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**Title:** The Afghan War for Sexual Reform

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**Synopsis:** DiManno critiques the Shiite Personal Status Law approved by Hamid Karzai. She begins the piece by criticizing him for appeasing the fundamentalists.

The article occasionally states the obvious about life being hard for women in Afghanistan and resorts to stereotypes about female oppression. These are, however, balanced out by life-expectancy statistics among women.

DiManno also resorts to statements about the Quran not sanctioning the abuses enshrined in the misogynistic laws of the land.

She bases some of her findings on an interview with Palwasha Hassan, director of the Kabul Office of Rights and Democracy.

**Quote: “**What a sneaky little fellow President Hamid Karzai has become.

The modern Afghan messiah: a leader for the 21st century of a nation suspended in the cultural bell jar of medievalism. Showing one face to the international community but, increasingly, and with the instinct of a political survivor, another at home to appease fundamentalists.

His own wife – a doctor – is never seen in public. That should have been a clue.”

“Life is harsh for all women in this nation, one of only three countries in the world where females die earlier than males. The Ministry of Women's Affairs just released figures showing record violence against women in the first three months of 2009 – everything from rape to acid dousing of schoolgirls. But the numbers cited, 1,149 reported acts of violence, represent just a fraction of un-reported reality.”

“There was nothing in the Qur'an and other Islamic texts to justify abuses as promulgated in the original legislation.”