

Ko‘iahi Pūnua

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Current Event Analysis

## How Authoritarians Use Gender as a Weapon

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### Summary:

In May of 2021, Hungary and Poland got the term “gender equality” removed from the E.U social summit in Portugal. Both governments support Catholic and conservative values and said that using the term “gender equality” is an “ideologically motivated expression.” In Poland, many areas have been proclaimed as “LGBT-free zones” and have received government support. Other countries like Azerbaijan use “honor culture”-to drive women out of political life and remove women who are a potential challenge to a one-man rule. Many women with political power in Europe have received sexualized threats and so much more. Video recordings of female activists’ and leaders’ personal lives have been released to the public and highly affect many women. A woman activist in Azerbaijan attempted suicide due to the harassment and threats she received, many from other men in political status. Because many of these countries have conservative values, gender equality is a very big issue. Countries like Russian and Georgia have depicted feminism and LGBT rights as “anti-Georgian.” They have also forbidden the use of “he” and “she” pronouns.

### Geography Theme:

The main themes of geography are location, place, human-environment interaction, movement, and region. I think that place is the theme because gender inequality is something that has been happening for a long time. And over time it has gotten worse in this place. Gender geography has grown over time to what it is today and has changed significantly since major movements in the 1970’s. It analyzes how

gendered social processes are linked to place. In Europe there have been many movements for 40 years to work toward gender equality and an equal environment.

#### Reaction:

My reaction to this article was shocking. I was shocked and quite sad because the way countries have discriminated against women and the LGBTQ community is very wrong. I think it's very sad that men, especially men with political power and men who influence communities, feel the need to give sexual and hurtful threats to someone because they feel like they are a threat and competition to them. Women and the LGBTQ community should feel safe and empowered when doing their jobs and men should make them feel included. Knowing that people use gender as a way to discriminate and hurt others does not sit right with me. It hurts to hear that the effects of men in power have hurt many women mentally and physically. Without a woman, there would be no man and people need to learn to respect that. E

#### Connection/Analysis:

I think that this topic of gender equality connects to Hawai'i because it is happening in Hawai'i now. Although Hawai'i is one of the leading states in working towards gender equality many women struggle with the biased minds of the government. 8.9% of women in Hawai'i live in poverty because of the lack of money and childcare. Unfortunately because of the social and educational class of women, they are treated differently and many are judged by their race. Women in Hawaii typically make \$0.83 for every dollar paid to men and the national figure is \$0.82. Many people in Hawai'i's political system are men and there are hardly any women. There have been many laws that are trying to be passed but it is kept behind closed doors so that people don't know about them. It is important to understand that this is real and there are many people who struggle with the fact that we are not equal.

APA Citations

Thornton, L. (2021, June 7). How authoritarians use gender as a weapon. Retrieved July 19, 2021, from Washington Post website:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/06/07/how-authoritarians-use-gender-weapon/>