Aren't Only Girls Secretaries...?": Leadership Lessons From Women U.S. Secretaries of State

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“AREN’T ONLY GIRLS SECRETARIES…?”: LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM WOMEN U.S. SECRETARIES OF STATE

by

Lindsay Dimon Allen

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2024

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ABSTRACT

American political systems, predominantly steered by White males, often conform to masculine leadership paradigms derived from traditionally male-dominated domains like the U.S. government. Thus, it is vital to explore women’s roles in political leadership to foster a more comprehensive understanding of effective leadership.

The purpose of this study was to examine how women who have served as U.S. secretary of state exhibited leadership. Of the 71 people to have served as secretary of state, just three have been women: Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Rodham Clinton. Due to the complexity of gendered experiences, and the challenges of having direct contact with leading figures, I used biographical research as a means of data collection and a case study/cross-case analysis design paired with a constructivist grounded theory strategy as the method of inquiry.

Findings reveal Albright’s leadership is anchored in her Czech American heritage, unwavering optimism, and commitment to democracy. Her adept use of humor and direct communication facilitated diplomatic negotiations and fostered relationships on the global stage. Similarly, Rice’s leadership exemplified the complexities of leadership dynamics and the pursuit of personal empowerment within institutional structures. Her story served as a testament to the importance of fostering strong relationships, maintaining loyalty, and navigating power dynamics skillfully to wield influence effectively in high-level governance. Clinton’s leadership journey emphasized the impact of personal values and building connections on diplomatic engagement. Her implementation of smart power—combining traditional sources of power with innovative and inclusive methods—reshaped U.S. foreign policy, emphasizing the interconnectedness of various factors in addressing global challenges.
This study illuminated the role of identity in shaping leaders’ backgrounds, values, and objectives. It also emphasized their engagement with power, whether through personal authority, navigating established dynamics, or employing strategic approaches to achieve diplomatic goals. Moreover, the importance of nurturing meaningful relationships emerged as a common theme among the three leaders.

Practical implications for future leaders included prioritizing genuine relationships, strategic diplomacy, and adeptly navigating power dynamics within institutional structures. By examining these women’s leadership experiences, the study contributed to a more nuanced understanding of effective leadership beyond traditional masculine frameworks.
DEDICATION

To the remarkable women who have graced my life with their presence, strength, and unwavering support, this dissertation is dedicated to you.

To my mother, who ingrained in me the importance of questioning norms, fostering courage, resilience, and an unyielding resolve to carve out my unique journey.

To my daughter, who reminds me daily of the importance of nurturing, empowering, and cherishing the next generation of women.

To my girl friends, who have been constants through every stage of life, offering endless amounts of laughter and cherished memories. I am endlessly grateful for your love and companionship.

To the trailblazing women I studied, whose resilience and tenacity paved the way for progress and whose legacies continue to inspire future generations.

And to every woman whose presence has enriched my life. May this dedication serve as an acknowledgment of the profound impact you have had on my journey.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people to thank, but I will start by extending my deepest gratitude to my ever-supportive parents, Andy and Denise. Your belief in my potential and tireless encouragement has been a constant source of strength through every setback and milestone of my academic journey. Dad, you have given me so much love and support throughout my life. Your humor, intelligence, and compassion inspire me every day. Mom, you are my best friend. I am grateful for your thoughtfulness, generosity, and commitment to creating lasting family memories. Thank you for being the best parents.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my daughter, Angelina. Thank you for constantly asking me, during the most unexpected times, 'how’s your dissertation going?' You are everything I wished I was when I was your age – confident, funny, smart, caring, and curious. Thank you for being my biggest cheerleader while also reminding me why this dissertation matters.

My amazing committee, Dr. Cheryl Getz, Dr. Bob Donmoyer, and Dr. Johanna Hunsaker, you were instrumental in guiding me through this academic labyrinth. Cheryl, my amazing chair, I owe you profound gratitude for your patience and kindness throughout this process. Your capacity to offer space when necessary, and then push me forward when I was ready, was exactly what I needed in a chair. Bob, your wisdom and probing questions expanded my understanding of methodology and qualitative research. When I proposed using autobiographies and biographies, your enthusiastic support gave me confidence to move forward. Jo, having you on the committee was special for so many reasons. Your expertise in women's leadership and management broadened my perspectives on implications and significance, pushing me to think beyond conventional boundaries. The three of you were a dream team.
Lastly, I would like to acknowledge my writing sisters. I could not have completed this journey without them. Their friendship and camaraderie sustained me during extremely challenging times. I am forever grateful for the all day Zoom sessions, the laughter, and the comfort during the tears. The support system we created is nothing short of remarkable. I am forever grateful to you all.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Study

“What’s the big deal about Grandma Maddy being Secretary of State? Aren’t only girls Secretaries of State?” The quote above reflects the perspective of the youngest granddaughter, of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who was coming of age in a time when her grandmother, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Rodham Clinton had all served, or were currently serving, as secretaries of state. Only 8 years old at the time she could not conceptualize a world in which women weren’t secretary of state. Despite this progress, the current reality in the United States does not entirely match this perspective, as there are still significant challenges and disparities faced by women in leadership roles.

The United States prides itself on being a democracy and has a long-standing history of attempting to spread democracy across the world, as seen with the development of the National Endowment for Democracy agency (Lowe, 2013). Leadership is essential to a healthy democracy. Additionally, “equal access of men to women in power, decision-making, and leadership at all levels is a necessary pre-condition to the proper functioning of a democracy” (Sharma, 2012, p. 1).

This study was designed to develop a more complete and judicious understanding of leadership in the political arena. My purpose in conducting this study was to better understand how women who have held leadership positions in the U.S. government, specifically secretary of state, exhibit leadership. The dissertation introduces the study; offers a review of the literature on women in leadership studies and women in political science; the methodology used in the study; findings; and concludes with a discussion.
This chapter begins by providing background for the study, specifically, discussions of women in leadership and women in politics. Next, the problem statement is presented, and the purpose of the study is discussed. Finally, the study’s research questions are presented, and the chapter concludes with operational definitions.

**Background**

The fields of political science and leadership studies have long been intertwined, given the importance of leadership in government. Both fields were slow to include women in theoretical development and empirical studies. The development of leadership theories, for example, has emerged from studying men within masculine institutions, such as the U.S. government. Consequently, our understanding of leadership is incomplete.

**Leadership Models**

There is limited knowledge of how women in the political arena exhibit leadership. Historical accounts of leadership reference men with political power, such as Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Oliver Cromwell, Sargon of Akkad, Ramesses the Great, and Machiavelli (Grint, 2011). Based on historical accounts of leadership, one might assume women did not hold any leadership positions, which is not true. Take, for example, the accomplishments of Ana Nzinga Mbande, an African ruler who negotiated peace treaties, organized alliances to fight the Portuguese, and built a kingdom that resisted colonization during the 17th century (Bortolot, 2003). Or Gertrude Bell, a political force in the British Empire and an expert in Middle East affairs, drew the Iraq borders and strongly advocated against colonial rule (Krayenbuhl & Oelbaum, 2016). One might also consider the accomplishments and leadership of Cleopatra or Queen Elizabeth. Women leaders existed; they simply are not referenced in leadership theories.
Leadership studies moved beyond great-man thinking and focusing on men in politics and evolved to looking at skills, traits, situations, systems, and organizations; however, understanding of these things was generated mostly by examining men and male-dominated organizations in business; see, for example, the development of situational leadership (Blanchard et al., 1985), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), and authentic leadership (George, 2003), to state a few. While these theories are useful, they are not easily adaptable and applicable to leadership in the political arena, much less to understanding female leadership in the political arena. Except for Burns’ (1978) transactional leadership and transformational leadership, none of the leadership theories developed in the last several decades have been developed through examining political leaders, and even Burns developed his leadership theory by focusing on male leaders. In fact, to my knowledge, there has only been one leadership theory, integrative leadership, developed by studying women political leaders.

Women in Politics

In the new code of laws, I desire you would remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power in the hands of the husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation. (Abigail Adams, 1776)

When we examine the institutions politicians and appointed officials operate within, it is not surprising women continue to lack representation. The construction of the United States and three branches of government was the work of the Founding Fathers. The Founding Fathers were aware of the masculine control of the institutions they were designing, considering the
letter Abigail Adams wrote to John Adams urging him to “Remember the Ladies” (Adams, 1776, as cited in Rossi, 1973, p. 7).

Masculinism has continued to operate and has defined leadership and governance … women have been forced to understand—even master—masculinism and its values if they are to move successfully into positions of public leadership. The converse for men is not true. (Kelly & Duerst-Lahti, 1995, p. 261)

To summarize, the political institutions in the United States are guided by a masculine sensibility, and the development of leadership theories has been born out of masculine institutions. Therefore, “only by studying women in leadership roles can a more discriminative understanding of leadership be achieved” (Rosenthal, 1998, p. 21).

Current Status of Women in Politics

Even though women are entering the workplace and earning more academic degrees than men (Ali et al., 2011; McKinsey Global Institute, 2015; Musu-Gillette et al., 2017), this progress has not translated to women holding more positions of authority in our political institution. The World Economic Forum’s (2023) Global Gender Gap Report tracks four constructs yearly: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. No country has achieved gender parity in all four constructs. Globally, the gender gap is closing with education and health, while political empowerment for women remains the widest gap. The report also ranks the United States 63rd out of 146 ranked countries on political empowerment for women.

As of January 2024, the landscape of gender representation in the highest echelons of power remains starkly imbalanced, with only 26 countries boasting a total of 28 women serving as Heads of State. Despite incremental progress, achieving gender parity in these positions seems
a distant goal, projected to take another 130 years at the current pace (UN Women, 2023).

Disturbingly, data compiled by UN Women (2023) revealed as of January 1, 2023, women hold a mere 22.8% of cabinet positions worldwide, where they lead Ministries and policy areas.

Among the most commonly held positions by women cabinet ministers are those concerning women and gender equality, family and children affairs, social inclusion and development, social protection and social security, and Indigenous and minority affairs, reflecting both the challenges and priorities facing women in positions of power across the globe.

According to the Center for American Women in Politics (CAWP; 2023a), women in the United States comprise 28.2% of the members in Congress, 25% of the members in the United States Senate, and 29% of the United States House of Representatives. At the state level, women currently hold 24% of the gubernatorial seats and 32.8% of the seats in state legislatures (CAWP, 2023a; see Figure 1). Locally, women account for 25.8% of the mayoral positions (CAWP, 2023b; see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*Percentage of Women and Men in Elected Positions*
These figures decrease dramatically when looking at women of color. Currently, women of color account for 9.4% of members in Congress (CAWP, 2023a). The figures slightly decrease when looking at statewide elected offices. Women of color currently hold only 7.4% state executive positions (e.g., governor, lieutenant governor, comptroller, attorney general, treasurer; CAWP, 2023a). Additionally, women of color constitute 9.4% of all 7,383 state legislators (CAWP, 2023a).

In the 1990s, several significant research studies were conducted on leadership and women in politics. However, in the last 20 years, the lack of women representatives in government has resulted in prominent women and politics scholars focusing primarily on uncovering reasons women do not run for office. While the figures are bleak, there is still much to be learned from the women in political leadership positions.

In addition to elected positions, there are 30 appointed positions within the Presidential cabinet. Since President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed the first woman in 1933, only 12 U.S. presidents (5 Democrats and 7 Republicans) have selected women for cabinet or cabinet-level
roles. As seen in Table 1, 66 women have been appointed to a Presidential cabinet position and 14 of those women held previous positions in federal or state elective offices (CAWP, 2024)

**Table 1**

*Women Appointed to Presidential Cabinets (1933-2023)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th># of women</th>
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<tr>
<td>Administrator, Small Business Administration</td>
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<td>U.N. Ambassador</td>
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<td>Chair, Council of Economic Advisers</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Commerce</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary of Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, Office of Management and Budget</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Housing and Urban Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Interior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Transportation</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Trade Representative</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Homeland Security</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorney General</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Energy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair, National Economic Council</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counselor to the President</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, Office of Personnel Management</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Agriculture</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of Health, Education, Welfare</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Trade Representative</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director, Central Intelligence Agency</td>
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 Secretary of State

United States secretary of state is a position held in the executive branch of government and is part of the President’s cabinet (United States Department of State, n.d.). The position was created in 1789, and to date, there have been 71 secretaries of state. The 64th secretary was the first female, Madeleine Albright. Condoleezza Rice was the 66th, and Hillary Rodham Clinton was the 67th.

The United States secretary of state is the head of the United States Department of State and is the chief foreign affairs adviser to the President of the United States. The secretary of state is responsible for representing the United States in diplomatic negotiations, developing and implementing foreign policy, and providing guidance and direction to American embassies and consulates around the world. The secretary of state also serves as an important member of the President’s cabinet and is responsible for advising the President on international affairs and promoting American interests abroad (United States Department of State, n.d.).

As deemed by the Constitution, the President of the United States holds the authority to establish U.S. foreign policy. The secretary of state, appointed by the President with the senate’s approval, serves as the President’s primary adviser on foreign affairs. In executing the President’s foreign policies, the secretary oversees the State Department and the United States Foreign Service (United States Department of State, n.d.).
The secretary of state fulfills a wide range of responsibilities crucial to U.S. foreign affairs and domestic operations. As indicated by the United States Department of State (n.d), these duties include:

- Serving as the President’s primary adviser on U.S. foreign policy.
- Conducting negotiations pertinent to U.S. foreign affairs.
- Issuing passports to American citizens and exequatur to foreign consuls within the United States.
- Providing advice to the President on the appointment of U.S. ambassadors, ministers, consuls, and other diplomatic representatives.
- Advising the President on matters concerning the acceptance, recall, and dismissal of foreign government representatives.
- Directly participating in or overseeing U.S. representation at international conferences, organizations, and agencies.
- Negotiating, interpreting, and terminating treaties and agreements.
- Ensuring the protection of American citizens, property, and interests abroad.
- Overseeing the administration of U.S. immigration laws overseas.
- Furnishing information to American citizens regarding political, economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian conditions in foreign countries.
- Reporting to Congress and the American public on the conduct of U.S. foreign relations.
- Facilitating beneficial economic interactions between the United States and other nations.
- Managing the Department of State and supervising the Foreign Service of the United States.
In addition to the job duties outlined above, there are twenty bureaus and offices reporting directly to the secretary of state. These bureaus and offices include: Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Counselor of the Department, Executive Secretariat, Office of Civil Rights, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Global Women’s Issues, Office of the Chief of Protocol, Office of the Legal Adviser, Office of the Ombudsman, Office of the Secretary’s Special Representative for Syria Engagement, Office of the Special Envoy for Critical and Emerging Technology, Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, Office of the U.S. Special Coordinator for the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment, Office of the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, Policy Planning Staff, Special Envoy for Iran, Special Representative for Venezuela, and United States Security Coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority (United States Department of State, n.d.).

Additionally, the secretary of state retains certain domestic responsibilities Congress assigned to the State Department in 1789. These tasks include safeguarding the Great Seal of the United States, preparing specific presidential proclamations, publishing treaties and international acts, maintaining the official record of U.S. foreign relations, and overseeing the custody of original treaties and international agreements. Furthermore, the secretary serves as the intermediary between the Federal Government and the States concerning the extradition of fugitives to or from foreign countries (United States Department of State, n.d.).

The State Department consists of approximately 13,000 members of the Foreign Service, 11,000 Civil Service employees, and 45,000 locally employed staff stationed at over 270 diplomatic missions across the globe. The secretary of state oversees and is responsible for all 70,000+ employees (United States Department of State, n.d.). For comparison, only one hundred
and seven (107) U.S. Fortune 500 companies have 70,000 or more employees. (50pros, 2024). Additionally, the State Department currently has a budget of roughly 63 billion dollars (United States Agency for International Development, n.d.).

**Problem Statement**

There have been various definitions of leadership offered throughout the years; however, because the institutions in which these definitions were produced were and continue to be gendered, they privilege “masculine qualities over feminine ones and [support] a distribution of labor in which people who are not white professional males are at a disadvantage” (Stiver, 1993, as cited in Rosenthall, 1998, p. 20).

Existing leadership theories have contributed to a double bind for women (Eagly & Carli, 2007). The combination of gender stereotypes and leader role stereotypes leads to incongruity and prejudice against women as leaders (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Stereotypes of leaders include self-confidence, assertiveness, taking charge, solving problems, and inspiring others (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Women are stereotyped to be perceived as more concerned with the welfare of others, sympathetic, gentle, sensitive, supportive, kind, and nurturing (Bem, 1974; Broverman et al., 1972; Spence & Helmreich, 1979). These gender-based misalignments are often problematic for women who aspire to positions of leadership because society’s images of leaders tend to emphasize agentic characteristics, such as self-confidence, assertiveness, and taking charge (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Another indicator of gender bias in the leadership literature was found by Madsen and Scribner (2017), who conducted a meta-analysis of articles published by cross-cultural leadership and management journals to determine how often gender was a variable in studies. In total, 5,270 articles, over a 6-year period, were examined; 2.88% had gender/women as the primary variable
of the publication and 1.61% had gender as a secondary component. Overall, women/gender were only discussed in 4.5% of the published articles.

A lack of focus on women and leadership is also apparent in fields other than leadership studies. For example, in journals focused on women and politics, leadership is rarely discussed. Two of the most reputable journals, Politics & Gender and The Journal of Women, Politics, and Policy, have published very few studies related to leadership. Since 2005, Politics & Gender has published roughly 672 articles, and only 31 mention the word leadership. Similarly, from 2005 to 2023, in The Journal of Women, Politics, and Policy, “leadership” is only listed as a keyword in 64 articles.

Additionally, the lack of methodological diversity in the field of leadership studies is evident. According to Lowe and Gardner (2000), 64% of the articles published in the first ten years by The Leadership Quarterly used a questionnaire to gather data. This approach highlights the paradigm in which many leadership scholars operate. While questionnaires can be useful for capturing the what and when, they can overlook the why and how and fail to capture the complexity of individual experiences, often informed by context, as well as gender and other intersecting identities. Additionally, in the social sciences, qualitative research is used in 90% of studies, where interviews are often used (Briggs, 1986; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

There is a problem: the development of leadership theories, in both fields of Leadership Studies and Political Science, have systematically excluded women political leaders, and women and politics journals are not publishing enough studies about women and leadership. There is a need to consciously generate theories that link leadership and women political leaders. Lastly, there is a methodological gap in the literature on women in political leadership.
**Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to fill the gap that existed between the women-in-politics literature and women-in-leadership literature. More specifically, this study aimed to construct leadership theories by reviewing autobiographies and biographies about former women who served as secretary of state for the United States. While most mainstream leadership theories had been developed primarily through the examination of male leaders in business contexts, this study attempted to build a grounded theory through reviewing written material about women leaders engaged in politics. Furthermore, this study, using biographical research as a means of data collection, and a case study/cross-case analysis design paired with constructivist grounded theory as a method of inquiry, began to fill a methodological gap in research covering women in leadership and women in politics.

The goal was to shed light on the leadership qualities exhibited by the women who had held one of the most influential positions in the U.S. government, secretary of state. The study aimed to expand our theoretical understanding of leadership not only about gender and leadership, but also about leadership in the political arena.

**Research Questions**

Three research questions were used to guide this study:

1. How do select women, who have served as United States secretary of state, describe their leadership and/or how do others perceive/describe their leadership?
2. How do women leaders, as described in select autobiographies and biographies, exhibit and modify their leadership over time in response to changing circumstances and contexts?
3. What commonalities emerge among the women and what differences emerge?
Operational Definitions

The operational definitions used for this study are listed below.

*Appointed officials:* Appointed officials are defined as anyone who obtained a position in the government through appointment.

*Elected officials:* Elected officials are defined as anyone who obtained a position in the government through winning an election.

*Executive branch of government:* The executive branch of government are defined as the arm of the government overseen by the President of the United States.

*Federal government:* The federal government refers to the three branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial.

*Judicial branch of government:* The judicial branch of government are defined as the court system in the United States, whose responsibility is to interpret laws, decide how to apply laws, and to determine if laws are unconstitutional.

*Leader:* Leader are defined as anyone who has formal positional authority.

*Leadership:* Leadership is not defined by one definition of leadership, instead I share two definitions, developed with women leaders in mind and will remain available to me while I conduct this research study as leadership is a working definition.

*Feminist leadership:*

Women with a feminist perspective and vision of social justice, individually and collectively transforming themselves to use their power, resources and skills in non-oppressive, inclusive structure and processes to mobilize others—especially other women—around a shared agenda of social, cultural, economic and political transformation for equality and realization of human rights for all. (Batiwala, 2011, p. 29)
Black feminist leadership:

Black women activists who, from the intersection of race and gender, develop paths, provide a direction, and give voice to Black women . . . lead by example and generate opportunities for change, provide encouragement and skills to others, and ignite desire in other Black women to create conditions for success. The ultimate goal of a Black feminist leader is to eliminate the multiple oppressions that comprise the lives of Black women. (Hall et al., 2007, p. 283)

Legislative branch of government: The legislative branch of government will be defined as the arm of the government members of Congress who are elected to either the Senate or the House of Representatives.

Politics: Politics will be defined as any activity related to running for office, proposing bills, overseeing laws, or governing in any branch of government.

Political arena: The political arena will be defined in the same way politics is defined.

Woman or women: Woman or women will be defined as any person identifying as a woman.

Women in politics: Women in politics will be defined as any women in an elected or appointed position in either the legislative, judicial, or executive branch of the United States government.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

The purpose of my study was to investigate (a) how women who have served as United States Secretary of State exhibited leadership; (b) how others perceived their leadership; (c) how their leadership changed over time and in different contexts; and (d) what commonalities and differences emerged among the women studied. Through this study, I constructed a grounded theory using a case study and cross-case analysis design by analyzing biographical data (i.e., autobiographies and biographies) of select women.

The purpose of this literature review was to illuminate trends in research, trends in methodologies, and gaps in research. The literature review was composed of four main topics. The first section provided a brief history of the evolution of leadership theories. In the second section, I examined the leadership theories which shaped the women’s leadership field, and reviewed research on women’s leadership styles. In the third section, I analyzed the trends of women in politics literature, including leadership theories about why women did not run for office and how women governed. Lastly, I reviewed the methodologies used to study women leaders—specifically women in politics.

Leadership Theories

Leadership theories have evolved over the past century and scholars from various disciplines have contributed to the evolution (Northouse, 2010). The first theory, classified as a traits theory and typically discussed first in leadership books (see Bryman et al., 2011; Northouse, 2010), is great man theory, which contends there were great men who possessed traits that made them great leaders (Carlyle, 1907). Trait theorists and researchers such as Stogdill (1948, 1974), Mann (1959), Lord et al. (1986), Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991), and
Zaccaro et al. (2004) have each contributed a list of traits and characteristics found in leaders. From these studies, there are five traits that appear throughout, intelligence, self-confidence, integrity, sociability, and determination (Northouse, 2010). The newest addition to traits theory is charismatic leadership in which “charismatic leaders consistently possess traits of self-monitoring, engagement in impression management, motivation to attain social power, and motivation to attain self-actualization” (Jung & Sosik, 2006 as cited in Northouse, 2010, p. 16).

Similar to traits in that the focus of the theory is on the leader, there is the development of skills-based leadership theories. Katz (1955) approached leadership as a developmental skill in three areas: (a) technical, (b) human, and (c) conceptual. This approach later influenced research on leader effectiveness with Mumford et al. (2000). In addition to traits and skills, theories based on style, specifically behaviors based on tasks and behaviors based on relationships, emerged in the field (see the Leader Behavior Description questionnaire [Hemphill & Coon, 1957]; and Managerial Grid [Blake & McCanse, 1991 as cited in Northouse, 2010]).

Theorists argued traits, style, and skills failed to consider context and situations (Northouse, 2010), which led to the development and emergence of contingency theories—most notably with Fiedler’s (1964) least preferred coworker theory. Situational leadership theory was developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1985) with the underlying idea that leaders should change approaches or styles based on the situation and the person with whom they are working (Blanchard et al., 1985). Path-goal theory, emphasizes “the relationship between the leader’s style and the characteristics of the subordinates and the work setting” (Northouse, 2010, p. 125) whereas leader-member exchange theory takes more of a relationships based approach and focuses on the dyadic relationship between leader and follower (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Furthermore, transformational leadership theory and transactional leadership theory, developed
by Burns (1978), who claims leaders can have transactional exchanges with followers, or they inspire followers.

The final two leadership theories considered are authentic leadership, which emphasizes the need for authenticity (George, 2003) and servant leadership, developed in the 1970s by Robert Greenleaf and popularized in his 1977 book, *Servant Leadership*. According to Greenleaf (1977), a servant leader is someone who wants to serve first and, thus, “he is sharply different from the person who is leader first” (Greenleaf, 1991, p. 7).

**Women in Leadership Studies**

The aforementioned theories do not address challenges specific to women. Metaphors used to describe challenges women in leadership face include: (a) concrete wall, (b) glass ceiling, and most recently, (c) labyrinth (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

**Theories**

The theories examined in this section of the literature review—social role theory, role congruity theory, and theory of gendered organizations—appear throughout in scholarship related to women and leadership, and can be considered the foundation to studying women in leadership.

**Social Role Theory**

Developed in 1987, social role theory contends the differences among sexes is the product of social roles, which determine and regulate the behaviors in adults (Eagly, 1987). This theory was born out of Eagly’s (1987) research on gender stereotypes and sex differences. Eagly, a professor of psychology, has been cited over 108,000 times. Her work has been central to understanding women in leadership. Eagly emphasized several ways in which adult behavior differs among the sexes, which are rooted in social roles, and have a greater influence on adult
social behavior than socialization or biology. This is different from past gender difference theories, which primarily focused on the socialization of the child or biological and therefore physical differences among genders. Eagly regarded social roles to be the central predictor of sex differences among adults. The different gender roles originated due to biological differences; men were physically stronger, so they labored and hunted whereas women were child bearers, so they stayed home. Long past the hunter-gathering days, the demands of childcare and labor forced women to remain in the home, and men were able to leave the home to further develop their trade and skills (Wood & Eagly, 2012).

The content of gender roles is crucial to understanding how gender roles are a cause of sex differences such that predictions of behavior and sex differences are guided by the content of gender roles (Eagly, 1987). This content can be analyzed by gender-stereotype research. Gender-stereotype research shows most people’s beliefs about sex differences can be categorized in two dimensions which define positive attributes, the communal or the agentic (Bem, 1974; Broverman et al., 1972; Deaux & Lewis, 1983; Rosenkrantz et al., 1968; Ruble, 1983; Spence & Helmreich, 1978).

Furthermore, women are stereotyped to align with the communal traits such as, being concerned with the welfare of others, be sympathetic, gentle, sensitive, supportive, kind, and nurturing. Whereas, men are stereotyped to align with the agentic traits such as, assertive, competitive, adventurous, aggressive, courageous, dominant, and they stand up during pressure (Bem, 1974; Broverman et al., 1972; Spence & Helmreich, 1978). These distinctive trait dimensions are said to have derived from the female’s domestic role and the male's typical role in the economy and in society (Eagly, 1987; Yount, 1986).
Using this understanding of the content of gender roles and predicting adult behavior is central to conceptualizing social role theory. The sexual division of labor in most world societies, such as women having a disproportionate share of domestic duties, causes the communal and agentic gender-stereotypes (Williams & Best, 1982). These stereotypes cause women and men to behave in what they believe to be socially acceptable roles, such that these gender roles maintain the division of labor among the sexes (Eagly, 1987; see Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

*Social-Role Theory of Sex Differences in Social Behavior*

![Diagram of Social-Role Theory of Sex Differences in Social Behavior]


**Role Congruity Theory**

Building off of social role theory, Eagly and Karau (2002) found people were positively evaluated when their behavior aligned with expected social roles. Women were then positively evaluated when showing communal characteristics and men were positively evaluated when showing agentic characteristics. This, in turn, leads to prejudice toward female leaders because the leadership stereotypes do not align with gender stereotypes (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly &
Stereotypes around leaders include self-confidence, assertiveness, taking charge, solving problems, and inspiring others (Eagly & Karau, 2002). As seen in Figure 3, the combination of gender stereotypes and leader role stereotypes leads to incongruity and prejudice against women as leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Figure 3

Prejudice Against Women as Leaders


This theory highlights two specific forms of prejudice faced by female leaders. First, women receive less favorable evaluations addressing their potential to lead and their ability to possess leadership qualities (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Second, their leadership evaluations are less favorable because leadership behavior is perceived to align with male characteristics, and when
female leaders express leadership behaviors they are seen as less desirable (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The application of these two theories helps us understand the bias and prejudice women face when seeking leadership positions in the United States government.

**Theory of Gendered Organizations**

In contrast to social role theory and role congruity theory which focus on gender stereotypes, and findings that result in observed problems such that women are not treated fairly in supposed gender neutral institutions, the theory of gendered organizations focuses on hierarchical power structures which reproduces inequalities and is then normalized (Acker, 1990). This theory highlights the organization as the source for gender inequities whereas the previous two theories focus on the individuals in organizations. Acker (1990) was one of the first scholars to develop this theory. Acker argued organizations and institutions were not gender-neutral and assumptions about gender, and therefore inequalities, were embedded in the construction of organizations and institutions.

Acker (1990) argued there are five different processes in organizations that reinforce gender and inequalities. The first, the division of labor, which can be found in the structure and hierarchical nature of the organizations. Second, the development of cultural symbols which serve to reinforce the division of labor and can be found in language, dress code, images, ideology, the press and popular culture. The third process, workplace interactions among men and women, men and men, as well as women and women. Fourth, the individual identity of workers in organizations set and reinforce gender. The fifth and final process, the organizational logic, the assumptions and practices of the organization.

Additionally, the work of Butler (1990, 2004) has contributed to this theory and focused on the (un)doing of gender and what happens when we transgress the norms. Butler (1990)
argued “gender, is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practice of gender coherence” (Butler, 1990, p. 24). Essentially, gender is performative, is always a doing, and it is important to challenge the structures that reinforce gender and the illusions of identity, while understanding doing and (un)doing gender are still in essence doing gender (Butler, 1990).

More recently, scholars have added to this theoretical framework by maintaining an organization-centered approach (Bielby, 2012; Castilla, 2012; Madden, 2012). The organization-centered approach seeks to understand the organizational processes which lead to gender stratification. Such processes investigated in this approach include compensation, recruitment, evaluations, and promotion (Calas et al., 2014). Rather than offering social and psychological explanations for gender differences, this approach focuses on the non-neutrality of organizational practices, organizational processes and organizational decision making which lead to gender inequality (Calas et al., 2014).

**Leadership Styles**

There are conflicting studies on whether or not women lead differently than men. Based on a survey of women and compared to men, Rosener (1990) claimed women have an interactive style of leadership in which they work to make sure all members of the organization feel included and build a group identity. Bass (1981) disagreed and claimed there are no patterns of difference. Furthermore, in a comparison study of 139 men and women’s leadership style, women showed greater interpersonal orientation (Eagly & Johannesen, 1990). When women are leading in male dominated organizations and industries, their leadership styles can reflect more agentic qualities, ascribed to men (Eagly & Carli, 2007).
Chapman (1975) found women expressed relationship-orientation traits whereas men displayed more authoritarian traits. Whereas, Appelbaum et al. (2003) found women had a collaborative style however the women who had an androgynous style of leadership moved higher in the positions in the organization. The authors contend gender roles at an early age influence the traits men and women exhibit. Perceptions and expectations can influence leadership styles.

People expect male leaders to speak assertively, compete for attention, influence others, and initiate activity. In contrast, people expect female leaders to speak more tentatively, not draw so much attention to themselves, accept others’ suggestions, support others, and solve interpersonal problems. (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 122)

Unfortunately, women are challenged with “acting like a man” or they are “not tough enough” both center maleness thus women usually find someplace in the middle (Moskowitz et al., 1994). Additionally, a study by Koch et al. (2005), highlighted additional differences among men and women in leadership traits. Men were more likely to be associated with traits such as strong, aggressive, hard, and dominant. While women were associated with femininity and traits such as soft, delicate, flexible, sentimental and quiet.

There are two concerns with the sameness or difference studies. First, this approach continues to further the patriarchy. Meaning, when we examine women’s leadership by trying to find similarities or differences, this places men’s leadership as the standard and judges all other leadership against this measure making women the other. Second, these studies generalize women’s leadership; however, all women are not the same, and, in a White supremacist society, this places White women as the norm and lumps all other women together. The data are scarce on women of color and leadership, however “it is clear that women of color who have careers in
organizations that are dominated by white men can face the dual challenges of racism and sexism” (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 131).

**Women in Politics**

Shoukla (2017) has written, “Political Science has evolved considerably since the beginning of the study of politics as a discipline, which was primarily centered around men, masculinity and maleness, and where women were considered apolitical and therefore, invisible” (p. 167). The emergence of research on women in politics is relatively new, mostly due to the fact most political scientists were men, up until the 1970s (Flammang, 1997). The research on women in politics can be placed into three distinct areas, deciding to run for office, getting elected or appointed, and what happens when in office. While this study focused on leadership of women in an appointed position, it is important to report on trends in the field and methodologies that dominate in the field.

The first area of research addresses what women do when they are in office and leadership. Unfortunately, most of the literature addressing leadership was developed in the 1980s and 1990s with very few current studies (see Madsen, 2009; Gallagher, 2008; Weikart et al., 2008). The second area examines obstacles women face after they decide to run or are trying to get appointed to a position. Studies on bias and sexism have remained constant throughout the start of studying women in politics and leadership, in the 1970s, and continues on today with studies moving from only studying women as a universal group to include some but limited studies on bias due to race and gender (see Abele, 2003; Bauer, 2015; Eagly, 1987; Huddy & Terkidsen, 1993). The third area, with the exception of a few studies, has emerged just in the last 20 years and focuses on getting women to run for office, why they do not run for office, the obstacles they face when deciding, and efforts to increase participation (see Elder, 2012; Fox &
Lawless, 2010; Sanbonmatsu, 2006). Additionally, most of the literature focuses on women in elected positions with very few studies investigating women who have been appointed to positions in government, this may be because there are over 500,000 elected positions and an estimated 7,000 appointed positions in the United States government (United States Government Policy and Supporting Positions, 2016).

**Women in Office**

Research concerning women's activities during their time in office primarily concentrates on several aspects: their effectiveness in enacting legislation, scrutiny of the kinds of legislation they introduce and endorse, and exploration of their leadership qualities alongside potential relevant leadership theories.

**Effective Legislators**

There is conflicting data on women legislator effectiveness in office. Anzia and Berry (2011), analyzed federal spending at the district level to see if districts with women representatives procured more money for their districts. They found women represented districts obtained 9% more funding than their male counterparts. Volden and Wiseman (2011) developed Legislative Effectiveness Scores (LESs) for each member in each Congress. The score is based on how many bills she or he sponsors, how far each bill gets through the legislative process, and the significance of the proposed legislation. In their study looking at health policy, they found women legislators to be more effective.

Several studies have found women legislators to be equally effective as men and legislative effectiveness is due to “seniority, preferences, and membership in important House institutions” (Jeydel & Taylor, 2003, p. 19). In a six-state, 3-year sample, Bratton and Haynie (1999), also found men and women to be equally effective in passing legislation they introduced.
A 29-year longitudinal study on Arizona’s state legislature revealed similar findings, women and men were equally effective in securing the passage of bills they introduced (Saint-Germain, 1989). Additionally, the power in a person’s political party influences effectiveness, women in the U.S. House of Representatives in the minority party were more effective than men, however, women in the majority party were less effective than men (Volden et al., 2013).

Sponsoring “Women’s Issues”

Several studies show women are more likely to introduce legislation addressing what is typically referred to as women’s issues. These issues are bills focused on education, childcare, and health legislation (Burrell, 1994; Sanbotmatsu 2003; Swers, 2002). Furthermore, Congressional women who are working mothers, with children under the age of 18, produce a significantly higher number of sponsored bills concerning children and family (Bryant & Hellwege, 2018). Donahue (1997) found contradictory information, women in local school committees in Massachusetts affiliated with the Democrat party were more likely to support gender equity education measures, but the data were not statistically significant. Political party affiliation and voter cues have also proven to be more influential in voting on women’s issues rather than gender (Barnello, 1999).

Leadership

As noted, there are few recent studies on the leadership styles of women in office. One study, Madsen (2009), interviewed ten women Governors, stated at the beginning of her book, there are few studies on women leaders and books on the leadership of women in appointed and elected positions. Her 2009 study findings are organized in a 13-chapter book, the first 10 chapters highlight each one of the women and the last three chapters discuss the overall themes and findings. The book focused on the development of their leadership, tracing life history. The
women were asked to describe their leadership style, “All ten governors described their own leadership styles as ‘collaborative’ (Madsen, 2009, p. 299). The governors used a variety of terms and characteristics to describe their leadership style through their staff’s point of view, indicating a combination of leadership styles, “including emergent leadership, situational leadership, transformational leadership, and androgynous leadership” (Madsen, 2009, p. 301) although the author does not draw a clear link from the data to the various leadership theories.

In the well-known and respected political science journal, *The Journal of Women, Politics, and Policy*, formally *Gender & Politics*, since 2005, the word leadership only appears as a keyword in 64 articles. Most used the word leadership to describe formal authority, obtaining a title or position, rather than discuss how women were or were not exhibiting leadership. Five of the 64 articles in the search discussed the act of leadership. The first article found female mayors were more inclusive, willing to change budget processes, obtain participation from a broad group, and communicate changes and goals (Weikart et al., 2008). The second article challenges the notion legislative leadership is primarily transactional leadership such that during conflict, leadership is more complex. This study found women committee chairs raised their voices when dealing with conflict and “more importantly, the study shows how the gender composition of the membership, the distribution of gender power, and the extent of professionalization influence conflict resolution style” (Rosenthal, 2000, p. 21). The third article examined how Black women, in New York City, used the period after World War II to challenge the conventional image of a politician and overcome resistance (Gallagher, 2008). The fourth, and most recent article, analyzed news coverage on twenty two newly elected officials, men and women, and found media outlets praise the officials for collaborative leadership traits, considered a communal trait. The research challenges previous research that
suggests news coverage of political leaders tends to favor traditionally masculine agentic qualities over communal qualities associated with femininity (Trimble et al., 2022). Lastly, the fifth article found female justices assign less value to consensus and are more inclined to prioritize interactions with state legislatures (Norris, 2021).

**Theories.** Burns (1978), developed the transactional leadership theory and specifically addressed legislative leadership. However, “despite its concern with leadership, political science has not yet developed anything that can in the strict sense of the term be labeled leadership theory” (Sinclair, 1993, p. 203). Since this statement by Sinclair, there have been attempts to theorize leadership in the legislature, most notably congressional leadership and integrated leadership, which is the only theory developed which considered gender.

**Congressional leadership theories.** One of the most well-known congressional leadership theories is generally referred to as principal agent theory (Evans & Oleszek, 1999). This theory contends congressional officials are elected and must act in accordance with the wishes of the electorate (Sinclair, 1998). One notable critique of this theory is it assumes politicians to be rational actors (Peters & Rosenthal, 2010). Additionally, “scholars have developed sophisticated theories of congressional leadership, but none of them account for gender, a significant variable” (Peters & Rosenthal, 2010, p. vii). Although this theory was supposed to be gender neutral, it has been used to assess the effectiveness of Nancy Pelosi. Peters and Rosenthal (2010) interviewed members of congress, congressional staff, and Speaker Pelosi, to provide both an overview of her career but also test her accomplishments during her time as Speaker of the House. The authors argue we are in a new age of American politics which requires more from politicians, specifically in leadership positions such as Speaker of the House. Findings suggest Pelosi “has done quite well” in executing the various criteria set out in
congressional leadership theory (Peters & Rosenthal, 2010). However, it is curious Peters and Rosenthal (2010) began their book by noting congressional leadership theory was developed without accounting for gender but then used the same theory to analyze Pelosi’s leadership.

**Integrated leadership.** Integrative leadership has been studied in the field of management and political science. Several management studies suggest women share power, empower others, are inclusive and less competitive, focus on consensus building, build relationships, and seek a wide range of participation (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Helgesen, 1990; Hennig & Jardim, 1977; Loden, 1985; Lunneborg, 1990; Rosener, 1990; as cited in Rosenthal, 1998). Rosenthal (1998) studied state legislatures and found leadership exhibited by women were integrative while the leadership exhibited by men were aggregative. When looking at committee chairs, women articulated different motivations, they are motivated by policy, issues, and problem solving (Rosenthal, 1998). Additionally, women committee chairs “lead by listening,” “consult more frequently with other members,” and share strategy while maintaining a collaborative style (Rosenthall, 1998, p. 161).

**Transactional leadership and transformational leadership.** James MacGregor Burns (1978) developed transactional leadership in the 1970s and believed most leaders engage in some form of transactional leadership. Transactional leadership theory focuses on the transactions or exchanges that take place between leaders, managers, employees, colleagues, and followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978; Northhouse, 2010). The transaction occurs when the leader articulates expectations for followers and indicates the rewards for meeting—and, in some cases, the sanctions for not meeting—expectations. For example, a manager can offer a promotion to an employee if they surpass their yearly sales quota. Burns (1978) argued most political leaders engage in transactional leadership stating, “the tradition, the ethic, the organization, the spirit of
Western Parliamentary enterprise is that of transaction and brokerage. No legislature lives up to that tradition and ethic more faithfully than the United States Senate” (p. 344).

Legislators are seen as pawns or puppets to interest groups and their political party, which has the power to withhold resources needed for reelection (Burns, 1978). However, legislators have the ability to exercise their leadership in a number of factors: (a) the conflict situation in which they act, in their constituency and in the legislature; (b) the roles they assume in the face of varied claims, demands, and expectations; (c) the values they hold and the goals derived from them; and (d) the extent to which they can manipulate conflict situations and roles to obtain legislation or other parliamentary action that helps realize their goals (Burns, 1978).

Burns (1978) believed the structure of the legislature “exemplifies transactional leadership” (p. 368) because constituents express needs, wants and expectations, and the leader must respond. However, there are gender implications associated with Burns’s notion of transactional leadership and legislative leadership that Burns does not acknowledge. On a macro level, Burns discussed the importance of the institution, but failed to address the gendered nature of the institution. Acker (1990) argued organizations and institutions were not gender-neutral and assumptions about gender, and therefore inequalities, were embedded in the construction of organizations and institutions. Rosenthal (1998) determined the institution which created committees in the state legislature are in fact gendered and legislative leadership in the context of committees is not gender neutral.

On a microlevel, Burns discusses the importance of a reciprocal relationship between leader and follower/constituent but fails to address how gender influences how followers and constituents will perceive the reciprocity. Consider the importance of engaging in conflict, as
mentioned, a woman who challenges another member of her political party is likely to be perceived as bossy and aggressive (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Given the likelihood they will be criticized, women may shy away from transactional forms of leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Because of the tension associated with mixing leadership ideal types and gender stereotypes, women often are penalized if they engage in transactional leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Burns makes no mention of the possibility followers may perceive transactional leadership differently depending on the leader’s gender identity.

In *Leadership*, Burns (1978) juxtaposed the notion of transactional leadership with another form of leadership, which he named *transformational leadership*. There are four components of transformational leadership, all of which focus on the development of the follower. The first component, *idealized influence*, refers to transformational leaders becoming role models to their followers and those followers, in turn, try to emulate the thinking and actions of the transformational leader (Avolio & Yammarino, 2008; Bass; 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Diaz-Saenz, 2011; Northouse, 2010). The second component is called *inspirational motivation*. This component refers to how transformational leaders convey high expectations and motivate followers to achieve these expectations and to embrace a shared vision (Avolio & Yammarino, 2008; Bass; 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Diaz-Saenz, 2011; Northouse, 2010). *Intellectual stimulation*, the third component of transformational leadership, refers to leaders encouraging followers to challenge organizational values and beliefs in a creative and innovative manner (Avolio & Yammarino, 2008; Bass; 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Diaz-Saenz, 2011; Northouse, 2010). The fourth component of transformational leadership is *individualized consideration*. This component refers to how transformational leaders create supportive environments for followers
and engage in coaching to help followers develop and grow (Avolio & Yammarino, 2008; Bass; 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Diaz-Saenz, 2011; Northouse, 2010).

Transformational and transactional approaches to leadership are not necessarily antithetical. Burns (1978) suggested a single leader might employ both forms of leadership at different times, in different contexts, and for different purposes. Bass (1985) was even more explicit in suggesting good leaders switch back and forth between using transactional and transformational forms of leadership (See also, Northouse, 2010; Yammarino et al., 1993).

In addition to transformational leadership and transactional leadership, researchers have identified an additional style, laissez-faire, in which the leader is absent and lacks engagement and responsibility (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This style, in addition to transactional leadership, proved to be an ineffective leadership style (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). A study conducted by Eagly et al. (2003) found men were more likely to engage in transactional leadership and laissez-faire when compared to women.

Burns was an award-winning presidential biographer and his thinking about transformational leadership appears to have been stimulated by presidents, the notion of transformational leadership has applicability to the realm of elective politics. It suggests to political candidates that winning votes and maintaining public support after an election are not just about policy-based promises or delivering policies favorable to constituents after the election, contradictory to congressional leadership theory.

It would seem as if transformational leadership is gender neutral. That is not the case, but even though the theory about transformational leadership was initially developed by looking almost exclusively at men, emotion, supportive, and caring seem in tune with stereotypes about women. One aspect of transformational leadership, individualized consideration, for example, is
aligned with the cultural norm that women are more supportive and caring than men. In a meta-analysis, Eagly et al. (2003) found women leaders exhibit more transformational leadership than men.

There is a problem when women are supportive and caring: When they exhibit emotion and attempt to inspire and motivate, they are not necessarily perceived as leaders but can be assumed to simply be fulfilling cultural expectations (Eagly & Carli, 2007). When men and women engage in the same behaviors, the behaviors can be interpreted by the public in fundamentally different ways. Additionally, even in contexts other than political arenas, while transformational leadership may be effective, it is not necessarily useful when women are trying to obtain promotions (Eagly & Carli, 2007). All too often, for women, transformational leadership behaviors can be coded as signs of weakness rather than as indicators of a carefully chosen—and effective—leadership strategy.

Getting Elected or Appointed

The research on women getting elected and appointed centers on the bias and sexism women face when running for office and the impact bias plays when elected officials make appointments in their cabinet and in the judiciary.

Appointments

Although there are limited studies on bias and sexism for women in appointed positions, when considering Supreme Court Justices, President Nixon said,

I don’t think a woman should be in any government job whatsoever . . . The reason why I do is mainly because they are erratic. And emotional. Men are erratic and emotional, too, but the point is a woman is more likely to be. (Clymer, 2001 as cited in Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 3)
Not surprising, countries that have a higher percentage of women in the legislature also have a higher percentage of women judiciaries (Hoekstra et al., 2014). In a recent study comparing the United States and France, Remiche (2015), found power to impact the amount of women on courts. Meaning, courts with more power, and the authority to change laws, were less likely to have women serving compared to courts that applied laws.

Unlike elections in the legislative branch, there are various ways in which members in the judicial branch can be appointed positions. Scholars posit this variation, appointed by a president or governor or in an election, influences the gender and racial diversity of courts. Carbon et al. (1982) found women judges were more likely to be appointed by a governor than if they ran for election. Furthermore, women were more likely to be appointed by a Democratic governor however, only when the appointment would diversify an all male court (Bratton & Spill, 2002). More recently, Gill (2012), found women were more likely to be appointed if the selection or nomination process included a group of people rather than a sole individual making the selection. Additionally, Gill (2012) argued the chances of a woman being selected increases if the selection or nominating committee is diverse. Other scholars found no such connection (Alozie, 1988 & 1990; Slotnick, 1984). In a study looking at the appointment of Defense Ministers worldwide, Barnes & O’Brian (2018), found women were less likely to be appointed to the position attributing it to the reinforcement of traditional beliefs about the masculinity associated with the job requirements.

**Voter Bias**

Thirteen percent of American men and women still think women should not be involved in politics, according to the 2018 General Social Survey, an decrease from 37% in 1975. These numbers are slightly different from the 2019 Gallup poll in which 94% of Americans said they
would vote for a woman president. Assumptions about what it means to be a woman and what it means to be a leader no doubt influence their opinion. Voters stereotype based on issues and traits. Traits associated with a politician include; being aggressive and assertive as explained by social role theory (Eagly, 1987).

Research on voter bias and stereotypes has shifted from findings indicating stereotypes can hinder women’s ability to get elected, (Huddy & Terkidsen, 1993) to findings indicating the impact of stereotypes depends on the context (Sanbonmatsu, 2003). Hayes and Lawless (2016), showed negative evaluations of women candidates is not related to gender but related to political party affiliation. Other literature suggests stereotypes do not impact women candidate evaluations (Brooks, 2013; Dolan, 2014). Dolan (2014) and Fridkin and Kenney (2009), posits stereotypes used when evaluating women candidates can help women get elected. Additionally, some scholars argue gender stereotypes are only activated when gender is brought up in a campaign (Abele, 2003; Bauer, 2015). However, given the findings by Bauer (2015), the activation can occur when a woman expresses emotion and is caring, stereotypical attributes of communal roles.

The research on women in politics continues to generalize “the experiences and priorities of White, middle-class women . . . and the experiences and consciousness of women of color in the United States and women outside of the Western world have largely remained unrecognized and unexamined” (Frederick, 2013, p. 115). Understanding the intersections of multiple identities is still underdeveloped in leadership studies and political science. “Neither in the United States nor in Europe has intersectionality been mainstreamed across a variety of subfields of political science research” (Erzeel & Mügge, 2016, p. 342).
Women Friendly Districts

Palmar and Simon (2008) developed an index to identify districts more likely to not show bias toward women candidates. The six demographic characteristics in a district that indicate the district is more likely to vote for a woman, “urban residents, median income, college graduates, proportion of African American, Hispanic, and foreign-born residents” (Palmar & Simon, 2008, p. 204). Additionally, the authors found four demographic characteristics that indicate districts not friendly to women candidates; these include districts that voted Republican for president, school-age population, the size of the district, and blue-collar workforce. A woman, in either Republican or Democratic party, in a woman friendly district triples the probability of winning a primary election (Palmer & Simon, 2008).

Deciding To Run For Office

Understanding why women decide to run for office has emerged as a major subfield in women and political science literature. The literature covers structural barriers, such as running against incumbents, political ambition, training programs and mentors meant to increase the number of women running and the impact political elites have on recruitment.

Political Ambition

In 2001, Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox conducted the Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study, in which they sought to understand how gender interacts with a person’s decision to run for political office through a nationwide survey of 3,800 people eligible to run for office. What they found was, women did not have as much political ambition as men and “the gender gap in political ambition results from long-standing patterns of traditional socialization that persist in U.S. culture” (Fox & Lawless, 2010, p. 8). The study identified three indications traditional gender socialization influences a woman’s political ambition. First, family roles and
responsibilities impact a woman’s decision. Second, the political institutions needed to support a candidate’s run for office are inherently masculine and therefore put women at a disadvantage. While overt bias may not exist, ideas of what makes candidates electable and the qualities one seeks in candidates were formed in these masculine institutions by men. Third, women are not socialized to consider politics as a career, whereas men are taught to be confident, assertive, and self-promoting, all characteristics needed to run for office.

In a survey of 4,000 high school students, evidence of a political ambition gap between men and women begins before entering professional careers. Black and Latina students were found to have more political ambition when compared to White students, however the authors suggested this was due to Obama being such an inspirational politician (Fox & Lawless, 2015).

**Recruitment**

Women are less likely to see themselves as a candidate (Fox & Lawless, 2004). Therefore, recruitment is essential in building a larger candidate pool. However, women with equal qualifications and political connections are less likely than men to be recruited to run for political office (Carroll, 1994; Fox & Lawless, 2010; Niven, 1998). Similarly, men are more likely than women to be recruited multiple times (Fox & Lawless, 2010). These findings are disappointing as women are twice as likely to consider running for office if a political actor has attempted to recruit them (Fox & Lawless, 2004). Additionally, one study found Republican women are even less likely to be recruited in comparison to Democrat women (Elder, 2012). However, this may be due to the fact there are twice as many organizations focused on recruiting and training Democrat women compared to Republican women (CAWP, 2017).

Candidate training programs play a significant role in women’s decision to run for office. Participants of these programs claim the programs provided them with the necessary skills
needed to begin their campaign, build confidence, and inspire women to become candidates (Hennings, 2011; Rozell, 2000; Sanbonmatsu, 2015). The training programs often focus on recruitment and then training. Studies of specific training programs run by nonprofits and private organizations are limited in comparison to the recruitment process.

In a research article by Rozell (2000), several different candidate training and recruitment programs were examined and found all of the training programs shared similar objectives however their implementation strategies were different. The study by Rozell (2000) is limited in it does not interview or survey candidates or attendees of the training programs but rather interviews the executive directors on their goals, mission, and methods. Overall, the training programs have proved to provide candidates with the necessary skills and inspire them to run for office (Hennings, 2011; Rozell, 2000; Sanbonmatsu, 2015). Additionally, women of color have proven to greatly benefit from training programs specifically designed to address their specific challenges (Sanbonmatsu, 2015). This is important as currently, women of color only hold 8.8% congressional seats and only 4.5% of the state legislator (CAWP, 2020).

**Mentors**

Many state and local training organizations have their local leaders attend events and will often engage in mentoring potential candidates. Having women candidates present sends a message to future female candidates that it is possible for them to run and win (Burns et al., 2001; Dolan 2006; Reingold, 2000; Thomas, 1998). In addition to the traditional sense of mentoring, the presence of women candidates and elected officials offer the opportunity to serve as symbolic mentors, sending an indirect message that women can win votes (Burrell, 1998; Dolan, 2006; Sapiro, 1981; Tolleson-Rinehart, 1992). Symbolic mentorship is crucial as it likely has a larger impact on potential candidates. However, Fox (2004) found contradictory evidence
to suggest symbolic mentors have little to no impact on participation and engagement.

Additionally, the presence of political leaders who are women of color has a specific impact on women of color candidates. The opportunity to see yourself in a political leader and identify with them is crucial to building the courage needed to emerge as a candidate (Dolan, 2006; Sanbonmatsu, 2015).

**Party Elites**

In addition to nonprofits and private organizations working to recruit candidates, party elites will often engage in the recruitment process. Research has shown women are faced with bias among party elites (Carroll, 1994; Niven, 1998). While significant at the time, Niven’s (1998) study was a survey of elected women and party county chairs across four states, however the survey was unable to capture women who ran and lost their race as well as women who never ended up running for office. In 2008, Lawless and Fox conducted a national survey of 2000 potential candidates and found women were less likely to be recruited by party leaders, confirming previous studies. Additionally, Boss (2011, 2015), indicates party elites are less likely to nominate women during political party conventions.

While overall there is a discrepancy among party elites recruitment of men compared to women. Taking a deeper dive, there is an even large discrepancy among the political party elites. Studies show Republican party elites are less likely to recruit women when compared to the Democratic party (Elder, 2012; Sanbonmatsu, 2006). This may reveal why the Republican Party has seen a decline in women legislators and women candidates (CAWP, 2020a). Of the 127 currently serving in Congress, only 22 of them are Republican. Of the women in the state legislature, Republican women only make up 30.6% compared to women in the Democratic party which comprise 68.9% (CAWP, 2020a). However, Preece et al. (2015) suggested the
disparity among political parties may be due to Republican women responding negatively to recruitment efforts of party elites and the gap is due to other influencing factors. This study was limited in it only surveyed women from one state which does not allow for broad application.

**Fundraising**

Initially, I thought women’s perception of fundraising was a significant factor impacting their decision to run for office. After reviewing the literature, I could only find one article which indicated women are more concerned than men about their ability to raise funds (Jenkins, 2007). The article stated, women candidates tend to raise just as much money as their male counterparts, they tend to believe they will not be good at fundraising which likely factors into their decision to run for office (Jenkins, 2007). This leads me to two possible explanations, either women’s perceptions need further research, or it is not statistically significant. Much of the research conducted has been on how much money women raise. Women candidates running for Congress raise just as much money as men (Burrell, 2005; Fox, 1997; Werner, 1968). Contradictory research which, focused on fundraising in open-seat races, has found men raise more than women (Fiber, 2004; Fox, 2006).

**Competitive Races**

Women are less likely to run if they believe the race will be too competitive (Palmer and Simon, 2008). Lawless and Fox found in their Citizen Political Ambition Panel Study (2008) women who played competitive sports as children were more likely to consider running in competitive races. Running against and beating an incumbent is extremely difficult as incumbents win roughly 90% of their races (Duerst-Lahti, 1998). In addition to winning 90% of the races, incumbents seek reelection 75% of the time (Duerst-Lahti, 1998). This is true for both male and female candidates, however, the incumbency advantage primarily benefits men as they
currently hold roughly 80% of all local, state and national seats (Darcy et al., 1987; Fox & Lawless, 2010; Nixon & Darcy, 1996; Palmer & Simon, 2008). Some researchers claim the incumbency challenge, women candidates face, is in fact the political glass ceiling (Palmer & Simon, 2008). When women run for open seats, they win just as often as men (Fiber-Ostrow, 2012; Fox, 2006; Palmer & Simon, 2001). Logic would suggest, the more open seats, the greater the opportunity for women. Surprisingly, several studies contradict this logic. Kousser (2005) and Caress (1999) found term limits did not significantly increase the percentage of women legislators. Increasing concern found by Jenkins and Carroll (2003) suggested the number of women legislators who had to step down because of term limits did not outweigh the amount of newly elected women legislators. Term limits prove to be just one factor in winning the race however these studies do not measure the impact they have on women’s decision to run for office.

**Family Responsibilities**

Balancing a professional career with responsibilities in the home proved to inhibit women’s political ambition (Carroll, 1989; Fox & Lawless, 2003, 2004; Sapiro, 1982). Data collected from two-income households indicate women, regardless of education level and professional success, continue to spend twice as much time on household labor (Belkin, 2003). Most recently, Fox and Lawless (2011) conducted a follow-up study to their 2004 research and found family responsibilities do not directly influence a woman’s decision to run for office. Findings did suggest their family responsibility may delay their entrance into the political arena. This may explain why women begin their political careers at a significantly later age than men (Mariani, 2008).
When women do enter the political arena, they are often faced with what is known as the “double bind” (Jamieson, 1995). The double bind refers to the struggle women face to juggle professional goals with family duties. If a woman achieves professional success, then she must be neglecting her responsibilities at home. If a woman fails professionally then she should have just stayed home (Jamieson, 1995). Fox and Lawless (2011) also indicated while family roles may not have a direct impact, perceptions of family roles may influence whether or not women are recruited by party leaders and political actors. Women are significantly less likely to be recruited to run for office by a party leader (Fox & Lawless, 2010, 2011; Niven, 1998).

**Methodologies**

There is a significant amount of research conducted on women in politics attempting to predict and understand behavior from a positivist lens. “By adopting a positivist approach, behaviorists restricted their analysis to the clearly observable and assumed they were not imposing their own beliefs on the people studied. But this strategy contributed to the invisibility and biased interpretations of women’s politics” (Flammang, 1997, p. 21) and this paradigm does “not adequately capture the experience of people of color—women or men” (Hardy-Fanta et al., 2007, p. 1).

**Surveys**

Surveys continue to be one of the most used methods of data collection in political science, even though in 1990, Steuernagel pointed out that although men and women might respond similarly on a survey questionnaire, the “why” of the response was significant, because so much empirical research made the implicit assumption that the importance of events was similar for men and for women. (as cited in Flammang, 1997, p. 29)
One of the most referenced studies on women in politics, in political science, is the Citizen Political Ambition panel study in which the data were gathered through a survey (Fox & Lawless, 2001) and then a second follow-up survey was sent in 2008 (Fox & Lawless, 2010). Several additional studies used surveys to collect data (see Carroll, 1994; Fox, 1997, 2006; Jenkins, 2007; Lawless, 2004; Preece et al., 2015; Niven, 1998; Sapiro, 1981; Weikart et al., 2008). In addition to the field of political science, according to Lowe and Gardner (2000), 64% of the articles published in the first 10 years by *The Leadership Quarterly* used a questionnaire to gather data.

**Interviews**

While surveys still dominate the field of political science and leadership studies, there are numerous studies, mentioned in this chapter, that use interviews to gather data (see Burns et al., 2001; Frederick, 2013; Madsen, 2009; Peters & Rosenthal, 2010; Rozell, 2000; Sanbonmatsu, 2006, 2015). In social science and political science, some estimate 90% of all qualitative investigations use some type of interview (Briggs, 1986; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Sanbonmatsu (2006) argued qualitative methods such as interviews should be used when studying politics and gender as interviews can provide specific insight into attitudes, personal decisions and perceptions, not capturable in surveys. However, there are problems with interviewing political elites. Political elites often use interviews to make themselves look better (Ball, 1994), or they derail the interview to a topic of their choosing (Ball & Batteson, 1995). Berry (2002) interviewees would exaggerate their roles and contributions, whereas Lilleker (2003) and Richard (1996) found political actors would purposefully leave out information.
Document Analysis

Within the women in politics literature, I found one study that examined autobiographies. Gallagher (2008) used news articles, autobiographies, biographies, voting records, and speeches to make the case the end of World War II provided an opportunity for Black women in New York City to gain political seats. In addition to the end of the war, Gallagher also argued there were structural changes to the New York City political institution that contributed to these gains. Unfortunately, the article does not make any reference to the specific methodology she used. I am only aware of the primary and secondary data because she mentions them in the article.

Although I was only able to find one study that used autobiographies and biographies of women in politics, Burnham et al. (2008), in Research Methods in Politics, stated, “Without doubt much valuable material can be found in published political diaries such as Hall (1989 and 1992); Shuckburgh (1986); Benn (1989); Clark (1994); Lamont (2000); Colville (1987); and even Moran (1966)” (p. 193). While these are all written by men, one can assume the same statement may be applied to personal accounts written by women.

Public Records

The aforementioned study is the only study I found in which autobiographies and biographies were used in studying women in politics. Many of the studies discussed in this chapter use public data such as electoral records (see Dolan, 2006; Elder, 2012; Fiber-Ostrow, 2012; Mariani, 2008), budgets (see Anzia & Berry, 2011), voting records (Bryant & Hellwege, 2018), and proposed or supported bills to identify the ways in which women legislated (see Anzia & Berry, 2011; Barello, 1999; Bratton & Haynie, 1999; Bryant & Hellwege, 2018; Donahue, 1997; Saint-Germain, 1989; Volden & Wiseman, 2011). Using public records such as
the ones mentioned are useful in examining actions taken by leaders but it fails to include context in which the actions were taken, resulting in only a portion of the story being told.

Mixed and Unique Methods

Several studies used a combination of methods, such as Hennings (2011). In her doctoral research, she used public records, observations, a survey and interviews to show how candidate training programs help shape civic identity. Reingold (2000) challenged existing studies that said men and women legislate differently by using in-depth interviews, legislative records and survey responses with California and Arizona state legislators to find their legislative behavior is not solely related to gender, but social and political contexts have strong influences as well. Helgensen (1990) conducted what she termed a “diary study” in which she observed four women leaders in meetings and conferences, listened in on phone calls and read their correspondence. This is a unique method as it offers a layer of transparency interviews do not, however it is limited to those who have time and access.

Conclusion

The studies mentioned in this literature review used several different methodologies, however the use of biographies, autobiographies, and other documents have been underutilized in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It is important to use several various methodologies as “many methods may be necessary for one question or another in order to reveal silences and oppressions, and to understand the conditions, processes, and institutions that cause and sustain them” (Ackerly & True, 2010, p. 7). Scholarly studies of mostly male legislatures reinforce the public’s understanding of legislative leadership and pigeonhole leadership in legislatures to be primarily transactional. Additionally, studies also fail to include appointed positions in a government, focusing only on the elected positions. While there may be
fewer appointed positions in the government, many of these positions hold significant power influence.

In conclusion, this chapter highlights several missing pieces. First, we need more studies on the leadership exhibited by women in politics and women in appointed positions. Second, there is a need for the development of leadership theories from examining women in politics rather than comparing women to men. Third, studies on women universalize all women’s experiences and more research is needed on women with unique identities. Lastly, methodological diversity is crucial to creating a more holistic understanding of leadership.
CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The purpose of the study was to fill the gap in women-in-leadership literature and women-in-politics literature, highlight leadership qualities exhibited by women in government, and expand our theoretical understanding of leadership. The study's focus was on how the women selected to be studied exhibited leadership, how others perceived their leadership, how their leadership changed over time and in different contexts, and what commonalities and differences emerged among the women studied. Through this study, a grounded theory was constructed using a case study and cross-case analysis design by analyzing biographical data, specifically autobiographies and biographies, of women who had served as United States secretary of state.

This chapter begins with my positionality statement in order to situate myself as a researcher. The second section is an in-depth description of the inquiry strategies, the data collection and analysis methods that will be employed. The concluding section reviews the significance and limitations of the study.

Positionality

My positionality has influenced my topic selection and the research design, and, consequently, it's important to address this matter prior to sharing the methodology. There are several factors that influence and shape my positionality.

First, my upbringing has largely shaped who I am today. I am a White American woman brought up in a middle-class family that encouraged challenging societal norms and questioning authority. It was a privilege to be able to challenge authority without fear of retribution, and this privilege, undoubtedly, has a great deal to do with being White and middle class. Within the
women’s movements in the United States, there was historically and is currently a division among White women and women of color. It is important for me to acknowledge my upbringing and bias so I do not repeat the mistakes of the past and to try to make this study both inclusive of other life experiences than my own and sensitive to context. I will do my best to transcend my life experiences.

Second, during my last semester as an undergraduate, I took a class called Women, Power, and Politics. It was my absolute favorite class, and, while I loved that class, it also made me upset when I realized all my other political science and international relations courses lacked perspectives outside the Western White male interpretation. Reflecting on the content of even my favorite class now, I see this class still largely centered the voices of White women in political power. My goal in this study will be to do better in terms of inclusiveness.

Third, shortly after I graduated, I became a high school history and government teacher, where, again, I found the Western Protestant male perspective dominated the stories, perspective, and history that were included in the school’s history curriculum. I did the best I could at that time to change the school’s history curriculum; however, looking back now I see what I ended up teaching was still very Western and White. My redefined curriculum did incorporate stories about women, but they were just mostly White women. I did the best I could with the knowledge I had.

This period of time has been very informative for me to reflect on. When we think of women in politics, women in history, women in government, and women’s movements, I find myself questioning who we are talking about and who it is for. For example, 1992 is known as “The Year of the Woman” because, in the United States, women made record breaking political gains, however most of those women were White, so again, who are we talking about?
After many years of teaching history and government, I came back to higher education and started to expand my understanding of identity and intersectionality, a term coined by Crenshaw (1989). I began to understand the harm in not recognizing the multiple identities people hold and how that influences every aspect of life. This prompted me to learn more about Black feminist thought and the contributions Black women have made in society. Trying to see the world from multiple and intersecting identities had been and continues to be a welcome, but difficult, challenge for me. Hopefully, my approach to this study will demonstrate I am meeting this challenge.

Finally, in 2019, I read Stacey Abrams (2019) book, *Lead from the Outside*, and her book sparked my curiosity and the reasoning for the methodology I chose. There were so many leadership lessons in her book that both resonated with me yet reminded me and reminded me of what is lacking in leadership studies. The book, in short, was another reminder both of how women’s voices have been left out of the development of leadership theories but, also, that women’s leadership in the political arena exists and can be found in autobiographies and biographies.

In summary, I have a clear history of being passionate about government and a pattern and history in my life of wanting to attend to different perspectives, as well as a continuous evolution in my understanding of identities and perspectives. It is important my study is not just about White women’s experiences and that I learn from my past to do better in the future. The aforementioned experiences have influenced my choice topic and the methodology.

**Strategy of Inquiry**

This research study used a case study/cross-case analysis design employing autobiographies and biographies as sources of data. Autobiographies allowed me to examine
how each woman described her leadership. The case study design allowed me to focus on the individual women, create thick rich descriptions of their professional (and personal) experiences, and construct a grounded theory with which to make sense of each individual case. The cross-case analysis provided an opportunity to see if a grounded theory would emerge when looking across all the cases.

**Research Design: Case Studies/Cross-Case Analysis and Grounded Theory**

Due to the uniqueness of the women's experiences, a case study/cross-case design was used in conjunction with grounded theory. Each woman studied was treated as a single case. After the three case study descriptions were constructed, what emerged from studying each woman was compared and contrasted with what emerged from studying the other women.

This design was ideal for the study because by treating each woman's unique experiences as one case before looking across the cases for salient themes, a deeper insight was gained into the nuances of each woman's experiences. The search for nuance in the individual cases included, but was not limited to, how each woman described their leadership and/or how others perceived/described their leadership, as well as how they exhibited and modified their leadership over time in response to changing circumstances and contexts. The context in which each woman emerged was particularly important to fully understand each individual and their experiences. For example, the leadership of Condoleezza Rice, a Black woman who grew up in the South during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, had a different meaning than the leadership of Madeleine Albright, an immigrant from Czechoslovakia who was influential in the late 1990s. The women's identities and the context in which they came from and lived better informed understanding and helped make meaning of the data. Additionally, the study did not set out to generalize all women's leadership. When generalizing in a society that favors one race over
another or one gender over another, the dominant identity becomes the standard. The strength was found in the differences, thus why single case studies were first created before doing a cross-case analysis.

**Data Collection**

I used autobiographies and biographies of three women to collect data. There were an estimated 7,000 federal appointed positions in the U.S. government, in addition to elected positions (United States Government Policy and Supporting Positions, 2016). The study focused on women who had been appointed to one of the highest levels of government. I recognized gender as one of many women's identities and experiences which contributed to and shaped how they showed up and made meaning of leadership. Thus, a study based on women should not have assumed it was representative of all women's experiences, as there were most likely other intersecting identities that were discussed in the autobiographies and biographies.

Women for the study were chosen based on professional accomplishments: specifically, they were the only women to have served as secretary of state in the United States. At the time of this study, there had been seventy-one (71) Secretaries of State. Of those seventy-one, three had been women and two had been African American. In addition to professional achievements, the women had a minimum of four autobiographies and biographies available for review. The amount of resource material available was also considered in selecting the women who would be studied. Each of the women selected for the study had at least one autobiography and two biographies written by/about them, therefore, providing multiple perspectives.

The autobiographies were chosen after researching the author, reviewing other published works, and reading reviews. In cases where there were several biographies about a woman, the biographies selected for study were chosen based on the sources used to produce the biography.
For example, *Chasing Hillary: Ten Years, Two Presidential Campaigns, and One Intact Glass Ceiling*, written by Amy Chozick in 2017, seemed like it might be a good data source; however, after searching the book for sources, I was not able to find any sources other than the author. This book was not included in the study for that reason. For comparison purposes, the author of *A Woman in Charge* interviewed 200 people close to Clinton in addition to using books and articles. I created a spreadsheet, see Appendix B, with every autobiography and biography I could find and recorded the following information about each text: title, author, publication date, publisher, number of pages, awards the text won, author background, other texts written by the author, type of data used to produce the text, whether or not the sources were listed in the text, average rating of the text on Goodreads.com, low Goodreads.com reviews, high Goodreads.com reviews, low Amazon.com reviews, high Amazon.com review, and the reason I included or excluded the text.

Using historical research, in this case, biographical data, was a well-recognized methodology in the political science field and had often been used to understand wars, people, the development of laws, and was similar to the approach used in the development of Great Man theory seen in leadership studies, which looked at men in politics (McNabb, 2010). Historical research was a larger umbrella, under which situated political history and biographical data for collection (McNabb, 2010).

Autobiographies and biographies also fell under the document analysis umbrella as a research methodology. Document analysis was a procedure for analyzing and reviewing documents (Bowen, 2009). Some document types included books, diaries and letters, newspapers, minutes of meetings, maps, scripts, reports, public records, and press releases. The
term "biographical data" was chosen for this study due to the specification of the source of data and the familiarity of the term in the field of political science.

In traditional grounded theory, interviews and observations were standard; however, autobiographies and biographies were considered "as potentially valuable for generating theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 163). Biographical research as data collection was chosen for three reasons. First, on March 23, 2022, Madeleine Albright passed away from cancer at the age of eighty-four (84). She was instrumental in challenging the status quo, and her contributions to advancing women in leadership cannot be overlooked. Therefore, biographical research methods were one of the only methodologies available to study how she exhibited leadership. Second, due to the depth and breadth of information provided in autobiographies and biographies. The final reason for using biographical data was due to the concern of obtaining access to high-level officials.

**Autobiographies and Biographies**

It was not uncommon to think of elected officials when thinking of women in politics. These were the women seen in commercials and Facebook advertisements and whose names were on ballots. In addition to running for elected office, however, many powerful women gained their seats at the table by becoming experts in their fields, most commonly foreign relations, and then joining an administration as advisors and appointed officials. This study focused on women in politics, and the term, as used here, at least, encompassed women who had been appointed to positions, not solely women who ran for office. Descriptions of each woman selected for this study follow.

**Case Study #1: Madeleine Albright.** Dr. Madeleine Albright, an immigrant from Czechoslovakia, born in 1937, had a long professional history in foreign relations. Albright
served on the National Security Council and the Council of Foreign Relations, was the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama. Albright became the first woman to serve as U.S. secretary of state in 1997 during the Clinton Administration, which was why she was chosen for this study. Table 2 summarized the Albright-related books I reviewed for this study.

**Table 2**

*Data Sources for Madeleine Albright*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madeleine Albright</th>
<th>Autobiographies</th>
<th>Biographies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Year Published</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hell and Other</em></td>
<td>Madeleine Albright</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Read my Pins:</em></td>
<td>Madeleine Albright</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Destinations: A 21st Century Memoir</em></td>
<td>Madeleine Albright</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Stories from a Diplomat’s Jewel Box</em></td>
<td>Madeleine Albright</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Madam Secretary: A Memoir</em></td>
<td>Ann Blackman</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the three autobiographies written by Albright, this study also used two biographies. The first, *Seasons of Her Life: A Biography* by Ann Blackman, was published in 1998, during which time Blackman was a journalist for TIME magazine. Blackman's career has mainly focused on covering politics and foreign affairs.

The second biography used was *Madeleine Albright: A Twentieth Century Odyssey* by Michael Dobbs, published in 1999. For more than 30 years, and during the time of publication, Dobbs was a foreign correspondent for The Washington Post. While researching Albright, prior to publishing the book, Dobbs authored an article for The Washington Post in which he uncovered Albright’s family connection to the Holocaust. Dobbs discovered Albright’s
grandparents, uncle, aunt, and first cousin died in Nazi concentration camps. Due to Dobbs tracing Albright’s family history, he was awarded the 1997 George Polk Award for International Reporting.

**Case Study #2: Condoleezza Rice.** Dr. Condoleezza Rice, born in 1954, was an American diplomat, public servant, author, and professor specializing in political science. In 2001, Rice became the first woman to be appointed to the position of National Security Advisor. Shortly after, in 2005, Rice became the first Republican woman and first Black woman to serve as secretary of state. Table 3 summarized the Rice-related books that were reviewed for this study.

**Table 3**

*Data Sources for Condoleezza Rice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year Published</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington</td>
<td>Condoleezza Rice</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condi: The Condoleezza Rice Story</td>
<td>Antonia Felix</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice as Good: Condoleezza Rice and Her Path to Power</td>
<td>Marcus Mabry</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the two autobiographies, three biographies have been included. The first, *Condoleezza Rice: An American Life: A Biography*, written by Elizabeth Bumiller and published
in 2007, is based on 10 interviews with Rice and 150 interviews with others close to her.

Bumiller is a writer for the New York Times and has been a journalist since the 1980s.

The second biography, *Condi: The Condoleezza Rice Story*, was written by Antonia Felix and published in 2005. Felix is the author of 22 nonfiction books. In addition to her biography on Condoleezza Rice, she has published biographies on Elizabeth Warren, Sonia Sotomayor, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, to name a few.

The third biography, *Twice as Good: Condoleezza Rice and Her Path to Power*, was written by Marcus Mabry and published in 2007. Mabry is currently the vice president of global programming at CNN. Prior to joining CNN, he spent ten years as a political correspondent with the New York Times and twenty years with Newsweek.

**Case Study #3: Hillary Rodham Clinton.** Hillary Rodham Clinton, born in 1947, was an American politician, author, and former first lady of the United States of America. In 2000, Clinton ran for Senate and won, becoming the first female senator from New York. During the first three weeks in January 2001, after being elected to the Senate, she held both the title of first lady and senator, the first in history. In 2008, Clinton ran for president, only to lose the Democratic nomination to Barack Obama. Clinton later became secretary of state during the Obama Administration. In 2016, Clinton ran for president for a second time, becoming the first woman to earn a presidential nomination for a major political party. While she lost the election, she became the first woman to win the popular vote, earning over 65 million votes. Table 4 summarized the Rodham Clinton-related books that were reviewed for this study.

**Table 4**

*Data Sources for Hillary Rodham Clinton*
In addition to the two autobiographies written by Clinton, this study also used two biographies. The first, *A Woman in Charge*, was written by Carl Bernstein and published in 2008. Bernstein has had a lengthy and impactful career in journalism. In the early 1970s, Bernstein and Woodward, both working for the Washington Post, broke the Watergate story for which they were awarded the Pulitzer Prize (The Pulitzer Prizes, 1972). Bernstein went on to write numerous books including *All the President’s Men, His Holiness, The Final Days*, and *Loyalties: A Son’s Memoir*.

The second biography, *The Secretary: A Journey with Hillary Clinton from Beirut to the Heart of American Power*, written by Kim Ghattas, was published in 2013 and has a narrow scope of only focusing on her time as secretary of state. Ghattas is a BBC correspondent who focuses on the State Department and has won an Emmy for her coverage of the Lebanon-Israel conflict in 2006.

**Data Analysis**

The initial stage of data collection began with formulating a written context for each of the autobiographies and biographies. Constructivist grounded theory oriented methodologist, Charmaz (2006), wrote, “People construct texts for specific purposes and they do so within social, economic, historical, cultural, and situational contexts” (p. 35). I first started by providing
a description of the time period and key issues, and I used somewhat modified versions of some of the questions outlined by Charmaz (2006) to further guide the written context:

1. Who was the author? This question was important specifically when addressing my first research question: How were women describing their leadership, and how were others, specifically the authors of the biographies, describing their leadership?

2. What was the ostensible purpose of the text? Might the text have served other unstated or assumed purposes? Which ones? (Charmaz, 2006, p. 39). This set of questions helped me further understand why this text was written and who the text was written for. Understanding this helped me critically engage with the text.

3. What was happening politically, socially, culturally, and economically during the construction of this text? This question was important in creating a frame of reference for the text. For example, a book written in the 1990s was written during a very different political, social, economic, and cultural time period in the United States when compared to a text written in 2014.

4. Which realities did the text claim to represent? How did it represent them? (Charmaz, 2006, p. 40). These questions helped me better understand the perspective the authors were taking. For example, a text written by Hillary Clinton about her personal experience had a different reality presented compared to a text written by a journalist. Additionally, examining the realities the text claimed to represent also provided insight into the social context in which the women emerged and existed.

5. Who benefited from this text? Why? (Charmaz, 2006, p. 40). Understanding the beneficiaries of the text further helped me critically analyze and engage with each text. This close examination of the text helped me better study each text (Charmaz, 2006).
During data analysis, there were two phases of coding. The first phase of coding was the initial phase in which open coding occurred in an attempt to develop core categories. Codes were constructed category by category; they were active, short, and immediate with a focus on “defining action, explicating implicit assumptions, and seeing processes” (Charmaz, 2005. p. 517). Data was coded into as many categories of analysis as possible (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). During the first phase of coding, I examined all the texts written about one woman before moving on to the next set of texts about another woman. This allowed me to begin to create a case study for each woman.

I took a constructivist approach to grounded theory and therefore entered the first phase of coding with some existing knowledge of what I might find in the texts (Charmaz, 2006) as it related to women’s leadership. To help guide me in this process and to ultimately organize my coding, I focused my analysis on the leadership specific to each woman’s profession. This study did not seek to understand how teachers in their childhoods influenced their leadership, nor did it include leadership they exhibited in the home as a partner or parent. In addition to focusing on women’s leadership in relation to their profession, I also used a subset of questions to help organize data. The sub questions were modeled after the feminist leadership diamond, as shown in Figure 4, which included four elements: power, principles and values, politics and purpose, and practices (Batilwala, 2008).

**Figure 4**

*Feminist Leadership Diamond*
This framework was chosen not because I wanted to see if the women in the study exhibited feminist leadership, but because the model was useful in thinking beyond traditional leadership frameworks focused on elements such as effectiveness, influencing, decision making, and personalities. The feminist leadership diamond helped me map and organize the codes that emerged from the data. Below were questions for each aspect of the diamond that I considered as I engaged with the data.

1. **Power:** How was each woman interacting with power? How was each woman exerting power? How was each woman responding to others with power?

2. **Principles and values:** What were the values that were guiding each woman’s behavior? What were the principles that were guiding each woman’s action? What were each woman’s non-negotiables as they related to their profession? How did these values, principles, and non-negotiables show up in their career?

3. **Politics and purpose:** What was the ideological lens that informed each woman’s analysis of socio-economic realities? How did these realities influence each woman’s long-term vision and mission?
4. Practices: How was each woman assessing the political environment and opportunities and anticipating political reactions? How was each woman developing and implementing directional strategies? How was each woman building relationships with colleagues and stakeholders? What were the communication strategies created by each woman? How were each woman's skills at obtaining resources? How was each woman managing staff?

These questions were meant to help organize, not limit, as I worked through the data. Additionally, some of the questions were not addressed in every autobiography and biography.

The second phase, focused coding, was more directed, conceptual, and selective (Charmaz, 2006). This process took place after I had determined the most significant and frequent codes from phase one. Memoing occurred throughout the data analysis phase. Special attention was paid to tensions emerging in the data, my personal thoughts, reflections, and additional questions, comparisons between data, codes, concepts, and categories, and patterns. Through the practice of memoing, I was able to reflect on the data but also on how I perceived leadership and experiences. It served as a way for me to circle back with my positionality, allow for reflexivity, and ensure my biases were not inserted into the analysis. Due to the comparative nature of grounded theory, while analyzing autobiographies and biographies, I continuously compared data with data, data with categories, and categories with categories (Charmaz, 2005). This study employed what Glaser and Strauss (1999) deemed the constant comparative method in grounded theory.

The final step in data analysis was theoretical integration, during which I took the generated codes and shaped them into a working theory. This was where I moved from defining what happened to making meaning of the data. See Figure 5 for a visual representation of data analysis, which was done for each case followed by a cross-case analysis.
In grounded theory, the concern of trustworthiness in findings could be addressed in theoretical saturation (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2018). The use of autobiographies and biographies provided me with multiple perspectives on each case and could be considered a form of triangulation. This triangulation helped me create rich descriptions and reach theoretical saturation faster (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2018). Additionally, employing a constant comparative method allowed me to test theoretical saturation at different levels and stages of data collection and analysis. The constant comparative method followed the four-step approach as outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1999), “(1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing and theory” (p. 105). Lastly, providing the reader with an in-depth description of analysis and
outlining the link from original data to the generated theory added to the trustworthiness of the findings (Elo et al., 2014).

A point of clarification was needed to explain why this study did not use content analysis. At the surface, due to the use of biographical research as data collection, this method would have seemed a possible choice. While it could have worked, grounded theory paired with case study/cross-case analysis was the preferred methodology. Content analysis and grounded theory, while both followed similar coding processes, did not emphasize theory development or uncovering relationships among categories (Cho & Lee, 2014). Additionally, the constant comparative analysis used throughout the data analysis indicated that the use of grounded theory was preferred to a more linear content analysis. Lastly, this study laid the foundation for a larger research agenda, and the theory generated would guide future decisions of data collection and analysis.
CHAPTER 4

Findings

The purpose of my study was to investigate (a) how women who have served as U.S. secretary of state exhibited leadership; (b) how others perceived their leadership; (c) how their leadership changed over time and in different contexts; and (d) what commonalities and differences emerged among the women studied. Through this study, I constructed a grounded theory using a case study and cross-case analysis design by analyzing biographical data (i.e., autobiographies and biographies) of three women: Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Case Study 1 - Madeleine Albright

Themes identified in the case study of Madeleine Albright, illustrated in Figure 6, include:

1. Influence of identity: Albright’s national origin and identity as a Czech American woman shaped her beliefs and leadership style.

2. Leadership style: Albright’s leadership was characterized by humor, relentlessness, and a direct communication style.

3. Relationship manager: Albright’s ability to navigate relationships with individuals in positions of power was a key factor in her success as a leader.

Figure 6

Albright Leadership
In 1996, Dr. Madeleine Albright was nominated to be the U.S. secretary of state; several weeks later her nomination was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and she was sworn in, making her the first woman to hold the position. She received confirmation from the U.S. Senate in a vote of 99-0-1, with 99 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention. Albright served as the 64th secretary of state from 1997 to 2001. Prior to becoming the first female secretary of state, Albright was the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. This case study examined her leadership from both prestigious positions.

In the memoir, Madam Secretary, Albright (2003) started with an introduction explaining what the readers can expect from her book, “It reflects the turbulence of the past century, the expanding and changing roles of women, and the clash between those around the world with faith in freedom and those who place power above human values” (p. xi). Interestingly, this introduction statement captures many, but not all, of the themes explored in this case study. There were several themes that emerged while exploring five sources of data, including: three
autobiographies, and two biographies. First, Albright’s identity largely shaped how she saw the world, her purpose in the world, and how she chose to show up in her role as secretary of state. She leaned into her identity as a woman and Czech American. Her identities influenced her belief in democracy and her optimistic view of individuals and the world. Second, Albright’s leadership style was a mix of humor, relentlessness, and opted for a direct communication style, all of which were strongly built around the foundational goal of cultivating relationships. Third, she was a relationship manager, she built and maintained relationships with colleagues, international leaders, and counterparts. Her ability to navigate those relationships, specifically with individuals holding power, contributed to her ability to lead and her successes.

Key Figures

As the U.S. secretary of state and UN ambassador, Madeleine Albright worked with several domestic and international figures. Their titles reflect their position at the time Albright was interacting with them.

- Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic
- Bill Clinton, President of the United States
- Slobodan Milošević, President of Serbia
- Boris Yeltsin, President of Russia
- Kim Jong-il, Supreme Leader of North Korea
- Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority
- Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister of Israel
- Jiang Zemin, President of China
- Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
Influence of Identity

The influence of identity was paramount in understanding Madeleine Albright’s leadership journey. Rooted in her Czech American heritage, Albright’s upbringing and experiences shaped her worldview and leadership style. Her family’s flight from Czechoslovakia in 1949, seeking political asylum in the United States, marked a pivotal moment in her life. Albright’s reflections on her dual identity as both an American and a Czechoslovakian underscore the complex interplay between her national origin and her values. Raised in a household where anti-Communist sentiments ran deep, Albright’s political opinions were profoundly influenced by her heritage. Despite embracing her American identity, Albright remained deeply connected to her Czech roots, as evidenced by her efforts to promote democracy and human rights in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, Albright’s gender also played a significant role in shaping her leadership approach, as she navigated gender discrimination both domestically and on the global stage. Through her unwavering optimism, commitment to democracy, and advocacy for gender equality, Albright’s leadership embodied the intricate intersection of identity, values, and leadership.

Czech American Identity

Albright’s father was a diplomat and professor. She developed much of her worldview in part due to how her father saw the world. Albright’s siblings referred to her as her father reincarnated (Dobbs, 1999, p. 141). Albright and her family fled Czechoslovakia in 1949 after being granted political asylum in the United States. Upon arriving in the United States, Albright and her family moved to Denver, Colorado, where her father became a professor at the
University of Denver in one of the first international relations departments (Blackman, 1998, p. 105). About relocating to the United States, Albright (2003) said:

Although I had become an American, I couldn’t separate myself from the struggles in Europe. As much as I wanted to be like my American contemporaries, I was not. I had spent nights in a bomb shelter. I had felt in my own life some of the disruption war could cause. My family had been driven from its homeland by admirers of Stalin. These experiences made me a person with strong opinions, and I had been born with a tendency to express them. (p. 43)

Albright shared this statement when discussing her thesis topic. Albright acknowledged her national origin and experience during childhood as having influenced her political opinions and how she spent most of her career. Albright stated, “I was strongly anti-Communist both by heredity and conviction” (Albright, 2003, p. 61). Albright was heavily influenced by her Czech identity, but when speaking to people from the Czech Republic, she reflected on how her upbringing in the United States distinguished her from her Czech friends:

My way of thinking had been shaped by my coming of age as a free American. As I explained how a democratic government should function, what it meant to own your own business, how important individual rights were, and why there must be no restrictions on the media, I tried not to sound patronizing. (Albright, 2003, p. 119)

Albright’s Czech identity and influences were known amongst her colleagues. Vaclav Havel, former president of the Czech Republic, said, “She knows what it means when the powerful decide about the less powerful” (Blackman, 1998, p. 13). Albright stayed connected to Czech citizens yet also was very different from them, being raised in the United States.
Albright was raised Christian but later learned from an investigative reporter, Michael Dobbs, that her relatives were Jewish and murdered by Hitler. After this news broke, Albright recalled being asked how she felt now that she is Jewish. Reflecting on her identities, Albright shared, “As an adult, I have always viewed myself first as an American and second as a Czechoslovak, but for me, as for my parents, identity is primarily a question of nationality and values, not blood” (Albright, 2003, p. 251). Albright’s unique Czech American identity laid the foundation for her world views and later her career goals.

**Optimist**

Albright was an optimist in her approach to global problems. She identified as an optimist when recalling her approach as a UN ambassador:

> During my years as a diplomat, I naturally thought in global terms. As an optimist, I hoped to strengthen international acceptance of the idea that terrorism is wrong, just as genocide, ethnic cleansing, slavery, apartheid, and racism are wrong. (Albright, 2003, p. 379)

Albright saw the potential in the United Nations and the possibility of achieving global goals yet understood the slow process of diplomacy and bureaucracy. This hope and frustration were recalled by Albright:

> Throughout my years at the UN, I had two contradictory feelings. At optimistic moments I thought, “Isn’t it remarkable that the Security Council is actively striving to ease suffering and end conflicts, including some not even international, but rather inside countries, in remote corners of the globe?” On bad days I would think, “Why are we sitting around here arguing about commas when people are dying?” (Albright, 2003, p. 140).
Albright’s optimism and her Czech American identity influenced how she saw the world and the potential for each country and individual.

**Democracy**

In addition to being an optimist, Albright was a firm believer in democracy. These two identifiers are connected; one must be optimistic to believe democracy can be globally adopted. Albright started her autobiography with a reflection on her guiding star; she stated, “It is important, however, to have some guiding star. For me that star has always been faith in the democratic promise that each person should be able to go as far as her or his talents will allow” (Albright, 2003, p. xiv). She ended her book with a similar reflection, “Throughout my years in government, democracy was my theme” (Albright, 2003, p. 504). In addition to explicitly stating she believed in the power of democracy, this theme is demonstrated through her work with the UN and as secretary of state. When Albright became secretary of state, she quoted her father during her swearing-in ceremony, stating her father was the one “who taught me to love freedom” (Blackman, 1998, p. 16). In this statement, she connected her optimism and upbringing.

Albright’s core belief in democracy was one of the reasons she challenged Milosevic, the then President of Serbia. One of the chapters in her autobiography is titled “Milosevic is the Problem” (Albright, 2003, p. 381). Albright believed “Milosevic was the last powerful obstacle to the integration of the Balkans into a democratic Europe” (Albright, 2003, p. 383). In her attempt to democratize Eastern Europe, Albright met with Serb and Albanian leaders to persuade them to agree to her proposal:

My message to the Albanians was the mirror image of my arguments to the Serbs. “You are leaders. You have been chosen to represent your people. Think carefully before you
condemn them to a future of fighting. The agreement we have proposed will give you self-government, NATO protection, economic help, the right to educate children in your own language, and the ability to exercise control over your lives. If you accept it, you will move toward a future of prosperity, democracy, and integration with Europe. Reject it, and the outcome will be a war you will lose, along with international support.

(Albright, 2003, p. 402)

Milosevic had already started three wars and was prepared to start another. He was responsible for provoking mass killings and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. Albright’s guiding star, her belief in the democratic promise, drove her work in Serbia.

**Gender**

Given that gender discrimination is often exhibited by those in power, it is no surprise that when Albright was asked if her gender influenced how she was received by individuals around the world and in Arab nations, she replied, “No, because when I arrived somewhere, it was in a large plane with ‘United States of America’ emblazoned on the side. Foreign officials respected that. I had more problems with some of the men in my own government” (Albright, 2003, p. xii). Similarly, in an interview with the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan was asked about Albright and gender dynamics. Annan stated “Being the only woman brought its own dynamics to the situation…I don’t think it bothered her much. It may have bothered some of the others more than it bothered her” (Blackman, 1998, p. 237).

Albright’s gender and passion for gender equality prompted her to set up a coalition of female UN ambassadors, while a UN ambassador herself, with the promise of always taking each other’s phone calls. Out of the 180 countries represented at the time, there were only six other countries with female representatives: Canada, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Philippines,
and Trinidad-Tobago. This newly formed female caucus upset a few male representatives “who didn’t think it logical that the ambassador of Liechtenstein could get through to the U.S. ambassador more readily than they could.” She added, “I told them the solution was for them to give up their posts to women, which stopped them cold” (Albright, 2003, p. 196). The female caucus demonstrated Albright’s belief in advancing women and the importance of relationship building. Her quick wit and humor were able to quiet those who opposed her decision to form the caucus. As secretary of state, Albright convened the world’s women foreign ministers each year during the UN General Assembly sessions in New York.

During her time at the UN, Albright and Hillary Clinton bonded over their belief and passion for gender equality. This continued during her time as secretary of state. In recalling this relationship, Albright stated:

Our shared goal was to move beyond lip service and afterthoughts to convey the message to each State Department bureau and embassy that I cared about whether women were included in democracy-building projects, whether programs were underway to combat violence against women, whether microenterprise was being encouraged to give women access to credit, whether the special needs of women refugees were being met, and whether family planning programs were being given the priority they deserved. To dramatize this commitment, I insisted on meeting with groups of women activists whenever possible on my trips overseas. (Albright, 2003, pp. 342–343)

Albright did spend some time reflecting on things she, as a woman, could not get away with, however, other world representatives could because they were men. When recalling her time at Camp David with Yasser Arafat, foreign minister of Palestine at the time, and Ehud
Barak, Israeli Prime minister, at the time, Albright described the gender differences when recalling the negotiations:

Negotiations inevitably lead to some playacting. Sometimes it’s useful to pretend that you have a warmer relationship than you actually do. At other times, a show of anger or walking out is useful. I believe it’s unacceptable, however, for leaders to let tantrums obstruct important initiatives. If women leaders had acted the way Arafat and Barak did during Camp David, they would have been dismissed as menopausal. (Albright, 2003, p. 493)

Over the years, Albright became known for wearing pins. The idea of writing a book about her pins terrified Albright and for many years, she refused to consider the idea posed to her by her chief of staff, Elaine Shocas. When Shocas first asked Albright to write a coffee table type book about her pins, Albright responded by stating, “You’ve lost it. You want the first woman Secretary of State to publish a book about her jewelry? I won’t do it in a million years” (Albright, 2020, p. 274). Albright worried the book would jeopardize her ability to command respect in a field focused on poverty, ending genocides, and furthering democracy. Six years later, Albright caved and decided to write the book about her pins.

The book was received better than anticipated. According to Pulitzer Prize-winning fashion critic, Robin Givhan, quoted in Hell and Other Destinations but published in the Washington Post, “Albright has done what no glass-ceiling busting, power-broking, globe-trotting diplomat has attempted: written a book that speaks directly to her personal style and emerged with her brainy reputation unscathed” (Albright, 2020, p. 287). Quite the praise yet it would not soften the blow for the women who followed her, Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Rodham Clinton, who were both criticized for their fashion style.
Albright’s leadership journey underscores the significant influence of identity on leadership style and approach. Her Czech American background and upbringing profoundly shaped her worldview and values, contributing to her diplomatic strategies and decision-making. Albright’s commitment to democracy, human rights, and gender equality remained consistent themes throughout her career, reflecting the importance of authenticity and purpose in leadership. As a prominent figure in diplomacy and politics, Albright’s experiences serve as a valuable lesson on the impact of identity in shaping leadership principles and guiding global initiatives.

**Leadership Style**

Albright’s leadership style was distinguished by her unique blend of humor, relentlessness, and direct communication. Utilizing humor as both a personal trait and a diplomatic tool, Albright employed clever one-liners and self-deprecating humor to defuse tense situations and connect with colleagues and adversaries alike. Her wit was evident in her interactions at the United Nations, where she cultivated a reputation for her quick wit and clever remarks. Whether facing criticism from foreign diplomats or navigating delicate negotiations, Albright’s humor served as a valuable asset in fostering understanding and easing tensions. Additionally, Albright’s unwavering determination and persistence were evident throughout her tenure, as she tirelessly pursued her agenda and stood firm in her beliefs. From navigating diplomatic standoffs to advocating for U.S. interests on the world stage, Albright’s direct approach and assertive demeanor were hallmarks of her leadership style.

**Humor**

Throughout Albright’s autobiographies, she regularly inserted witty one-liners, and readers can easily grasp her humor; however, humor appears more than just in her reflections on
past events, it was a leadership tool she used regularly and effectively. Albright used humor as a tool to defuse negotiations and further conversations. She also used humor as a way to respond to those in power challenging her.

During her time as UN ambassador, Albright “developed a reputation for her clever one-liners” (Blackman, 1998, p. 245). Part of Albright’s “approach was occasionally to use the element of surprise by being self-deprecating in a world [where] that tactic was rarely practiced” (Albright, 2003, p. 165). Her self-deprecating approach was a style of humor employed to lighten the mood and even her recollection of this tactic was shared in a humorous tone. Others agreed Albright was full of witty humor. After giving a speech, the Washington Post wrote, “Ambassador Albright, not known as a laff riot, wowed the crowd with a batch of deadpan one-liners” (Albright, 2003, p. 139). After the press was first introduced to the humorous Albright, her new colleagues and foreign counterparts would soon experience this firsthand, where her “colleagues enjoyed her winning personality and her self-deprecating sense of humor” (Blackman, 1998, p. 237).

In a long emergency UN security council meeting discussing an incident in which the Cuban government shot down two planes, Albright (2003) recalled her response to the Cuban ambassador denouncing her as a liar:

Feeling I had kept my colleagues up too long, I was also willing to forgo my statement as the American representative and only read out the presidential statement of condemnation. It was 3:30 A.M. by the time the Cuban had finished a wildly anti-American diatribe. I heard myself denounced as a scheming imperialist liar but couldn’t respond because I had given up my right to speak in my national capacity. In the end UN protocol gave me an opportunity to strike back, albeit with honey, not vinegar. The first
time a council president is addressed with words of congratulations by another
ambassador, a script prepared by UN staff directs the appropriate response. When my
accuser finished, the room grew silent. I looked down at the scripted reply and said, “I
thank the Cuban representative for his statement, and for his kind words addressed to
me.” Council members who were not asleep laughed at this bizarre bit of theater, and we
all headed home to bed. (p. 205)

Albright frequently used humor as a tool to ease tension and humanize herself. In her
autobiography, she recalled a memory of her and Russian prime minister, Primakov, singing
during an intense period with Russia:

In between discussions on the Balkans and Iraq, we came up with a story about star-
crossed lovers we called the East-West Story. The night before the performance, we held
a raucous rehearsal in my room–the Douglas MacArthur Suite–at the Manila Hotel.
Primakov was the Tony character, backed by his gang, “the Yankees.” The next day, our
staffs put out word there would be a “rumble” that night, but few got the reference until
the Russkies and Yankees took stage with snapping fingers and menacing looks. I entered
from the left wearing an embroidered barong blouse, singing, “The most beautiful sound
I ever heard - Yevgeny, Yevgeny, Yevgeny,” to which Primakov replied in his thick
Russian accent, “Madeleine Albright–I just met a girl named Madeleine Albright.” This
parody too was a hit and, more important, helped ease our relations with the Russians at a
difficult time. (Albright, 2003, p. 349)

Albright does not share any humorous stories or memories when discussing her dealings
with Milosevic. Additionally, there were not any memories shared about her spending time
building a relationship with Milosevic. She did, however, spend time building relationships with other foreign leaders that helped her cause with Milosevic.

While Albright was UN ambassador, North Korea had announced they were withdrawing from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and, in response, the Clinton administration was considering all options to deter the withdrawal, including airstrikes. During a UN session, the North Korean representative gave a speech in which he criticized Albright. Not taking the bait to engage in a fight, Albright responded with humor while still calling out the representative for his rhetoric. Albright replied, “Saturday is my birthday, and although I am sure this was not the intention, I would like to thank the DPRK representative for making me feel forty years younger with his rhetoric from the deepest depths of the Cold War” (Albright, 2003, p. 459).

**Relentless**

Albright was grounded in her beliefs which allowed her to remain relentless in pursuit of her agenda. This was a theme throughout her time as UN ambassador and secretary of state. In February 1996, Albright held the UN ambassador position; two humanitarian planes were shot down by Cuba’s government over international water. Albright called an emergency session of the Security Council and drafted a statement condemning the killing and requesting the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conduct a formal investigation. The following day, in an informal session, the Chinese ambassador began trying to stall the statement condemning the killing. First, he suggested the council wait until the Cuban foreign minister arrived. Albright said, “No. The foreign minister had been in Europe when the killings occurred and later flew to Mexico City. It was his fault he wasn’t there” (Albright, 2003, p. 205). The Chinese diplomat then continued to delay by stating he couldn’t move forward with agreeing to the statement until hearing from his government in China. Albright allowed for a recess, but the
meeting would resume at 11:00 pm that night. Upon returning, the Chinese ambassador said he still had not received instructions from his government. Albright, fed-up with his delay tactics, said, “Perhaps we should turn this statement into a resolution and have an official vote.


During a 4-hour debate regarding sanctions and consequences for Milosevic, Albright (2003) recalled her determination:

The debate grew heated, and as I listened I doodled on my writing pad with fierce energy.

Having come into the meeting prepared to state my strong views clearly, I was determined not to betray the trust of those who looked to America for leadership. At one point the ordinarily hawkish Jamie Ruben urged me to compromise on a particular measure. I glared and said, “Jamie, do you think we’re in Munich?” (p. 385)

In this instance, Albright’s grounded identity, combined with her witty sense of humor and relentless determination to achieve her goals, helped her to push through and a consensus was achieved, except for Russia (Albright, 2003, p. 385).

Albright’s ability to advance the U.S. agenda only increased with her job titles. She notes this in her position on threatening to use force if Milosevic attacked Kosovo. In a meeting with Bob Gelbard, Strobe Talbott, and Sandy Berger, Albright stated, “Five years ago, when I proposed using force in Bosnia, Tony Lake never let me finish my argument. Well, now I’m Secretary of State and I’m going to insist we at least have this discussion.” After, Berger said, “The way you people at the State Department talk about bombing, you sound like lunatics” (Albright, 2003, p. 386). A couple of months later, Albright again pushed her view that the threat of force was needed to stop Milosevic:
I made my case yet again to my administration colleagues, arguing that if we did not act, the crisis would spread, more people would die, we would look weak, pressure would build, and we would end up resorting to force anyway under even more difficult and tragic circumstances. (Albright, 2003, p. 390)

This time her argument prevailed when “NATO issued a formal warning that airstrikes would be authorized if the Serb offensive continued” (Albright, 2003, p. 391).

Several months after the October agreement with Milosevic, 45 people were massacred in the town of Racak, Kosovo. This prompted Albright to return to push her original strategy “that would combine force and diplomacy to stop Milosevic without turning Kosovo over to KLA guerillas” (Albright, 2003, p. 397). Part of this strategy included getting the six-member Contact Group of NATO to agree to use the threat of force. Russia, a Contact Group member, would be the biggest obstacle.

Albright flew to Russia and met with Igor Ivanov, the foreign minister, to discuss Kosovo and Milosevic, saying:

Look, Igor, I said, I’ll tell it to you straight. If Kosovo explodes, we’ll face huge obstacles in working together on a whole range of issues. We can’t let that happen. There has to be a political settlement. But the Albanians won’t lay down their arms unless NATO is there to protect them. And Milosevic will never allow NATO in unless we threaten force. The Europeans are worried about your reaction if NATO tries to act without going to the Security Council, but I can’t entrust this to the council, because Milosevic knows you will veto force, which means our threats won’t be credible, which means there will be no political settlement, which means war in Kosovo. This is a real Catch-22. (Albright, 2003, p. 399)
Ivanov responded by stating “Russia will never agree to airstrikes against the Serbs;” however, we do “share your desire for political settlement and perhaps the threat of force is needed to achieve that” (Albright, 2003, p. 400). Albright had succeeded in getting every player on board with her plan.

**Direct**

In her quest to achieve her goals, Albright’s relentlessness included direct and indirect approaches. Her indirect approach is seen in her use of her pins. Albright wore specific pins to make statements and push her agenda without having to speak. Albright (2009) refers to this tactic “as a diplomatic tool” (p. 15) and part of her “diplomatic arsenal” (p. 20).

Albright referred to her pins “as a way of “sending a message” (Albright, 2009, p. 17). She purposefully wore a serpent pin while meeting with Iraqi officials after a government-controlled Iraqi press published a poem referring to Albright as a serpent. When negotiations were going slow, Albright wore turtle pins, which she had many, and a crab for when she was aggravated with the progress (Albright, 2009, p. 86). In her negotiations with Yasser Arafat, she wore a bee, symbolizing she was prepared and going to deliver a sharp message. Recalling this pin, Albright stated:

> Muhamad Ali used to boast that he would “float like a butterfly, sting like a bee”; my message was that America would try to resolve every controversy peacefully, but if pushed into a corner, we had both the will and a way to strike back” (Albright, 2009, p. 93)

The pins Albright chose to wear did not go unnoticed. According to Albright, Vladimir Putin told President Clinton he often checked to see what pin Albright was wearing and attempted to figure out the meaning behind the choice (Albright, 2009, p. 110). Albright often
wore a ladybug when she was feeling happy and hot air balloons when she was hopeful (Albright, 2009, p. 88). While her pins were an indirect way of communicating with foreign powers, Albright was known for being very direct with her words.

While Albright was UN ambassador, she began to, as she put it, “discover her own voice” (Albright, 2003, p. 203). During her time as ambassador, “Albright was assertive and never hesitated to make her point during the breakfast sessions, although less so when the group gathered for more formal meetings in the Situation Room” (Blackman, 1998, p. 234).

Recalling her first Security Council meeting, Albright stated:

The other fourteen permanent representatives, all men, also sat and folded their arms in front of them. I thought immediately that if I lived to write my memoirs, I would call the book Fourteen Suits and a Skirt. I found myself struggling between instinct and duty. As a woman, I wanted to get a sense of who was who and what the dynamics among the players were before speaking. As the American delegate, I knew I had to speak up if I wanted my country’s views to be heard. After a few minutes I took a deep breath and raised my hand. (Albright, 2003, p. 137)

Albright found her voice and over time honed in on her ability to be a force in the room. This discovery continued into her role as secretary of state and became a characteristic her colleagues and foreign counterparts could count on. Kofi Annan stated he “admired her bluntness” (Blackman, 1998, p. 238).

Three months in as secretary of state, an assassination attempt was made against former President Bush. The FBI determined Iraqi intelligence agents were behind the plot and retaliation plans were made. Albright was responsible for communicating and informing the Iraqi
permanent resident that the United States was in the process of launching cruise missiles at a
target in the capital of Iraq. In recalling this assignment, Albright states:,

Because it was a weekend, and UN buildings were locked, I visited Iraqi Ambassador
Niar Hamdun at his residence on Manhattan's Upper East Side. When I arrived, I was
escorted into a spacious wood-paneled room and seated on a sofa beneath a jumbo-sized
portrait of Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi ambassador came in, we exchanged pleasantries,
and he offered me tea. “So what brings you here today?” he asked with a slight smile. He
was clearly surprised by my visit, and even more by my message. I said, “Well, I’m here
to tell you we are bombing your country because you tried to assassinate former President
Bush.” (Albright, 2003, p. 275)

Hamdun denied the assassination attempt, calling Albright’s statement an “outrageous lie”
Albright kept firm and direct; she invited Hamdun to the Security Council where she planned to
share the evidence with all UN representatives. She then rose, thanked him, and left quickly.

During one of Albright’s first trips as secretary of state, she was to fly to Moscow and
meet with the Russian foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov. Primakov was concerned Albright
had the same views of Russia as a former professor from Albright’s university who was “anti-
Russian” (Albright, 2003, p. 255). Albright replied:

I respect him very much. But I have my own opinions and you shouldn’t judge me based
on my past association with anyone. I know you are a fierce defender of Russian
interests. You should understand I intend to be equally fierce in defending American
interests. If we both acknowledge that, we should get along fine. (Albright, 2003, p. 255)

Although she was direct in her beliefs and role, she also took time to build a relationship
with Primakov. Prior to leaving Russia, Albright gave Primakov a gift for his newly born
granddaughter. The gift was a picture of President Clinton and Albright. On the photo, Albright wrote, in Russian, “Little Mary, when you were born, your grandfather and I were trying to do something to make the world a better place for you to live” (Albright, 2003, p. 255). This gesture highlights her belief in democracy and building relationships.

Albright’s leadership style, marked by humor, relentlessness, and direct communication, stands as a testament to her significant contributions to diplomacy. Her adept use of humor as both a personal trait and a diplomatic tool allowed her to navigate complex negotiations and build relationships effectively. Albright’s unwavering determination and persistence, combined with her straightforward approach to diplomacy, highlighted her commitment to advancing U.S. interests and fostering global stability.

**Relationship Manager**

Albright’s ability to navigate relationships with individuals in positions of power was a key factor in her success as a leader. Albright spent a significant amount of time building relationships which ultimately helped her negotiation skills and ability to navigate power dynamics. Albright opened her autobiography, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir*, with a heartfelt apology for any friends inadvertently left out, underscoring the significance she places on each and every connection she forged. From her lunch sessions with high-ranking officials, dubbed the “ABC lunches,” to her genuine friendship with Aung San Suu Kyi, Albright’s approach to diplomacy was deeply personal (Albright, 2003, p. 351). She believed in the power of forging bonds to advance mutual interests, as evidenced by her efforts to mend fences with Senator Helms and her adept negotiation skills. Albright’s ability to navigate power dynamics and build consensus, both domestically and internationally, reflected her status as a negotiator and relationship builder in the realm of diplomacy.
**Relationship Builder**

It is evident Albright cared about the relationships she cultivated over the years. She starts out her autobiography with an apology to anyone she left out of the book and promised it was not because she did not care or thought they were not significant: “I regret what has been left out and mean no disrespect to the people and nations whose names do not appear within these pages” (Albright, 2003, p. xiii).

During her time as UN ambassador, Albright had the opportunity to meet Aung San Suu Kyi, a Burmese political leader under house arrest during the time of Albright’s visit. While only meeting Suu one time, Albright described her as a “real friend” stating, “I know she is mine and have reason to trust that she feels the same way” (Albright, 2003, p. 203). Many of her colleagues and international counterparts became her friends.

Every Monday, when in town, Albright had lunch with the Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen and National Security Advisor Sandy Berger. “Dubbed the ABC lunches (A for Albright, B for Berger, C for Cohen), the sessions were useful in coordinating policy, breaking logjams, and clearing the air” (Albright, 2003, p. 351). They were also useful in building and maintaining relationships. While working for Senator Muskie, Albright wrote a memo criticizing Cohen for his opposition to an arms control treaty. While she was secretary of state, the Washington Post got ahold of that memo and intended on publishing it. Albright learned about the Post’s plan and “went out and bought some books on forgiveness and presented them to Cohen as a gift. ‘What are these for?’ He asked, puzzled. I replied, ‘You may not understand now, but you soon will’” (Albright, 2003, p. 351). Unsure if it was the books or not but Cohen did forgive Albright after the story was published.
When referring to her team, Albright stated, “One of the reasons our foreign policy team functioned well is that despite small problems we all actually liked one another and often got together socially” (Albright, 2003, p. 351). Albright enjoyed spending time with her colleagues and counted on them for advice:

For Albright, work is play. She is a quick learner, operating in two modes. As an academic, she reads a lot and absorbs encyclopedically from briefing memos, but she is also a schmoozer, like [Bill] Clinton, who likes to talk through issues. “Her method is Socratic,” Talbott says. After she has read all the papers her staff has prepared for her, she often gathers aides around for discussion. (Blackman, 1998, p. 297).

Albright spent time building relationships with her team, foreign leaders, and members of Congress.

During her time as secretary of state, Albright spent time cultivating a working relationship between her and Senator Helms, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It was “Albright’s red-blooded American patriotism” that Helms found appealing, “an understanding that while they frequently do not agree on issues, they have deep respect for the underlying values of democracy” (Blackman, 1998, p. 298). Albright took Helms seriously and treated him with respect. She did not “deny him victories, she sought to compromise” (Blackman, 1998, p. 298). During Albright’s time as secretary of state, Helms proposed a plan to reorganize the foreign policy organization within the government and eliminate four agencies. Albright reviewed his plan and proposed eliminating only two while also increasing AID in the State Department, thus increasing her budget. She succeeded in “repairing the badly strained relationship between the State Department and the Republican-controlled Congress” (Dobbs, 1999, p. 399). Shortly after, Albright persuaded the Senate to ratify a Chemical Weapons Treaty
even with many conservatives, not in favor, and she and Helms worked together to pay the United Nations almost 1 billion dollars in past due dues (Dobbs, 1999, p. 399). This relationship with Senator Helms highlights several themes. Albright’s identity as an American and fundamental belief in democracy aided her ability to build relationships with powerful colleagues and successfully negotiate to achieve her goals.

**Negotiator**

Albright was an expert negotiator and an expert at navigating power:

Albright is a rarity among our national leaders, a person who understands both American politics and foreign policy and how one affects the other. In this delicate operetta that combines the two, Albright is a master, the crystalline voice of justice and common sense. (Blackman, 1998, p. 13)

Albright’s background aided her in this ability to see through an American lens and an international lens. Albright was also skilled at negotiating with those who did not share her values.

Recalling her time as UN ambassador, Albright states:

As I began to know my colleagues better, I discovered ways to achieve consensus without yielding on principle, and I started to see clearly what I came to call “the billiard-ball effect”- how one decision knocks into others. I also learned when to be direct and when to persuade others to make my point while I stayed behind the scenes.” (Albright, 2003, p. 165)

This statement highlights Albright’s ability to successfully negotiate, navigate powerful people, build relationships and be direct.
Albright described her job as secretary of state as similar to a chess player moving from one game to the next, except the people on the other side of the tables “were those of Saddam Hussein, Muammar Qadhafi, Fidel Castro, and Ayatollah Khamenei. The games were complicated because a change in the momentum of one altered the dynamic of every other…” (Albright, 2003, p. 381). In addition to international leaders, Albright worked with members of Congress. “The GOP controlled both houses of Congress and all the key committees. So I joked about how, when I entered government, I had my partisan instincts surgically removed. And I concentrated on building good working relationships” (Albright, 2003, p. 233). Albright was optimistic she could reach members of the Republican party and revitalize bipartisanship. “Unlike most Democrats, Albright goes out of her way to woo Republicans, recultivating the bipartisanship that vanished in the Cold War” (Blackman, 1998, p. 297). Albright was optimistic, she could relate to those who did not share her same beliefs, she used humor to ease tension, focused on building relationships, and worked on her craft of negotiating with powerful people.

Albright’s legacy as a skilled negotiator and relationship builder in the realm of diplomacy is a testament to the enduring power of personal connections in shaping international relations. Her approach, marked by genuine friendship, sincere dialogue, and adept negotiation, facilitated consensus-building and fostered understanding across diverse perspectives. Albright’s commitment to forging bonds and navigating power dynamics underscores the timeless importance of diplomacy rooted in human connection. As her autobiography illustrated, Albright’s ability to navigate relationships with individuals in positions of power served as a cornerstone of her leadership, leaving a lasting impact on the world stage.
Conclusion

Madeleine Albright, the first female U.S. secretary of state, was heavily influenced by her identity as a Czech American woman and her belief in democracy. This influence can be seen in her leadership style, which is characterized by humor, relentlessness, and a direct communication style. During Albright’s transition from the UN to Secretary of State, her core identity and values were unchanged. Her communication style did evolve as she gained more experience. Albright’s ability to navigate relationships with individuals in positions of power was also a key factor in her success as a leader.

Case Study 2 - Condoleezza Rice

Themes identified in the case study of Condoleezza Rice, illustrated in Figure 7, include:

1. Influence of identity: Rice grew up in a structured and sheltered environment with ample opportunities to explore her interests and learn the early importance of discipline. In her structured upbringing, Rice was taught not to invest energy in understanding racism but rather to trust her faith and work twice as hard.

2. Relationship with Bush: Rice and Bush had a complementary relationship. Rice was loyal to Bush and Bush trusted Rice’s intellect. This dynamic gave Rice access and influence over the direction, priorities, and issues Bush pursued.

3. Finding her power: Rice’s leadership and autonomy flourished as her career in the Bush administration advanced.

Figure 7

Rice Leadership
In November 2004, Dr. Condoleezza Rice was nominated to be the U.S. secretary of state; she assumed office in January 2005 after an 85–13-2 vote. With 85 senators voting in favor, 13 voting no, and 2 abstaining, she garnered the highest number of negative votes since 1825. Rice was the first, and remains the only, Black woman to serve in the position. Rice served as the 66th U.S. secretary of state from 2005 to 2009. Prior to becoming secretary of state, Rice was the first woman U.S. national security advisor. This case study examines her leadership from both of these historic and notable positions.

There are several themes that emerged while exploring four sources of data, including: one autobiography and three biographies. First, Rice’s identity influenced how she saw the world, how she managed conflict, and her approach to her work. Her structured and sheltered upbringing engrained the importance of discipline, hard work, and provided her with space to explore various interests. Second, her relationship with George W. Bush was central to her success in government. Rice’s religious identity was an immediate link and the foundation of her and Bush’s relationship. Rice was immensely loyal to Bush and this in turn granted her access and influence to him and his agenda. Third, over the course of Rice’s career in Washington her
leadership evolved and she began to embrace her authority and power. As her titles changed, so too did her leadership.

**Key Figures**

As the U.S. secretary of state and national security advisor, Condoleezza Rice worked with a number of domestic and international figures. Their titles reflect their position at the time Rice was interacting with them.

- George W. Bush, President of the United States
- Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of Defense
- Colin Powell, 65th U.S. Secretary of State
- Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq
- Valdimir Putin, President of Russia
- Kim Jong-il, Supreme Leader of North Korea
- Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority
- Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister of Israel
- Osama bin Laden, Leader of al Qaeda
- Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
- Hosni Mubarak, President of Egypt
- Masoud Barzani, President of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

**Influence of Identity**

Condoleezza Rice’s journey from a Black-middle class neighborhood in Alabama, to the highest echelons of U.S. diplomacy and academia is a testament to her strategic upbringing, unwavering discipline, and deeply rooted faith. Raised in Titusville, Alabama, in a close-knit
community that sheltered her from the harsh realities of segregation, Rice was instilled with a legacy that prioritized education and discipline. Despite the racial tensions of the Jim Crow South, Rice’s parents strategically cultivated an environment where she was encouraged to excel, embodying the motto of being “twice as good” to achieve equality. This environment of structured enrichment and learning opportunities, coupled with a disciplined approach to life, propelled Rice to become the first Black woman to serve as secretary of state, embodying the values instilled in her from a young age. Additionally, Rice’s deep religious convictions provided her with strength and perspective throughout her life, guiding her through personal and professional challenges and reinforcing her belief in the universality of democracy and freedom.

**Strategic Upbringing**

Rice grew up in Titusville, Alabama, a Black-middle class neighborhood in Birmingham Alabama during the height of the Civil Rights Movement (Felix, 2005, p. 37). It is easy to assume Rice suffered an oppressive upbringing given she was Black living in the Jim Crow south. However, this is not Rice’s story. Rice “is the product of a family legacy that has always made education a priority. With three generations of college-educated family members, including preachers, teachers, and lawyers, the bar has always been set high” (Felix, 2005, p. 34).

Titusville was an ideal community for John and Angelena Rice to raise their daughter. Felix (2005) wrote, “This close-knit community of Birmingham’s black teacher, preachers, and other middle-class citizens was a parallel world in which the Rices sheltered Condi from the harsh realities of segregated Birmingham” (p. 43). The mantra in Titusville was “to raise children who were ‘twice as good’ as white kids to gain an equal footing and ‘three times as good’ to surpass them” (Felix, 2005, p. 43). It was not that race was ignored, but rather,
approached strategically. In Felix (2005), Rice is quoted from various news articles explaining her parents' approach on race:

“My parents were very strategic,” she explained. “I was going to be so well prepared, and I was going to do all of these things that were revered in white society so well, that I would be armored somehow from racism. I would be able to confront white society on its own terms.” (p. 43)

The commitment to making education a priority was a valuable legacy passed down through multiple generations.

Rice’s childhood days were filled with structured enrichment and learning opportunities to ensure she had every opportunity and advantage later in life. The approach was very matter-of-fact. Rice, quoted in Felix (2005) recalled: “It wasn’t as if someone said, ‘You have to be twice as good’ and ‘Isn’t that a pity’ or ‘Isn’t that wrong,’” Condi said. “It was just, ‘You have to be twice as good’” (p. 43).

According to Rice’s cousin, Connie Rice, “They simply ignored, ignored the larger culture that said you’re second class, you’re black, you don’t count, you have no power” (Felix, 2005, p.37). Rice’s parents showered her with love and encouragement while providing her with endless opportunities to intellectually explore her interests. Rice stated, “My parents had me absolutely convinced that. . . you may not be able to have a hamburger at Woolworth’s but you can be president of the United States” (Felix, 2005, p. 36). It was this approach to race and racism that provides context to a statement made by Rice at the 2000 Republican National Convention where she stated, “I have never accepted this notion that you have to see somebody who looks like you doing it to make it possible,” Rice’s parents aimed to instill in her the belief that personal accomplishments and capabilities could transcend racial limitations.
Discipline

Rice was playing the piano at age 3; she learned to read music before she could read books, which was not until age 5 (Felix, 2005, p. 38). Rice has described her parents as “education evangelists” (Felix, 2005, p. 1). As a child, her schedule was filled with enrichment activities. In Feliz (2005), Rice was quoted: “It was a very controlled environment with little kids’ clubs and ballet lessons and youth group and church every Sunday,” Condi said. “The discipline comes from that” (p. 37).

Rice became provost of Stanford at age 38, was the first female national security advisor and the first Black woman to become secretary of state. The art of discipline began early in her childhood and served her well through her years in the White House:

“Well, Condi’s always been so focused, ever since she was really, really young,” said her mother’s sister, Genoa Ray McPhatter, who was a school principal in Chesapeake, Virginia. “She would practice her piano at a certain time without anyone having to remind her. (Felix, 2005, p. 38)

Reflecting on her time at Stanford, a fellow professor Coit Blacker remarked, that “her Southern graciousness is mixed with ‘a very steely inner core’ and extreme self-discipline” (Felix, 2005, p. 116). As a professor and provost her days were structured and predictable.

Having to adjust as national security advisor, Rice stated:

“I don’t love to travel, frankly,” she later said. “I like my things, I like my schedule, I like my routine. It’s not that I don’t like visiting foreign countries, but I don’t particularly like getting there and I don’t particularly like the sense of disruption in my life. Some of my happiest years of my life were as provost, when I almost never traveled. I got up every day and I did the provost job. I liked that. (Bumiller, 2007, p. 249)
Transitioning from national security advisor to secretary of state, amongst other things, meant Rice’s travel schedule would significantly increase. However, “the discipline of exercise, diet, and enough sleep kept me healthy throughout my tenure and the crazy travel schedule that I endured” (Rice, 2011, p. 451).

In addition to being disciplined in her routine, Rice required her staff to exhibit discipline when divulging information to the press.

In an article written in the last weeks of the campaign, The New York Times’ Elaine Sciolino wrote that members of the foreign-policy team did not dare speak a word to reporters without getting Condi’s permission first. In a response to that article Condi remarked “with a smile, “We are disciplined, we are disciplined.” (Felix, 2005, p. 18).

**Black in America**

In her childhood, Rice was sheltered from the day-to-day racism experienced by many Black Birmingham residents but she was not immune. Birmingham, 1963 was a year particularly fraught with racial charged bombings. Rice’s childhood friend, Denise McNair was killed in the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing. Rice and McNair attended kindergarten together. (Felix, 2005, p. 55-56) Additionally, Rice recalls, “her father and other neighborhood men guarding their streets at night to keep the nightriders away from their homes. Armed with shotguns, they formed night-long patrols” (Felix, 2005, p. 50). A memory that shaped her belief in the right to bear arms and her opposition to gun control.

During Rice’s time in Washington, she often reflected on how far the country has come. While reflecting on her time as national security advisor, Rice recalls a royal visit to Buckingham Palace with the Secretary of State Colin Powell, and his wife Alma, among others.
In this recollection she also acknowledges the important role her parents played in her success and her connection to her religion:

That night Colin, Alma, and I had a drink in the sitting room. What would our parents think? I thought. Then Alma and I drank a toast to her father and mine. Two little black girls from Birmingham had come a long way. Then, as Prince Charles escorted me into the elaborate dinner as the orchestra played “God Save the Queen,” I once again wished that I could tell my parents about this incredible experience. And so I did in a little prayer just before going to sleep. (Bumiller, 2007, p. 92)

Additionally, when thinking about democracy across the globe, Rice often connected her experience as a Black person in the United States to the struggle for democracy in the Middle East. While secretary of state, Rice gave a speech, at the University of Alabama, in which she highlighted the civil rights movement as a model for democracy and freedom. Rice declared there were those who “believed that black [people] were unfit for democracy, somehow too childlike or too unready or too incapable of self governing” (Bumiller, 2007, p. 274). She continued her statement connecting the same voices were arguing that people in the Middle East, “perhaps because of their color or their creed or their culture or even perhaps because of their religion, are somehow incapable of democracy” (Bumiller, 2007, p. 274). However it was “the very height of arrogance to believe that political liberty, and rights for women, and freedom of speech, and the rule of law, belong only to us” (Bumiller, 2007, p. 274).

While Rice was secretary of state, she took the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Jack Straw to Birmingham in an effort to show foreign leaders more of the United States as most visits were only in Washington D.C.
The deeply personal journey to the place of my birth had done more than that—it had given Jack a feel for how far the United States had come. We visited my father’s church and my childhood home. Jack and his wife, Alice, didn’t say it, but I know they were stunned at how modest my beginnings had been. Birmingham had rolled out the red carpet and our visit coincided with the dedication of a memorial to the four little girls killed at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in 1963. I participated in the dedication, a very personal event for me since my kindergarten classmate Denise McNair had been one of those killed. Jack and I walked the short distance from the church to Kelly Ingram Park, holding the hands of four little girls all dressed in pink and white for the occasion. The experience was powerful, particularly when we were told of how the bomb had blown out almost all of the windows—except one. That window, showing a likeness of Jesus Christ, had withstood the blast, but there was a hole—the face of our Lord was gone. (Rice, 2011, p. 453)

Religion

Rice was a deeply religious person, attending church as often as possible and it was the initial tie that connected her with George W. Bush. Rice’s father was a pastor prior to moving into the education field. Like education, the importance of religion and faith was passed through multiple Rice generations. According to Rice’s cousin, Connie Rice:

Our grandfathers had this indomitable outlook. It went: Racism is the way of the world, but it’s got nothing to do with your mission, which is to be the best damned whatever-you’re-going-to-be in the world. Life was a regimen: Read a book a day. Religion, religion, religion. (Felix, 2005, p. 36)
Religion is an important aspect of her identity and supports her later in life while going through major milestones or hard times.

Rice’s journey from her upbringing in Titusville to her roles in academia and government underscores the significance of purpose-driven determination and resilience. Raised in a community that emphasized education and the pursuit of excellence, Rice’s disciplined approach to life enabled her to achieve significant milestones, including becoming the first female national security advisor and the first Black woman to serve as secretary of state.

**Relationship with Bush**

Rice’s relationship with President George W. Bush was characterized by mutual respect, shared values, and a deep bond of friendship. Both Bush and Rice admired each other’s intellect and appreciated their lighthearted yet focused approach to their work. Their connection was not only intellectual but also rooted in their common religious beliefs, which provided them with strength and guidance during challenging times. Despite their close relationship, Rice was not afraid to challenge Bush when necessary, demonstrating her loyalty and commitment to ensuring the best outcomes for the administration. This relationship of trust and collaboration allowed Rice to influence Bush’s decision-making process, particularly on issues where she felt strongly or had significant expertise. Their partnership was instrumental in navigating complex geopolitical challenges and advancing the administration’s agenda both domestically and internationally.

The relationship between Rice and Bush was one established in reciprocal admiration. Bush said of Rice, “She’s fun to be with. I like lighthearted people, not people who take themselves so seriously that they are hard to be around. Besides, she’s really smart! (Felix, 2005, p. 11).” Rice said of Bush,
I’ve respected him from the first time we talked . . . because he has the kind of intellect that goes straight to the point. You can get a bunch of academics in a room and they can talk for three hours and never actually get to the point. (Felix, 2005, p. 11).

In addition to their intellectual connection and appreciation for one another, “one strong characteristic of Condi and George W. Bush’s connection to each other is their deep religious faith” (Felix, 2005, p. 219). Religious faith, a shared aspect of each of their identities, would aid them both during their time in the White House, particularly during times of great celebration and times of turmoil.

**Loyalty and Respect**

Rice and Bush were great friends. Rice often joined Bush and his wife, Laura, for weekends at Camp David, such that “The President would tell people we were like brother and sister. Yet it wasn’t always easy to get the balance “ (Rice, 2011, 43). However, the dynamic of their relationship allowed them the ability to challenge each other without ever questioning where they stood. Rice had worked for months to bring Bush along to the idea of following the European plan for negotiating with Iran. In an interview with an administration official, they describe how Rice persuaded Bush and categorized their relationship as a push and push.

To bring Bush around to her thinking, Rice employed the subtle but persistent style that she had learned from experience might work. ‘She would push at him, and he would push back,’ the advisor said. ‘What was really happening was she was giving him a brief and he was thinking about it. But it was his style to banter and push back and then see if you mean it. You know, “That’s not right, you don’t mean that!” But she’d go back and back and back. Eventually Rice persuaded Bush that if the United States was to repair relations
with France, Germany, and the European Union, the way to get there was to be more supportive of their efforts in Iran. (Bumiller, 2007, p. 259)

Even though Rice and Bush had a solid relationship, she was not always clued into every directive. One such example, President Bush signed a military order, without her knowledge, that instructed the Department of Defense to establish military commissions for the trial of detainees, ultimately leading to the establishment of Guantanamo Bay. Rice, then serving as national security advisor, was not opposed to the nature of the order but both Rice and Secretary Colin Powell were left out of the discussion:

When I learned what had happened, I went to see the President. “If this happens again,” I said, “either Al Gonzales [white house counsel] or I will have to resign.” The President apologized, but it was not his fault. Al Gonzales and I were friends, and I respected him. But in that case I told the President that the White House counsel and the Vice President’s office had not served him well. (Rice, 2011, p. 105)

Rice was able to be direct with Bush because of the trust and friendship that underlined their relationship. In another instance when Rice disagreed with Vice President Cheney and Bush’s legal counsel, Al Gonzales, Rice went directly to the President. Rice wanted to testify before the 9/11 Commission but legal and the Vice President were opposed. Rice recalled her one-on-one conversation with Bush:

I told him that I felt I had to testify and that I would have no credibility going forward if I did not. The American people wanted to know the story. I’d asked to testify before and been denied. We had tried the strategy of “going directly to the people.” It hadn’t worked, and now even my own family and friends wondered what was going on. I didn’t threaten
to resign. My relationship with the President wasn’t like that. But I would have had we not worked out a way for me to testify. (Rice, 2011, p. 262)

The following day Bush sided with Rice and she would testify. Rice and Bush both felt she was the most suitable person to make the administration’s case.

In 2003, the United States was spending a considerable amount of effort and resources in Iraq. Oftentimes the Pentagon, led by Donald Rumsfeld, the State Department, led by Colin Powell, and the White House acted independently or made statements that conflicted with what one of the other organizations said. The media often portrayed this as a power struggle. Rice’s job was to get Don and Colin to act in line with the President’s directives:

The next morning I went to the Oval and told the President about the conversation. “Why did you do that?” the President barked, perhaps still smarting from the ISG flap. “Does Don agree?” “Mr. President,” I said, “I wanted to tell you first, and I will call Don. And if you want me to tell Jerry not to come I’ll do that too. But don’t be surprised when the United States has a new plan for Iraq’s political transition that you haven’t seen.” I immediately thought that this might have sounded insubordinate. But the President and I could speak frankly when we were alone. He kind of smiled. “Okay, when is he coming?” he asked. (Rice, 2011, p. 245)

Rice felt comfortable enough around Bush to challenge him and defend her actions.

**Influence**

Because Rice had such a strong foundation and time and time again proved her loyalty to Bush, she was able to influence his decision making. Rice rarely did this in public, when she needed him to change his mind or move forward with something she believed in, she would speak with him in private. When Rice assumed the role of national security advisor, she had
assumed she would run the National Security Council (NSC) meetings when Bush was away, as this was tradition. Vice President Dick Cheney had Bush appoint him chair of the committee rather than Rice. According to Bumiller (2007):

Rice in a pattern that would repeat itself over the next four years, went directly to the president to reclaim her territory. She was determined, as she put it, “to get it fixed,” and made the argument to Bush that it “wasn’t appropriate” for Cheney to run the meetings since that had not been the role of vice presidents in the past” (Bumiller, 2007, p. 136) Bush sided with Rice on this issue and in the next meeting he announced the change.

While preparing for war against Saddam Hussein and Iraq, Rice was concerned with the Pentagon’s long-term plans, particularly their plans for Northern Iraq and hostile Turkish/Kurdish population, and second, the plan for maintaining order as Saddam’s forces fell. Rice brought these two concerns directly to Bush:

I was able to get the first of these issues addressed by going to the President with my concerns. We were having all kinds of problems with the Turks, who had initially agreed to let our forces transit through their territory but eventually refused to do so. That meant we had no northern entry into the country. After one of the briefings in the Situation Room, I followed the President into the Oval. I sat on the sofa to the right of the wing chair in which the President sat. The Vice President was on the other side. George Tenet was present too. “Mr. President,” I said, “you don’t have a northern strategy, and the Pentagon owes you one.” The Vice President immediately objected, letting it be known that the President should trust Don and the generals to do the military planning. I held my ground, though, and the President raised the issue with Don in his next meeting. (Rice, 2011, p. 189)
Rice often approached President Bush directly to express her concerns. While she regularly questioned decisions originating from Cheney’s and Rumsfeld’s offices, she rarely if ever clashed with Powell.

During a contentious time between Palestine and Israel, Rice traveled to Jerusalem and the West Bank to share Bush’s message of peace with the region, a task which should have fallen under Colin Powell, who was secretary of state at the time. Rice was aware of how her influence over the President seemed to others and the media, even if she disagreed with their portrayal:

I was concerned that I might be taking on too much of an operational role for a national security advisor. But it seemed to be one of those times when it was important to use my close relationship with the President to push the process forward. I felt bad that this produced press stories of a split between Colin and me. There was not. I kept him informed, and State supported my work. But some saw it as an affront to the nation’s chief diplomat. (Rice, 2011, p. 219)

While Rice’s influence with Bush allowed her to transcend traditional roles first as national security advisor, as shown above, and then later to sidestep the national security advisor, Steve Hadley, while she was secretary of state.

It hadn’t occurred to me that the President’s decision to call me in had put Steve in an embarrassing position. He was right about the implications for how he would be viewed. I’d been in his place, knowing what it was like to occasionally have the President take me for granted in front of his peers. “I’ll talk to him,” I said. (Rice, 2011, p. 479)

Rice learned to include Steve in future talks even when she went straight to the President. One such instance was when Rice was working on an agreement to disable North Korea’s
nuclear facilities. Rice shared her memory of how she got Bush to support the proposed agreement.

It looked like a reasonable approach, but I knew it would be a tough sell in the interagency process. I decided to go directly to the President. I called Steve on the phone and told him what had happened. “I need you to take this to the President directly,” I said. As any good national security advisor will do, Steve protested that he needed to convene the Principals. “I don’t have time for that, Steve. I’d like to talk to the President.” Steve got the President on the phone. “Sir, we have a chance to get this thing off the ground but it won’t be there tomorrow,” I said. “Send me the paper,” he answered. I did and then waited until about 1:00 A.M. Berlin time (7:00 P.M. in Washington) before calling again. The President had approved the paper. (Rice, 2011, p. 571)

Bush and Rice worked very well together. Because it was known they had a solid relationship, Rice was able to use this to push Bush’s agenda forward. An example of this was when Rice was trying to get China to take a stronger stance against North Korea’s nuclear program. Rice recalls,

I asked to see Hu with only a couple of advisors present. This time, the Chinese acceded to my request. He made very short work of the formal session, ended it, and we went into a back room, three on three. Sandy Randt, our ambassador, and Chris Hill accompanied me. I told Hu and Tang that China had to stop acting like the meeting planner and take real responsibility for making the Six-Party Talks work. The North’s aggressive act in testing a nuclear device had changed the circumstances. I couldn’t hold President Bush behind the current strategy if Beijing didn’t play its role more actively. But I said I thought the President might be willing to restart the talks based on a clear understanding
with China of how we would proceed. This tactic of holding the President’s agreement in reserve was very important in getting things done. The President and I would often choreograph moments like this. “You deliver the message of what we want. But tell them you’ll have to convince me,” he would say. It was always good for the secretary of state to be the negotiator but to make clear that there was a hard-to-convince President who would ultimately make the decision. Hu asked if Chris could stay a day longer: China would work with us to develop a proposal to move the process forward. (Rice, 2011, p. 530)

This example also showcases Rice was adept at diplomatic negotiations and strategic communication. Rice’s approach involved leveraging her close relationship with President Bush to advance diplomatic initiatives, highlighting her skill in navigating power dynamics, and achieving desired outcomes. “Rice’s greatest asset as secretary of state (was) her relationship with the president” (Mabry, 2007, p. xxxvii). Additionally, her ability to read a situation and adapt her tactics accordingly underscores her effectiveness as a diplomat and negotiator.

With Rice and President George W. Bush, it is evident that their connection was characterized by mutual respect, shared values, and effective communication. Their friendship, grounded in admiration for each other’s intellect and faith, provided a solid foundation for navigating the complexities of governance and decision-making. Despite occasional challenges and disagreements, Rice and Bush maintained a dynamic that allowed for candid dialogue and constructive criticism. Rice’s influence on Bush’s decision-making process, facilitated by their close relationship, underscores the significance of trust and loyalty in leadership dynamics. Through their collaboration, Rice and Bush were able to tackle critical issues on the global stage, leaving a lasting legacy of effective diplomacy and strategic leadership.
Finding Her Power

The transition from one high-ranking position to another often marks a pivotal moment in a leader’s career, reflecting not only shifts in responsibilities but also evolving dynamics of power and authority. Such was the case for Rice as she moved from her role as national security advisor to secretary of state. In her tenure as national security advisor, Rice found herself in a supporting role, tasked with translating President George W. Bush’s instincts into policy while navigating the intricate web of government opinions. However, her authority was tethered to her proximity to the President, as illustrated by her account of being dismissed by the Pentagon until Bush validated her concerns in a meeting. As she assumed the role of secretary of state, she embarked on a quest to redefine her power and autonomy. “For those who knew her, Rice’s increasing power comes as no surprise (Mabry, 2007, p. xxxv).” This transition not only marked a shift in responsibilities but also served as a platform for Rice to assert her authority independently while continuing to uphold Bush’s vision.

National Security Advisor

As national security advisor, Rice took a supporting role; she “saw her job as essentially a staff position with three main responsibilities: translating Bush’s instincts into policy, reconciling competing views within the government, and operating as a gatekeeper” (Bumiller, 2007, p. 134). Rice felt her power came from her proximity to the President, she shares a memory, while national security advisor, of not being taken seriously by the Pentagon because they believed her inquiry was her own and not from Bush:

My several attempts to get the Pentagon to address the rear-area security issue seriously always led to uninformative slides and a rather dismissive handling of the question. When I finally arranged a briefing on the issue before the President in early February, he started
the meeting in a way that completely destroyed any chance of getting an answer. “This is something Condi has wanted to talk about,” he said. I could immediately see that the generals no longer thought it to be a serious question. That is the weakness of the national security advisor’s position: Authority comes from the President. If he wasn’t interested in this issue, why should they care? (Rice, 2011, p. 190)

It is unclear if the authority of national security advisor only comes from the President or if this was specific to what Rice believed and/or experienced. Regardless, Rice did not attempt to publicly exert her authority or challenge other members in the government while national security advisor. In a conversation with Don Rumsfeld, the U.S. secretary of defense at the time, “Don said, ‘What you did really hurt the President’” (Rice, 2011, p. 243). Referring to a New York Times article that reported the development of the Iraq Stabilization Group (ISG), and spun it to seem as if Rice was taking control of U.S. involvement in Iraq and the Pentagon, and Donald Rumsfeld, were being passed in the chain of command. Rice was not trying to take over but the purpose of the group was to make sure the White House was involved in minor and major decisions the Pentagon made. Rather than holding her ground, Rice recalls, “I held my tongue, resisting the temptation to say, ‘You don’t think that mess in Iraq is hurting the President?’” (Rice, 2011, p. 243).

There was one instance in which Rice spoke up as national security advisor. Bush wanted to give a speech supporting Palestinian rights, however, the Vice President was opposed to the idea. Rice recalls, in a meeting about the speech, “Finally I decided to speak up and voice my own opinion, something I rarely did in an NSC meeting. Usually I spoke only to clarify points for the President or to get agreement from him on a way forward” (Rice, 2011, p. 144). Rice continues to share why she spoke out at this moment:
[Bush] was struggling to find support for what he clearly and rightly wanted to do. “Mr. President,” I started, but, noticing that my voice was quivering, I stopped and started again. “Mr. President, this is what the President of the United States does. He changes the terms of the debate, and heaven knows someone has got to do that in the Middle East.” I could tell that the President was a bit startled since I generally shared my views in private. But I was glad I’d said it. After a little more debate he sat back in his chair. “I’m going to give the speech.” he said. (Rice, 2011, p. 144)

Not only was this a rare time when Rice spoke out at meetings but it also highlights the strength of her relationship with Bush and her loyalty to him. Rice knew he felt strongly about his position and wanted to affirm him and his decision. The example also highlights Bush’s confidence in her opinion.

**Transitioning from National Security Advisor to Secretary of State**

In addition to new and different responsibilities, the transition from national security advisor to secretary of state offered Rice an opportunity to operate autonomously, while still acting in the best interest of the country. Her strong relationship with Bush preempted her to brooch the differences in her power and authority in a meeting with Bush:

In eleven days I’d be fifty, and I was about to become the secretary of state. But the President and I needed to talk first, as directly as we ever had. I’d liked being his national security advisor, but a lot would change when I left the White House and crossed into Foggy Bottom, as the State Department was informally known. He and I both needed to understand how we’d handle the new relationship, one that, historically, hadn’t always been smooth: the interaction between the President of the United States and the secretary of state. (Rice, 2011, p. 289)
Rice’s remarks on her new role highlighted the beginning of her finding her own power as well as the importance of her relationship with Bush:

After four years as national security advisor, I was ready to be a line officer with the authority that only Cabinet secretaries have. I was tired of coordinating others and tired of the mismatch between authority and responsibility that is an everyday challenge for the NSA. My good friend and mentor George Shultz had predicted this when I left for Washington. “One day you’re going to want to run your own shop,” he said. He was absolutely right. (Rice, 2011, p. 290)

Even though Rice made sure to set clear expectations with Bush as she entered her new role, her loyalty to Bush never faltered. Rice continued to act in support of Bush’s goals:

From my first days at the State Department, I was determined to act on the President’s desire to bring our policies into the light, frame them for the public, and gain legislative authorization for them. He had expressed a desire to do so when I was national security advisor, and now, as secretary of state, I could pursue them from the strength of my Cabinet position. (Rice, 2011, p. 497)

Leaving her old position, Rice also wanted to leave her somewhat rocky relationship with Donald Rumsfeld in the past as well. However, she was not interested in repairing and trying to reason with Don. Rather, she was no longer going to spar with him:

I’d been careful not to involve myself in the decision about Don Rumsfeld’s fate. There was something unseemly about one secretary, no matter how close to the President, appearing in any way to be trying to vanquish another. The President knew how I felt. The closest I’d come to an opinion about Don had been in our initial conversation at Camp David when the President had asked me to be secretary of state. “I don’t intend to
spend my energy sparring with Don,” I’d said. “I’m going to lead U.S. foreign policy, and I don’t need his input.” The President had simply acknowledged the statement, a little taken aback, I think, by the sharpness of the comment. Again, it was nothing personal with Don. I just wanted him out of the diplomatic lane.

Another example of Rice embracing her power and approaching individuals with power differently in her new role came in a clash with Cheney. Rice believed Bush should publicly acknowledge the existence and purpose of Guantanamo Bay and work with Congress to develop a legal framework. Cheney strongly disagreed with Rice and would become the most contentious issues they disputed. The differing in opinions reached a climax during an August 2006 National Security Council meeting:

I argued, as did others, that the President should publicly acknowledge the CIA’s detention and interrogation programs and transfer all remaining detainees in the CIA’s overseas facilities to Guantánamo Bay, where they could face trial. The Vice President objected, arguing that the detainees should remain in CIA custody given that they might have continued intelligence value. He worried that revealing the existence of the prisons would betray the trust of countries that had agreed to host them within their borders. I told the President that the secret sites were having a corrosive effect on the nation’s ability to secure intelligence cooperation and that he should resolve the issue rather than leaving it for his successor. “Mr. President,” I said, “don’t let this be your legacy.” For several minutes the Vice President and I went back and forth; no one else spoke. It was the most intense confrontation of my time in Washington. (Rice, 2011, p. 502)

This example also illustrates Rice’s priorities, Bush and his legacy.
The transition from national security advisor to secretary of state meant Rice was moving from managing about 100 people to overseeing 57,000 employees worldwide (Rice, 2011, p. 19). Rice eagerly began her time as secretary of state by reviewing the organizational structure, record keeping, budgetary matters and accountability safeguards. She recalled,

There were also a number of immediate management problems that had come to my attention during the transition. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, for instance, was overseeing huge budget expenditures for the training of police in Afghanistan and Iraq. The recordkeeping, though, and thus the accountability for that work was less than adequate. The serving assistant secretary was resistant to the changes that needed to be made. That would have been fine, and I certainly would have allowed him to make his case. But when Brian, my chief of staff, walked into my office late one evening and told me that the gentleman had gone behind my back to complain to his patrons on the Hill, I decided that the bureau needed new leadership. The message had to be clear that I encouraged open disagreement but that this kind of behavior was unacceptable. (Rice, 2011, p. 315)

Rice was loyal to Bush and wanted members of the State Department to also stay loyal to her leadership.

In addition to interactions and expectations for the staff Rice oversaw, she also approached cabinet members and colleagues differently. In recalling a disagreement with George Casey, a 4-star general and senior coalition commander in Iraq at the time, Rice asserts herself while also trying to reassure Casey:

I tried to stay calm, reminding myself that he was under enormous pressure. “George, I’m sorry that you were blindsided,” I said. “That’s wrong. But let’s get one thing straight.
I’m the secretary of state, not the State Department. That means I am one of the President’s chief advisors on this war, and I will say what I please.” I then repeated that I thought he had been briefed and would make sure that we had better coordination. (Rice, 2011, p. 373)

Rice logically and unapologetically found herself either not having time or not needing to discuss her opinions and decisions with Bush prior to acting. In one instance, she recalled an international meeting with foreign leaders and Bush in which Bush was unaware of something she did on his behalf to appease the leaders:

I didn’t have time to brief the President, who was walking into his meetings with the Malaysian and then Indonesian presidents, both from countries with large Muslim populations. “Thank you so much for what you’ve achieved for Palestine,” they said to the President. Teasing me a little after the meeting, the President asked, “What did I do for Palestine, and what did you agree to?” (Rice, 2011, p. 410)

Rice has a clear respect for authority and chain of command, however, in her capacity as secretary of state she was able to have more autonomy and appreciated when her international counterparts were also able to make decisions on the spot. In a reflection on working with Germany, the United Kingdom, France, China, and Russia to develop a plan for Iran’s noncompliance of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. Rice recalled,

We agreed that the first step would be a referral to the IAEA, but I laid down a marker that a judgment of noncompliance should lead to referral to the UNSC. In an example of how diplomacy works when foreign ministers are empowered, no one had to “phone home” for approval to the language. (Rice, 2011, p. 423)
As secretary of state, Rice was not afraid to exert her power and force international leaders when needed. In a conversation with Mikheil Saakashvili, the Georgian President, Rice recalled her tactics to persuade Saakashvili to sign a pledge stating he wouldn’t use force against Russia:

“How can I do that when Putin is doing the things he’s doing?” he answered, suggesting that he’d sign only if the Russian gave him something in return. “I’ll talk to the Russians, but you don’t have a choice,” I told him. “You can’t use force, and so the threat to do so doesn’t do you any good. Sign the pledge now while you have international support.” We went back and forth for more than an hour, Saakashvili stubbornly refusing to yield. Finally, I thought I’d better get tougher. “Mr. President, whatever you do, don’t let the Russians provoke you. You remember when President Bush said that Moscow would try to get you to do something stupid. And don’t engage Russian military forces. No one will come to your aid, and you will lose,” I said sternly. He got the point, looking as if he’d just lost his last friend. (Rice, 2011, p. 685)

As Rice shifted and grew in her career, she embraced her autonomy and exerted her authority. In addition to finding and embracing her own power, she was skilled in managing others who held considerable power.

**Managing Those with Power**

As secretary of state, Rice was in Cairo meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. In their meeting they discussed many topics, however, Rice saved the most sensitive topic for last, recalling, “I asked him if we could speak alone. I wanted to talk about democracy and reform, but I didn’t want to embarrass the president in front of others” (Rice, 2011, p. 375). Mubarak was an authoritarian ruler and Rice wanted to encourage him to hold free and fair
elections. In their one-on-one conversation, Rice explained Mubarak had an opportunity to do something great for his country. Unfortunately, Mubarak countered, “The Egyptians need a strong hand, and they don’t like foreign interference” (Rice, 2011, p. 375).

After listening to him for several minutes, I tried to appeal to that pride and his vanity.

“You saved your country from ruin after Sadat’s assassination,” I told him, referring to his predecessor, who had been gunned down in 1981. “Now take your people forward.” I ended our encounter by telling him what I would say in Cairo. “I don’t want you to be surprised.” (Rice, 2011, p. 375)

Mubarak did not step away from office until the Egyptian Revolution in 2011.

In an attempt to unify Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein, Rice flew to northern Iraq to meet with the president of the Kurdistan region, Masoud Barzani. Rice was hoping to encourage Barzani to increase the amount of time he spent in Baghdad even though his relationship with Jalal Talabani, the newly elected President of Iraq was rocky. Both Barzani and Talabani aided and worked with the United States led coalition to overthrow Saddam Hussein. In Rice’s reflection on the meeting with Barzani, she stated, “I tried to appeal to Barzani’s sense of pride in overthrowing Saddam and—frankly—to his vanity by saying that he was a founding father of the democratic Iraq” (Rice, 2011, p. 513). Barzani agreed to visit more, however, according to Rice he rarely followed through but the meeting was still a success in that Barzani needed to feel respected.

Rice had a calm and rational way of dealing with those in power, foreign and domestic. During Rice’s confirmation hearing in 2005, she recalled the questioning from Senator John Kerry:
Perhaps smarting from his defeat in the election two months before, the senator from Massachusetts launched on a long rhetorical journey through most of the points he’d made in the campaign. After having testified for nearly nine hours, I was exhausted and ready to go home, but I kept telling myself that this was really about him, not about me. It helped that I held then and hold now a great deal of respect for John Kerry’s knowledge of the issues. So I tried to answer the questions without exhibiting any annoyance.

Finally, well after 7:30 P.M., the hearings adjourned. (Rice, 2011, p. 300)

Rice was often able to rationalize why a person was exhibiting behaviors and give them grace and space to exert their emotions while remaining calm and unaffected. In another instance, Rice met with a frustrated John McCain, a Republican senator from Arizona:

I’ll never forget the day John McCain came to see me to complain about the Department’s role in Iraq. John and I are old friends, and it started off with civility. But all of a sudden he was yelling and red in the face. “We’re about to lose the second war in my lifetime, and State isn’t in the fight!” I let him finish his tirade because I knew that he could be emotional. And then I led him through the changes we’d made and encouraged him to meet Ryan Crocker, who’d just become the U.S. ambassador in Iraq. Ryan would have everything he needed, I told John, including a team of people with ambassador-level experience working for him. “John, you know that no one is more dedicated to winning in Iraq than I am,” I said. “I know,” he replied quietly. He’s just a patriot who has given a lot and demands the same, I thought. It’s okay. Don’t return fire with fire. Our meeting ended amicably. (Rice, 2011, p. 560)
However, during Rice’s confirmation hearing she had a different response to a domestic leader trying to exert her power and criticize Rice for her involvement in the Iraq war. Rice recalled the situation,

After a near-relentless barrage of criticism, California Senator Barbara Boxer provided one of the few openings during which I could take the offensive. She inexplicably suggested that I could not understand the sacrifices of those lost in conflict because I had no children. Not only was it a dumb thing to say, it was deeply offensive. Would anyone have said that to a male secretary of state? I wondered. I didn’t realize that having children had anything to do with one’s fitness to lead. I decided not to engage her on that point and instead responded that I fully understood the sacrifices that our men and women in uniform were making. “I visit them,” I stated. “I know what they’re going through. I talk to their families. I see it.” She backed off but was broadly criticized for the bizarre comment. (Rice, 2011, p. 548)

Rice did however engage, stating her thoughts the following day to the New York Times:

Rice responded the next day to Boxer’s comments by stating, “I thought it was okay to be single,” Rice told The New York Times. “I thought it was okay to not have children, and I thought you could still make good decisions on behalf of the country if you were single and don’t have children. (Bumiller, 2007, p. 310)

It may have been the nature of the hearings to hold back her warranted response.

Rice’s transition from national security advisor to secretary of state, it became evident that her journey encapsulated the intricate dynamics of leadership within the realm of high-level governance. From assuming a supportive role to gaining greater autonomy, Rice’s trajectory highlights the intricate interplay between proximity to authority and individual agency. Her
narrative underscores the significance of fostering strong relationships, upholding loyalty, and adeptly navigating institutional structures to wield influence effectively.

**Conclusion**

Condoleezza Rice, the 66th U.S. secretary of state, learned early in life the importance of discipline and hard work. These early life lessons propelled her success first in academia and then in government. Rice’s relationship with Bush was a key factor to her success as a leader. She had unwavering loyalty to Bush and his goals, in turn, Rice was granted access and influence over the direction and policies pursued by the Bush Administration. During Rice’s transition from national security advisor to secretary of state, she embraced her authority and power. Her ability to work with and manage individuals in positions of power was also a key factor in her success as a leader.

**Case Study 3 - Hillary Rodham Clinton**

Themes identified in the case study of Hillary Rodham Clinton, as illustrated in Figure 6, include:

1. **Purpose Driven Work:** Much of Clinton’s work focused on advancing the lives of women and children both in the United States and abroad. Two major influences shaped Clinton’s dedication to advancing the well-being of women and children: her mother’s advocacy for social responsibility and her Methodist faith’s emphasis on putting faith into action.

2. **Connector:** The foundation of Clinton’s leadership is based on her ability to form connections. Clinton built relationships with foreign counterparts and international leaders, connected other leaders together to bridge nations, reached out to average
citizens to connect with them and not just their leaders, and built lifelong connections with her staff.

3. Smart Power: Clinton’s approach to diplomacy and leadership is grounded in the concept of smart power, utilizing a combination of diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural tools to advance interest and address issues.

**Figure 8**

*Clinton Leadership*

In 2008, Hillary Rodham Clinton was nominated to be the U.S. secretary of state by President Barack Obama after losing to him in a primary election. A few months later, in January 2009, her nomination was confirmed and she was sworn in, making her the third woman to hold the position. Clinton received confirmation from the U.S. senate in a vote of 94-2-2, with 94 votes in support, 2 in opposition, and 2 abstentions. Clinton served as the 67th U.S. secretary of state from 2009 to 2013. Prior to becoming secretary of state, Clinton was a U.S. senator representing the state of New York and a former first lady. This case study examined her leadership throughout her career with an emphasis during her time as secretary of state.
There were several themes that emerged while exploring four sources of data, including: two autobiographies, and two biographies. First, Clinton’s purpose-driven work is deeply rooted in her Methodist upbringing, which instilled in her a strong belief in social justice and the importance of taking action. Guided by her mother’s advocacy for social responsibility and her faith’s emphasis on making a difference, Clinton has dedicated her career to advancing the lives of women and children, both domestically and internationally. Second, Clinton’s leadership is characterized by her exceptional ability to connect with others. Whether building relationships with foreign leaders, fostering collaborations between nations, or engaging directly with people abroad, she has demonstrated a talent for forging meaningful connections that transcend borders. Third, Clinton’s approach to diplomacy and leadership is grounded in the concept of smart power. By strategically utilizing a combination of diplomatic, economic, and cultural tools, she effectively navigated complex geopolitical challenges to promote U.S. interests and address global issues. These themes collectively underscore Clinton’s enduring impact as a purpose-driven leader, skilled connector, and practitioner of smart power on the world stage.

Key Figures

As the U.S. secretary of state, New York senator, and first lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton worked with a number of domestic and international figures, over the course of many years. Their titles reflect their position at the time Clinton was interacting with them.

- Benjamin (Bibi) Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel
- Nicolas Sarkozy, French Foreign Minister
- Abdullan bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Saudi Arabia King
- Zhang Yesui, China’s Ambassador to the United States
Hillary Rodham Clinton’s leadership journey was deeply intertwined with her upbringing and values instilled by her parents. Raised amidst the ideological tension of her father’s conservative Republicanism and her mother’s quieter Democratic leanings, Clinton learned the importance of navigating differing perspectives and defending her beliefs from a young age. Rooted in her Methodist faith and influenced by her mother’s commitment to social responsibility, Clinton’s dedication to advocating for women and children’s rights emerged as a central theme throughout her life’s work. From her early days at the Children’s Defense Fund to her tenure as secretary of state, Clinton’s unwavering commitment to this cause has shaped not only her identity but also her mission to address the “unfinished business” of achieving equality and empowerment for women and girls worldwide.

**Upbringing**

Clinton grew up in a suburban town in Park Ridge, Illinois. Clinton’s father, Hugh Rodham, was a “tight-fisted, contrarian…[who] voted a straight Republican ticket, and was infuriatingly slow to praise his children” (Berstien, 2013, pp. 12–13). Her mother, Dorothy, was a Democrat who showered her children with love and encouragement (Bernstein, 2013). According to Bernstein (2013), “Dorothy Rodham was one of the few women in the community
who didn’t stay home all day, who could be found in the library’s reading room, or downtown at a museum” (p. 19). In Clinton’s (2003) words,

I grew up between the push and tug of my parents’ values, and my own political beliefs reflect both. The gender gap started in families like mine. My mother was basically a Democrat, although she kept it quiet in Republican Park Ridge. My dad was a rock-ribbed, up-by-your-bootstraps, conservative Republican and proud of it. He was also tight-fisted with money. He did not believe in credit and he ran his business on a strict pay-as-you-go policy. His ideology was based on self-reliance and personal initiative, but, unlike many people who call themselves conservatives today, he understood the importance of fiscal responsibility and supported taxpayer investments in highways, schools, parks and other important public goods. (p. 22)

Clinton’s parents “were polar opposites - temperamentally, intellectually, emotionally” (Bernstein, 2013, p. 54). According to one of Clinton’s lifelong friends, she grew closer to her mother as she got older. “Dorothy is the person who shaped Hillary more than any other, and there is no way to see Dorothy and not see how she fashioned her daughter” (Bernstein, 2013, p. 27).

While she grew closer to her mother, there was still much Clinton learned from growing up in a politically divided household:

In our family’s spirited, sometimes heated, discussions around the kitchen table, usually about politics or sports, I learned that more than one opinion could live under the same roof. By the time I was twelve, I had my own positions on many issues. I also learned that a person was not necessarily bad just because you did not agree with him, and that if you believed in something, you had better be prepared to defend it. (Clinton, 2003, p. 23)
In addition to the influence of her parents and their beliefs, Clinton (2003) grew up a Methodist, saying “My active involvement in the First United Methodist Church of Park Ridge opened my eyes and heart to the needs of others and helped instill a sense of social responsibility rooted in my faith” (p. 34).

Clinton shares her faith but does not explicitly reference it throughout her autobiographies, however, it is evident its influence has guided her work throughout her life. Clinton shared a rule taught in the Methodist church:

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can (Clinton, 2003, pp. 34–35)

Clinton took this to heart but as a young girl, she struggled “to reconcile (her) father’s insistence on self-reliance and (her) mother’s concerns about social justice” (Clinton, 2003, p. 34) Along this process of reconciliation, in 1961, Clinton met a Methodist youth minister named Donald Jones. “Rev. Jones stressed that a Christian life was “faith in action” (Clinton, 2003, p. 35). Faith in action is the idea that one must be active in making a difference.

Her belief in the concept of faith in action was later affirmed during her time at Wellesley. She recalled, “Wellesley emphasized service. Its Latin motto is Non Ministrari sed Ministrare—‘Not to be ministered unto, but to minister’—a phrase in line with my own Methodist upbringing” (Clinton, 2003, p. 41). In an interview noted in Bernstein (2013) after her husband’s presidential election, Clinton commented on why Methodism resonated with her personal values and beliefs: “Methodism’s ‘emphasis on personal salvation combined with active applied Christianity,’ she said, was what she believed in. ‘As a Christian, part of my obligation is to take action to alleviate suffering’” (Bernstein, 2013, p. 297). The influence of Wellesley, the
Methodist belief in “faith in action,” and her mother’s conviction in social responsibility, influenced Clinton’s values and aligned with what would become her life’s purpose and work, the advancement of women and children.

**Women & Children**

Clinton’s passion for working on behalf of women and children began just after she graduated from Yale Law School. She wrote, “One of my first jobs after law school was working for Marian [Wright Edelman] at the Children’s Defense Fund. For me, it was the beginning of a lifelong commitment to children’s rights” (Clinton, 2014, p. 559).

As first lady, Clinton took on a huge role spearheading universal health care reform. Due to political partisanship and delays in Congress, she postponed that campaign and decided to focus on other domestic projects. She wrote, “On my agenda now were children’s health issues, breast cancer prevention, and protecting funding for public television, legal services and the arts” (Clinton, 2003, p. 331). Additionally, in 1994, Clinton “promoted the largest survey of working women ever conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor. Called ‘Working Women Count,’ the survey reflected the worries of millions of working women, who comprise nearly half of our nation’s labor force” (Clinton, 2003, p. 430).

Along with numerous domestic projects aimed at improving the lives of women and children, Clinton also turned her focus abroad and how to make the most out of her travels. “Although we had only a short time in each country,” she later wrote, “I wanted to meet with as many women as possible to stress the correlation between women’s progress and a country’s social and economic status” (Clinton, 2003, p. 306). While on a trip to China, with then Secretary Madeleine Albright, Clinton gave a speech that “ended with a call to action for all of us to return to our countries and renew our efforts to improve educational, health, legal,
economic, and political opportunities for women” (Clinton, 2014, p. 561). A portion of Clinton’s speech stated:

For too long, the history of women has been a history of silence. Even today, there are those who are trying to silence our words. The voices of this conference and of the women at Huairou must be heard loud and clear: It is a violation of human rights when babies are denied food, or drowned, or suffocated, or their spines broken, simply because they are born girls. It is a violation of human rights when women and girls are sold into the slavery of prostitution. It is a violation of human rights when women are doused with gasoline, set on fire, and burned to death because their marriage dowries are deemed too small. It is a violation of human rights when individual women are raped in their own communities and when thousands of women are subjected to rape as a tactic or prize of war. It is a violation of human rights when a leading cause of death worldwide among women ages fourteen to forty-four is the violence they are subjected to in their own homes by their own relatives. It is a violation of human rights when young girls are brutalized by the painful and degrading practice of genital mutilation. It is a violation of human rights when women are denied the right to plan their own families, and that includes being forced to have abortions or being sterilized against their will. If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women’s rights… and women’s rights are human rights, once and for all. (Clinton, 2003, p. 347)

Women’s rights are human rights and human rights are women’s rights became a mantra that is still referenced today.
By the time Clinton moved on to working in the Senate, she had made significant contributions to improving lives for women and children. She later noted, “After nearly three decades as an advocate and eight years as First Lady, I had accumulated broad experience working on behalf of women, children and families” (Clinton, 2003, p. 561). Her work would continue beyond the Senate and into her role as secretary of state:

Clinton particularly wanted to use her new position to advance the rights of women and children everywhere, a project that stemmed from her deep belief that the world would never be a better place until half the population was no longer neglected. No matter how many wars, peace efforts, missile launches, or nuclear crises lay ahead, women’s rights had to be part of the agenda. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 24)

**Unfinished Business.** Clinton had been working on women’s rights and children’s rights for nearly forty years prior to becoming secretary of state. Her new role would provide her with new opportunities to address what she called unfinished business. “As I dove deeper into my work on behalf of women and girls around the world, I started describing the quest for equal rights and full participation for women as the “unfinished business” of our time” (Clinton, 2014, p. 564). “When I became Secretary of State in 2009, I was determined to put this “unfinished business” at the top of America’s diplomatic to-do list” (Clinton, 2014, p. 567).

Understanding a crucial part of advancing women’s and children’s rights would require buy-in from various stakeholders, Clinton began work gathering data with the hopes of presenting figures to these stakeholders in an accessible manner. Clinton recalled,

So if we were serious about helping more girls and women achieve their full potential, then we had to get serious about gathering and analyzing the data about the conditions they faced and the contributions they made. We needed not only more data but also better
data. We needed to make it accessible to researchers and policymakers so it could help them make good decisions. The State Department launched a number of new initiatives to fill the data gaps, working with the UN, the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and others. (Clinton, 2014, p. 570)

Under Clinton’s leadership, the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), launched many global and regional initiatives. These initiatives included:

- programs to help women entrepreneurs gain access to training, markets, finance, and credit; a partnership with some of America’s top women’s colleges and universities to identify, mentor, and train women in public service around the world; and efforts to help more women use mobile technology for everything from secure banking to documenting gender-based violence. (Clinton, 2014, p. 568)

Clinton also saw the values of including women in the peacemaking process, something they are traditionally left out of. To do this, Clinton found sympathetic allies at the Pentagon and in the White House, including Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy and Admiral Sandy Winnefeld, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. State, USAID, and Defense got to work on a plan that would change the way diplomats, development experts, and military personnel interact with women in conflict and postconflict areas. There would be new emphasis on stopping rape and gender-based violence and empowering women to make and keep peace. We called it a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security. (Clinton, 2014, p. 571–572)
Prior to leaving office, Clinton wanted to ensure the advancement of women and children remained a priority in the State Department long after she left.

As my term as Secretary drew to a close, I wanted to be sure that the changes we had made to knit gender issues into every aspect of U.S. foreign policy wouldn’t disappear after I left. In any bureaucracy, institutionalizing reforms is difficult, and that was certainly true at the State Department. Over several months we worked with the White House to prepare a Presidential Memorandum that would make Melanne’s position of Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues permanent and ensure that her successors reported directly to the Secretary of State. (Clinton, 2014, p. 572)

Reflecting on her life’s work, Clinton stated:

The message of Beijing and the lifetime of work it represented had become so much a part of my identity it was practically written into my DNA. I was glad that it had permeated into the culture, in places that had once been hostile. The cause of protecting and expanding human rights is as urgent and compelling as ever, and further progress is unlikely without continued American leadership. (Clinton, 2014, p. 585)

Clinton’s leadership legacy underscores the significant influence of personal background, values, and beliefs in shaping an influential leader. From her upbringing in Park Ridge to her global advocacy for women and children’s rights, Clinton’s life story highlights the importance of resilience, empathy, and steadfast determination in making a difference. Her mantra that “women’s rights are human rights” continues to resonate and inspire, emphasizing the ongoing need for inclusive leadership and collaborative efforts to promote equality and justice for everyone.
Hillary Rodham Clinton’s tenure as secretary of state was marked by her nuanced understanding of the importance of personal relationships in international diplomacy. Drawing from her experiences as first lady, Clinton recognized the significance of fostering trust and camaraderie among world leaders, understanding that even ideological adversaries can find common ground through mutual respect and understanding. As she traversed the global stage, Clinton’s approach to diplomacy went beyond formalities, prioritizing genuine connections and rapport-building, whether through lighthearted banter or heartfelt discussions. From navigating complex negotiations to diffusing tense situations with empathy and humility, Clinton’s commitment to engaging with people on a personal level exemplified her belief in the transformative power of relationships in shaping foreign policy outcomes.

**Building Relationships with Foreign Counterparts and World Leaders**

Because Clinton previously served as first lady, she was experienced in meeting and entertaining world leaders. Clinton recalls,

> One of the most important lessons I learned during my years as First Lady was how dependent the affairs of state and the policies of nations are on the personal relationships among leaders. Even ideologically opposed countries can reach agreements and forge alliances if their leaders know and trust one another. But this sort of diplomacy requires constant nurturing and informal dialogue among the principals, which is one reason why the President, Vice President and I took frequent trips overseas. (Clinton, 2014, p. 461)

Additionally, when leaders change, so do personalities. “Relations between nations are based on shared interests and values—but also on personalities. The personal element matters more in international affairs than many would expect, for good or ill” (Clinton, 2014, p. 207). Because
Clinton believed in the power of relationships, she often chose to start official conversations with small talk:

Contrary to some of my American colleagues, who like to get right down to business, I usually start my side of an official conversation with small talk as a signal of my respect and friendship. (Clinton, 2014, p. 353)

This choice to nurture relationships came in handy when tensions arose with long term allies such as Benjamin (Bibi) Netanyahu the Prime Minister of Israel. Clinton recalled,

Despite our policy differences, Netanyahu and I worked together as partners and friends. We argued frequently, often during phone calls that would go on for over an hour, sometimes two. But even when we disagreed, we maintained an unshakeable commitment to the alliance between our countries. I learned that Bibi would fight if he felt he was being cornered, but if you connected with him as a friend, there was a chance you could get something done together. (Clinton, 2014, p. 307)

Learning personalities and understanding cultural differences impacted large peace treaties as well as individual lives. Clinton shared a memory of her interaction with the Saudi government when learning of an eight-year-old girl who was being forced, by her father, to marry a 50-year old man in exchange for $13,000:

Saudi courts rejected pleas from her mother to stop the marriage, and it did not look like the government was going to intervene. I knew that embarrassing governments with public condemnation can backfire, making them dig their heels in deeper. Instead of calling a press conference to condemn the practice and demand action, I looked for a way to persuade the Saudis to do the right thing and still save face. Quietly reaching out through diplomatic channels, I offered a simple but firm message: “Fix this on your own
and I won’t say a word.” The Saudis appointed a new judge who quickly granted a divorce. It was a lesson I’ve learned all over the world: There’s a time to get on a soapbox—and I’ve been on quite a few—but sometimes the best way to achieve real change, in diplomacy and in life, is by building relationships and understanding how and when to use them. (Clinton, 2014, p. 352)

As a strong supporter of women and children, Clinton chose to intervene on the eight-year-old girl’s behalf and did so in a strategic way.

In addition to building relationships to press a firm hand when necessary, Clinton had fun and cracked jokes with international leaders. Clinton recalled a memory with Nicolas Sarkozy the French Foreign Minister:

One chilly day in January 2010, as I was walking up the steps of the Élysée Palace in Paris to greet him, I stepped out of my shoe, leaving me barefoot in front of the press, who gleefully snapped pictures. He graciously took my hand and helped me regain my footing. Later I sent him a copy of the photograph inscribed, “I may not be Cinderella but you’ll always be my Prince Charming.” (Clinton, 2014, p. 209)

In another show of humor, Clinton tried to defuse an emotionally charged situation with Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign minister, in the hopes of reminding Russia they had more global interests uniting them with the U.S. than dividing them. In a speech by then Vice President Biden, he called on Russia to “reset” and focus on common interests. Clinton was scheduled to meet with Lavrov shortly after and had a lighthearted idea:

Why not present Lavrov with an actual reset button? It might get people laughing—including Lavrov—and ensure that our commitment to a fresh start, not our
disagreements, made the headlines. A little unconventional, maybe, but worth a try.

(Clinton, 2014, p. 232)

Lavrov ended up loving the reset button, both Clinton and he had a good laugh. Clinton’s adeptness at forging relationships with international leaders was not only evident in her proposal to present Lavrov with a reset button but also extended to her skill in fostering fruitful negotiations over Peruvian cocktails, exemplifying her multifaceted approach to international relations and diplomacy. Clinton recalled,

The J. W. Marriott in Lima is perched atop the Costa Verde cliffs, with a striking view of the Pacific. When Ambassador Zhang arrived, I led him over to a quiet table in the bar where we could talk. I had been visiting with members of the State Department press corps, who were enjoying pisco sours, a local favorite that mixes Peruvian liquor with lime juice, egg whites, and bitters, and many of the reporters remained at the bar. They had no idea that negotiations were going on right under their nose. At one point an ebullient Mark Landler of the New York Times approached our table bearing two pisco sours. Who says diplomacy can’t be effective and fun at the same time? I smiled and accepted. Zhang politely followed suit. And there, over Peruvian cocktails, we reached a final understanding on the sanctions designations. (Clinton, 2014, p. 433)

Clinton worked long hard hours but also liked to enjoy herself when she could. It was not so out of the ordinary that Clinton was mingling with the traveling press corps that they had no idea sanction negotiations were happening at the next table.

**Hillaryland**

During Clinton’s time as first lady, she put together a group of trusted staff and began working on policy initiatives. In fact, she set up her office in the West Wing, breaking norms
with past first ladies. The term *Hillaryland* became a term of endearment among her staff, and, later, outsiders adopted the term. Clinton recalls how the term came into existence:

Steve Rabinowitz, rushed to pick up the receiver and, for no particular reason, blurted out: “Hillaryland!” He was embarrassed to hear my voice on the line, but I thought he had come up with a great nickname. Patti [Solis, a staff member] loved it, too, and tacked a sign on the wall behind her desk that said “Hillaryland.” The name stuck. (Clinton, 2003, p. 136)

It did not take long for the name to stick and travel through the White House. According to Clinton, “soon my staff became known around the White House as ‘Hillaryland.’ We were fully immersed in the daily operations of the West Wing, but we were also our own little subculture within the White House” (Clinton, 2003, p. 156). She added, “My staff prided themselves on discretion, loyalty and camaraderie, and we had our own special ethos. While the West Wing had a tendency to leak, Hillaryland never did” (Clinton, 2003, p. 156).

As Clinton evolved and advanced in her career, her staff also evolved, however, many of her Hillaryland staff remained with her from her time as first lady to the senate and eventually to the state department, although new members also were brought onto her team during her time as secretary of state. (Clinton, 2014)

In addition to cultivating loyalty among her staff, Clinton spent time connecting with everyday people. While they were not members of Hillaryland, Clinton still chose to spend time with the traveling press corps who accompanied her during her four years as secretary of state. Many in the traveling press corps had traveled with Rice before Clinton. On the plane used by secretaries of state, the front of the plane was sectioned off for the secretaries of state and their staff, while the back of the plane seated the press; traditionally those in different sections did not
mingle. From the beginning of her term, Clinton was different from her predecessors; she would often sit back with the press. Ghattas’ (2013) recalled, “Hillary was curious about other human beings and enjoyed chitchat” (p. 32). In the press section of the plane, one of the seats became known as the “Hillary seat.” The shift away from normal protocol made some people uneasy. In an interview with a traveling press member, recalled her unease with Clinton’s chitchat. Ghattas recalled a reporter asking,

“Why does she want to know my name?” one of them thought. She had never before had to explain to a secretary of state where she was from, whether she had a family, or what her career path had been like so far. The real shock came later, when Hillary remembered her name. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 32)

Later came during a visit to the Saudi king, Abdullan bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. Ghattas later noted, during this meeting,

Clinton had much she wanted to ask the king but, as she often did with her counterparts, she took her time making a connection, before making any requests. She believed that Americans did not always fully appreciate how their get-down-to-business approach to meetings was experienced by others, especially in countries where every conversation started with the same litany of inquiries about the health of family members, from parents to distant relatives. Hillary believed that taking the time to know her counterparts was not only a show of respect but also a smarter way to build relationships. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 130)

Clinton spent time sharing stories and making a personal connection with the king and then spent time introducing her staff and the traveling press. Ghattas (2013) writes,
After twenty minutes…Clinton and the king rose from their chairs. “Your Majesty, let me introduce you to my staff,” said Clinton. One by one, she introduced Jeff, Jake, and Huma…When Clinton was done presenting the last person on her team, she was suddenly faced with the traveling press standing sheepishly in line. Clinton thanked the king for extending his hospitality to the media and began to introduce each one of us by our full name and the media outlet we worked for. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 130)

Clinton made an effort to engage members of the media, however it was not always smooth sailing because she would often cause stress by running behind schedule. Her tardiness was not because she was spending hours on her hair but, rather, because she would lose track of time listening and engaging with people. During a visit in South Korea, Ghattas (2013) noted,

The secretary was running late. Everything on this trip had run late, every day, all day. If it was a hallmark of the Clinton administration to be an hour late, this was the Hillary-at-the-State-Department version. The tardiness was deeply frustrating for everybody, the traveling press corps who had to hurry up and wait and then miss their deadlines, the State Department staffers running the show, the local officials trying to keep to their own schedules, the local journalists who had to show up early for events to be screened for security. But Hillary was in a back room meeting the university’s president and some of its alumni. As she always did, she gave the people she was talking to her full attention and listened closely to their stories, head tilted, eyes focused. She didn’t rush, didn’t cut anyone off. She made them feel like she had traveled all the way from Washington just for them. The crowds could wait. (pp. 39–40)

When Clinton visited countries, her schedule was packed with meetings with foreign leaders and dignitaries, interviews with the media, and always a town hall where she liked to
speak directly to people. These town halls became an adaptation of her listening tours she embarked on during her run for Senate, though one might argue Clinton’s engagement with everyday citizens began during her time with the Children’s Defense Fund, where she went door to door learning the stories of children who were unable to attend school. Berstein (2013) said the following about the listening tours Clinton engaged in during her run for the New York senate seat:

Under the guise of trying to learn the concerns and complaints of constituents, and to offset the “carpetbagger” effect, she did the opposite of a lifetime’s instincts: she restrained her tendency toward unequivocal advocacy and the assertion of her own strongly held views. Instead, she “interviewed” the voters; she made sure not to offend, and she told voters largely what they wanted to hear. (pp. 541–542)

Clinton’s adept use of listening tours, from engaging with citizens during her time with the Children’s Defense Fund to adapting the model during her senate run and later as secretary of state, demonstrated her ability and desire to connect with citizens and to hear their concerns.

During town halls, as secretary of state, Clinton would typically start with a speech and then she would take questions at random (Ghattas, 2013). Clinton thrived in these town halls, never knowing what types of questions would emerge. In recalling her time in Tunisia, Clinton stated:

I wanted to talk to the young people who had provided the emotional core of the revolution and who stood to gain the most if democracy took root in Tunisia. About two hundred of them met with me in the Palais du Baron d’Erlanger, a center for Arab and Mediterranean music perched on a cliff above the sea. I spoke about the hard work of
making a transition to democracy and about the role their generation could play. Then I
took questions. (Clinton, 2014, p. 361)

Because the questions were never staged, Clinton often got personal questions in addition to
policy related questions. Additionally, the questions from audience members were not censored,
therefore, sensitive topics charged with emotions often came up. Ghattas (2013) recalled, “With
her interlocutors, Hillary always reacted first as a person, as a mother. Children often came up.
Her empathy was real” (p, 104). Clinton, herself, recalled her time on a popular Turkish talk
show:

I visited Turkey as part of my first trip to Europe as Secretary. In addition to meetings
with top Turkish officials, including Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and President
Abdullah Gül, I reached out directly to the Turkish people, as I tried to do everywhere.
This was particularly important in countries where governments wanted to work with us
but large segments of the population were generally distrustful or anti-American. By
taking my case directly to the people, via the mass media, I was trying to influence
attitudes, which, in turn, could give governments greater political cover to cooperate with
us. A popular television talk show called Haydi Gel Bizimle Ol, or Come and Join Us,
invited me to appear as a guest. Similar in format to The View, it appealed to a wide
cross-section of Turkish society, especially women. The hosts, a diverse collection of
women, asked me about serious policy issues as well as more personal questions. The
discussion was warm, funny, and wide-ranging. (Clinton, 2014, p. 215)

In addition to answering personal questions, Clinton did not shy away from emotionally
charged questions. Her ability to empathize with others, connect on a personal level, and learn
from the past, allowed her to diffuse situations that had the potential to combust, metaphorically.
During a trip to Pakistan, for example, “over the course of three days, she was going to hold four separate group interviews, with seven television presenters, eight radio journalists, and six newspaper editors. She was also planning a town hall with five women journalists” (Ghattas, 2013, p. 86). In a potentially hostile environment in Pakistan, Ghattas recalls witnessing Clinton apologizing and admitting to mistakes. In Ghattas’s (2013) opinion,

> It was a magic, disarming utterance, and she put it to work on a bigger scale. America, she told the Pakistanis, had made a mistake when it shifted its attention away from the region after the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan. She then tried to explain why this time it really was different, that America was there for the long term. The world had rarely heard an American official apologize for past mistakes. This approach didn’t go down well with Republicans back in the United States; but around the globe, it went a long way to buy goodwill. (p. 94)

Clinton’s ability to empathize allowed her to connect with people and diffuse situations in which it was easy to “other” someone with an opposing view. Ghattas (2013) noted, “She rarely admonished, hectored, or gave orders but laid out the arguments in favor of the course of action she supported” (p.105). Clinton sought to understand and then connect.

Early in her time as secretary of state, Clinton was questioned about letting the Chinese government off the hook for their human rights violations because of the economic relationship with the U.S. Clinton was not letting them off the hook, she was going around the government and attempting to implement a smart power approach to facilitate change. Ghattas recalls,

> Clinton was trying to say she didn’t want to bang her head against the wall on the issue of human rights with a government that wasn’t listening anyway. She found this approach counterproductive and wanted to advance the human rights agenda in new ways: by
connecting with grassroots organizations, by using the Internet—anything to bypass the government. It was part of the strategy devised on the seventh floor of the Building by her team to connect U.S. diplomacy with people around the world. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 43)

The strategy of connecting beyond a country’s leadership and going straight to people was tied to Clinton’s philosophy of effective diplomacy and an effective use of power, smart power.

**Smart Power**

The concept of smart power was derived from the field of political science. Nations may have Hard Power, strength, and Soft Power, influence, but Smart Power is the ability to use these different sources of power in a strategic manner utilizing “diplomacy, persuasion, capacity building, and the projection of power and influence in ways that are not only cost-effective but have political and social legitimacy” (Sehgal, 2013, p. 69). Clinton believed the United States’s power and influence in the world would be measured not just by brute military strength or by attending diplomatic meetings, but by engaging with local activists, utilizing social media to reach everyday people, reducing carbon emissions, increasing political participation, defending universal human rights, developing clean energy plans, and encouraging equitable economic opportunities (Clinton, 2014). According to Clinton, “smart power meant choosing the right combination of tools—diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural—for each situation” (Clinton, 2014, p. 33).

In Clinton’s view, smart power was not going to replace the traditional way of doing business in the state department, but, rather, enhance it:

The goal of smart power and our expanded focus on technology, public-private partnerships, energy, economics, and other areas beyond the State Department’s standard portfolio was to complement more traditional diplomatic tools and priorities, not replace
them. We wanted to bring every resource to bear on the biggest and toughest national security challenges. (Clinton, 2014, p. 33)

The concept of smart power is not new; however, as Ghattas (2013) has noted, Clinton was the first secretary of state to implement the concept in the State Department:

Clinton became the first secretary of state to methodically implement the concept of smart power. She institutionalized this approach in the Building: budgets now include funds for gender issues, foreign service officers are embedded at the Pentagon, economic statecraft is part of the diplomatic brief. Clinton was determined to make sure her work would not be undone after her departure and planned to invest a lot of her time following up and providing counsel to her successor. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 334)

The implementation of smart power at the state department was initially met with resistance. Ghattas (2013), for instance, wrote, “There would be much eye rolling at the State Department for four years, but the men on the team would eventually buy into Hillary’s vision about American smart power” (p. 24).

Smart power aligned with Clinton’s ability to connect. Much like her ability to connect with people and promote people connecting with each other, smart power gave her a formula to connect sectors, organizations, and institutions. For example, Clinton used smart power in her efforts with Iran, connecting finance, energy, and technology to deter nuclear weapons production in Iran. “We used new financial tools and private-sector partners,” Clinton (2014) later wrote,

to enforce stringent sanctions and cut Iran off from the global economy. Our energy diplomacy helped reduce sales of Iranian oil and drummed up new supplies to stabilize the market. We turned to social media to communicate directly with the Iranian people
and invested in new high-tech tools to help dissidents evade government repression. All of that bolstered our old-fashioned shoe-leather diplomacy, and together they advanced our core national security objectives. (p. 33)

Another example of smart power, on a smaller scale, was the U.S. efforts in Uganda to help capture Joseph Kony, a notorious warlord whose army, known as the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), had been kidnapping children and enslaving young girls for years (Clinton, 2014). In recalling the U.S. intervention in Uganda, Clinton wrote,

President Obama decided to deploy a hundred U.S. Special Operations troops to support and train African forces hunting for Kony. To work with them, I sent State Department experts from our new Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, which I had created to increase the Department’s ability to work in crucial hotspots. Our civilian team arrived on the ground a few months before the troops and began building relationships in local communities. With their encouragement, village chiefs and other leaders started actively encouraging defections from the LRA, including through a new radio station we helped set up for them. It was a small mission, but I thought it showed the potential of what we could achieve when soldiers and diplomats lived in the same camps, ate the same MREs (Meals, Ready-to-Eat), and focused on the same goals. That’s smart power in action. (Clinton, 2014, p. 290)

Iran and Uganda were just one of the many ways Clinton implemented smart power within the State Department. In Ghattas biography of Clinton, she stated,

Over the course of Hillary’s tenure, the department would set up twenty-five formal initiatives that would place the United States at the heart of a web of diplomacy and encourage others to feel involved in managing the planet. There were bilateral strategic
dialogues with India and South Africa, in addition to the already existing one with China; smaller countries like Indonesia and Nigeria got bilateral commissions. There were global programs of all sorts: entrepreneurship, civil society, maternal health, climate change, counterterrorism efforts. Many initiatives relied on a key partner, from Turkey to Norway, from nongovernmental organizations to businesses—stakeholders in a new system. Every day, the State Department worked to connect with countries, players, and people everywhere. Even in the midst of the Iran debacle with Turkey and Brazil, the State Department was announcing a “conference for the U.S.-Brazil joint action plan to eliminate racial and ethnic discrimination and promote equality” in Atlanta a few days later. Diplomacy was no longer just about formal talks with leaders. Smart power was exhausting but, in Clinton’s view, essential. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 153)

Clinton believed as the world evolved, the United States also needed to evolve in how the country approached global problems. In the case of counterterrorism, Clinton stated,

Faced with this evolving challenge, I felt even more certain that we needed to pursue the smart power approach to counterterrorism I had described to the President in 2010. At the State Department we had been quietly working to develop the tools and capabilities we would need, including expanding our counterterrorism office into a full-fledged bureau headed by an Assistant Secretary of State. (Clinton, 2014, p. 199)

Additionally, Clinton believed the United States should learn from past international conflicts and interventions. Ghattas recalls a conversation she had with Clinton about the future of the United States as a world leader and the role of smart power:

“This is truly the inflection point, because we now understand that America, as powerful and strong as we are, cannot remake societies,” Clinton told me. “We can help liberate
them, like Libya, but we cannot remake them. That must come from within, and there needs to be a reformation in thinking amongst people in countries that have been downtrodden, oppressed, violence-ridden, and there needs to be higher expectations and demands placed on leaders who should be reconcilers, not dividers. . . The kind of help we need in the twenty-first century is for people themselves to overcome the differences that still divide them,” Clinton told me during the interview for the book. (Ghattas, 2013, p. 335)

At the end of her term, Clinton began to think about ways to ensure smart power remained long after she left. Clinton commissioned the development of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review which, Clinton stated,

aimed to map out exactly how we would put smart power into practice and use what I started calling “21st-Century Statecraft.” This included harnessing new technologies, public-private partnerships, diaspora networks, and other new tools, and it soon carried us into fields beyond traditional diplomacy, especially energy and economics. (Clinton, 2014, p. 551)

The implementation of smart power into the State Department, under Clinton’s leadership, highlighted her strength as a connector. Clinton developed new initiatives connecting previously siloed sectors of the government and economy to build broad coalitions in order to advance U.S. interests.

Conclusion

From her global advocacy for women’s rights to her strategic implementation of smart power during her tenure as secretary of state, Hillary Rodham Clinton’s journey exemplifies resilience, empathy, and unwavering dedication to effecting positive change. As she continues to
inspire generations with her mantra that “women’s rights are human rights,” Clinton’s commitment underscores the ongoing imperative for inclusive leadership and collective action in advancing equality and justice for all. Furthermore, her approach to diplomacy, characterized by a focus on building personal relationships and employing smart power strategies, has reshaped traditional diplomatic paradigms, leaving behind a legacy of effective and empathetic engagement on the global stage.

Throughout her tenure in government, Clinton's leadership style remained steadfast, rooted in her core values and unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of women and children. From her early days at the Children's Defense Fund as a young woman to her advocacy for women's issues at the state department, Clinton's determination to effect change was evident. As first lady, she challenged the status quo and continued to confront harmful narratives aimed at silencing powerful women, this continued on during her tenure as secretary of state. From her time at Wellesley College to her interactions with foreign leaders, Clinton navigated relationships with confidence and conviction. Her leadership style, shaped by her early understanding of herself and her values, remained consistent despite the changing titles and responsibilities throughout her career. As Clinton’s influence continues to reverberate, her leadership serves as a guiding beacon for future diplomats and leaders navigating the complexities of international relations in the 21st century.

Cross-Case Analysis

Madeleine Albright’s leadership was shaped by her Czech American identity, influencing both her beliefs and leadership style, characterized by humor, relentlessness, and direct communication. Her ability to build relationships, especially with individuals in positions of power, was pivotal to her success as a leader. Themes identified in the case study of Condoleezza
Rice include the influence of her upbringing on her disciplined approach to life, as well as the complementary relationship she shared with President Bush, characterized by loyalty and mutual trust. As her career progressed within the Bush administration, Rice found her leadership and autonomy blossoming, shaping the direction, priorities, and issues pursued by the administration. Hillary Rodham Clinton’s leadership is marked by purpose-driven work, influenced by her Methodist upbringing and dedication to advancing women and children’s rights worldwide. She excelled in building connections, forging relationships with foreign counterparts, bridging nations, and engaging with citizens. Additionally, her diplomatic approach was grounded in the concept of smart power, utilizing a multifaceted toolkit to address global issues effectively.

Through the development of these three case studies, several themes intersected and intertwined, revealing connections among their respective leadership styles. As depicted in Figure 9, all three case studies highlighted the significance of identity in comprehending each leader’s background, values, and purpose. Furthermore, each case study showcased a notable association with power, whether it involved embracing one’s own power, navigating existing power structures, or strategically utilizing power to achieve diplomatic goals. Lastly, the most noteworthy cross-case correlation lies in their respective capacities to uphold and foster meaningful relationships.

Figure 9

Overlapping Aspects of Leadership
Embracing Aspects of Identity

Each leader’s upbringing and identity played a significant role in shaping their values and purpose therefore influencing their approaches to leadership. Albright’s leadership journey epitomized the profound influence of identity on leadership style, particularly her fervent belief in democracy and unwavering optimism in the potential for human progress. Grounded in her Czech American heritage, Albright’s upbringing instilled in her a deep-seated commitment to democratic principles and human rights. Her family’s flight from Czechoslovakia and subsequent experiences fueled her passion for promoting democracy, evident in her diplomatic endeavors aimed at challenging authoritarian regimes and advocating for democratic reforms.

Clinton wholeheartedly embraced and acknowledged her identity as a woman, recognizing it as a strength that facilitated meaningful connections with others and championed causes targeted at advancing women’s rights. While gender held significance for Albright, her primary focus lay in advancing democracy.
Rice, on the other hand, maintained that any perceptions of her identity were not her concern, but rather a reflection of others’ perspectives. Rice’s upbringing in Titusville, marked by a strategic approach to overcoming racial barriers and a deep-rooted commitment to education and discipline, profoundly influenced her leadership. The ethos of being “twice as good” instilled by her parents propelled her to excel in her endeavors and equipped her with the strength and focus necessary to undertake demanding roles, such as her tenure as national security advisor and secretary of state. Furthermore, Rice’s identity as a Black woman provided her with a unique perspective on global issues, allowing her to connect the United States’s racial struggles with those struggling to gain democratic freedoms.

**Relationship Building**

All three leaders prioritize building personal relationships with individuals in positions of power. Rice fostered a close relationship with President Bush, characterized by mutual respect and trust. Rice and Bush maintained open lines of communication, allowing for candid dialogue and constructive criticism. Rice’s relationship with Bush extended beyond professional collaboration, as they often spent weekends together at Camp David, highlighting the personal nature of their connection. Rice’s close relationship with President George W. Bush afforded her a significant advantage in her role as secretary of state, as it allowed for direct access to decision-making processes and enhanced influence over policy formulation. Their mutual trust and collaboration enabled Rice to effectively advocate for her priorities and shape the administration’s foreign policy agenda, contributing to her success in navigating complex geopolitical challenges on the world stage.

Albright’s approach to diplomacy was deeply personal, emphasizing the importance of forging bonds to advance mutual interests. Albright initiated regular lunch sessions with key
figures like Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen and National Security Advisor Sandy Berger, fostering open communication and coordination on policy matters. These gatherings, known as the “ABC lunches,” not only facilitated policy coordination but also served to build and maintain relationships across government agencies. Albright’s ability to connect with people on a personal level extended to her interactions with international counterparts, as evidenced by her genuine friendship with Burmese political leader Aung San Suu Kyi. She valued her colleagues and team members, fostering a positive work environment where camaraderie and mutual respect thrived. Additionally, Albright demonstrated her commitment to repairing strained relationships, as seen in her efforts to reconcile with Senator Helms and her proactive approach to resolving conflicts within her team. Overall, Albright’s skillful relationship building enhanced her effectiveness as a leader, enabling her to navigate complex power dynamics and build consensus both domestically and internationally.

Similarly, Clinton’s approach to relationship building was characterized by a deep investment in personal connections and genuine friendships. From her “listening tours” during her time as first lady of Arkansas to her tenure as secretary of state, Clinton fostered meaningful relationships with everyday average citizens in addition to individuals in positions of power. She leveraged these connections not only to advance her own political agenda but also to build consensus and forge alliances on key issues. Clinton’s ability to cultivate rapport with foreign leaders, members of Congress, the traveling press corps, regular citizens, and influential figures both domestically and internationally contributed to her effectiveness as a leader and diplomat.

In comparing Clinton and Albright, while both emphasized building relationships, they approached it differently. Clinton tended to allow conversations to extend, fostering rapport through attentive listening, while Albright, characterized by humor and bluntness, prioritized
relationship-building with a more direct approach. In contrast, Rice’s approach to relationship-building did not extend beyond cultivating and nurturing her connection with Bush as the primary focus.

In comparing Rice to Albright’s retelling of interactions with colleagues, domestic and international leaders, Rice delves into the historical and political landscapes, whereas Albright tends to focus on personal relationships. When recounting stories, Rice often employs broad country-centric terms, whereas Albright frequently references specific individuals. Rice primarily discussed her interactions with Bush, while Albright highlighted her relationships with counterparts, rarely mentioning her relationship with then President Bill Clinton. Additionally, Rice tended to discuss politics more extensively, while Albright emphasized interpersonal relationships. Lastly, Rice meticulously revisited her calendar, methodically detailing each event, while Albright concentrated on specific issues and people.

In comparing Clinton and Rice, Clinton emphasized personal connections, empathy, and grassroots engagement, while Rice leveraged a close relationship with President Bush to influence decision-making and navigate complex geopolitical challenges. Clinton cultivated loyalty among her staff, fostering an environment known as “Hillaryland.” She spent time connecting with everyday people, engaging with the traveling press corps, and breaking traditional protocols by mingling with reporters. Clinton’s ability to listen and empathize allowed her to connect with individuals on a personal level. Whereas, Rice’s relationship with her staff was characterized by discipline and discretion. While she engaged with the media when necessary, her focus was primarily on advising and supporting President Bush.
Power

The journey of Condoleezza Rice from national security advisor to secretary of state illuminates the nuances of power dynamics within high-ranking positions in government. Initially, as national security advisor, Rice’s authority was closely tied to her proximity to President George W. Bush. Despite occasional assertiveness, Rice largely refrained from publicly exerting her authority, preferring to maintain loyalty to the president and avoid confrontations with other government officials. However, Rice’s transition to secretary of state marked a turning point in her quest for autonomy. With Bush’s support, she sought to redefine her authority independently while still aligning with the president’s vision. This shift allowed her to wield greater influence and assert her power more forcefully, as evidenced by her management of international relations and internal affairs within the State Department.

In contrast, Madeleine Albright’s journey in discovering her own power came sooner, learning to find her voice, prior to becoming secretary of state, while UN ambassador. Meanwhile, Clinton’s experience as first lady provided her with a platform to sustain her inherent personal power throughout her government service, with no notable shifts in autonomy observed in her case study.

Clinton’s tenure as secretary of state marked a paradigm shift in diplomatic strategy with her introduction and implementation of smart power principles. Clinton believed that traditional diplomatic methods alone were insufficient in a rapidly evolving global landscape. Instead, she emphasized engagement with grassroots activists, leveraging social media for outreach, and addressing issues like climate change and human rights to enhance the United States’s global standing. As referenced in her approach taken towards Iran, employing financial tools, energy diplomacy, and social media outreach to dissuade nuclear proliferation as well as her efforts to
capture Joseph Kony in Uganda involved a blend of military support, community engagement, and radio broadcasts to encourage defections from his militia. In contrast, Albright and Rice took a more forceful and traditional approach to diplomacy. In one example, Albright threatened Ivanov, the Russian Foreign Minister, to agree to her plan of getting NATO to threaten to use force in order to stop Milosevic and violence in Kosovo. Similarly, in a conversation with Mikheil Saakashvili, the Georgian President, Rice persuaded Saakashvili to sign a pledge stating he wouldn’t use force against Russia, by strong-arming him. Rice told him he did not have a choice and should his actions result in an invasion from the Russian government, the U.S. wouldn’t help and he would lose. Clinton demonstrated a departure from traditional diplomatic approaches, emphasizing smart power principles such as grassroots engagement, social media outreach to bolster the United States’s international influence, contrasting sharply with the more forceful and traditional tactics employed by Albright and Rice.

**Conclusion**

Ultimately, the convergence of these themes underscores the multifaceted nature of leadership. Additionally, the complexity of gendered experiences underscores the importance of not generalizing women’s leadership. The significance of identity, relationship building, and navigating power all shape impactful leadership trajectories, however, teasing the nuances of individual leadership styles provides a richer understanding of leadership studies.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

My research aimed to explore several facets of leadership: (a) the leadership exhibited by women who served as U.S. secretary of state, (b) the perceptions of others regarding their leadership, (c) how their leadership evolved across various contexts and over time, and (d) the commonalities and distinctions among the women under study. Utilizing a grounded theory approach, I employed a case study and cross-case analysis design to analyze the biographical data—autobiographies and biographies—of three prominent figures: Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Through this research study, I provide new insights into leadership theory which hopefully will prove useful in both Leadership Studies, as well as Political Science. This study expands the theoretical understanding of leadership and fills gaps in the existing literature. Additionally, through this study, I lay the foundation for a larger research agenda which looks at how women in local, state, and national government positions exhibit leadership. Although the study only examines three women leaders, when considering generalizability in a different way, this study sheds light on individual lived experiences, perceptions, and meaning making (Donmoyer, 2009). In addition to the similarities in leadership among the women, the differences I identify are a strength of the study as they highlight the nuances and complexity of each woman’s experience. As noted in Chapter 2, up to this point, most of the existing data on women in politics has been obtained through surveys, interviews, and public voting records; therefore, illustrating a need for greater methodological diversity in terms of documenting the ways in which women exhibit leadership. The emergent themes found in this research respond to this
need and should add relevant but previously overlooked variables to future quantitative and qualitative work.

**Leadership Implications**

**Albright’s Leadership**

From her Czech American heritage to her unwavering optimism, Albright’s identity served as the guiding force behind her leadership principles. Throughout her career, she remained steadfast in her commitment to democracy, human rights, and gender equality, often leveraging her unique identity to advance these causes on the global stage. Albright’s leadership legacy not only reflects the importance of embracing one’s identity but also highlights the transformative power of leadership grounded in authenticity, resilience, and a deep sense of purpose. As a trailblazer in diplomacy and politics, Albright’s story serves as an inspiration for future leaders, reminding us of the profound impact that identity can have on shaping the course of history.

Albright’s leadership style, characterized by humor, relentlessness, and direct communication, reflects her remarkable contributions to the field of diplomacy. Through her adept use of humor as both a personal trait and a diplomatic tool, Albright deftly navigated complex negotiations and fostered relationships with colleagues and adversaries alike. Her unwavering determination and persistence, coupled with her direct approach to diplomacy, underscored her commitment to advancing American interests and promoting global stability.

An expert negotiator and relationship builder in the realm of diplomacy, Albright is a testament to the enduring power of personal connections in shaping international relations. Her approach, marked by genuine friendship, sincere dialogue, and adept negotiation, not only facilitated consensus-building but also fostered understanding and cooperation across diverse
perspectives. Albright’s commitment to forging bonds and navigating power dynamics underscores the timeless importance of diplomacy rooted in human connection. As Albright’s (2013) autobiography illuminated, her ability to navigate relationships with individuals in positions of power served as a cornerstone of her leadership, leaving an indelible mark on the world stage and inspiring future generations of diplomats and leaders to prioritize the art of building meaningful connections in pursuit of shared goals.

Rice’s Leadership

Condoleezza Rice’s remarkable journey from her upbringing in Titusville, Alabama, to her prominent roles in academia and government serves as a testament to the power of purpose-driven determination and resilience. Raised in a community that prioritized education and instilled in her the belief in being “twice as good,” Rice’s disciplined approach to life propelled her to become the first female national security advisor and the first Black woman to serve as secretary of state. Her ability to navigate challenges and her unwavering commitment to excellence reflect the values instilled in her by her family and community.

The relationship between Rice and President George W. Bush exemplifies the importance of mutual respect, shared values, and effective communication in leadership dynamics. Their bond, rooted in admiration for each other’s intellect and faith, laid a robust groundwork for navigating the intricacies of governance and decision-making. Despite encountering occasional challenges and differences of opinion, Rice and Bush maintained an environment conducive to open dialogue. Rice’s ability to influence Bush’s decision-making process, facilitated by their close rapport, highlights the pivotal role of trust and loyalty in leadership interactions.

In navigating the corridors of power, Condoleezza Rice’s journey from national security advisor to secretary of state embodies the complexities and nuances of leadership in high-stakes
environments. Her evolution, from playing a supporting role to one of greater autonomy, reflects the delicate balance between proximity to authority and the assertion of individual agency. Rice’s story underscores the importance of cultivating strong relationships, maintaining loyalty, and strategically navigating institutional hierarchies to wield influence effectively.

**Clinton’s Leadership**

Hillary Rodham Clinton’s leadership journey highlights the impact of personal upbringing, values, and convictions. From her formative years in Park Ridge, Illinois, to her global advocacy for women’s and children’s rights, Clinton’s journey exemplifies the power of building connections, empathy, and unwavering dedication to effecting positive change. As she continues to inspire generations with her mantra that “women’s rights are human rights,” Clinton’s enduring commitment underscores the ongoing imperative for inclusive leadership and collective action in advancing equality and justice for all.

Clinton’s approach to diplomacy, characterized by her emphasis on building personal relationships and connecting with individuals on a human level, transcended traditional diplomatic protocols and yielded tangible results in advancing American interests on the global stage. From her time as first lady to her tenure as secretary of state, Clinton demonstrated a keen understanding of the intricate interplay between personalities, cultures, and politics, leveraging these insights to navigate complex challenges and forge meaningful partnerships. As she leaves behind a legacy of effective and empathetic leadership, Clinton’s commitment to dialogue, understanding, and inclusive engagement serves as a guiding beacon for future diplomats and leaders navigating the complexities of international relations.

The concept of smart power, championed by Hillary Clinton during her tenure as Secretary of State, represents a strategic approach to diplomacy that combines traditional sources
of power with innovative and inclusive methods. Smart power recognizes that effective diplomacy involves more than just military strength or formal negotiations—it requires engaging with local activists, utilizing social media, promoting human rights, and fostering economic opportunities. Clinton’s leadership in implementing smart power within the State Department institutionalized this approach, resulting in initiatives that connected various sectors and stakeholders to address global challenges. By emphasizing the importance of adaptation and collaboration, Clinton paved the way for a more dynamic and effective U.S. foreign policy that continues to evolve in the 21st century.

**Practical Implications**

Future secretaries of state can draw several practical implications from the leadership approaches of Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Clinton. First, they should prioritize the cultivation of genuine relationships and effective communication with key stakeholders, both domestically and internationally. Building trust and mutual respect, as demonstrated by Albright’s humor and Rice’s close rapport with President Bush, can facilitate diplomatic negotiations and consensus-building on critical issues. Second, future secretaries of state should embrace a strategic and adaptable approach to diplomacy, leveraging innovative methods like Clinton’s use of “smart power” to address complex global challenges. This involves recognizing the interconnectedness of various factors, including culture, economics, and human rights, and employing a comprehensive strategy that incorporates diverse perspectives and stakeholders. Third, Rice’s trajectory exemplifies the complexities of leadership dynamics and the pursuit of personal empowerment within institutional structures. Her story serves as a testament to the importance of fostering strong relationships, maintaining loyalty, and navigating power dynamics skillfully to wield influence effectively in high-level governance. Ultimately,
the leadership of Albright, Rice, and Clinton offer valuable leadership insights for future
 secretaries of state, emphasizing the importance of relationship-building, strategic diplomacy,
 and principled leadership in addressing the complex challenges of the 21st century global
 landscape.

 As noted in Chapter 2, studies show women, particularly those in Congress who are
 working mothers, tend to introduce more legislation concerning education, childcare, and health,
 while also sponsoring a greater number of bills related to children and family compared to their
 counterparts without children under 18 (Bryant & Hellwege, 2018; Burrell, 1994; Sanbotmatsu,
 2003; Swers, 2002). The findings in this dissertation that explored female leadership in a
 somewhat different area than the legislature, are consistent with this previous research and
 expand it beyond elected positions to include those in appointed positions.

 Methodological Implications

 This study contributes to the methodological diversity that is missing in the field of
 leadership studies. Using a case study and cross-case analysis design by analyzing biographical
 data, specifically autobiographies and biographies, proved to be a data rich method for collecting
 and analyzing relevant information. Although interviews and surveys have traditionally
 dominated data collection in women in leadership and politics, this research stands out, alongside
 Gallagher’s (2008), as one of the few utilizing autobiographies and biographies. Methodological
 diversity is essential for achieving a comprehensive understanding of leadership. The integration
 of autobiographies and biographies facilitated comprehensive data gathering. Autobiographies
 offered firsthand perspectives from each woman, while biographies served to triangulate the
 data. Moreover, the biographies, compiled through rigorous journalistic inquiry, drew from a
 variety of primary sources such as interviews, speeches, memos, and news articles.
Future researchers employing this method of inquiry and analysis should carefully prioritize maintaining a focused scope to avoid becoming overwhelmed by data. Though autobiographies and biographies offer rich sources of information, researchers must implement self-regulating measures to ensure alignment with the study’s defined scope. Moreover, the utilization of researcher-generated memos proved especially beneficial and advisable in mitigating bias and self-regulation, thereby ensuring the study does not merely replicate narratives found in autobiographies and biographies. Instead, it facilitates the discovery of fresh insights and connections during analysis.

The adoption of Batilwala’s (2008) feminist leadership diamond in this study, aimed at organizing codes, was not motivated by an intention to evaluate the presence of feminist leadership traits among the women studied. Rather, it was selected for its capacity to surpass conventional leadership models, which commonly emphasize factors such as effectiveness, influence, decision-making, and personality. The feminist leadership diamond was instrumental in structuring and categorizing the emerging codes extracted from the data. Its incorporation underscores the invaluable perspective it offers to the field of leadership studies and theory development, encouraging a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of leadership dynamics. Future researchers are encouraged to explore its utility for code organization and contemplate its potential as a framework for leadership theory.

**Theoretical Implications**

As mentioned in Chapter 2, existing research often overlooks appointed positions within the government, concentrating solely on elected roles. Despite their relatively fewer numbers, those in appointed positions wield considerable influence and play a crucial role in shaping the nation’s direction. Given that there are approximately 4,000 appointed positions in the U.S.
government, with 1,200 of them requiring Senate approval, gaining data-driven insight into effective leadership styles of people in appointed positions is poised to assist those appointing and confirming nominees, and those working with appointed individuals (Partnership for Public Service, 2024).

Additionally, there was a pressing need to cultivate leadership theories stemming from the analysis of women’s involvement in politics, rather than framing them solely in comparison to men. Simply comparing women to men or only studying men further enforces the patriarchal system. When women are compared against men it insinuates men are the standard to which women are judged. Moreover, current studies tended to generalize the experiences of women, thus highlighting the necessity for more in-depth investigations into the diverse identities within the female demographic.

This dissertation utilized grounded theory as its analytical framework, providing flexibility in discerning emerging themes from the data. This approach was particularly advantageous in ensuring that each case study received thorough exploration. Given the scarcity of studies investigating the leadership of women in public office appointments, this methodology ensured that the research did not confine itself to preexisting leadership theories derived primarily from the study of men.

This study adds to the grounded theory of women's leadership in appointed roles, particularly focusing on the role of secretary of state. While leadership theories typically strive for simplicity to engage broad audiences, overgeneralization and simplification may obscure the distinctive aspects of individual leadership styles. Furthermore, there's a danger of reducing all women's leadership to a singular category of "women's leadership," perpetuating societal biases favoring certain races or genders. Recognizing strength in diversity, the study highlights the
importance of each case study as a potential source for unique leadership theories. From Albright, leadership is founded in heritage, steadfast optimism, and dedication to democracy. The skillful deployment of humor and straightforward communication facilitated diplomatic negotiations and cultivated relationships on the world stage. From Rice, leadership is the ability to navigate a quest for personal empowerment within institutional frameworks and highlights the significance of nurturing robust relationships, upholding loyalty, and adeptly navigating power dynamics to wield influence proficiently in governance at the highest levels. From Clinton, leadership is the influence of personal values and the cultivation of connections on diplomatic engagement. The adoption of "smart power," blending conventional sources of influence with inventive and inclusive approaches, reshaped U.S. foreign policy by highlighting the interplay of diverse elements in confronting global issues.

When using grounded theory, the modification or an existing theory is a common outcome. In addition to the three new theories addressed above, it is worth mentioning the commonalities that emerged from the cross-case analysis and the contribution the findings have to integrated leadership theory. All three leaders, Condoleezza Rice, Madeleine Albright, and Hillary Clinton, prioritize building relationships. Rice had a close bond with President George W. Bush, granting her direct access to decision-making and influencing policy. Albright fostered connections through initiatives like “ABC lunches” and genuine friendships with international leaders. Clinton mastered the art of building connections to further diplomatic interests and build a loyal team. This dissertation adds to the research on integrated leadership which suggests women share power, empower others, are inclusive and less competitive, focus on consensus building, build relationships, and seek a wide range of participation (Eagly & Johnson, 1990;
Limitations of the Study

Although this study provides insight into the leadership of women who have served as secretary of state, the findings presented in this dissertation should be interpreted with several limitations in mind. Initially, this research intended to encompass three additional case studies and explore two other branches of government. However, upon reflection, I opted to abandon this approach and confront any potential internalized patriarchal biases. As a female researcher studying women, I initially felt compelled to broaden my study to meet perceived scholarly standards, driven by a need to overcompensate and validate my presence in academia. By choosing to exclusively focus on women who have served as secretary of state, I was able to refine my scope and delve deeper into my analysis, examining commonalities among these figures and the contextual nuances of their leadership roles. Additionally, the role of secretary of state is an appointed position, literature on women in appointed positions is significantly lacking when compared to women in elected positions.

During the cross-case analysis section of this dissertation, I struggled with conflicting thoughts on the validity of such a method. Conducting a cross-case analysis is common practice in qualitative research; however, there is one primary issue regarding research studies focusing on sameness or difference. Such studies tend to oversimplify women’s leadership, disregarding the diversity among women (Browne & Misra, 2003). Within a White supremacist societal framework, this homogenizes women’s experiences, positioning White women as the standard while disregarding the unique perspectives of women from marginalized groups.
Although autobiographies and biographies offered substantial data, they were not comprehensive. Each book was crafted with a specific intent. For instance, the autobiographies and biographies on and by Clinton lacked sufficient coverage of her Senate tenure. Consequently, delving deeper into this phase of her career would have offered valuable context to understand potential shifts in her leadership over time.

Lastly, because I was only focusing on leadership as it related to each woman’s profession, this study did not provide a comprehensive view of leadership they exhibited throughout their entire life. The study utilized the feminist leadership diamond as a means for organizing the data. Consequently, I posed inquiries pertaining to the values, beliefs, and upbringing of each individual. However, though the study delved into various stages of each woman’s life, the autobiographies and biographies primarily focused on their tenure as secretary of state, serving as the main source of insight.

**Future Research**

Further research is required to explore the leadership roles held by women in both political office and appointed positions. There are other women trailblazers such as Stacey Abrams—whose book, *Lead From the Outside*, inspired the idea for this study—possessing leadership style and accomplishments that would add depth and breadth to the field. Geraldine Ferraro—the first female vice-presidential nominee for a major political party. Shirley Chisholm, born in 1924, was a politician, author, and educator. In 1968, Chisholm became the first Black woman to be elected to Congress. She served seven terms as an elected official and in 1972, she became the first Black person to run for president of a major political party in the United States. Nancy Pelosi, born in 1940, has held an elected position since 1976 and is currently the highest-
ranking woman politician in American history. In 2001, Pelosi became the highest-ranking woman in the history of Congress when she was elected, by her colleagues, as House Democratic Whip. Shortly after, in 2002, she was elected House Democratic Leader, becoming the first woman to head a party in Congress. In 2007, Pelosi became the first woman Speaker of the House. Sandra Day O’Connor, born in 1930, is an attorney; politician; and judge. In 1981, President Ronald Regan appointed O’Connor to the Supreme Court, becoming the first woman Supreme Court Justice. The list of women to study is extensive. Given many, if not all, of them have autobiographies, it opens the opportunity to study their leadership style.

The adage “history repeats itself” became increasingly evident during the conduct of these three case studies, particularly given the prevailing political climate. Notably, several actors featured prominently in the data used for each case study and continue to pose concerns for the current administration. These include Russia, China, North Korea, the Israel-Palestine conflict, and various terrorist organizations in the Middle East. Further research is warranted to delve into the challenges encountered during each presidency with these actors, examining both successful and failed negotiation tactics, and offering recommendations for future administrations on how best to engage with them.

A recurring theme across all case studies was the adeptness in establishing and nurturing relationships. Considering the demands of the U.S. secretary of state role, which necessitates collaboration with both domestic and international counterparts to achieve consensus, further research is needed to investigate whether proficiency in relationship building is a common trait among all secretaries of state, regardless of gender, and if it correlates with their success.

The case studies highlighted power as a central theme, with all three mentioning instances of encountering resistance from senior male figures within the U.S. government.
Clinton with her implementation of smart power, Rice and her interactions with Donald Rumsfeld, and Albright vaguely mentioning she had more problems with men in the U.S. government than in her dealings abroad. Interestingly, this opposition appeared more prevalent domestically than in interactions with foreign leaders. Further research is imperative to explore the intricacies of power dynamics within the U.S. government, as these dynamics may impede progress and the advancement of policy agendas. Additionally, the complexity of the U.S. government and its institutional structures, which may facilitate individual autonomy or non-compliance due to the government’s compartmentalized nature, necessitates closer examination.

Similarly, the gender discrimination encountered in the U.S., in contrast to internationally, resonates with Adler’s (1984) findings indicating that working women abroad are initially perceived as foreigners before being recognized as women. Further investigation is warranted to delve into the gender discrimination experienced by women holding governmental positions abroad compared to those working within the U.S. Additionally, there is a need for research examining the gender discrimination encountered by international women working with U.S. governmental officials and their respective experiences.

Rice shifted from a position of support to attaining increased autonomy, illustrating the nuanced relationship between proximity to authority and personal agency. Further exploration into the intricate balance of maintaining close ties with influential figures while preserving individual freedom is warranted, given its remarkable nature. This balance presents an invaluable lesson for aspiring leaders, specifically future secretaries of state.

Lastly, despite facing significant criticism from the media, voters, and domestic colleagues, Clinton's determination to improve the lives of women and children, promote democracy, and serve her country only intensified. Arguably one of the most polarizing figures
in American politics, she was possibly protected and held up by a strong support network of friends, family, and loyal staff who stood by her through both professional and personal challenges. This underscores the vital role of community in navigating oppressive institutions and systems. Further exploration into the dynamics of friendship and community in Clinton's life could provide valuable insights for operationalizing similar support structures in other professional industries. There is a need for additional research to deepen our understanding of how women can build and leverage communities to overcome obstacles and drive positive change.

**Final Thoughts**

This study's intention was not to make sweeping generalizations about women's leadership. In societies where certain races or genders are favored over others, such generalizations often lead to the dominant identity setting the standard. Instead, this study emphasizes the individuality of each woman and her distinct strengths and methodologies. Consequently, it challenges the notion that there exists a separate category of "women's leadership" distinct from leadership in general. Future leaders, regardless of gender, can draw inspiration from the three newly formulated leadership theories presented in this study, particularly those aspiring to the role of secretary of state.

Given the significance of identity in shaping each secretary's leadership style, current and prospective leaders can utilize questions from Batilwala's (2008) feminist leadership diamond to anchor their own leadership approaches. Several questions can prompt reflection on personal identity, such as: What values steer my actions? What principles underpin my decisions? What aspects of my beliefs are non-negotiable? How do these values, principles, and non-negotiables manifest in my professional trajectory? What ideological perspectives shape my understanding
of socio-economic contexts? How do these contexts inform my long-term goals and mission?

Understanding one's purpose, mission, and values serve as a compass for leaders to uphold their authenticity despite changes in power dynamics and roles.
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Supplemental Material

Appendix A Biographical data reviews