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**CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL  
SECURITY: RETHINKING THE LINKS  
BETWEEN NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

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# CHAPTER 5

## INSECURITIES OF NON-DOMINANCE: RE-THEORIZING HUMAN SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE IN DEVELOPED STATES

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### **Introduction**

Contemporary human security theory often characterizes people as secure or insecure based largely upon the ‘security’ of their respective states. Although some research explicitly notes that human insecurity can arise in developed and developing states, seldom does it pay the former more than cursory attention. Repeatedly, the unspoken assumption is that citizens of developed states don’t actually experience, or experience very little, human insecurity.<sup>1</sup> Such an approach, however, assumes generally uniform security conditions within a given state, and depends upon gendered characterizations of ‘secure’ states in the Global North exporting or promoting human security to ‘insecure’ states in the Global South. Consequently, it obscures conditions of insecurity experienced by minority or marginalized groups within otherwise ‘secure’ states and societies. As a result, human insecurity within developed states remains under-theorized and under-examined.

Given the particular, and worsening, hazards associated with environmental changes, this paper proposes a framework for explaining environmentally driven human insecurity in developed states based on societal relations of dominance/non-dominance.<sup>2</sup> Centrally, it identifies non-dominance as a constitutive factor for insecurity due to the inability of marginalized groups to ‘securitize’ locally experienced environmental hazards to their human security. Such an approach avoids the state-centrism inherent in much of the human security literature, and provides a mechanism for identifying, examining and mitigating human insecurity within developed states.

This paper proceeds in three parts. First, it examines contemporary human security theory and asserts the need for a broad and non-statist conception of human security. It identifies the concept of insecurity(ies) of non-dominance and situates it within a broad human security framework. Second, it examines the particular constitution of non-dominance within Canada as an example of a developed state. Third, it examines how environmental changes underlie and multiply the human insecurity of non-dominant groups in Canada. In particular, it surveys economic, physical and societal insecurities constituted by environmental changes and non-dominance in the Canadian Arctic.

## **Human Security and the Insecurities of Non-Dominance**

The concept of human security emerged from the geopolitical and conceptual opening offered by the end of the Cold War. It sought to change the ontology of security from one concerned primarily with the survival and interests of states to one focused upon the survival and well-being of people. Since their inception, however, human security theory and practice have been bifurcated between two distinct approaches: a 'narrow' school concerned primarily with violent threats to people's well-being; and a 'broad' school which asserts that, because human lives and livelihoods are integrally affected by non-violent as well as violent means, "the problem of human security ... cannot by its very constitution be approached in a narrow manner."<sup>3</sup> Instead, the broad school contends that human security must extend to other hazards that can threaten the economic, social, cultural and physical aspects of human life.<sup>4</sup> Although this debate has not been entirely resolved, the broad school appears to have gained traction in scholarly and practical circles, and there seems to be a general recognition that human security cannot be limited *a priori* to violent security hazards without excessively limiting the remit and utility of the concept.<sup>5</sup>

Central to most human security theory is the assumption that the state remains a, if not *the*, central provider of security for its citizens.<sup>6</sup> Although the literature notes the potential and likelihood for predatory, despotic, or unstable states to pose a threat to their citizens' security, most policy-oriented human security studies still promote the establishment of effective sovereign states able to fulfil the 'responsibility to protect' their citizens.<sup>7</sup> According to Keith Krause and Michael Williams, for instance, "security is synonymous with citizenship,"<sup>8</sup> such that creating effective states capable of delivering the goods of citizenship is the *sine qua non* of providing human security. In examining states that lack the capacity to provide security for their citizens, however, scholars have overwhelmingly focused upon so-called fragile, failing and failed states concentrated in particular regions of the Global South. This has resulted in two problematic and related trends within the human security field.

First, human security research has often retained a state-centrism that is antithetical to the basic purpose of human security, namely employing *people* as the referent object of security analysis.<sup>9</sup> Whether in the developing world, such as the ongoing turmoil in the Great Lakes region of Africa, or the developed or semi-developed world, such as the overflow of drug violence from Mexico into the southern United States, human security hazards clearly transcend state borders. Analytical and policy state-centrism, such as the reduction of regional violence to a 'civil war' within the Democratic Republic of Congo, or the designation of cross-border drug problems as a 'Mexican' drug war, denies the multi-faceted causes, transmission and impacts of security hazards across state boundaries. Moreover, it obscures the variegated effects of those hazards within societies. To take two similar examples, discussions of violence associated with 'Mexico's drug war' or 'Brazilian gangs' omit the reality that violent crime throughout most of both countries has been declining for decades.<sup>10</sup> Overlooking trans- and sub-state insecurities merely compounds the flaws of "the dominant state-centric security orthodoxy [that has] provided at best a very partial representation of reality and at worst completely misunderstood, misrepresented, or ignored other important security concerns."<sup>11</sup> This state-centrism is further compounded within the narrow approach, since restricting the focus of human security to violence necessarily emphasizes state structures that defend, fail to defend, or

actively endanger the lives of civilians. In many ways, the narrow school thus attempts to discipline the radical potential of the human security framework by 'securing security' from alternative, i.e., non-state, ontologies.<sup>12</sup>

Second, while a robust research focus on the developing world is appropriate given that it contains the most severe and pervasive cases of human insecurity, the ongoing paucity of human security analysis in/of the developed world suggests a widespread view of human security as being a problem *only* in/for the developing world. Contemporary human security studies often employ and reinforce a dichotomy according to which people's security is largely determined by the 'security' of their respective state.<sup>13</sup> The dichotomy arises from a view of human security not "as a concept that is relevant the world over ...but as a service offered by the global north to the global south, defined by the global north (scholarship and policymaking) and distributed by the global north."<sup>14</sup> This approach thus employs gendered characterizations of 'secure' states in the Global North exporting or promoting human security to 'insecure' states in the Global South, and is subject to standard critical and feminist critiques of mainstream security theory.<sup>15</sup> In particular, dichotomous North-South/secure-insecure conceptions of human security mirror what Iris Marion Young termed the "bargain of masculinist protection." According to Young, "in this patriarchal logic, the role of the masculine protector puts those protected, paradigmatically women and children, in a subordinate position of dependence and obedience.... Central to the logic of masculinist protection is the subordinate relation of those in the protected position."<sup>16</sup> Not only does such logic perpetuate power/knowledge relations that privilege Northern polities and their citizens – with developed societies treated as aspirational for all others – it obscures conditions of insecurity that exist *within* developed states.

By characterizing developed states as 'secure' and by collocating human security with the existence of effective states, conventional human security theory cannot explain conditions of insecurity for minority or marginalized groups within wealthy states with high security-provision capabilities, particularly if they are caused *by* the state. It more or less presumes human security for citizens of the developed world, uncritically accepting that states which *can* secure their citizens *will*. That such conditions exist is axiomatic of social and economic policies aimed at mitigating unequal distributions of resources and providing essential services to vulnerable and marginal groups. It is also empirically demonstrated by quotidian instances of intra-developed state poverty, violence, ethno-social tension, injustice, etc., such as, to take but one example, a 2004 national homicide rate of 5.5/100,000 across the United States, but a rate of 48.5/100,000 in the city of Baltimore, one of the poorest and most heavily African American metropolitan areas in the United States.<sup>17</sup> State-centric approaches to human (in)security, combined with a presumption of homogenous security conditions within states, especially developed states, lead to the conceptual restriction of human insecurity to those states that cannot provide for their citizens, rather than those which, for whatever reason, do not.

By contrast, a broad approach to human security provides an epistemology for examining (in)security beyond the confines of violent and statist analysis. Conceptually, it suggests that traditional notions of security lack relevance in a world of transnational phenomena capable of affecting a wide variety of human referent objects. The security of people, intimately linked with the security of their respective states during the Cold War, can no longer be examined by employing the state

as the referent object of analysis. Instead, “‘human security’ seeks to place the individual – or people collectively – as the *referent* of security, rather than, although not necessarily in opposition to, institutions such as territory and state sovereignty.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, human security can only be understood by specifying a level of analysis – individual, collective, or societal – and uncovering hazards to some element of the specified group’s existence. As people are, in most societies, only rarely threatened through the overt exercise of military force, it is necessary to examine hazards arising from a multitude of sources, analytically divided into different ‘sectors’ of security analysis.<sup>19</sup> Hazards affecting any of these areas – such as the physical, economic, environmental, and cultural sectors – are potential sources of insecurity and valid subjects of security analysis.

In this paper, human security is defined by two critical elements: the multi-sectorality of security hazards, as identified above, and the intersubjectivity of security for human communities. Intersubjectivity – shared understandings among a group of people – determines communal identity, since it is individuals’ mutual understandings of membership, ‘being’ part of a group and ‘belonging’ to it, that distinguish a community from other observable human collectivities.<sup>20</sup> Community derives from shared understandings of common interests and common identity among a group of people; without a shared identity, a sense of ‘we-ness,’ there is no community. In this sense, we discuss “community not as a matter of feelings, emotions, and affection, but as a cognitive process through which common identities are created.”<sup>21</sup> Human communities are therefore “imagined communities,”<sup>22</sup> socially constructed and intersubjectively understood by their members. Communal identity, moreover, is an essential component of broad human security; although a critic of a human security approach, Barry Buzan, has observed that, as social creatures, “individuals are not free standing, but only take their meaning from the societies in which they operate.”<sup>23</sup>

Communitarian human security, as a level at which to conduct security analysis, overlaps with the idea of ‘societal security’ pioneered by Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, which centres on “identity, the self-conception of communities, and those individuals who identify themselves as members of a particular community.”<sup>24</sup> Using this framework, the referent object is the community – including the identity(ies) that link its members – rather than the individuals who comprise its membership. Identity is central: some hazards might threaten a human collectivity irrespective of the social relations that exist between its members, but others can only be understood in terms of their impact upon the shared identities that constitute a particular community. Since communal identities are socially constructed, so too must be the hazards by which societal human securities are considered threatened. Only members *of* a group can designate threats *to* that group, but the designation of ‘threat’ must be intersubjectively understood by the group’s members. “Threats to identity are thus always a question of the *construction* of something as threatening some ‘we’ – and often thereby actually contributing to the construction or reproduction of ‘us.’”<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, different communities experience particular hazards in different ways, “depending upon how their identity is constructed.”<sup>26</sup>

Whether or not changes to a particular communal identity are translated into *security* hazards, however, is a function of the power relations between that community and other securitizing actors. Securitization – the process of designating an issue a security threat “requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure”<sup>27</sup> – is one from which no actor is entirely excluded, but to which a small number have privileged access. Socio-political and state elites, through their greater control of political and economic resources, mass media and the

instruments of government authority, occupy a dominant position within securitization processes that privileges their, i.e., statist and elite, conceptions of security over those of non-dominant actors. As such, identities that are shared by these elites or that are strongly linked with national identity are privileged as more security-worthy than competing or marginal sub- and trans-state identities. Beyond hazards to a particular identity, then, identities matter for security. As Gunhild Hoogensen and Kirsti Stuvoy note, “relations of dominance and non-dominance determine who defines norms and practices and who must follow them; who is important and who is not; who is valuable and who is not,”<sup>28</sup> who is to be secured and who is not.

This cleavage between the security and securitization-capacities of dominant and non-dominant groups exists at both the international and sub-national levels, and re-affirms the limitations of statist forms of security analysis. Non-dominance is constituted in multiple ways along multiple societal cleavages dependent upon the societal context, and not all non-dominance translates into insecurity. Examining human security at the state level risks conflating the (in)security of the dominant social group within a state with (in)security for all groups within the state, precluding the serious possibility of secure and insecure groups co-habiting the same space. Employed this way, human security merely reinforces the tired and false dichotomy between secure developed states and insecure developing ones.<sup>29</sup> As Edward Newman notes, such an approach obscures the reality that “citizens of states that are ‘secure’ according to the traditional conception of security can be perilously insecure to a degree that demands a reappraisal of the concept.”<sup>30</sup> Conversely, it overlooks an elite transnational socio-economic class originating from the developing world whose security is unaffected by the insecurity of the majority of their fellow citizens. Crucially for this paper, reifying human security within developed states “denies relations of dominance and non-dominance within the global north itself. People that are located in the north but that do not reap the benefits of the dominant group – such as, for example, indigenous peoples or marginalized communities – vanish within such a security approach.”<sup>31</sup> The security and identities of dominant social groups are privileged within any security analysis that does not delve into sub-national insecurities that exist even within developed states; minority and marginalized concerns continue to be omitted.

Such an epistemic basis for security analysis dramatically alters the way in which security is understood, studied, distributed and pursued. If security hazards occur within and across state borders, the state’s utility as a level of analysis diminishes. Since human security is experienced differently by peoples and groups within polities, the structures and variables that determine who is secure and who is not must be uncovered, and the processes that lead to or perpetuate insecurity examined. If state action can be both cause and corrective of human insecurity, analysts must consider insecurity “not as some inevitable occurrence but as a direct result of existing structures of power that determine who enjoys the entitlement to security and who does not.”<sup>32</sup> For research truly to reflect conditions of human (in)security within a given polity, it must examine the security of those groups most removed from political and economic power, and most marginalized from securitization discourse and the exceptional mobilization of state resources to address their security concerns.

## **Non-Dominance in Canada**

As a wealthy developed state that has also been a pioneer in the conceptual and policy development of human security, albeit a consciously narrow approach, Canada is a particularly suitable candidate for (in)security analysis.<sup>33</sup> It also typifies two examples of societal non-dominance that, in the face of an environmental hazard, can result in insecurity. Two dominant/non-dominant cleavages appear particularly relevant for human (in)security analysis in Canada: a geographic division between rural and urban Canadians; and a racial one between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. Canada is highly urbanized, and economic and political power is concentrated in a few urban regions across the country.<sup>34</sup> In political representation, per capita income, socio-economic indicators of well-being, and influence upon major public policy debates, rural residents are quantitatively or substantively inferior to city-dwellers.<sup>35</sup> Thus, although rural areas are politically over-represented per person, there are fewer rural representatives than urban ones, thus making it less likely that rural concerns will be reflected in public policy. Although the relationship between rural and urban in determining public policy is complex, Simon Dalby notes “the urban view of things frequently reduces rural concerns either to a backward society in need of modernisation or to a source of resources for the industrial modern sector controlled in the metropolises.”<sup>36</sup> Rural Canadians are a non-dominant group relative to their urban counterparts; their numerical minority and political and economic marginalization render them less able to affect policy decisions regarding their particular needs and concerns, including security. In political decision-making, this can be understood as the power of metropolitan and mid-sized urban areas vis-à-vis smaller urban areas and rural communities.

A second social cleavage exists between the dominant non-Aboriginal and non-dominant Aboriginal populations. Though broad, this implicates a racialized power distinction between the non-Aboriginal majority and the Aboriginal minority that exists on multiple political and social levels. At the level of the Canadian state, Aboriginal non-dominance is evident; the capacity of Native groups to pursue their rights and assert their interests against Ottawa and the provinces is circumscribed by their inferior legal and constitutional status. The *Indian Act* of 1876 and subsequent legislation established a fiduciary relationship between the federal government and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples that has marginalized and infantilized Aboriginals, making so-called “Indians a special class of persons, legal dependents on the crown, [and] children in the eyes of the law.”<sup>37</sup> This legal regime informed racist, exclusionary and assimilationist practices directed by the state against Aboriginal peoples for at least the subsequent century of the Canadian nation-building project.<sup>38</sup> The *Constitution Act* of 1982 stipulates that Aboriginal groups possess a set of unspecified rights vis-à-vis the state, of which ‘self-government’ has been the primary focus of the rights efforts of government and Native bands.<sup>39</sup> In practice, though, as an expression of the self-determination of Aboriginal peoples self-government has struggled to overcome “the very configurations of colonial power that Indigenous peoples’ demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend.”<sup>40</sup> The non-dominance of Canadian Aboriginals has been enshrined in successive constitutional and legal instruments, and has been implicated in the substantially lower socio-economic conditions experienced by Native populations both on- and off-reserve, as identified by, among others, the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.<sup>41</sup>

The implications of racialized relations of non-dominance in a developed state context are

particularly significant because they have often escaped security analysis. As Debra Thompson has observed, Canadian political science has generally under-examined the significance of race.<sup>42</sup> She notes that “dominant approaches to the study of English Canadian political science are unlikely to acknowledge race as a political production or phenomenon,” despite the fact that “institutions that avoid race according to the principles of colour blindness serve to solidify existing social hierarchies.”<sup>43</sup> This is apparent with respect to Canadian security studies, in which the overwhelming disciplinary preoccupation is with security policy and practices abroad, rather than any particular conception of insecurity at home. Indeed, precisely because it generally does not employ a human security lens, security studies of much of the developed world seem to omit any serious discussion of race. Like insecurity itself, race is seen to be more relevant ‘out there’ than it is ‘here at home’.

A notable exception in Canadian security studies is recent work by Kyle Grayson, who not only incorporates race into his study of the production of Canadian domestic security and drug policy, but also observes the highly racialized nature of (in)security in Canada. Grayson challenges dominant perceptions of Canadian identity as “civilized, unified, progressive, and tolerant”<sup>44</sup> and, though with specific respect to state practice towards illegal drugs, notes that “the substances, those who use them, and the spaces in which it is claimed they are exclusively produced/used have been subject to a series of securitizations that have marginalized specific individuals and entire communities.”<sup>45</sup> Given the litany of Native abuses over Canada’s colonial and post-colonial history, an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal cleavage appears particularly relevant to studies of Canadian human insecurity since, as Heather Smith has observed, “human security remains an aspiration for too many First Nations people in Canada.”<sup>46</sup> Race is thus seen to be an important variable in the distribution of (in)security, perhaps especially in a developed context such as Canada, where strong state security-provision capabilities mitigate insecurity for large portions of the population. In such a state, insecurities of non-dominance may be especially apparent in relation to the security of dominant social groups.

### **Environmentally Driven Human Insecurity**

Although there exist clear societal cleavages in Canada and other developed states that suggest certain groups are disproportionately unable to securitize hazards to their local human security, it remains true that, in many observable ways, people in developed states are more secure than those living elsewhere. Effective state structures can indeed mitigate insecurity for citizens; particularly in democracies, state responsiveness to citizens’ concerns provides perhaps the greatest defence against insecurity. However, increasingly security conditions within all states, including developed ones, are being undermined by environmental changes, a category which captures both ‘natural’ (including the effects of anthropogenic climate change) and man-made (including pollution, ecological degradation and resource depletion) hazards. There is a substantial and growing literature about environmentally driven human insecurity in the developing world, but increasingly scholars and policy-makers are also recognizing the insecurity facing the states, and citizens, of the developed world.<sup>47</sup> A high-level report in the United States, for instance, noted that the magnitude of environmental change is now such that it has “the potential to disrupt our way of life and to force changes



in the way we keep ourselves safe and secure.”<sup>48</sup> The increasing seriousness of global environmental changes is generating a renewed awareness of the maxim of environmental security scholarship that “the environment, modified by human interference, sets the conditions for socio-political-economic life. When these conditions are poor, life is poor.”<sup>49</sup> Thus, it is *environmental* hazards that are increasingly likely to confront non-dominant groups within developed states, since these groups’ relative inability to securitize emerging threats makes them less able to deal with environmental changes that affect them but not, or not yet, dominant groups.

Given the suggested relationship between non-dominance and insecurity in developed states, the logic of non-dominance suggests that insecurity will be greatest where forms of non-dominance overlap and coincide with an environmental hazard. In Canada, this suggests that the most acute human insecurity will exist in the Arctic, which is comprised primarily of rural and Aboriginal communities and is experiencing some of the most significant environmental change in the world.<sup>50</sup> In the Arctic, non-dominance is partly structured by the territorial status of the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Unlike provinces, whose powers derive from the constitution, territorial governments have no inherent jurisdiction; their mandates and powers are delegated by the federal government. A federally appointed commissioner is influential in each territorial government, and although the territories have the highest per capita representation in Parliament, in absolute terms they are by far the least significant jurisdictions in the House of Commons and least represented in the Senate. The territories also have the highest proportional Aboriginal populations of any Canadian jurisdictions, with Nunavut and the Northwest Territories both possessing Aboriginal majorities. While progress has been made in the realization of northern Aboriginal self-government, including the resolution of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and establishment of Nunavut Territory, these jurisdictions with Aboriginal majorities continue to be denied full incorporation into Confederation. Thus, although self-government remains the watchword of federal-territorial relations, “direct rule from Ottawa denies them the regional political representation and authority enjoyed by the majority in the south.”<sup>51</sup> The consequences of this configuration of federal/territorial, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal power relations extend beyond issues like the settlement of land claims and the devolution of authority over natural resources. As a result, “the North can be studied as a society – actually a set of several societies – but it can only be understood as a colony.... A society is colonial to the extent that major decisions affecting it are made outside it ... [and] the North is totally dependent constitutionally on Ottawa.”<sup>52</sup> The political dependence of the region in Canadian politics, and the racial and geographic non-dominance of its inhabitants, makes it unable to respond effectively to the hazards of environmental change.

Of the different dimensions of human (in)security, the economic, physical and societal sectors appear especially relevant in the Arctic. The author has argued elsewhere that all aspects of security are underpinned by conditions of environmental security,<sup>53</sup> but environmental changes seem most directly to affect Arctic human security in these three sectors: economic security because environmental changes are undermining traditional economic activities and the subsistence capacities of communities and individuals; physical security because northerners experience greater risk of harm, impairment and threats to their survival as a result of environmental change; and societal security because Inuit and other northern Aboriginal cultures and identities rooted in a connection with the natural environment are eroded by changes to that environment. These insecurities are empirically

linked and conceptually interdependent, and the purpose in distinguishing them is not to separate each from the others. Rather, it is to identify “a multiplicity of [in]securities flowing concurrently [so] we can then start to recognize ways in which these [in]securities are linked to one another, rather than isolating them from one another and prioritizing them individually.”<sup>54</sup>

### **Economic Insecurity in the Canadian Arctic**

In its 2007-2008 *Human Development Report*, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) identified five “key transmission mechanisms” that link environmental change to reversals in human development: food security; water stress and water security; rising sea levels and exposure to climate-driven disasters; ecosystem disruption; and human health.<sup>55</sup> Although the report’s focus is conditions within the developing world, these mechanisms also contribute to human insecurity in the Canadian north. For instance, there are strong links between these mechanisms and economic human security in the Arctic. At its most basic, “economic security requires an assured basic income – usually from productive or remunerative work.”<sup>56</sup> This income is essential for the purchase of food, the mitigation of vulnerability to weather and climate events and the maintenance of health. In other words, economic security is integral to resisting the negative effects of the environmental transmission mechanisms identified by UNDP.

One of the challenges in the Arctic, however, is that socio-economic modernization has substantially displaced traditional economic systems. Although modernization drives positive and negative economic trends, for many Aboriginal northerners modernization has supplanted traditional economic activities with a mixed wage-subsistence economy in which they remain disadvantaged. In 2001, for instance, the unemployment rate for Inuit was 22% compared to 6% for non-Aboriginal northerners; the average income among non-Aboriginal adults in Nunavut was \$52,864 but only \$19,686 among Inuit, a stark example of economic inequality.<sup>57</sup> The purchasing power of northern incomes is further reduced because store-bought foods are two to three times more expensive than in the south but provide less nutrition than traditional country foods.<sup>58</sup> Economic modernization has thus not only failed to benefit many Inuit, in absolute terms it has weakened their economic self-sufficiency. According to Simon Dalby, “the increasing dependence of native peoples in the far north on commercial markets in the global economy may ironically reduce their resilience and ability to adapt because their modes of life and resource extraction have become so dependent on fuel, clothing and other necessities provided by the market system.”<sup>59</sup>

Although not caused solely by environmental change, the economic insecurity of northerners is multiplied by it. Country foods remain an important part of most Inuits’ regular diet, with more than half of all meat and fish consumed coming from traditional harvesting.<sup>60</sup> However, as Arctic ecosystems change as a result of climate change, thinning sea ice, changing vegetation, altered migration patterns for caribou herds, and increased variability and unpredictability in weather and climate the accessibility and availability of traditional foods is reduced.<sup>61</sup> In some places, “reduced quality of food sources, such as diseased fish and dried up berries, are already being observed.”<sup>62</sup> Given the higher cost and reduced benefit of packaged foods in northern communities, a decrease in the availability of local foods as a result of environmental change means it is economically

impossible for many northerners to replace the local foods, further implicating their food and economic security. Simultaneously, climate change is facilitating industrial development to extract natural resources from the Arctic, particularly minerals and fossil fuels. However, in many cases “these large-scale activities are totally separated from the regional socio-economic environment. They are carried out on an autonomous basis and have practically no economic impact on the permanent communities in the vicinity.”<sup>63</sup> In such cases, the environmental facilitation of extractive economic activity in the north is likely to perpetuate the disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups.

### **Physical Insecurity in the Canadian Arctic**

Physical security refers to personal survival and the conditions for ongoing human existence. It is clearly affected by reduced access to food and water, exposure to extreme weather events, and chronic and acute health issues. In the north, physical insecurity is particularly manifest in endemic levels of public and private health issues. Arctic communities are faced with lower life expectancies and lower access to medical care but substantially higher levels of depression, domestic violence, physical abuse, infant mortality and suicide than anywhere else in Canada, with the exception of certain other Aboriginal groups.<sup>64</sup> For instance, in 2001 average life expectancy for all Canadian men was 77 years, while for Inuit men it was 62.6 years, and the gap between the life expectancies of all Canadian and Inuit women was more than 10 years.<sup>65</sup> Hazards to physical security are not free-standing, however, but linked to phenomena in the economic and societal sectors that pose hazards in their own right – economic subsistence and affordability and accessibility of food, for instance. The relationships can also be more complex. The fact that Arctic communities have unemployment levels 30% above the Canadian average, with mean incomes 30% below, is linked with the dislocation of traditional economic activity. Local and regional climate change also affects opportunities for traditional hunting and harvesting, especially when combined with societal loss of traditional skills and knowledge.<sup>66</sup> These factors contribute to an Inuit suicide rate of approximately 135/100,000, more than 10 times the rate for non-Inuit.<sup>67</sup> Thus, while a physical security hazard, “this pattern [of suicide] has been associated with a view of young males not seeing a future for themselves as hunters and contributors to their community and at the same time not fitting into the cash employment structures that are becoming the dominant lifestyle.”<sup>68</sup> Clearly, human (in)security analysis must consider the mutual constitution of hazards in different sectors in order to fully grasp their impacts upon human collectivities.

As with economic insecurity, physical insecurity in the Arctic is generally not caused by environmental changes, but is strongly affected by them. Although there are significant and growing physical security hazards due to increased lake temperatures, permafrost thawing, stress on plant and animal populations, melting of glaciers and sea ice, and damage to essential infrastructure, for the moment their impacts are primarily transmitted through their effects upon other sectors. Environmental hazards that more directly have an impact on the physical security of northerners include the well-documented effects of transboundary pollution and persistent organic pollutants (POPs).<sup>69</sup> Although virtually none of these pollutants originate in the Arctic, high levels of POPs “have been

linked to cancer, birth defects, and other neurological, reproductive, and immune-system damage in people and animals”<sup>70</sup> throughout the circumpolar north. These toxins bioaccumulate within individual animals and biomagnify up the Arctic food chain by “as much as 10-fold from one ‘link’ to the next,”<sup>71</sup> resulting in human consumption of concentrated chemical and organic pollutants such as PCBs, DDT, mercury and other heavy metals. The level of certain toxins found in the blood and fatty tissue of some Canadian Inuit is five to 10 times higher than the national average, including “the highest levels of PCBs ever found, except for victims of industrial accidents.”<sup>72</sup> These pollutants may originate from southern industries, but the physical environment is a factor because “the Arctic’s cold climate slows the natural decomposition of these toxins, so they persist in the Arctic environment longer than at lower latitudes.”<sup>73</sup> The environment cannot be separated from the constitution of physical human security hazards in the Arctic, either.

### **Societal Insecurity in the Canadian Arctic**

Societal insecurity in the Canadian Arctic is strongly linked to how Aboriginal identities and cultural practices are affected by changes to the natural environment. Many Aboriginal peoples share a close relationship between their communal identities and natural environments: “cultural survival, identity and the very existence of indigenous societies depend to a considerable degree on the maintenance of environmental quality. The degradation of the environment is therefore inseparable from a loss of culture and hence identity.”<sup>74</sup> The intersubjective understanding of northern Aboriginal cultures is one in which the social and physical realms are intimately connected. Aboriginal peoples have traditionally regarded themselves as central to the order and balance of the natural world, and their cultural and spiritual well-being depends upon maintaining their relationship with the land. Thus, “damage to the land, appropriation of land, and spatial restrictions may all constitute assaults on the individual and collective sense of self of those who adhere to this ecocentric world view.”<sup>75</sup> Physical changes to the land that alter the ways Aboriginal peoples subsist, and which undermine the accumulated generational knowledge of weather and climate patterns, animal movements, and methods of hunting and gathering, can have wide-reaching implications for Aboriginal cultures and identities.

Societal (in)security clearly also overlaps with hazards in other sectors. Reduced quality and availability of country foods as a result of the changing environment affect the food security and physical health of northerners, but also contribute to the erosion of cultural practices. “To hunt, catch, and share these foods is the essence of Inuit culture. Thus, a decline in [country foods] ... threatens not only the dietary requirements of the Inuit, but also their very way of life.”<sup>76</sup> Similarly, high rates of young male suicide have widespread implications for the societal security of communities. The relationship between societal and physical insecurities is two directional: hazards to communal identity can contribute to physical insecurity for the individual, just as an individual’s physical insecurity can affect the ties that bind a community together. Whole communities can be affected by the insecurity of individuals, particularly when that insecurity stems from shared community experiences. Thus, throughout the north, older men and “women of all ages inevitably share in and suffer from the demoralization of the [young] men in the community.”<sup>77</sup> Here the significance of the racial cleavage in the Canadian Arctic is emphasized again, because non-Aboriginal

northerners who do not share traditional systems of belief and whose societal security is not rooted in a collective identity tied to the land will not experience the same societal insecurity as a result of environmental change.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has provided a critical analysis of contemporary human security theory, and has proposed a non-dominance framework for explaining and studying human insecurity within developed states. Particularly with respect to natural and man-made environmental changes, insecurities of non-dominance will increasingly expose non-dominant societal groups to environmental insecurity. This framework has been demonstrated through an analysis of non-dominance and insecurity in the Canadian Arctic where, despite significant and growing impacts of environmental change, and increasing calls from Inuit and Aboriginal leaders for action to protect their people's human security,<sup>78</sup> the ongoing non-securitization of climate change reflects the non-dominance of northerners and northern Aboriginals most immediately affected by it. This framework suggests that human (in)security is, and will increase as, a relevant mode of analysis within and across all states in both the developed and developing worlds.

## **Notes**

1. See Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now* (New York: United Nations Press, 2003); Fen Osler Hampson, Jean Daudelin, John Hay, Holly Reid and Todd Martin, *Madness in the Multitude: Human Security and World Disorder* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2002); International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), *The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001); David Roberts, *Human Insecurity: Global Structures of Violence* (London: Zed Books, 2008); and Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin (eds), *Globalization, Human Security, and the African Experience* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999). The insecurity of non-citizen residents of developed states has been noted, however; see Michelle Lowry, "Creating Human Insecurity: The National Security Focus in Canada's Immigration System," *Refuge*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (November 2002).
2. I have previously proposed a four-part typology of different sources of insecurity. For this paper, however, I will employ the term 'hazards' to refer to all observable immediate, likely and potential sources of insecurity. See Wilfrid Greaves, "The Essential Condition: A Stable Environment, Global Security, and Sustainable Peace," in Anne Livingstone (ed.), *Environmental Conditions for Building Peace: The Pearson Papers Volume 12* (Clementsport, NS: Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 2009).
3. Roberts, *Human Insecurity*, p. 16.
4. See Commission on Human Security and UN Development Program (UNDP), *Human Development Report 1994: New Dimensions of Human Security* (New York: United Nations, 1994).
5. A notable exception is official Canadian policy towards human security, which has continued to employ a narrow approach centred around "violent threats to people's rights, safety, or lives." Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), "Human Security. Cities: Freedom from Fear in Urban Spaces," Leaflet (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2006).

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6. See, for example, Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now*; Hampson, Daudelin, Hay, Reid and Martin, *Madness in the Multitude*; ICISS, *The Responsibility to Protect*; Roberts, *Human Insecurity*; and Thomas and Wilkin (eds), *Globalization, Human Security, and the African Experience*. For a specific example, see Andrew T. Price-Smith, "Ghosts of Kigali: Infectious Disease and Global Stability at the Turn of the Century," *International Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (Summer 1999). For a more critical appraisal see Giorgio Shani, Majoto Shani and Mustapha Kamal Pasha (eds), *Protecting Human Security in a Post 9/11 World: Critical and Global Insights* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
7. Commission on Human Security; DFAIT, "Freedom from Fear: Canada's Foreign Policy for Human Security" (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2002); ICISS, *The Responsibility to Protect*; and UN, "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 60/1. 2005 World Summit," UN Document A/RES/60/1 (New York: United Nations, 2005).
8. Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, "From Strategy to Security: Foundations of Critical Security Studies," in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (eds.), *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (London: UCL Press, 1997), p. 43.
9. See, for example, Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now*; Hampson, Daudelin, Hay, Reid and Martin, *Madness in the Multitude*; ICISS, *The Responsibility to Protect*.
10. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Homicide Statistics, Criminal Justice and Public Health Sources – Trends (2003-2008)* (Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010), available at <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/homicide.html>. See also Pablo Piccato, "All Murder is Political: Murder in the Public Sphere in Mexico," and Jean Daudelin, "Moving Frontiers: Patterns of Drug Violence in the Americas Through a Property Rights Lens," both presented at the Workshop on the Politics of Armed Violence in Latin America, Armed Groups Project, May 2009.
11. Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin, "Introduction," in Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin (eds), *Globalization, Human Security, and the African Experience* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), p. 9.
12. For a related critique of the securitization approach, see Gunhild Hoogensen and Svein Vigeland Rottem, "Gender Identity and the Subject of Security," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 2004), p. 160.
13. This is particularly the case when human security is associated or conflated with humanitarian intervention or a political 'human security agenda.' See Ronald M. Behringer, "Middle Power Leadership on the Human Security Agenda," *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2005); Sorpong Peou, "The UN, Peacekeeping, and Collective Human Security: From An Agenda for Peace to the Brahimi Report," *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2002); Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon, "Canada's Human Security Agenda," *International Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Autumn 2005); and Nicholas Thomas and William T. Tow, "The Utility of Human Security: Sovereignty and Humanitarian Intervention," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (June 2002). For a non-dichotomous approach see Karen O'Brien and Robin Leichenko, "Human Security, Vulnerability, and Sustainable Adaptation," Human Development Report Office Occasional Paper (New York: UNDP, 2007).
14. Gunhild Hoogensen and Kirsti Stuvoy, "Gender, Resistance, and Human Security," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (June 2006), p. 216.
15. *Ibid.* See also Hoogensen and Rottem, "Gender Identity and the Subject of Security"; and Laura Sjoberg (ed.), *Gender and International Security: Feminist Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009).
16. Iris Marion Young, "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2003), pp. 2-4.
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19. See Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991); Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998); and Jorge Nef, *Human Security and Mutual Vulnerability: The Global Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1999).
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  21. Emanuel Adler, "Imagined (Security) Communities: Cognitive Regions in International Relations," in Emanuel Adler (ed.), *Communitarian International Relations: The Epistemic Foundations of International Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 195.
  22. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
  23. Barry Buzan, "A Reductionist, Idealistic Notion that Adds Little Analytical Value," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (2004), p. 370.
  24. Ole Wæver, "Securitization and Desecuritization," in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 67. See also Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Order in Europe* (London: Pinter, 1993).
  25. Buzan, Waever and de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, p. 120. Emphasis in original.
  26. *Ibid*, p. 124.
  27. *Ibid*, p. 24.
  28. Hoogensen and Stuvoy, "Gender, Resistance, and Human Security," p. 219.
  29. See for example, Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now*; Hampson, Daudelin, Hay, Reid and Martin, *Madness in the Multitude*; ICISS, *The Responsibility to Protect*; and Jasmine Cheung-Gertler, "A Model Power for a Troubled World?" *International Journal*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (2007).
  30. Newman, "Human Security and Constructivism," p. 240.
  31. Hoogensen and Stuvoy, "Gender, Resistance, and Human Security," p. 216.
  32. Thomas and Wilkin (eds), *Globalization, Human Security, and the African Experience*, p. 3.
  33. Cheung-Gertler, "A Model Power for a Troubled World?"; and Asteris Huliaris and Nikolaos Tzifakis, "Contextual Approaches to Human Security: Canada and Japan in the Balkans," *International Journal*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (2007).
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