



## Episode 491: Queen of Chaos: The Misadventures of Hillary Clinton

Guest: Diana Johnstone

**WOODS:** As I said before we went on, I have followed your work for years and years, and it helped me tremendously as I was trying to make my way through understanding the Balkans situation years later. I was in graduate school in 1995, and the situation in Bosnia seemed so complicated, and I was so busy with my graduate studies that I thought someday I'll have the leisure to figure out what in the world is going on. All I know is I don't trust a word the U.S. government is saying. And it turns out that wound up serving me pretty well, in retrospect.

**JOHNSTONE:** That was a good intuition.

**WOODS:** That's right, that's right. Now, that's an issue, we're talking about your book, *Queen of Chaos*, which I'm going to be linking to at [TomWoods.com/491](http://TomWoods.com/491), and strictly speaking, of course, Hillary Clinton did not occupy an office at that time. But she seems to have consistent foreign policy views over the past couple of decades, so it's not altogether unfair to be talking about the Balkans in the 1990s. I won't ask you to talk about the situation in Bosnia in 1995, because it's an immensely complicated subject, but I do want to say a little something, if we may, before we get into the real thicket with Hillary Clinton, about the situation in Kosovo in 1999, because right now, as you know – no doubt you're an observer of the U.S. – we have Bernie Sanders running in the Democratic primary, and Sanders voted for the bombing of the Serbs over Kosovo in 1999.

So I think it's important to get that one right. We were being told at the time that the Albanian Muslims were being killed in enormous numbers. We were being told hundreds of thousands of people were missing, and one U.S. official said ominously, they may have been murdered. And then after the fact, it turned out that maybe 2,200 people on both sides of a civil war had died, which was not quite as sexy a statistic. So what was really going on there, and why is that so many progressives seem to job on board for this?

**JOHNSTONE:** Well, it was an incredible propaganda thing. You see, that was – what I've called is "the war to start wars." You have this false humanitarian war, which is taken as permanent permission for NATO to go anywhere in the world, supposedly to save people from genocide or something like that. And see, the threat of genocide in Kosovo was exactly like the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. It was a false alarm

that was designed precisely at the 50th anniversary of NATO to give NATO a new mission out of its treaty area, out of its defense area, into an offensive posture, but on humanitarian grounds. And the Kosovo Liberation Front was a bunch of gangsters, which we chose — as we tend to choose the worse people everywhere — as our allies to undermine a legitimate government and give us an excuse to go in there, and then set up a huge U.S. military base. A few days after going in there to save the people, we set up a huge military base by just taking over people's farmland without asking their permission. I mean, it's one of the most fraudulent events in history.

**WOODS:** And then after the fact, there's all this destruction; there's devastation everywhere. But by that point, the American public and the American regime has moved onto the next issue. No one's going to come help these people. There's wreckage everywhere. And it's interesting that at that time, I'm pretty sure that right-wing radio people like Sean Hannity were saying how terrible it is that this intervention has gone on, and we ought to mind our own business. And of course I briefly became optimistic at that point, failing to realize that the instinct to mind one's own business changes completely when the party in the White House changes. No longer did Sean Hannity want to mind his own business.

Let's turn to Hillary Clinton, though, and the war in Iraq, which she supported and now says she regrets. And that is the cheapest currency in the world, just to tell me after the fact when it's become unpopular and all fashionable opinion is against it, that all of a sudden you're against it and you made a mistake. Why should I ever trust her again?

**JOHNSTONE:** Well, I mean, she regrets the war that has already proved to be disastrous, but she's all for the war that is now moving to be disastrous in Syria and has been in favor all along — more than Obama, by the way — of supporting these supposed in between rebels. She and Petraeus had this plan for them; she boasts about it in her memoirs, that she's boasted about being more for more war in Syria than Obama. So maybe she, for obvious political reasons, disapproves of the war that everybody disapproves of now, but she's absolutely in favor of the one that is going on and is causing massive refugees into Europe, which is causing huge problems for our dearest European allies, who are paying for it — but of course they bear some of the responsibility, because their leaders have gone along with this policy.

**WOODS:** No doubt. Now, is this what you have in mind when you're referring to Hillary Clinton as "queen of chaos?" And take a minute to elaborate on that beautiful title.

**JOHNSTONE:** Well, exactly, because her policies are leading to chaos everywhere. I mean, the prime example in my book is Libya —

**WOODS:** Right.

**JOHNSTONE:** — because she bears more direct responsibility for that. And she's a murderess and a war criminal of the worst kind, and Libya is really the example of that. Of course, she's not alone. You know, if it were just here — unfortunately it's a

whole war party that's running the United States. She's just their favorite to be the figurehead in this massive destruction. But what she's led to is terrible chaos in Libya. Libya was what kept refugees from Africa from pouring into Europe, they're now pouring into Europe. And that was perfectly clear along. It was also perfectly clear that Qaddafi's opponents in Libya were Islamic extremists. That was well known to anyone who knew anything about that. Of course, she doesn't have to know anything about it; she was just into this thing, we're going to remake the world. And remaking the world is turning it into chaos.

**WOODS:** On the subject of Libya, let's say something about that. I remember at the time reading in the newspaper that Qaddafi was on the verge of wiping out a whole term. It was likely that he was just going to kill absolutely everybody, and that's why intervention was necessary. What was the truth of the matter? What was actually happening?

**JOHNSTONE:** Qaddafi gave a speech in which he called on the armed rebels to lay down their arms. Who wouldn't do that? When you're the head of a country and you have armed rebels, you ask them to lay down their arms, and if you don't lay down your arms, well, we'll use force against you. And he was also offering compromises that some of them could creep into Egypt, etc. Of course, he never said that, but you know, when you give a speech in Libya, who knows what exactly he said? Actually, the main person who sold that story to the West – he's mentioned at length in my book; I can't remember his name exactly – but he was the head of the supposed human rights group in Libya. He went to Geneva and told stories, which he admitted openly afterwards on camera that there was no evidence of that. But everybody took it up, because beating up Libya looked easy to the West. Militarily it's not a big opponent, and so they just think since we have the military power to crush this small country with not much military force, well, let's do it. And so they did. And it just opened Pandora's box all over the region and into Europe as well.

**WOODS:** What exactly is the motivating factor here? Qaddafi was completely cowed, and he had come out and said I'm giving up my nuclear weapons program that nobody was really concerned about to begin with. He was totally cowed. He had come out and more or less emasculated himself. What possible reason – now here I am trying to find some rational reason – why Libya? Just because it's weak? There are a lot of weak countries.

**JOHNSTONE:** Hillary uses an expression in dealing with Russia. She says in that shot period<sup>3</sup> of the supposed reset when they had good relations, she speaks about, well, we used that to pick off the low hanging fruit. And I think Libya looked like a low-hanging fruit. It looked like something – an oil-rich country, whose leader the West never liked, but who is probably getting close to retirement, by the way, but leave that aside. But it just looked like an easy thing to do, and they could use the excuse of the Arab Spring, which was this big media hype. Arab Spring, you know, this is supposed to be something wonderful. We don't really know what's going on, and it's very different from one country to another, but they would use this as, ah ha, we're going to do something wonderful and go in and save some people. This was completely

invented, but why not grab a country that produces very high quality petroleum products? Why not grab it when it looks like it's an easy thing to do, and we have an opportunity? And I think it's been on the hit list for years and years, of one of the countries that the neocons want to regime change and remake the world in what is supposed to be our image. Well, if that's our image, it's the image of Dorian Gray.

**WOODS:** Tell me what life is like in Libya today. And I was trying to explain this to my daughter the other day, because in school unfortunately she's surrounded by kids who accept the military propaganda line. We've got to go in and – "we," they always say. The ambiguous *we've* got to go in and defend these smaller countries, because they don't have the technical ability to defend themselves, and I keep thinking, well, they keep buying a lot of weapons from the U.S.; I think most of them are okay. But she wants to know what to say when her friends are talking about the need to intervene and to help out these less fortunate countries, and I said, well, a lot of times in these situations, it's true there's a bad guy in charge, but there's no good guy waiting in the wings. There's a much worse scenario. It's not that we're choosing between good and bad. We're choosing between bad and much, much worse. Is that what's actually happened in Libya?

**JOHNSTONE:** Well, it certainly is what has happened. You know, I was in Libya in 2007 for an international conference on the international criminal court. It was an international juris conference. And I was very struck by the fact that this was a high level, important international conference with people from all over the world, right? And I noticed that Qaddafi had his posters on poles and things like that, but there was absolutely no intervention by Qaddafi in this conference. Now, if we was such a dictator, you'd have thought that he would have put his fingerprints on this conference. On the contrary, the general gist of the conference was contrary to the views of Qaddafi.

I saw a bit of the country. It was very peaceful compared to other countries of that region. There were no beggars. Even in the bazaar, nobody was pushing you to buy. It was very calm and good quality stuff. I mean, I don't know what more those people really wanted, but I know what they wanted in Benghazi. They wanted to have an Islamic state. They always have. They've been against Qaddafi all along, because he wasn't Islamist enough. It's very clear. Women didn't have to wear veils. I was speaking to women lawyers there, etc., etc. I say it's much, much, much worse.

And there was a kind of direct democracy on a local level. This country had – what is it? 5 or 6 million people? Why do you want them to be like Ohio? I mean, they have to work out things themselves, in their own way. Why is it when you can say, oh, they don't have elections like we have in Ohio; we've got to go bomb them to make them like us? It's absurd. It is absolutely crazy.

**WOODS:** I'm curious to know what you think about the relationship between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, specifically of course on foreign policy matters. Now of course, it's not to say that Barack Obama has been the peace president by any means. Of course, compared to George W. Bush he is, but that's a pretty low threshold. But

my feeling is he did put through this Iran deal, which I think was very good. He was under tremendous pressure not to do it, and he did it anyway, and I think that's all to the good. My feeling is that his heart is not really in a lot of the militarism. I mean, he feels compelled to do it for various reasons, whereas Hillary's heart really – she does seem to be gung ho about it? What's your own assessment of that relationship?

**JOHNSTONE:** Well, I must say that I agree with you. I think that of course Obama is responsible – I'm not sure. You see, I think that the American system now, the president is now sort of a figurehead, and I make that point in my book, you know. There's the whole neocon influence, and now there's humanitarian liberals, who are all gung ho for wars. I think that the president is not really – he's a temporary figure. He's there for four years and maybe for another four years, but he's a temporary chairman of the board. He doesn't really, can't really decide everything. I agree that Obama is increasingly I think not enthusiastic about this war policy, but he's a figurehead on a board, which is divided, but which is majority pretty much on the neocon line. Now, the thing is that Hillary seems to be completely on that line, without any hesitations whatsoever and with a lot of enthusiasm indeed for it. So I think she's much worse than Obama.

**WOODS:** Now I can accept that. I can accept the idea that the president is actually more hemmed in than we think. But yet if the president were really, really committed to peace, he could do it.

**JOHNSTONE:** Yes, he could.

**WOODS:** For instance, Dennis Kucinich I believe would just not bomb anybody. I believe Ron Paul would not bomb anybody. So I don't think it's enough to say, well, it's too bad that he's got all these countervailing forces at work on him. If he were a stronger personality and believed in this more strongly and felt like he could expend enough political capital, he would do it. Now, he did do it with the Iran deal. I do give him credit for that.

**JOHNSTONE:** Well yes, yes. But you see, if he were that strong person, he'd have never gotten the nomination.

**WOODS:** (laughing) Well, there you go.

**JOHNSTONE:** Look, they put both Ron Paul and Dennis Kucinich on the sidelines, right? Those people never have a chance to be nominated. When Ron Paul was a candidate, why, they pretended he wasn't there. You see, the person who will get the nomination has already shown a certain willingness to go along with the people who in fact choose who's going to be president.

**WOODS:** Well, no doubt, but I have to say one thing that has disappointed me about the Bernie Sanders campaign is, first, how little there is on foreign policy in it, even though by and large he's certainly much better than anybody in the past 15 years has been. But secondly, one of the great things that Ron Paul did was to call out the whole

Republican Party and say everybody in this party is a horrifying warmonger, and I think you're all moral reprobates. And Bernie could say the same thing. These wars couldn't have happened without the complicity of my own party, and he should be calling out Hillary. And as far as I know, he's barely even mentioning her name.

**JOHNSTONE:** Yeah, I can't argue with you on that at all. So far I don't really see the proper opponent for Hillary in the next election on any side, because there seem to be sort of the seven dwarves, and there's just – well, there's still time for something to happen. There's time for something to happen. And it's true; if you had a president who could arouse the American people to realize what's going on and would come right out and educate the public to what we are being led into, which is global disaster. I am convinced of that. If you had anybody politically acute enough, smart enough, and intelligent enough – not just smart, like they are, this sort of smart, smart, smart like Hillary – but intelligent, who knows to put things together and who would have the courage to inform the American people and get elected, could then choose the people around him or her who would change policy and change course. This is not impossible; it's just that there's a long way to go.

**WOODS:** You know, I was very much involved in Ron Paul's effort, and a lot of times people would say, well, if he got elected, he couldn't accomplish very much. He's only one person; he's just the president. But I said even if he accomplished nothing at all, which I think is unlikely, suppose he accomplished nothing at all, one thing he could accomplish is for four years, he would have an unfiltered reach to the general public to teach them the real truth about the nature of the U.S. empire. And that alone, I don't care what legislation goes through or doesn't go through, that would be four better years than I can remember in my lifetime. And so you're right; getting to the public is very important, because no matter whether you're Democrat or Republican or whatever, the vast majority of the U.S. public has bought into this almost religious reverence for the military that we have now.

I mean, I don't know when the last time was you were in the U.S., but it's gotten much worse since you were last here, I assure you. If you're on an airplane and you're landing, we have to salute and applaud all the service people onboard for serving our country. You're not allowed to ask impertinent questions, like what exactly has been done to so-called serve our country in any of these recent wars. I mean, none of it. But you can't say any of it. And every sporting event, there's some military demonstration. It's everywhere. That's very, very hard to cut through. Even the typical Democrat, who's supposed to be at least mildly anti-war, stands up and cheers.

**JOHNSTONE:** That's amazing. No, I haven't been back for a while, and you've just given me reasons why.

**WOODS:** (laughing) I'm sorry. But that's what we face here, and it's very, very frustrating. And toward the end of your book, you say that it's certainly not impossible that we could turn things around. And you're right; I mean, it's not a metaphysical impossibility; it's just extremely difficult on a practical level.

**JOHNSTONE:** Yeah, it is, because of course you've got the mass media against you; you've got Hollywood against you. You see, the public is constantly indoctrinated by the mass media and Hollywood too. I mean, I don't go to these movies, but I've heard about them, and it's all about, you know, killing people and — there's a whole sort of cultural indoctrination in the United States that's going on. It's visible if you're not there, because the whole world sees it. But it's very alarming, and it's hard to break people out of that, to think clearly about what's going on. And there's all this manna-Canaanism, all this dualism; there's the bad guys and the good guys, and we're the good guys. I mean, this is infantile, absolutely infantile. And yet, it's the kind of thinking that is promoted by the media, and I don't know what they're doing in the schools these days, but I never did think they were very good when it came to important subjects like history or geography.

**WOODS:** That's right. No, they're not so good, but once in a while, they'll be good on a war that's been over for 35 years. A lot of people are great on wars that have been over for 35 years. They tend not to be good on the wars that are going on now or the wars that they're contemplating, but for some reason we are willing to listen to the very people who admit I was wrong about this; I was wrong about that; the exact opposite of what I predicted occurred with this. And for some reason these people keep getting invited back onto TV, and we're supposed to sit and watch. Before I let you go, I want to ask if you could just say something about a term that Hillary uses, and I want people to understand what she means by it. She uses the term "smart power." We need to use smart power. Does that mean that she would be less bellicose than the right wing neocons? Or what does that mean?

**JOHNSTONE:** Well, it doesn't mean much of anything. I mean, that is an opposition to the notion that Bush only used hard power, and then there's the soft power of nigh. You know, these are these Hollywood bubble terms. I don't think they mean much of anything. She's someone who has always posed herself as very smart. She talks about how smart she is. She does herself — you know, she was the good little girl in school, always raised her hand, always had the answer teach wanted. She's still like that, only the teacher now is Haim Saban or somebody who's going to give her a lot of money for her campaign. But she always has the right answer. So all that smart power means is we don't just use military power; we also use subversion, bullying, economic — you know, every type of power. And she calls that smart power. And that's all that means. And it really doesn't mean much of anything.

**WOODS:** Well, on that note, I wish I could end on a happier note, but I'm going to let you go and urge people to check out *Queen of Chaos: The Misadventures of Hillary Clinton*, one of my favorite book titles in quite a long time. That is a fantastic title. We're going to link to it at [TomWoods.com/491](http://TomWoods.com/491). As we're talking, this is going to air — good heavens, today is — so tomorrow will be September 15th, 2015. It's still on pre-order, but it's coming out imminently, so get over to Amazon, get on that link that I'll put at [TomWoods.com/491](http://TomWoods.com/491) —

**JOHNSTONE:** Or CounterPunch; you can order directly from CounterPunch.

**WOODS:** Okay, I'll put it on CounterPunch.

**JOHNSTONE:** Because they have a basket, you know, but it isn't quite in the basket yet, but I think it's at the printers about now.

**WOODS:** Okay, so I'll link over on CounterPunch, which is the American publisher for the book and which very often publishes very interesting things that I've also benefitted from. Well, I hope we can talk to you again in the future. I wish you the best of luck with this book. If there were any justice in the world, all Americans would be reading it, but anyway, you can rest in the satisfaction of knowing that you have done the right thing, and that's at least something. Thank you very much, Diana.

**JOHNSTONE:** Well, thank you. It was a pleasure.