



Rapporteurs: Annaleah Westerhaug

On April 27, 2022, CNA held its third Inclusive National Security event of the year (@InclusiveNatSec on Twitter), which continued this year's focus on the relationship between gender and national security. The event ([recording here](#)), "Gender, Sex, Stability, and Security," reflected on how sex inequality affects governance, stability, and security. The event featured a discussion with Dr. Valerie Hudson, distinguished professor and George H.W. Bush chair in the Department of International Affairs and the director of the Program on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. Dr. Jennifer Hawkins, senior WPS advisor at the US Agency for International Development, moderated the event.

Reflections from Dr. Hudson:

- Dr. Hudson presented her recent research, including empirical evidence supporting the assertion that the political order practiced in the home (between the sexes) has a clear influence on the political order practiced in the halls of government. She argued, moreover, that this political order shapes the fate of states: Once the sex order is established, institutions reflect that ordering, and a vicious feedback loop maintains it.
- Or, as Dr. Hudson, noted: "What you do to your women you do to your nation state." She also discussed the evidence supporting the argument that disempowering women leads to poor economic performance. She argued that poor nations are poor partly because they treat their women poorly (and not the other way around). She also noted that, by triangulating data (theoretical, empirical, and historical), it was possible to make a compelling argument for a causal (and not merely correlational) relationship.
- Dr. Hudson discussed research on how gender inequities start in the home/family and introduced the term "patrilineal fraternal syndrome"; per this model, when families are grouped among men, a fraternity among men is created that becomes a node of power. However, this fraternity involves severely subordinating women, which harms not only women but also children and men.
- In fact, governance by extended male kin networks leads to unfortunate outcomes for society—for example instability, violence, corruption, and autocracy occur at high rates. In many countries, when women's financial access is limited, the prioritization of health, food security, and education is also limited.
- In addition, qualitative and quantitative analysis has demonstrated that, historically, societies' economies and stability made huge leaps forward after women began to be treated better, including being granted property rights.
- When discussing the nuance between "gender" and "sex," Dr. Hudson explained how conceptions about gender are used to define and limit both what women are and what they can do. Gender norms and restrictions are used to oppress women as well as individuals who are intersex and gender non-conforming.
- A key recommendation from Dr. Hudson was for the US WPS agenda to focus on ending child marriage worldwide. Evidence shows that child marriage is one of the root causes of gender inequity and disempowers women severely by limiting their freedoms and opportunities. Thus, ending child marriage would be a significant step toward improving gender equality.

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