

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

**Women's Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in China:
A Case Study for the Engendering of Human Security Discourse**

**A Dissertation Submitted by
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for the award of the degree

**PhD
in International Relations**

**FACULTY OF ARTS, USQ
2007**

ABSTRACT

Since the 1990s, the discourse of security has undergone profound change. Rather than merely pertaining to a more traditional, narrow interpretation of security primarily focusing on nation-states instead of people, a human dimension, known as *human security* has been added. While such discussions on human security have attempted to encompass threats to humanity as a whole, interpretations of such threats have largely failed to recognise the exceptional threats faced by women. Although threats found in analytical discussions of human security do *relate* to women, it is imperative that a sharper focus be placed on the additional threats women face in terms of their security; ones that might become blurred in general discourse, such as economic, educational and employment disparities, gender discrimination, substandard healthcare, restricted access to healthcare facilities, human trafficking and male violence.

This dissertation seeks to provide a gendered analysis of human security, using women in China as its focus. To provide a focused examination, it takes a global source of human insecurity, HIV/AIDS, and examines why women in China are increasingly at risk from HIV/AIDS. In addition to assessing the impact that this pandemic poses for their security, it also attempts to investigate the social impacts HIV/AIDS is having on women in China and what measures the government has put in place to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS. The extent and nature of the role played by intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) in China's HIV/AIDS epidemic is also explored.

This research was prompted by the limited nature of a gendered analysis in the mainstream human security literature, and the need to identify the unique threats to human security faced by women. The realisation that the 'disempowered status' of women increases their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and that HIV/AIDS is becoming a major source of insecurity for many women around the world (and in China in particular), provides a relevant focus for such an investigation.

CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signature of Candidate

Date

ENDORSEMENT

Signature of Supervisor

Date

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Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give a great deal of thanks to my principal supervisor, Professor Donald McMillen (USQ) and associate supervisor Dr Rosemary Roberts (UQ) who have both spent countless hours guiding me throughout the planning and writing of this dissertation. My thanks also go to the other members of the Arts Faculty at the University of Southern Queensland, staff from the University Services Centre at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and staff from other universities, who have also supported me and assisted my work. Special thanks go to Mr Richard Gehrman (USQ), Associate Professor Peter Wicks (USQ), Associate Professor Chris Lee (USQ), Ms Zhao Yan (USQ), Dr Jill Lawrence (USQ), Ms Eleanor Kiernan (USQ), Mrs Chris Bartlett (USQ), Ms Ruth Hilton and Ms Jean Hung (USC). It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the support I have received from the University of Southern Queensland, in particular, their generous research grant that allowed me to conduct field research in the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong.

My thanks also go to colleagues from the China Studies Association of Australia and the Asian Studies Association of Australia for their support and helpful feedback on conference papers I've presented based on my fieldwork and archival research. I would also like to thank the informants, who shall remain nameless, to whom I spoke while conducting field research in China. Their openness on this topic was greatly appreciated and offered valuable insights into China's responses to HIV/AIDS.

Special thanks go to my partner Brodie. I couldn't have made it without you. The same applies to my family and friends for their continual support and encouragement. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the postgraduate room at USQ for their support and encouragement, in particular Dr Ben Payne, Ms Cath Darcy, Dr Chris Ison, Dr Brian Beasley and Mr David Akenson.

And, finally, I would like to thank the Australia-China Council for their generous research grant that allowed me to attend the inaugural Chinese Studies Graduate Summer School Australian National University, Canberra 1-7 February 2004.

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my daughters, Keely and Molly, whose arrivals near the various stages of the completion of the dissertation were the inspiration that saw it through.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

ACWF	All China Women's Federation
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCTV	China Central Television Network
CNY	Chinese Yuan
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GRID	Gay Related Immune Deficiency
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HIV+	Human Immunodeficiency Virus Positive
IDU/s	Intravenous Drug User/s
IGOs	Intergovernmental Organisations
INGOs	International Non-governmental Organisation
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSM	Men who have sex with men
MTCT	Mother-to-child transmission
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
NSC	New Security Concept
PLWHA	People living with HIV/AIDS
PRC	People's Republic of China
RTI	Reproductive tract infection
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SOEs	State-owned enterprises
STI/s	Sexually transmitted infection/s
STD/s	Sexually transmitted disease/s
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

UNTGC	United Nations Theme Group in China
US	United States
USC	University Services Centre
VCT	Voluntary counselling and testing
WHO	World Health Organisation