walter Isaacson, “Madeleine’s War, ” *Time*, May 9,1999. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Stanley R. Sloan, *Defense of the West*, Manchester U.K.: Manchester University Press, 2016, p. 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1060, p.181 [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. See the careers of Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Clinton to see women in public office taking hardline stands and working together with men in a male dominated field. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. “The Madeleine Effect,” *The Moment,* November-December, 2012; accessed Tuesday, May 2, 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. [Nicholas Onuf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_Onuf) is usually credited with coining the term "constructivism" to describe theories that stress the [socially constructed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_constructionism) character of international relations. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. “Gender’, for example, is a socially constructed term whereas “woman” has a biological derivation. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Kevin J. Lasher, “The Impact of Gender on Foreign-Policy Making”, p. 17. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Cheryl de la Rey, p. 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. There are now several women’s groups representing women in foreign policy or women in leadership in foreign policy, for example see Women in International Security (WIIS); and Women's Foreign Policy Group (WFPG, founded in 1990s), an “independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational membership organization that promotes global engagement and the leadership, visibility and participation of women in international affairs.” There is also the Women In Foreign Policy (wifp) group; The Council on Foreign Relations’ Women and Foreign Policy (WFP) program, which “works with leading scholars to bring the status of women firmly into the mainstream foreign policy debate and analyze how elevating the status of women and girls advances U.S. foreign policy objectives.” [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. “Women and Leadership”, Pew Research Center, January 14, 2015. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Pew Research Center, 2015. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Including her autobiography, Madeleine Albright, *Madeleine Albright: Madam Secretary, A Memoir*, New York: Harper Collins, 2003. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Nordlinger, pp. 41-45. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Thomas Blood, *Madam Secretary: A Biography of Madeleine Albright*; Lasher, p. 12, and Madeleine Albright (autobiography). [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Changing differences: Women and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy, 1917-1994*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1995. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. “What Role do Women Play in The Foreign Service?” 2015. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. “The Madeleine Effect” accessed May 2, 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Madeleine Albright, “A Year of Decision in American Foreign Policy Making”, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, 10517693, Jan/Feb. 1998, Vol. 9, Issue 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Nordlinger, pp. 41-45. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Madeleine Albright, “A Year of Decision in American Foreign Policy Making”, Jan/Feb. 1998. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Madeleine Albright, p. 384. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Albright, p. 386. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Walter Isaacson, “Madeleine’s War, ” *Time*, May 9,1999. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Madeleine Albright, *Madeleine Albright: Madam Secretary, A Memoir*, New York: Harper Collins, 2003, Chs. 23, 24, 25, pp. 38-431. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Isaacson,1999. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Isaacson, Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. As quoted in Isaacson’s *Time* article on “Madeleine’s War”. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. # [Stephen Suleyman Schwartz](https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/author/Stephen+Suleyman+Schwartz), “Privatizing Kosovo: The Madeleine Albright Way”, December 26, 2012 at <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/3516/kosovo-privatization,Madeleine> accessed 2017 Gatestone Institute.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. See Lasher and Albright accounts of her political influences. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Jeffreys-Jones, 1995. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Lise Togeby, “The Gender Gap in Foreign Policy Attitudes,” *Journal of Peace Research,* Nov 1994, Vol.31(4), pp.375-392. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Jane Mansbridge, and Cathi Jo Martin, “Negotiating Agreement in Politics”, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2013. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Her dealings with Jesse Helms in the Senate are a good example where diplomatic negotiations worked well and showed that Albright could cooperate with government officials with greatly differing opinions from her own and still get policy decisions. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Schwartz, 2012. “Officials of another Albright entity, Albright Stonebridge Group, have a minor share in PTK's only competitor, the private company IPKO, based in Slovenia. *Times* correspondent Brunwasser wrote that the situation could "threaten… market competition if Ms. Albright's consortium wins the bid" for PTK.” [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. “The Madeleine Effect” accessed May 2, 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Swanee Hunt, “Let Women Rule”, *Foreign Affairs*, 2006.

    Even after Secretary Albright had been out of office for five years (1997-2002) the Inter-Parliamentary Union found that women only held 17% of the

    seats in parliaments worldwide and 14% of the ministerial seats. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Ann Wright, “Breaking the Glass Ceiling,” Foreign Service Journal, October 2005. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Micah Zenko, “Why Are Women So Poorly Represented in Foreign Policy?” *The Atlantic*, March 11, 2012, and “City of Men,” Foreign Affairs, July 14, 2011, Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. “The Madeleine Effect” accessed May 2, 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Since her nomination, there have been two other female Secretaries of States in the U.S., Condoleezza Rice and Hilary Clinton, and there are more foreign ministers around the world now than when Albright became Secretary of State in 1997. Also, shortly after her nomination as Secretary of State, Pres. Clinton nominated Janet Reno as the first woman to the position of Attorney General. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Thomas Lippman, *Madeleine Albright and the New American Diplomacy*, Basic Books, March 2004. Thomas Lippman traveled with Albright to get her story as she struggled to convert her personal stature into foreign policy success. He saw her in action at the State Department, as she grappled with an entrenched bureaucracy to force attention to women's rights issues and put international crime and other new issues onto the foreign policy agenda. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. IBID. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)