

Redefining State Security Using Gender: Case Study of the United States of America Post-Cold War

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Abstract : Traditional international relations theorists define state security, the principal national interest, as a state's military force. However, many political theorists argue the current definition of security is not comprehensive and therefore, problematic. This paper argues that women's physical security is not only linked but also necessary to achieve state security. In today's unipolar political international system, the United States continues to accredit national security to its military. However, in one of the most militarized countries, women remain insecure. Through a case study method of the United States, this paper illuminates a necessary political prescription: the empowerment of women through an inside-out, feminist theoretical approach that makes state security attainable. The research through empirical testing, drawing from several databases, shows the positive effects of women's physical security on state security. Women's physical security is defined in terms of equal legal practices, health, education, and female representation in the government. State security is measured by the relative peace of a state, its involvement in conflict and a state's relations with neighboring states. This paper shows that empowering women, 50% of the world's population, is necessary for ending the current vicious circle of militarization, war, and insecurity. Without undoing gender power dynamics at the individual and societal level, security at all levels remains unattainable.

Keywords : gender inequality, politics, state security, women's security

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