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Book Review: The Hillary Doctrine

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Book review of: Hudson, Valerie M. and Patricia Leidl (2015) <u>The Hillary Doctrine: Sex and American Foreign Policy</u>, New York: Columbia University Press

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Despite the name and the picture on the book jacket, *The Hillary Doctrine: Sex and American Foreign Policy* is not about Hillary Clinton, as the authors make clear on page xiv. Rather, it is about what she said. And it needs to be noted that she was not alone in what she said; others have said similar things for several years. Why is she singled out here? Because she has been the most vocal and prominent person to say these things.

So, what did she say? In September 1995, in Beijing, she said, "Women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights." (7) I ask the readers, how many of you knew that quote? I confess that I did not, and I suspect that many readers did not. But the authors make this remarkable claim: "To this day, women and girls from Cape Town to Cambridge can quote Clinton's words verbatim." (An endnote says that the phrase actually was coined by the Filipina women's movement in the 1980s.)

In December 2010, speaking at the TEDWomen Conference in Washington, D.C., Hillary Clinton said (1), "Give women equal rights and entire nations are more stable and secure. Deny women equal rights and the instability of nations is almost certain. The subjugation of women is therefore a threat to the common security of our world and to the national security of our country." This statement, particularly the last sentence, is what is termed by authors Valerie Hudson and Patricia Leidl the "Hillary Doctrine". Again, others have said similar things, but because of her prominence, this statement gained much attention. Readers may find it surprising, shocking, even unbelievable. Some may disbelieve it just because *she* said it. Or some readers may doubt it because they do not see any sort of connection between the treatment of women and foreign policy, which historically has been handled by men. After all, foreign affairs often deal with wars, treaties, and such things; don't women just handle the affairs of the home?

Some readers may be concerned with the term "women's rights". These are often defined to include rights to

contraception and abortion. The latter are hardly mentioned in the book, possibly by design. Readers will need to decide for themselves what relation they have to the matters discussed here. Such questions are complicated and divisive, but they need to be considered without hysteria in terms of the overall situation. The convention CEDAW and resolution UNSCR 1325, products of the United Nations, are worth reading to see what the term "women's rights" means to many people. Not having read either one until reviewing this book, partly because CEDAW has been roundly condemned, I was surprised to see how much of it I could agree with. I suggest that interested readers do the same.

The authors of this book, Valerie M. Hudson and Patricia Leidl, claim that the Hillary Doctrine, as defined above, is indeed true and that it is a pronouncement of tremendous import that needs to be taken seriously. To justify it, they have put together a densely worded work of 430 pages, with acknowledgments to a number of groups and many women who were interviewed personally by the authors, some on location, some in dangerous circumstances, about their observations and experiences. There is a 32 page bibliography. The amount of research that went into the book is staggering. But despite the density of the writing and the seriousness of the topics discussed, the reader will find the book fairly easy reading. A fine index facilitates that reading.

The audience to whom the book is addressed, given the subtitle, might be considered to be government people such as members of the State Department, Department of Defense, and the US administration and Congress. In some ways, that might be correct; but as one reads, one gets a sense that everyone, the US general populace, and readers from around the world, should read the book (and others like it.) The importance of these matters for foreign policy is undeniable; but the importance for the human race is overwhelming. That concern is clearly manifest by the authors; much of what they say applies directly to foreign policy; but much has to do with the treatment of women around the world simply as people. (They are, after all, daughters of God.)

The bibliography and references are extensive, as noted above. For example, I list here a few important books, referenced or mentioned in the book, in chronological order by copyright date: Valerie M. Hudson and Andrea M. den Boer, *Bare Branches: The Security Implications of Asia's Surplus Male Population* (2004); Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* (2009); Ann Jones, *War Isn't Over Until It's Over: Women Speak Out From the Ruins of War* (2010), and Valerie M. Hudson, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett, *Sex and World Peace* (2012). Also referenced is the WomanStats Project (womanstats.org), which is a huge collection of data about women and their status around the world. It was gathered, classified, and studied by a large research group including thirteen principal investigators, around 20 graduate and undergraduate research assistants, and over 120 former student assistants (data taken from its homepage.) A link from the website leads to a collection of maps and infographs that indicate at a glance the world statistics on many questions concerning women. Other links lead to research papers and other matters.

Readers should be aware that *The Hillary Doctrine*, other books mentioned in the above paragraph, and the WomanStats project present material about the treatment of women that may be unbelievable, sobering, horrifying, and sickening. (Of course it is important, no matter how unpleasant such data is, to bring it to light, as Alma noted to his son Helaman (Alma 37:29); see also Moroni 9.) The WomanStats web page, for example, displays world maps on women's physical security, discrepancy in secondary education, child marriage, the prevalence of rape, and a map and an infograph on female genital mutilation. Other projects and sources of information are listed on pages 296-302. They include the Women Under Siege project; HarassMap, which addresses sexual harassment and violence in Egypt; Eyes on Darfur; Google Ideas on human trafficking in the US; an effort by UN peacekeepers to stop rape in the Congo; work being done in the McCain Institute for International Leadership; and the Data 2X Initiative, a project begun by Hillary Clinton herself.

Evidence for the Hillary Doctrine

Much information gathered by researchers on women, including that in the WomanStats project, is in the form of statistical data. One must of course, go further than just statistical data and correlations to find causes and mechanisms that verify the claims of the Hillary Doctrine. The authors note this very point (72). Recognizing this, they conducted research, including interviews with many women around the world as noted above,

especially in case studies in Guatemala, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan. Chapter 2, and other parts of the text as well, address the verification of the doctrine.

Hudson's research in the early years of the 21st century on sex ratios (discussed below) led her to beginning indications of the Hillary Doctrine. This in turn led her to start, with others, the WomanStats project. The authors note that other groups were exploring the same basic idea of the Hillary Doctrine (pages 70-73, which by the way have an interesting analogy to canaries and coal mines.) Some preliminary examples: 1) Conflict among Islamic peoples was correlated with sex ratios and the literacy gap between males and females. 2) Domestic gender equality was linked to higher levels of state conflict and insecurity, and states with higher gender equality were less likely to rely on military force to settle disputes. Those with *more* inequality are *more* likely to be aggressors and to use force first in international conflicts. 3) Research by Hudson and colleagues showed that the best predictor of a state's peacefulness is not democracy, wealth, or civilizational identity, but its level of violence against women.

Sex ratios in various countries, especially China and India, are investigated in this chapter. Due to cultural views in those countries that male children are preferred to female children, it is common for female fetuses to be aborted and female babies to be killed. This thus has produced abnormal sex ratios in the countries. In China the current ratio is (at least) 118 boy babies for every 100 girl babies, and in India the ratio is about 109 to 100 (74-75). Because of the large population of these two nations, those figures translate into a shortage of girls in many tens of millions, the so called "missing" women. Estimates are that at least 60 million girls are missing in India (2013 figure, page 76) and that over 100 million are missing in China (1990 figure, page xv, *Half the Sky*.)

What are the consequences of this? This means that unattached young men—"bare branches", to use a Chinese term—are in excess. Estimates for China range from 22 million to 50 million bare branches (80.) And what are the consequences of that? The unattached young men, likely from the lower classes of society, may engage in antisocial behavior, such as violence, including violence against women, substance abuse, and the formation of gangs. Research reported on page 81 indicates that for every 1% disparity in sex ratio, there is an increase of 3.7% in violent and property crimes in China. Bare branches may have been at least partly responsible for the Nien rebellion of 1851-1868. The abnormal sex ratio in turn leads to governmental tendency to become more autocratic and also to conscription of bare branches into the military and sending them to fight in other countries instead of dealing with them at home. Thus the internal problem, begun by the view of females as inferior, has evolved into an international problem. (Research from *Bare Branches*, summarized in pages 71-84 of the present book.)

I now give two examples of the impact of sexual violence in war on communities, presented by Janie Leatherman and Ann Jones and quoted on pages 22 and 85-87, respectively.

Regarding the Bosnian conflict of the 1990s: "The Serb military established rape camps where soldiers forcibly impregnated women of differing ethnic groups and religions. The aim was to shatter the cohesion of families and by extension the communities in which they lived by forcing them to bear the children of their worst enemies. There was—and is—no more effective tactic of war…than engaging in the mass sexual assault and torture of women and girls."

Regarding rape in war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: "...shaming or provoking enemy men is merely the beginning of a process meant to destroy the life of a whole community...Husbands cast out raped wives to fend for themselves...Or raped wives... conceal the fact of rape from their husbands... In either case, women are afraid to venture out to gather firewood...women begin to neglect their crops...[then] have no money. Girls are afraid to go to school; now boys drop out, too. Some men leave the village, shamed by a wife's rape. Some men leave to join a militia...Some men never come back... People weaken and grow ill... People begin to die of commonplace complaints...The rare husband who stands by his raped wife finds that his brother's family no longer visits him, nor his uncle's either. The durability of extended family ties...fade(s) and fracture(s)...In this way the community falls apart...the people who have not already been removed to serve the soldiers are cleared off, leaving an open field for armies to go about the real business of war, which is, of course, business..."

(As noted on page 23, in the 1990s rape in war was finally declared a war crime, not just an inevitable byproduct of war—fifty years after the silence at Nuremburg about the rapes perpetrated in World War II—not that has made a lot of difference.)

Following the Jones quote above and building on further remarks by her, Hudson and Leidl (87-90) go on to discuss some very fundamental realizations about women in the community. [The woman] "...makes temporal existence for herself...also nurtures men, children, other women, and the children placed in her care...If women are incapacitated or killed, the family and the community unravels just as surely as if a weaver had left her loom. And if the women leave, the men and the children will follow. One of the most effective tactics of war, therefore, is to explicitly target women." Furthermore, "...those 'in charge'—overwhelmingly men—are profoundly, and thus humiliatingly, dependent of those who are 'not in charge', that is, women. The powerful are not indispensable, but the powerless are...the most terrifying thought for any patriarchal society is a free woman..." (Italics added.) Finally, "...What our years of study and observation lead us to conclude, in agreement with the Hillary Doctrine, is that the character of relations between men and women in society is the originary template for all other relations within that society and between it and other societies." And further down the page, "...this means that the character of male-female relations determines to what degree a society will encourage injustice, coercion, and violence or justice, democracy, and the resolution of conflicts. The research cited earlier showing that the most powerful predictor of state peacefulness is not democracy or wealth or culture but rather the level of violence against women reflects this deeper reality."

The discussion culminates with a treatment of nationalism and its connection to male bonding, including examples of violence in relation to political movements, which will not be explored here. The point of these examples is to show how sexual violence and other oppression of or discrimination against women affects communities, nations, and even the international scene in profound ways, dramatically demonstrating the Hillary Doctrine.

Relation to LDS Teachings

Incorporated into that discussion, much of which is horrifying, is a remarkable and uplifting quote from Susan Moller Okin (91), similar to what Hudson and Leidl said above: "The family is the first, and arguably the most influential, school of moral development. It is the first environment in which we experience how persons treat each other, and in which we have the potential to learn how to be just or unjust..." That quote should resonate with LDS readers; there are similar quotes by the hundreds from our leaders. Let us begin with the next to the last sentence of the LDS Proclamation on the Family: "...we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets." Or the citation from Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B. C.), as given by <u>Professor Brent Barlow</u> at a BYU devotional in October 1999: "The first bond of society is marriage."

Or consider these quotes, chosen at random from many that could be found in LDS sources: "The safety, the perpetuity of our government, or of any republican form of government, depends upon the safety and permanency of the home." (October 1917) "The real source of security of our nation rests in the well-ordered, properly conducted homes." (1945). (These quotes are taken from *Gospel Ideals*, Selections from the Discourses of David O. McKay, Improvement Era, 1953, page 486.) "The family is the basic unit of the kingdom of God on earth. The Church can be no healthier than its families. No government can long endure without strong families." (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, Edward L. Kimball, ed., Bookcraft, 1982, pp. 331-332.) "Society's problems arise...almost without exception, out of the homes of the people." (*Discourses of President Gordon B. Hinckley, Vol. 2*, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2005, Intellectual Reserve, page 632, remarks delivered in September 2001.)

The quotes above from presidents of the Church and others of a similar nature treat a familiar subject, almost so familiar that our eyes may glaze over when we hear them: the fundamental importance of the family to society. But wake up, dear reader. Do they apply here? Yes, but we may not recognize that, for three reasons: they were given roughly before these international male-female problems became widely known, speeches by general

authorities generally have a positive bent and they usually don't talk about things like rape, and the Church is relatively new in places like Africa, where many of these matters are severe. (However, the Church has been in Guatemala a long time and society there is extremely troubled, as treated in Chapter 3.) The situations described in *The Hillary Doctrine* will not likely make their way into conference or similar talks. But it would be interesting to talk with LDS women leaders who visit some of these countries and who see such problems close up. (It might even be useful to provide these leaders with information from the WomanStats project before they make such visits.) I suspect the Church will be dealing with such matters more and more in the future, certainly in private if not in public.

LDS doctrine may be important in a different way. The traditional Christian view of Eve is that she brought evil into the world by partaking of the forbidden fruit. This view probably originated with early Church fathers and may have led to the opinion in Christianity that women are inferior to men. Thus it is possible that maltreatment of women in Christianity is related to this opinion. In contrast, the LDS view is that Eve was actually supposed to eat the forbidden fruit; she is seen positively, not negatively. Furthermore, men and women are basically equal. However, this cannot have led to views among Muslims or other world religions that women are inferior, because Eve, even if she exists in doctrines of those religions, is not necessarily responsible for evil.

Hillary's Record; Kerry and Obama; Afghanistan

Even though the book is not *about* Hillary Clinton, she is still featured prominently *in* it, precisely because she has been a stout advocate of women's rights, particularly while she was First Lady and later Secretary of State. Hudson and Leidl give many quotes from her, showing that she is the most vocal, about these rights, of any public figure today. It is true that there have been some doubts. Why was she silent much of the time about Saudi Arabia's repression of women? (There is an extensive discussion of possible reasons for that on pages 169-177.) Did she betray women in the Arab Spring uprisings, or throw Afghan women under the bus (pages 61-62)? In fact, can she be trusted? However, on balance, she has been extremely vocal in defense of women, and as noted, her position made her visible around the world. (Interestingly, the authors characterize her as a "foreign policy centrist" (49-50). On page 60 is a remark by a critic that she was bellicose and a "liberal interventionist," whatever that means.)

Barack Obama and Clinton's successor, John Kerry, have been tepid in defense of women's rights. Obama's predecessor, George W. Bush, and his wife Laura were quite forthright, as detailed in Chapter 1 (pages 31-47). Laura gave a speech expressing concern for women in Afghanistan (37-38.) and she and Hillary have worked together. The authors comment about how similar Hillary's views were to Laura's speech (49). The Bush administration did run hot and cold on women's matters; while George and Laura were quite consistently concerned with them, officials lower in the administration often did not seem to be on board (an example of the failure of the message to make its way from the president to lower echelons, as discussed in many places later in the book.) John Kerry, on the other hand, was silent for eight months after he became Secretary of State (267, 282) until Hillary and Laura, working together, persuaded him to say something about women. President Obama has been quiet for years about women's matters in Afghanistan since 2010, as pointed out in a scathing criticism by Ryan Crocker (264-266.) There has been considerable worry about the effects of his announced drawdown of US troops from Afghanistan (pages 232-233, 276-277, 326). For example, General David Petraeus, in March 2010, in response to a student's question, said that only "moderate" Taliban would be considered for government positions in Afghanistan after the US troops were gone (232.) (Oh really? And what, pray tell, is the definition of "moderate"?) However, Obama did recently announce (in the last few days, before this writing, and after publication of this book) that US troops would remain in Afghanistan until he leaves office, thus leaving a final decision about the Afghan war to his successor.

Afghanistan is characterized by Hudson and Leidl as a possible test case for the Hillary Doctrine, as discussed in Chapter 6 (though they withdraw that characterization on page 266 because of inaction by the Obama administration.) A little history is useful here. Well before the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, that nation had a constitution that guaranteed equal rights for women (pages 234-235.) (This is something of an irony, considering that the US Constitution does not have such a guarantee; the Equal Rights Amendment was in fact proposed in the 1980s, but was defeated for a number of reasons. This is not the place, however, to discuss that

bit of history.) The Afghan women were enfranchised and were a major part of Afghan society. In the Soviet invasion, the USA, fearing Soviet expansion, backed the mullahs of Afghanistan. This was another irony because the mullah government eventually gave rise to the Taliban, an extreme Islamic group with their own interpretation of the Quran, who were terribly oppressive of the Afghan women—though, interestingly, they opposed rape and imposed severe penalties for it (238.) After the USA invaded Afghanistan in 2001 after the Trade Towers destruction (another irony, by the way, since the terrorists in that destruction were largely from Saudi Arabia, though Osama bin Laden lived in Afghanistan), the Taliban were ousted and US control meant considerable liberation for Afghan women.

Hudson and Leidl note that even if US troops are eventually withdrawn from Afghanistan and the Taliban come back to power, the years of exposure to Western ways will surely be a benefit to the women (pages 242-244, 260-262.) There is thus some hope for the Afghan women by the war's continuation. In view of an eventual end for the war, the authors discuss positive steps that could be taken in their outline of a *jus ex bello* strategy on pages 304-308. The tone of the text here, however, is that it would be best if US troops stayed in Afghanistan indefinitely (a view that surely has its opponents among the American people; considerable persuasion would be needed to justify that decision, which could perhaps be supplied by appeal to the Hillary Doctrine.)

Implementation of the Hillary Doctrine

As noted from the dates above, more attention was drawn to the plight of women in the last part of the twentieth century and the early part of the twenty-first century than before. One can now regard the Hillary Doctrine as well established. The hope is that leaders will not drop the ball.

Hudson and Leidl state three considerations for successful implementation (183). In very simple terms, they are: what is done in Washington to improve women's situations, what is done to establish bridges between Washington and other countries, and what is done on site in the other countries. Progress has been made in the first step, not so much in the others. Even the first step has been spotty at times, as detailed above, in the George W. Bush and Obama administrations. But it is clear that pressure from the top can improve things further down. The last chapter in the book speaks of the importance of presidential will in prodding others to act, when it seems sometimes that the lower echelons are not paying attention and are not doing anything.

It is also necessary to get input from the people upward, as well as motivation from the president downward, especially if the leaders have indeed dropped the ball. The book notes the uselessness of just gathering numbers to seemingly fill goals; numbers and budgets are often manipulated just to satisfy one's superiors. They may not reflect the actual needs on site. Briefly, for the understanding provided by the Hillary Doctrine to be successful, all three steps must bear fruit.

What is needed, in particular, to improve women's situation around the world? One can make a substantial list, as the authors do. A few things stood out to me. One is to try to counter the cultural view of women as inferior. This is a monumental task. But inroads can be made, by teachings and encouragement. I do not want to use the word *pressure*; one hopes that people could abandon their old prejudices on their own. Of course, when religious views come into play, transition is even harder. US leaders can encourage leaders in other countries to teach their people. In some cases, sterner methods may be required, justified by US interests. That is a minefield, of course, as one can see from the continuing controversies and failures of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

There have been successes, to be sure. US interests should be as wise and as altruistic as possible; we really shot ourselves, and everyone else, in the foot by supporting repressive governments in Guatemala and by supporting the mullahs against the Soviets in the 1979 Soviet-Afghanistan war. The book has a chapter entitled, "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Implementing the Hillary Doctrine." In the section of that chapter, "The Ugly: Old White Guys" (219-224), are remarks about egregious behavior by Americans that are reminiscent of the book *The Ugly American*, by Eugene Burdick and William J. Lederer, which was first published in 1958 and is about arrogance, incompetence, and corruption of American diplomats in Southeast Asia. One hopes that we can get past that in our current dealings in other nations; a single example like that can undo worlds of good

(Alma 39:11).

There are many other ways of helping women. Several are mentioned in the book. A very important method is mentioned over and over: *invite women to meetings concerning themselves, the policies of their governments or other organizations, or give them a role in those governments or organizations, and then listen to their input.* This could take place in all types of meetings. A second important action is to take steps to *ensure the education of women and girls*. The Taliban and their ilk fear educated women. Private and public organizations could aid in this. Also, attempts can be made to eliminate sex slavery, child marriages, and a host of problems, as well as rape in wartime and after. A good guide is simply to look at the maps at WomanStats; each one addresses a concern about women. Several ideas are presented in the last chapter of the book, which is on the future of the Hillary Doctrine.

The authors conducted surveys of women in Guatemala, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan, as noted above and as detailed in Chapters 3, 4, and 6. Not to be outdone, I conducted my own little survey—of one woman. She is a nurse who served a mission in the 1970s in Ecuador. She also has been exposed to sexual violence; she has worked for many years at the Children's Justice Center in Provo, Utah. She just got back from a trip to Ecuador, forty years later, so I asked her about the status of women there. She said it was better than before. Women no longer have to walk ten paces behind their husbands. The young people have less prejudice than the elderly. Some things haven't changed; her guide spoke of his wife as property, "mi mujer", my woman. (Hmm. I speak of "my wife." Maybe we shouldn't go there.) There is still machismo among the men. If one studies the maps at WomanStats, one sees that Ecuador is actually one of the more progressive countries in the world; it is frequently better that other South American countries on women's matters, yet there are still some problems. So work needs to be done. Interestingly, however, the guide, who has investigated the Church but is not yet LDS, has an LDS son on a mission. Young LDS missionaries can influence people for good, including an understanding of the dignity and equality of women, among the people they visit. They may be the leaven the world needs.

It is obvious that the United States cannot do everything for women, around the world, on its own. The point is often made that we cannot by ourselves police the world. But, as noted above (and like the LDS missionary program), help can be obtained from local leaders who are sympathetic to women's rights. That can give a multiplier effect.

It is to be hoped that voters and government officials in the United States will choose wise people who will pursue this concern, which is after all extremely important not only for stability in the world but simply because it is right. Such wise choices are needed in the impending 2016 elections. Hillary Clinton seems to be the most obvious choice for president at the moment for foreign affairs, although of course her views on domestic matters must be considered (and not everyone is happy with her conduct of foreign matters, as the Benghazi case illustrates.) It is possible that, despite her record, she would drop the ball. One hopes that whoever is elected president will not be an isolationist; the United States needs to be involved, as much as possible and as wisely as possible, in the affairs of the countries of the world and to provide constructive leadership for them.

Limitations of the Hillary Doctrine

There are of course countless examples of destructive interactions among nations, such as war, in which all people, not just women, are treated terribly. Examples readily come to mind: the Rape/Massacre of Nanjing, in which men were killed and women raped, because the Chinese were regarded as an inferior race; the ISIS killings, where men and women have been killed for various reasons, seemingly just to demonstrate hatred of the West; American settlers' killings of Native Americans and vice versa, because one side viewed all members of the other side as enemies; the massacres of the Golden Horde; one can go on and on. The reasons for these date back to the beginning of the human race. We won't solve that huge overall problem until men and women learn love and not hatred.

(Even in those examples, however, the perpetrators are usually men. Nationalism is often a major player. An interesting remark by Hudson and Leidl may bear on this matter (103-104): "What...male-bonded groups do

not recognize until much later—if at all—is that if their leaders allow or encourage men to attack and degrade women with impunity, they will do the same to men. (Italics in the original.))

This book is just a beginning—a very impressive one, to be sure!—to the study of problems of sex and foreign policy, as noted by the authors (page xvi), and, I might add, to more general matters as mentioned here. It is a monumental achievement that should be read by everyone. I can summarize its importance in no better way than to close with two quotes from the book jacket: "...The Hillary Doctrine...is the first book about high-level efforts to create a foreign policy as *if women mattered*." (Gloria Steinem; italics in the original); "This book is required reading for policy makers and implementers as well as anyone concerned about where we are going as a nation and a world" (Ryan Crocker).



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