

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Anne-Marie Slaughter <[REDACTED]>
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Cc: Abedin, Huma
Subject: to empower women, we have to find better ways to validate men
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I thought you might like this – although I don't think it necessarily applies in DC, where men still seem to me to be plenty empowered. On a completely different subject, nb the following point from Christopher Dickey this morning, which echoes your speeches – “If we Westerners are worried about popular sentiment in the Arab world, which would be something novel for us, then the opinion we need to satisfy should be that of the young people in the streets who have risen against their dictators. They represent, after all, some two-thirds of the region's population.” I think we should be making every effort to find out what leaders of the April 6 movement in Egypt, the Tunisian protesters, the Bahrainis etc. think re a NFZ or other military action in Libya. AM

International Men's Day

If we are going to empower women and girls around the world, we have to find new and better roles for men. Last week I led a State Department-sponsored delegation of women tech leaders to Liberia and Sierra Leone to meet with government officials, entrepreneurs, activists, telecommunication and banking executives, and university administrators to explore ways that technology, particularly mobile technology, can help improve the health, education, and livelihoods of women and girls in both countries. Women are doing amazing things in both countries, from President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in Liberia to First Lady Sia Koroma in Sierra Leone to countless local women and women returning from the diaspora that fled during horrific civil wars in both countries. But as a successful businesswoman was telling me that "women do all the farming" in Sierra Leone, as well as most of the market trading, and as I watched the groups of unemployed young men on every street corner, I kept wondering what men were supposed to be doing. It finally dawned on me that farming was women's work because it was domestic work -- tending family crops. Men were the hunters and the warriors, essential providers of protein and protection. Yet neither of those roles exist today, beyond the option of serving in small national military forces.

When I used to teach civil procedure as a law professor, I would begin the year by telling my students that "civil procedure is the etiquette of ritualized battle." The phrase, which did not originate with me, captured the point that peaceful, developed societies resolve disputes by law rather than by force. Litigation thus becomes "ritualized battle." It is not hard to imagine many litigators as modern warriors, just as it is not hard to imagine many investment bankers as competitive hunters -- of deals rather than game. But in societies that have just recently emerged from actual battle, where men fought each other and raped and captured women and that have only rudimentary legal and finance professions, what's the professional alternative to hunting and fighting?

The point of these admittedly loose sociological musings is that women's roles have expanded while men's have contracted. Over my lifetime, women have demonstrated repeatedly that they can do anything that men can do,

while still managing traditional women's work at the same time. But the same expansion of roles has not been available to men. Yes, men can do housework and take care of children -- my husband proves that every day, and I love him for it. But those roles are not celebrated in our society, even though they should be, which is one reason so many women have wanted more. So what is it that men are distinctively good at? Legal Analyst Dan Abrams has just written a book called *Man Down: Proof Beyond a Reasonable Doubt That Women Are Better Cops, Drivers, Gamblers, Spies, World Leaders, Beer Tasters, Hedge Fund Managers, and Just About Everything Else*. The book is based on over 100 gender-based studies. It is wonderfully timed for International Women's Day and ideal talk show fodder. But the implications are actually quite serious -- not only in terms of increasing the number of women in these professions, but also in terms of asking ourselves how we can better value and validate men.

I ask these questions every day as the mother of two sons, aged 12 and 14. Two sons who matter-of-factly say, as though it is indeed an unquestioned matter of fact, that "girls are smarter than boys" and thus do better in school. They are of course trying to curry favor with their feminist mother while explaining why their own grades aren't higher, but at a time when many colleges are starting to put a thumb on the scale for male applicants to ensure a roughly balanced class, I worry that they really believe it. As much as I want them to treat their wives as equals and value all that women can do and be, I also want them to value themselves.

Because in the end girls are not smarter than boys, any more than boys are smarter than girls. A healthy society has to honor and respect women and men. We know that rising unemployment correlates with rising domestic violence; frustrated, unhappy men who cannot control their lives all too often exercise violent control over their wives. Women should not validate men in ways that diminish themselves, such as cooing over a strong protector in a way that reinforces the idea of the weaker sex. But we must take to heart the idea that women's equality does not in fact mean women's superiority. It means what it says: equality. So our task for International Women's Day is to figure out, at least in part, how we can celebrate men.

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