The New Tipping Point: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Anti-Trans Rhetoric in Canada, 2000-2023

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LEGEND

CDA: Critical discourse analysis.

FCDA: Feminist critical discourse analysis.

MM: Mixed methods.

MMFCDA: Mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis.

HRT: Hormone replacement therapy.

ROGD: Rapid-onset gender dysphoria.

TERF: Trans-exclusionary radical feminist/feminism.

WPATH: World Professional Association for Transgender Health.

DSM: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

LGB: Lesbian, gay, bisexual.

LGBTQ+: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transgender, queer.

ABSTRACT

Français :

Depuis 2019, il y a eu une forte augmentation de la rhétorique anti-trans dans la politique et les nouvelles au Canada. Ces discours ont abouti à la promulgation de lois provinciales qui limitent les droits des enfants et des jeunes trans, accentuent le scepticisme à l'égard des soins d'affirmation du genre et ont entraîné des discours de plus en plus hostiles envers les personnes trans qui ont largement été diffusés. De plus, au moment de la publication de la présente thèse, peu de recherches universitaires portent sur ce phénomène dans le contexte canadien. Cette thèse fait état du contenu et de la portée des arguments anti-trans au Canada pour combler cette lacune. Une analyse critique féministe du discours et une approche mixte de méthodes ont été utilisées. Les 500 cas sélectionnés ont été recueillis entre le 1er janvier 2000 et le 31 décembre 2023 et proviennent de diverses sources canadiennes. Ces cas ont été codés quantitativement à l'aide du logiciel QDA Miner, puis analysés qualitativement pour suivre l'évolution des tendances en fonction des données globales, de la période et du type d'acteurices. Voici quelques-unes des principales constatations de cette thèse : les acteurices anti-trans au Canada ont colonisé les propos libéraux ou progressistes, redéfinissant le discours anti-trans en tant que mouvement politique. La politique de respectabilité dépeint les personnes trans comme des « extrémistes » qui déstabilisent la société canadienne. Les arguments législatifs et fondés sur les droits se sont multipliés; plus particulièrement, la tension existant entre les droits parentaux et les droits des enfants et personnes étudiantes a été soulignée. Au cours de la période étudiée, les acteurices anti-trans ont adopté une approche axée sur l'enfant qui consiste notamment à dépeindre les enfants comme étant « trop jeunes » pour être « exposés » à la transitude. Les acteurices anti-trans ont décrit la transitude comme étant dangereuse pour les hommes et les femmes cisgenres (c.-à-d. en menaçant les rôles selon le genre) et pour les enfants (par le biais de discours sur les « prédateurices trans » qui hypersexualisaient la transitude). Les discours médicaux ont dépeint les soins d'affirmation du genre comme étant inutiles, s'appuyant souvent sur des allégations selon lesquelles les enfants étaient « précipités » vers la transition médicale. Enfin, un thème commun qui est ressorti est la réification du modèle binaire des sexes et des genres. Les acteurices anti-trans s'appuient sur des débats scientifiques, médicaux, politiques, socioculturels et religieux pour soutenir leurs affirmations sur la binarité de sexe ou de genre stable. Cette thèse a généré une multitude de données sur les discours anti-trans au Canada. En comprenant ce que disent les acteurices anti-trans, il est possible d'élaborer des boîtes à outils théoriques et pratiques pour ralentir, arrêter, voire inverser la normalisation du discours anti-trans dans la politique et les médias canadiens.

Mots-clés : Transitude, personne trans, droits des personnes trans, acteurices anti-trans, droits parentaux, binarité de sexe ou de genre, sexe biologique, femmes, enfants, censure, endoctrinement, wokisme, soins d'affirmation du genre.

English:
Since 2019, there has been a sharp increase of anti-trans rhetoric in Canadian politics and news. These discourses have culminated in provincial laws that limit trans children's and youths' rights, heightened skepticism toward gender affirmative care, and led to an increase in trans-hostile discourses circulating widely. Moreover, there are few academic inquiries into this phenomenon focusing on Canada at the time of this dissertation's publication. This dissertation tracked the contents and scope of anti-trans arguments in Canada to address this gap. A feminist critical discourse analysis and a mixed methods approach were applied. 500 cases collected from the period between January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023, were selected from various Canadian sources. These cases were quantitatively coded using QDA Miner and qualitatively analyzed to track trends by overall data, time period, and type of actor. Some salient findings from this dissertation were: anti-trans actors in Canada have colonized liberal/progressive language, re-framing anti-trans speech as a political movement. Respectability politics portrayed trans people as 'extremists' who are destabilizing Canadian society. Legislative and rights-based arguments proliferated; most notably, the tension between parental rights and children's/student's rights were highlighted. During the period studied, anti-trans actors pivoted toward a child-centric focus, such as portraying children as being 'too young' to be 'exposed' to transness. Anti-trans actors portrayed transness as dangerous to cisgender men and women (i.e., by threatening gender roles) and to children (through 'trans predator' discourses that hypersexualized transness). Medical discourses portrayed gender affirmative care as unnecessary, often relying on claims that children were being 'rushed' into transitioning medically. Lastly, a common theme was the reification of the sex/gender binary. Anti-trans actors relied upon scientific, medical, political, sociocultural, and/or religious discussions to support their claims of a stable sex/gender binary. This dissertation has generated a wealth of data that captures anti-trans discourses in Canada. By understanding 'what' anti-trans actors are saying, one can develop theoretical and practical tool kits to slow, halt, and/or reverse the normalization of anti-trans discourse in Canadian politics and media.

Keywords: Transness, trans people, trans rights, anti-trans actors, parental rights, sex/gender binary, biological sex, women, children, censorship, indoctrination, wokeism, gender affirmative care.

ETHICS APPROVAL STATEMENT

This dissertation did not require formal ethical approval from the University of Ottawa's Research Ethics Boards. It was conducted using publicly accessible media texts and documents. The research did not involve direct interaction with human subjects, animal subjects, genetic material, or the collection of private personal data.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this dissertation.

DEDICATION

To William. Words cannot express how grateful I am to have you in my life.

To my trans siblings. I love you.

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I also would like to thank my support system for all their assistance throughout this journey. Thank you for supporting me through the self-doubt, the uncertainty, and the moments of hardship. Thank you for celebrating every win, every breakthrough, and every moment of triumph with me.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION – ANTI-TRANS DISCOURSE IN CANADA

1.1: Trans Discourse in Canada

Anyone who has paid attention to the trajectory of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transgender, queer) rights in Canada over the past two-or-so decades has witnessed the incremental steps taken toward recognition, equality, and acceptance – both socio-culturally and according to the law. Moreover, significant milestones have shaped Canada's reputation as one of the most progressive countries in the world for its robust legislative protections and cultural attitudes toward LGBTQ+ communities. Canada legalized gay marriage federally in 2005;[1] Bill C-16,[2] which protected Canadians against discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression, was enacted in 2017; Bill C-4,[3] which amended the Criminal Code to make the practice of conversion therapy illegal, passed its third Senate reading in 2021 and was enacted in 2022. A flurry of pride events, inclusive school board policies, and supportive mainstream media coverage created a portrait of a progressive, pro-LGBTQ+ Canada, ushering in an era of unprecedented widespread legislative and sociocultural support.[4] In 2007, the Transgender Archives was founded in Victoria; in 2009, the first Trans March was held in Ontario; in 2016, the Pride flag was raised over Parliament Hill for the first time.[5] In the early 2010s, something explosive occurred; the 'Transgender Tipping Point'. This period ushered in an explosion of legislative rights, consciousness-raising, activism, and visibility for trans people on a scale that

[1] *Civil Marriage Act,* 2005, S.C. 2005, c. 33
[2] *An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code*, S.C. 2017, c. 13 came into force immediately upon being given Royal Assent on June 19, 2017.
[3] *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy),* 2021, S.C. 2021, c. 24
[4] Jennex and Eswaran, 2020
[5] Jennex and Eswaran, 2020

was heretofore unseen in Canada. It was a period of almost electric possibility; it felt like forward progress.

However, this movement (which was, in many ways, flawed) did not last. In 2019, attitudes in Canada began to shift; trans-hostility began to proliferate in mainstream political and media spheres. This hostility seemed to grow exponentially, until it reached a fever pitch in 2023. This was a complete reversal of the celebratory 'Transgender Tipping Point' that had reached its peak not a decade ago. When did the tenor of the conversation shift so suddenly? What was being said, and by whom?

This discourse continued to intensify and proliferate during a period of growing conservatism in Canada's cultural and political spheres, leading to discourses such as 'gender ideology', 'parental rights', and 'wokeism' dominating discussions pertaining to trans rights in Canada. In 2023, these burgeoning discourses were mobilized into political action when Premier Blaine Higgs' Progressive Conservative government of New Brunswick introduced and passed amendments to Policy 713, an education policy for the province. The amendment stipulated that children under the age of 16 who wished to be referred to by a different name or set of pronouns required parental consent. This policy was widely opposed by provincial and national LGBTQ+ organizations, parents, teachers, opposing political parties, members of Higgs' own caucus, and the Child, Youth and Seniors' Advocate for New Brunswick, Kelly Lamrock.[6] Both Saskatchewan and Alberta have since gone on to pass similar legislation, with the latter creating further restrictions on trans children's and youths' access to gender affirmative care and barring trans women and girls from participating in women's sport. These legislative changes are but one facet of this heightened intensification of anti-trans discourse in Canada. Other such

[6] Lamrock, 2023

manifestations include hostility toward trans women in women's sport, public washrooms, and women's prisons; mass protests and petitions to prevent teaching transness in school curricula; demonstrations against drag story time events for children at local libraries; the sudden widespread discussion of detransition, trans desistance, and regret rates for surgical intervention; and concerns regarding the growing rates of youth self-identification with transness as a 'social contagion' brought on by 'rapid-onset gender dysphoria'. These are just some of the discourses that characterize the growing backlash against transness, trans people, and trans rights in Canada.

1.2: The Purpose of the Research

This purpose of this dissertation is to track changing trends in anti-trans discourse in Canada over a period of 23 years. The motivation for this dissertation is to understand 'what' anti-trans actors in Canada are discussing, to track changing trends over time, and to develop effective strategies to counter this trend. To my knowledge, a similar project that examines a large dataset of Canadian political and sociocultural cases for anti-trans discourse utilizing a mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis (MMFCDA) is not currently published or widely available. To that end, this dissertation will: demonstrate the suddenness of this backlash in the early 2020s; provide invaluable insight into 'what' anti-trans actors are discussing; and provide significant contributions to academic and activist groups by situating these discourses into broader sociocultural, political, and legal contexts. Using 500 cases that I have selected, I will code them using a custom coding dictionary and discuss the quantitative results and contextualise them by discussing the qualitative trends therein. Understanding what discourses have proliferated in recent years – and theorizing about their place in Canada's current social and political climate – will be invaluable in creating effective strategies to countering this normalization of anti-trans discourse in Canada.

1.3: Significance of the Research

This research is significant in two aspects. It is a meaningful contribution due to the generation of original data and because of the methodological frameworks I have employed to conduct this dissertation. It is also valuable for its contribution to the fields of trans studies and gender studies. This dissertation has generated a rich empirical dataset for study; the replicable nature of this dissertation means that other studies using the same coding dictionary could be used to track anti-trans discourse from other sources as well. Generating this quantitative 'portrait' of anti-trans discourse in Canada allows one to 'take the pulse' of the current state of the anti-trans discourse landscape. This dissertation therefore seeks to understand 'what' anti-trans actors are discussing, when they discuss it, and which actors are having these discussions.

Each content chapter of this dissertation has generated important empirical contributions to the literature. In Chapter 4, I examined the distribution of cases by year and by discursive actor. At the time of writing this dissertation, I did not know of any other work that quantitively sampled political transcripts and print media in Canada to verify the existence of the anti-trans backlash empirically. Likewise, I did not know of any available studies that empirically analyzed the distribution of discursive actors in Canadian politics and media who produced/disseminated anti-trans discourses. In Chapter 5, I examined which topics and sub-topics characterized cases containing anti-trans discourses in Canadian politics and media. At the time of publishing this dissertation, I was not aware of any studies that have generated a similar dataset pertaining to the anti-trans topics and sub-topics discussed in Canada. In Chapter 6, I examined the presence of explicit arguments that anti-trans actors employed. The original dataset provided empirical evidence which could be compared against qualitative observations and grounded in the literature to determine the most prevalent anti-trans arguments in Canadian politics and media.

To my knowledge, no other currently available study has undertaken this research goal with a similarly robust, extensive, diverse, and representative dataset of Canadian politics and media. In Chapter 7, I examined the presence of implicit arguments that anti-trans actors employed. Much like the previous chapter's examination of explicit anti-trans arguments, Chapter 7 revealed the implicit forms of argumentation employed by anti-trans actors in Canada. I know of no other currently available study that contains a comparable dataset that is robust, extensive, diverse, and representative of the anti-trans discourses present in Canadian politics and media. In Chapter 8, I examined the presence of the metaphorical tone and broader representational political framings. I examined what 'tone' characterized anti-trans discourses and which types of representational political framings were utilized to guide the presented discourses toward a desired conclusion or outcome. I do not know of any currently available studies that similarly study these aspects of the Canadian anti-trans backlash with a similarly robust, extensive, diverse, and representative sample. Chapter 8 also contained the creation of a dog whistle index, compiling every notable contemporary anti-trans dog whistle that I came across during my data collection and selection period. I am not aware of any other dog whistle index that was as fulsome or complete, which led me to compile one for reference. In addition to the empirical contributions of the dissertation, I believe the construction of the tools I employed (i.e., the coding dictionary and the dog whistle index) represent distinct methodological innovations and contributions to the literature.

Additionally, situating these findings in conversation with broader theoretical and scholarly disciplines provided a critical entry point for analyzing the possible implications behind these results. These findings could be held up against other discourse analyses of anti-trans discourse to determine how Canada compares. This dissertation's focus on Canada was purposeful; much of the current data on anti-trans discourse focuses on other nations, such as European countries,

the US, or Australia. While similar discourses and their evocations may apply to Canada, the distinct sociocultural, political, legal, historic, and economic realities of Canada may mean that different discourses are more readily evoked and/or have proven to be more effective within Canada's cultural landscape than abroad. This dissertation will therefore make a deeply meaningful contribution to the field by systematically and empirically gathering data, as well as analyzing that data in conversation with existing studies on anti-trans discourses to understand the state of anti-trans discourse in Canada.

1.4: Research Questions and Hypotheses

This dissertation is guided by broad research questions and hypotheses. These research questions were addressed in the proceeding chapters, and the hypotheses were tested. These research questions guided the data collection, coding, and analysis. The research questions were:

1. What are the main topics, positions and evidence discussed in anti-trans discourse in Canada?
2. What are the explicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
3. What are the implicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
4. What metaphorical tones do anti-trans actors employ?
5. What broader representational political framings do anti-trans actors employ?
6. What contemporary dog whistles do anti-trans actors employ?
7. Are there any differences in the above elements over time and/or among actors?

I developed several hypotheses during the data collection stage that were informed by the literature, the pre-reading sessions, and the pilot testing results. Regarding the first research question, I hypothesized that the main topics of discussion would center around medical, legal, and social topics. Specifically, I anticipated discussions centered around gender affirmative care

for children, ‘parental rights’, and/or the impact of trans rights on (cisgender) women, children, and families to be highly prevalent. I expected these topics to become more prevalent over time. I also hypothesized that the dominant positions regarding transness/trans people/trans rights would become more explicitly anti-trans over time. I expected the right-wing media groupings to generally have more explicit anti-trans positions compared to mainstream newspapers or politicians. I also hypothesized that anti-trans actors would utilize statistics and/or anecdotes prevalently, and that their usage would increase over time. I expected politicians and mainstream newspapers to rely on cited statistics the most, whereas I anticipated that think tanks and right-wing media outlets would utilize anecdotes (attributed and unattributed) more frequently.

For question 2, I anticipated a shift in focus over time regarding the presence of explicit arguments and sub-arguments. I expected pathologizing medical discourses and/or moralistic arguments in the 2000s, with a shift in the 2010s to also include legal arguments. In the 2020s, I anticipated a variety of arguments; specifically, I expected a notable increased in ‘biology’ related arguments that reified the sex/gender binary, as well as a shift towards ‘protecting women and children’ discourses. I anticipated that comparisons to the US would increase over time and be especially prevalent in the right-wing actor groupings.

For question 3, I hypothesized that similar trends would be present in the implicit arguments and sub-arguments to the explicit ones. However, I anticipated a greater prevalence for sub-arguments that reified the sex/gender binary, that portrayed trans people as predatory/dangerous, and/or sub-arguments that portrayed transness/trans people/trans rights as an existential threat to Western cultural hegemony, Canadian values, and ‘traditionalism’.

For question 4, I anticipated that the metaphorical tone would be generally punitive. I expected widespread condemnation of trans people/transness/trans rights as ‘fake’, ‘deceptive’,

‘insane/mentally ill’, ‘woke’, ‘sinful’, ‘immoral’, etc. I anticipated that this metaphorical tone would become more acute over time and that it would be especially prevalent among think tanks and right-wing media outlets.

For question 5, I anticipated that broader representational political framings would frame anti-trans discourse in ways that reinforced transphobic, sexist, homophobic, and/or white supremacist hegemonic cultural norms. I expected arguments to be structured in such a way as to lead audiences to these conclusions and to preclude other forms of critique, questioning, and/or engagement. I expected these framings to become more prevalent over time and for think tanks and right-wing media outlets to utilize them more often than politicians and newspapers.

For question 6, I expected anti-trans actors to employ dog whistles that portrayed trans people/transness/trans rights as evil, hypocritical, unnecessary, and/or detrimental to the (nuclear) family and/or Western cultural hegemony. I expected these dog whistles to become more prevalent over time and for think tanks and right-wing media outlets to utilize them more often than politicians and newspapers.

Finally, for question 7, I anticipated that politicians and mainstream newspapers would generally be more ‘moderate’ and implicit in their articulation of anti-trans discourses. I expected these groupings to discuss topics pertaining to gender affirmative care, ‘parental rights’, freedom of speech/expression, and ‘safety’ for women and children; these discussions would become more frequent over time. I anticipated that think tanks and right-wing media outlets would be more overt and explicit in their articulations of anti-trans discourse overall. They were expected to engage with discourses that portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as predatory, malicious, and/or harmful to others more often than other actors. These discourses were also expected to become more frequent over time.

I examined 500 cases selected from Canadian legacy media sources, Hansard transcripts, think tanks, and right-wing media outlets. A custom coding dictionary was created using the QDA Miner software to code these cases. I then generated macro-analyses to examine the raw and aggregate data. A systematic mixed methods (MM) research design was implemented, utilizing a feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) theoretical framework to analyze, code, aggregate, and analyze the findings. I mapped and surveyed anti-trans discourse in Canada over an extended period; from January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. I then qualitatively contextualized the results.

1.5: Dissertation Chapter Outline

This dissertation is divided into nine chapters. This introductory chapter is Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 detailed the theoretical framework and methodological approach. It defined and operationalized FCDA and how I planned to implement this theoretical framework to structure and guide the research conducted in this dissertation. I then discussed the MM methodology. I defined and operationalized it, discussing its strengths and addressed potential shortcomings. I also described the dataset collection process and justification for the selection process. The interpretive framework – the custom coding dictionary – was explained in detail, describing each section and how it functioned to generate the macro analyses.

Chapter 3 contained the literature review. The literature review was split into three sections. The first section analyzed critical discourse analyses from Europe, the US, and Australia regarding anti-trans discourses. Key findings were synthesized and described, providing a foundation for guiding expectations of potential discourses in Canada. The second section synthesized information from Canadian anti-trans critical discourse analysis studies – of which only two were available at the time of this dissertation's publication. The final section

then validated the research questions and demonstrated that this dissertation is an important contribution and intervention into the study of anti-trans discourse in Canada.

Chapter 4 was the first content chapter. This chapter contained charts illustrating the distribution of cases by time period and by actor, demonstrating the sharp rate at which anti-trans discourse in Canada has grown over time. It also demonstrated which actors were the largest contributors to the dataset. This chapter also examined the distribution of stances (what I called positions), determining to what extent anti-trans actors articulated explicit, implicit, or mixed stances. I cross-referenced these findings by time period and by actor. The last section of this chapter focused on the types of evidence anti-trans actors employed to support their claims. This chapter concluded with bullet-point syntheses of the main findings and a section detailing some key implications of these findings.

Chapter 5 examined the topics and sub-topics data. I assigned up to five codes per case based on the prevalence of the topics in each case. The overall data were examined and then cross-referenced by time period and by discursive actor. The sub-topics breakdown was synthesized in bullet-point form. The full prose analysis (including the tables) can be found in Appendix 4. This chapter concluded with a description of some key implications revealed by these findings.

Chapter 6 examined the explicit arguments and sub-arguments. Every instance of an explicit argument and sub-argument was assigned a code. The overall data were aggregated, examined by overall presence, and then cross-referenced by time period and by discursive actor. This section also contained an analysis of the comparisons made between Canada and the US, which was also examined by the overall data and cross-referenced by time period and by discursive actor. The sub-arguments breakdown was synthesized in bullet-point form. The full

prose analysis (including the tables) can be found in Appendix 5. This chapter concluded with a description of some key implications revealed by these findings.

Chapter 7 examined the implicit arguments and sub-arguments. Every instance of an implicit argument and sub-argument was assigned a code. The overall data were aggregated, examined by overall presence, and then cross-referenced by time period and by discursive actor. The sub-arguments breakdown was synthesized in bullet-point form. The full prose analysis (including the tables) can be found in Appendix 6. This chapter concluded with a description of some key implications revealed by these findings.

Chapter 8 analyzed the findings for the data pertaining to the metaphorical tone and the presence of broader representational political framings. Every instance of metaphorical tone and/or broader representational political framing was assigned a code. The overall data were aggregated, examined by overall presence, and then cross-referenced by time period and by discursive actor. I also included the index of contemporary dog whistles here. I did not gather data utilizing this index; rather, the creation of the index is another contribution from this dissertation for future research projects. This chapter concluded with a bullet-form summary of the major findings and a description of some key implications revealed by these findings.

The final chapter is the conclusion, Chapter 9. Here, I re-iterated the purpose of this research, revisited the research questions and hypotheses, and discussed 10 major thematic findings that were present throughout the dissertation. The chapter also discussed the theoretical and practical implications of these findings. Finally, some suggestions for future research projects were proposed.

CHAPTER 2: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This chapter will accomplish two main goals. Firstly, it will establish the comprehensive theoretical framework that will structure this dissertation. The theoretical framework is designed to situate a research project within a broader scholarly tradition, as well as to develop a theoretical lens for generating research questions and guiding the research process. FCDA (feminist critical discourse analysis) was chosen to be the theoretical framework for this project. FCDA will be defined and an explanation as to how it will structure the dissertation will be provided.

The second goal of this chapter is to establish a methodological approach. An MM (mixed methods) research design was selected. The MM methodology will be described, as well as an explanation as to its application and how it will be integrated with the theoretical framework. The strengths of this methodological approach will be explained, and potential shortcomings will be addressed. The dataset will be explained and justified, as will the process of determining its scope, the case selection, and sampling method that was utilized. This section also contains a description of the interpretive framework for this dissertation: the custom coding dictionary. Each section of the coding dictionary will be described in detail with explanations as to how it was systematically applied to the dataset.

2.1: Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework provides the structure that grounds this dissertation by providing the conceptual foundation and 'scaffolding' necessary to interpret the dataset. This dissertation is situated within the theoretical framework of FCDA. The following section will define critical discourse analysis (CDA) broadly, what FCDA is, and how it was employed to

structure the dissertation. This theoretical perspective will provide a clear framework for investigation, ensuring that the analyses are theoretically sound and academically rigorous. This theoretical approach will link this dissertation's findings to existing knowledge, as well as creating a basis for the generation of hypotheses and research questions. It also provides a clearly defined standard for evaluating this dissertation's findings.

2.1.1: Theoretical Framework – Critical Discourse Analysis

This dissertation is situated within the theoretical framework of FCDA. How is FCDA defined? How can it be utilized to conduct research projects? How will this dissertation be structured based on this theoretical framework? These questions will be addressed below.

CDA (critical discourse analysis) is based on the foundational supposition that words hold significance.[7] Political speech is one arena in which words can shape individual, interpersonal and (inter)national relationships. Applying a CDA theoretical framework to analyzing political speech can generate rich results. This dissertation will therefore operate on the supposition that words hold significance, and that the study of political speech (in this case, anti-trans discourse in Canada) is a worthwhile endeavour. But what is CDA, and how does it structure research projects? CDA can be defined as, "[a theoretical framework that is] fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse)".[8] CDA is therefore a theoretical framework designed to examine speech with a lens for structural power dynamics. To further expand on this concept, Van Dijk describes two principles of CDA. Firstly, CDA is based upon "… a study of the

[7] Saurette and Grandpierron, In Press
[8] Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p. 3

relations between discourse, power, dominance, social inequality and the position on the discourse analyst in such social relationships".[9] This dissertation will therefore be structed to engage with the anti-trans discourse by "focusing on *the role of discourse in the (re)production and challenge of dominance"* (emphasis in original).[10] Secondly, Van Dijk describes CDA as taking a position; he argues that this is CDA's primary function. There will be a short discussion on reflexivity later, but it is prudent to state that this dissertation will be approached from a distinctly trans-affirmative and trans justice-oriented lens. The study of anti-trans discourse in Canada is a purposeful choice with the goal of understanding 'who' is saying 'what' in order to slow, prevent, and ideally, reverse the trend of normalization of this discourse.

In the same vein as taking a deliberate stance in how to approach power dynamics in political speech, CDA also rests on the presupposition that language is neither neutral nor apolitical.[11] Language is a site of hegemonic reinforcement of sociopolitical norms as well as contestations of those norms. As Saurette states, "[l]anguage – and particularly political language – is itself an important tool of politics. In fact, many theorists argue that the struggle over the definition and use of various words and concepts lies at the very foundation of modern politics".[12] According to Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates, language is constructive; it does not exist independent of culture and social understanding. Rather, it is constitutive of social life.[13] Language is understood (within the discipline of discourse studies) as social in nature;[14] it is shaped, and given meaning by, the social subjects who utilize language.[15] As these scholars[16]

[9] Van Dijk, 2001, p. 300
[10] Van Dijk, 2001, p. 300
[11] Saurette and Grandpierron, In Press
[12] Saurette, 2026, p. 13
[13] Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates, 2001
[14] Wodak and Meyer, 2001; Flowerdew and Richardson, 2017
[15] Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002
[16] Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates, 2001

explain, language is a social action in which meaning is co-productive. Language is also understood as normative,[17] with grammatical, syntactic, and structural rules to generate meaning in a given social context. Wetherell argues that there is an interaction order; there are 'regular ways' of doing things which orders discourse. Language must 'fit' within the discursive genres in which they are located; news, documentaries, novels, and so on, have 'regular ways' of ordering, presenting, and utilizing language to convey meaning. Wetherell's explanation of meaning and discursive genre will be integrated into the CDA theoretical framework employed throughout this dissertation. This will structure my research investigations into understanding 'what' anti-trans actors in Canada are saying. I will consider the co-production of meaning of anti-trans discourse, as well as the interaction order – the 'regular ways' – in which the medium of written print is utilized to convey specific types of information. CDA will therefore structure the theoretical approach to addressing the central research questions posed in this dissertation.

2.1.2: Theoretical Framework – Feminism and Critical Discourse Analysis

The utilization of CDA in this dissertation contains another important dimension. This dimension is treated not as additive to the basic foundations of CDA, but rather a co-constituent and intertwining component that is foundational to the construction of the dissertation's theoretical framework. Therefore, this dissertation will be conducting a *feminist* critical discourse analysis.

What is FCDA? Lazar's[18] work on the subject provides an excellent starting point. She articulates the constituent parts of 'feminist' and 'critical discourse analysis' and explains how these concepts can be integrated with each other. She states that feminist scholarship adopts a

[17] Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates, 2001, p. 17
[18] Lazar, 2005

critical view of gendered dynamics and relations, "… motivated by the need to change the existing conditions of these relations".[19] She describes how CDA is often motivated by political perspectives and/or approached with specific stances in mind. These considerations overlap with many feminist concerns, and thus by articulating an explicitly FCDA theoretical framework, Lazar argues for a synthesis of feminist theory with CDA's politically motivated positionality. This synthesis is relevant for research projects wherein the contributions made provide theoretical and practical information that furthers liberatory goals in the struggle against oppressive forces.

In addition to Lazar's FCDA paradigm, a poststructuralist[20] approach to FCDA was also implemented. This facet of the theoretical framework guided approaches to social structures as complex and deeply entrenched, but capable of undergoing change.[21] Moreover, Foucauldian conceptualizations of power (especially biopower) were interwoven with this theoretical framework. Foucault's framework approaches power as a circulatory force that emphasizes the struggle over the use of language in modern politics. That being said, the state undeniably consolidates a great deal of power in its right to arbitrate the lives and deaths of its citizens.[22] 'Necropolitics'[23] expands on this idea in articulating the state's right to control the deaths of its citizens in creating and enforcing systemic barriers to life itself. This can lead to precarity and 'civil deaths', such as enslavement, forced displacement, deportation, and the right of the state to expose people – including its citizens – to death. Trans people are often relegated to both civil deaths and literal deaths for not complying with sexed/gendered expectations. This research

[19] Lazar, 2005, p. 3
[20] Butler, 1990
[21] Miller and Brewer, 2003, p. 310; Hesse-Biber, 2014
[22] Foucault, 1978; Foucault, 1983; Taylor, 2011
[23] Mbembe, 2003

project will highlight how anti-trans discourse normalizes these deaths and it will be critical of these structural limitations to trans life.

FCDA provides a clear theoretical framework to structure this dissertation.[24] It provides the tools with which to analyze political speech and how power dynamics reinforce and/or contest normative sociopolitical structures. It will structure the dissertation's' approach to studying how language is reified and contested in the struggle for political speech pertaining to trans people/transness/trans rights in Canada. It offers a lens through which to observe and discuss the power relations that shape anti-trans discourse in Canada, as well as potential liberatory paths forward.

2.1.3: Theoretical Framework – A Note on Positionality and Reflexivity

An important aspect of CDA is the researcher's own positionality and reflexivity. As a nonbinary trans scholar within the disciplines of trans studies and gender studies, my positionality provides an insider's lens on trans experience. It also functions as a site of tension. Utilizing an FCDA theoretical framework, I recognized that my knowledge and familiarity in identifying anti-trans discourse may be invisible to non-trans researchers. However, I am equally mindful of the potential pitfalls of insiders' biases. My familiarity with anti-trans discourse may render certain discourses as 'invisible' to me, as they may appear to be self-evident. Moreover, the amount of emotional labour involved in coding 500 cases of anti-trans discourse is deeply taxing. This may also lead me to code inconsistently in a subconscious desire to positively represent my community. To maintain scholarly rigor, the MM methodological approach (described in detail in sub-section 2.2.1) was purposefully structured to minimize personal biases

[24] Saurette and Grandpierron, In Press

during the generation of the macroanalysis. I employed a reflexive approach[25] by keeping a research journal to track my affective responses to the data. This ensured that I kept my coding consistent, reliable, and valid, while also making note of interesting or surprising qualitative observations to revisit in the discussion sections throughout this dissertation. This practice helped keep my coding anchored in systematic, empirical, and pre-established coding conventions rather than being guided by personal sentiment.

2.1.4: Theoretical Framework – A Note on Additional Theoretical Perspectives

The theoretical frameworks outlined above constitutes this dissertation's research design and structural approach to investigating the research questions. However, an additional 'high theory' literature review was included in Appendix 3. This literature review was grounded in exploring the academic disciplines of trans studies, disability studies, transfeminism, and backlash theory. These sections proved to be too lengthy to include in the body of this dissertation and were therefore added for optional reading, as they provide some additional context to qualitative discussion sections throughout.

Moreover, some select chapters will contain additional theoretical work conducted to explain chapter-specific research goals. These theoretical explanations were better suited to their respective chapters as they did not apply universally to the overall structure of the dissertation. These chapter-specific theories include: Chapter 7 and the explanation of van Dijk's concept of the Ideological Square[26], tracking pronoun usage, lexical choice, and syntactic mitigation. Additionally, Chapter 8 contains definitions of metaphorical tone, broader representational political framings, and dog whistles. These will be discussed in-depth in each pertinent chapter and referenced throughout the thesis when relevant.

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[25] Alejandro, 2021
[26] Van Dijk, 2016

2.2: Methodology

This section of Chapter 2 will outline the methodological approach employed to answer this dissertation's research questions. Specifically, this chapter will define and explain MM methodology. The MM methodological approach's strengths and shortcomings will be addressed. The dataset will also be explained and justified. Its scope and objectives will be explained. The process of determining the cultural and temporal scale, the case selection process, and sampling method that was utilized will all be addressed. An explanation of the interpretive method of choice – a custom coding dictionary – will be provided. This sub-section will demonstrate that this methodological approach is aligned with my theoretical framework and functions as a rigorous means of ensuring the validity and reliability of my findings.

2.2.1: Methodology – Mixed Methods Research Design

Part 1: Mixed Methods Methodology

An MM research design was chosen to be the methodological approach for this dissertation. This approach is effective for analyzing subject matter such as common talking points, rhetorical arguments, and metaphorical tone in a systematic manner. An MM methodology will be employed to empirically track forms of anti-trans discourse in Canadian media and politics. These findings will be examined quantitively and qualitatively by generating empirical data and closely reading the dataset for examples of relevant discourses to contextualize the results.

An MM methodology, when rigorously constructed and applied to a research project, can provide a means of testing "how widely, and how intensively, certain rhetorical strategies are employed across a given discourse".[27] An MM methodology requires a systematic and consistent

[27] Saurette, 2026, p. 15

project design to capture quantitative data. In the process of researching how to validate one's research questions, and engaging with the literature, one also develops an understanding of what to expect when qualitatively analyzing the data for interesting or surprising results. The empirical data provided by the quantitative aspect of the research design corroborates these observations and contextualizes them within the broader trends in the data one has tracked.

There are many ways to empirically track data. The foundational approach applied here was to code for frequency. Quantitative research designs make assumptions about measurable relationships present in a given dataset. A key assumption of an MM research design is that higher frequencies are more impactful.[28] This, of course, may not always be the case; there may be other characteristics at play. However, tracking the frequency of discourses can establish the "relative importance of these strategies to a discourse overall".[29] Therefore, this dissertation will track the frequency of anti-trans discourse in the dataset to determine how often anti-trans discourse is articulated. Tracking these data overall, as well as by time period and by discursive actor, will demonstrate what, when, and by whom anti-trans discourses are discussed.

Part 2: General Strengths and Limitations of Mixed Methods Methodology

An MM methodology is well-suited to the research goals of this dissertation. It provides a means of analyzing a dataset both qualitatively and quantitatively. Traditionally, quantitative methodologies focus on content analysis and data-mining approaches, such as automatic word searches, to track the frequency of words. While useful for certain research projects, this approach does not identify "complex rhetorical formations such as types of arguments, narratives, framing devices, etc."[30] unto itself. By contrast, a purely qualitative methodological

[28] Saurette and Grandpierron, In Press
[29] Saurette, 2026, p. 15
[30] Saurette, 2026, p. 15

approach faces challenges in empirically establishing the replicability, scope, and reliability and validity of the data. Therefore, an MM methodology can effectively structure and carry out a research design that pulls from the advantages of both methodologies while mitigating their shortcomings.

There are several advantages to employing an MM methodology. Firstly, it lends itself to the disciplinary expectations of trans studies and gender studies. While these disciplines tend to be highly theoretical in nature, providing original, empirical data that can then be discussed in relation to these fields' theoretical paradigms would be a productive experience. This dissertation's generation of original data will also hopefully inspire future discourse analysis research projects on anti-trans discourse in Canada.

Secondly, this methodology strengthens confidence when analyzing the findings, as it is methodologically rigorous with a systematic coding mechanism to track the desired data. This methodology requires researchers to have a strong familiarity with the breadth and depth of potential cases for the dataset before coding questions can be constructed. By constructing a systematic research design, it also limits the potential for researcher bias in 'massaging the numbers' to construct a desired outcome.

Additionally, this methodology employs multiple methods (quantitative and qualitative) to generate a robust discursive dataset that creates a stronger and more credible research project. A greater description of the dataset is provided below, but to summarize, both mainstream sources of Canadian politics and media, as well as smaller right-wing sources, were included. This provided context for any interesting or surprising distinctions between discursive actors in their articulation of anti-trans discourses with which they engaged most frequently.

There are, however, some potential limitations to utilizing an MM methodological research design. These limitations will be discussed, as well as the mitigating tactics that were employed.

One potential limitation was the possibility of generating inaccurate and/or invalid data. The degree to which this can be mitigated rests on the robustness and reliability of the coding dictionary, its accurate application to the dataset, and the researcher's interpretations of the contents during the coding process. To reduce the risk of generating inaccurate and/or invalid data, I embarked on the research process without any rigid hypotheses as to potential discoveries, and the research questions were only formulated after I engaged heavily with the dataset and the literature. No macro-analyses were generated until after the coding was complete. Additionally, six total rounds of coding were conducted to ensure internal reliability and validity.[31] This has effectively minimized the risk of inaccuracies and/or the data being invalid.

An MM methodology also relies on certain assumptions. As Saurette and Grandpierron state, "there is a shared commitment to the idea that the systematic study of words can be a useful endeavour".[32] These assumptions are open to contestation. Words are, after all, complex and contain many meanings. They can be utilized in different ways by different groups. Analyzing political speech for anti-trans discourse was approached from the perspective that the discourse in question was not necessarily reflective of a speaker's 'true' reasoning; there are many factors at play in the choice of words utilized by discursive actors, including choosing to not be truthful. This MM methodology was therefore not approached as an investigation into the 'true' reasoning and intent behind a discursive actor's words. Rather, the focus was kept to the contents of the discourses themselves and tracking their frequency.

[31] Saurette and Grandpierron, In Press
[32] Saurette and Grandpierron, In Press, p. 62

Another potential limitation is the focus on frequency itself. This focus runs the risk of overemphasizing frequency and invisibilizing other key factors that I did not track. However, by examining the dataset qualitatively, important factors beyond a strictly empirical tracking of frequency were considered. By contextualizing the results within their sociocultural and political milieus, other potential factors could be identified and discussed qualitatively.

The results of this study should therefore speak for themselves; the quantitative findings must rely upon their own rigorous merits. It should be judged on whether this dissertation is a persuasive document whose theoretical and methodological considerations have led to the generation of original empirical data that is reliable and valid. It also depends on how the qualitative discussions have contextualized these findings. If this dissertation has convincingly explained what the anti-trans discourses are, and when and how frequently they are present, then it has theoretically and methodological accomplished its goal. I am confident that the strength of this project will be self-evident, and that the data provided is original and provides a significant contribution to the study of anti-trans discourses in Canada.

2.2.2: Methodology – Dataset

Whose words should be examined when conducting a dissertation on anti-trans discourse in Canada? In what media/format? Over what period of time? This sub-section will address these questions and explain the scope, objectives, selection process, filtering process, and the characteristics of the dataset. Considering what dataset to use is crucial to conducting an effective, empirically sound, and justifiable MMFCDA research project. The dataset is the central subject of analysis throughout this dissertation; therefore, it is important to concretize a clear and consistent dataset for analysis. Below, a description of the scope and objectives of the dataset will be provided. I will justify the time period, cultural and temporal contexts, and the

richness of the dataset for raw data to examine. The next part will detail how cases were collected and sorted. The next part after that explains the processing and filtering process to generate a representative and diverse dataset in detail. Lastly, a section detailing the data characteristics will be provided. This part will then conclude with a synthesis of these topics and will reiterate the validity of the selected dataset.

Part 1: Scope and Objectives

When examining political speech via an MMFCDA research project, one is fundamentally examining words. As was established in section 2.1 of this chapter, this dissertation presumes that the systematic study of words is a useful endeavor. Therefore, it is crucial to devise a dataset which allows one to effectively examine words that allow one to address one's research questions.[33]

This dissertation utilized a comparative framework to examine the trends of anti-trans discourse in Canada. Cases were selected from Hansard transcripts, national mainstream newspapers, think tanks, and alt-right/socially conservative media outlets. I examined 500 selected cases from various Canadian and/or Canada-centric sources over a span of 23 years – January 1st, 2000 to December 31st, 2023. This dissertation was designed to track the frequency of anti-trans discourse in Canada.

This dissertation was designed to examine a variety of discursive actors to capture how different individuals, groups, and organizations employed anti-trans discourse. I therefore utilized a triangulation method.[34] Triangulation requires researchers to analyze their research questions for multiple perspectives; this improves confidence in the research data, as a diverse

[33] Saurette and Grandpierron, In Press
[34] Denzin, 2009

dataset mitigates the risks of skewed data results and poorly supported conclusions.[35] It can also reveal interesting and surprising trends in the data which may not be apparent when examining one type of discursive actor. Triangulation can therefore increase the validity of the research findings. Four types of triangulation were employed throughout this dissertation. The methodological approach incorporated 'actor triangulation', meaning that I examined different sources of information to build the dataset; this represented different dimensions of the anti-trans discourses present in Canadian print media. The next methodological approach incorporated 'time triangulation'.[36] This method examined the dataset across a 23-year period. This was designed to reveal any temporal trends in the data that might otherwise be obscured and prevented the dataset from being skewed due to unique events from a given era. Moreover, this dissertation employed a 'category triangulation' methodological approach, in which different types of discourse that were intended for different audiences (i.e., the general public, policymakers, actors internal to the movement, etc.) were examined for comparative purposes. The final approach was a 'methodological triangulation', in which an MM methodological approach was applied with qualitative and quantitative analytical approaches. In so doing, a comparative framework was systematically employed to the entire dataset to demonstrate a diverse and representative sample of anti-trans discourse in Canada. All sources selected for this dissertation were some form of print media. This format was selected as these sources are all publicly available, archived, and can be used to generate an easily replicable dataset, as other researchers can access the same cases to conduct further research projects.

This dissertation was designed to examine anti-trans discourses across multiple arenas of Canadian politics and media. Therefore, I decided to study four types of actors. Together, these

[35] Saurette and Gordon, 2015
[36] Denzin, 2009

discursive groupings captured a diverse and representative cross-section of some of the most influential contemporary anti-trans discourse in Canada: politicians speaking in Canadian legislatures, mainstream nationwide newspapers, think tanks, and alt-right/socially conservative media outlets. These actor groupings were chosen for several reasons. 'Politicians' was chosen as a grouping because the political realm has a very material impact on the lives of trans people in Canada; their human/civil rights and freedoms are directly related to the agenda-setting capabilities of lawmakers and policymakers. Moreover, politicians operate as discursive actors whose choices dictate the boundaries of acceptable public debate. Selecting politicians as a discursive actor grouping was justified because political discourse serves as an important foundation from which media engagement and public opinion emerges.

The next actor grouping I selected was national newspapers. This grouping was selected to capture the institutional mainstream media consensus of anti-trans discourse. Newspapers interface with political discourse and establish the baseline of national salience and framing; this effectively 'translates' political discourse into widespread public narratives. This expansive agenda-setting capability is therefore relevant to understanding how anti-trans discourse can be disseminated widely.

The next grouping I selected was think tanks. This grouping was included in the dataset as specialized institutions of policy discourse. Think tanks conduct research, policy, advocacy, and lobbying initiatives. They generate empirical data, policy frameworks, and vocabularies that politicians can adopt in public debates. They also interface with the public to shape public opinion, therefore making think tanks agenda-setting organizations who can shape anti-trans discourse on sociocultural and political scales.

Lastly, the final discursive actor grouping I selected was alt-right/socially conservative media outlets. These media outlets were selected to capture the mechanics of audience mobilization of specific sub-cultures. These specialized channels provide an empirical contrast to mainstream press coverage, demonstrating how mainstream political discourse can be reinterpreted, radicalized, and/or recontextualized for a distinct, politically motivated group.

Part 2: Collection and Sorting

The data collection process began via Internet searches for the names of specific individuals, groups, and organizations engaged in anti-trans discourses in mainstream politics and legacy media. Hansard transcripts, Canadian and/or Canada-centric national newspapers, think tanks, and alt-right media outlets were all examined. Using auto-word searching, I constructed an initial round of keywords with which to search these selected sources for anti-trans discourses. These keywords were constructed based on a review of the literature for indexes of trans-related keywords and phases.[37] As I conducted these searches, a second, emergent round of keywords were recorded and utilized for additional rounds of auto-word searching to search for more potential cases. (These keywords can be found in Appendix 2). I digitally saved every potentially relevant case to a password-protected laptop. Cases were placed in digital folders that were labelled by decade and by discursive actor; for example, Globe and Mail 2010-2019. All cases selected were in English and/or from Anglophone sources due to my lack of total fluency in French.

The first actor grouping was comprised of Hansard transcripts of politicians speaking in Canadian legislatures. This grouping was selected as an authoritative source of primary data. This grouping contained anti-trans discourses that directly shaped legislation and public policy.

[37] Devor and Haefele-Thomas, 2019

Transcripts captured the unmediated language that policymakers employed. Given that a key point of interest for this dissertation was an examination of data pertaining to 'pronoun bills', investigating politicians' speech as primary sources (rather than relying solely on secondary sources, such as journalistic interpretations) reveals how political speech works as a mechanism to drive trans-hostile legislation. Therefore, Hansard transcripts – which accurately transcribed Parliamentary, Senate, and provincial legislative sessions for archival purposes – was the premiere source for accurate primary accounts of Canadian legislative sessions. The Hansard transcripts featured sittings from the House of Commons and the Senate at the federal level. These texts were found using auto-word searching on the House of Commons and Senate websites, skimming for content, and then conducting close-reading sessions to confirm their suitability. They were then digitally saved in their respective folders. Transcripts from Saskatchewan and New Brunswick's provincial legislatures were also included because of their policy decisions/legislative enactments in 2023 which required parental consent for students under the age of 16 to be addressed by different names and pronouns at schools (New Brunswick's Policy 713 and Saskatchewan's Bill 137, respectively)[38]. The enactment of these bills characterized an unprecedented shift for political speech pertaining to trans rights in Canada and were therefore of great interest.

The Saskatchewan cases were obtained in the same manner as the transcripts from the federal jurisdictions. The New Brunswick cases were obtained by contacting the provincial government directly, following which a librarian sent cases via email based on the search terms that I provided. I received two rounds of selected transcripts from the librarian across four

[38] New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development [EECD], 2020; New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development [EECD], 2023; An Act to amend The Education Act, 1995 respecting parental rights, 2023

separate email correspondences. These cases were also read closely for suitability and then downloaded into their respective folders.

The data collected revealed potential cases for examination. Each Senator, MP, MPP, and/or individual speaking in the legislatures was treated as a discrete category per transcript. Transcripts were saved and downloaded in full as digital files, and then individuals' speeches/debates were isolated and saved as discrete cases in Text (.txt) files for readability. The average word count of the totality of a single speaker's transcribed speeches roughly equated to an op-ed article. Therefore, these transcripts were treated as comparable to the articles sourced from the other categories of actors. Hereafter, this category of actors will be referred to as Politicians.

The next actor grouping was comprised of national newspapers. National newspapers reflect the information to which the general public is being exposed on a sociocultural level. They also have agenda-setting capabilities to determine what cultural and/or political events are significant by choosing what information to publish. I selected the Globe and Mail and the National Post due to their national reach, established credibility, and their agenda-setting capabilities. However, it must be noted that the National Post is owned by the New Jersey-based hedge fund Chatham Asset Management LLC.[39] Despite this potential American cultural influence, the National Post remains one of the largest nationally distributed newspapers in Canada, and thus I decided to include it in the dataset. Both of the selected newspapers contained high numbers of potential cases with anti-trans discourses present. A single article (not including outgoing links, affiliate links, images, and/or audiovisual information) was treated as a discrete case. Hereafter, this category of actors will be referred to as MSM (mainstream) Newspapers.

[39] Wikipedia – Chatham Asset Management, 2025; Media Bias Fact Check, 2025

The third grouping was comprised of three think tanks. Think tanks are organizations that often bridge between political, academic, and public-facing sectors. They provide specialized and data-driven information which can influence policymakers, journalism, and public opinion. I selected cases from the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms (JCCF), the Fraser Institute, and the Canadian branch of Focus on the Family. These think tanks' use of anti-trans discourses was notable, as other Canadian think tanks did not produce anywhere near similar numbers of potential cases. This may indicate their utilization of anti-trans discourses to influence law, policy, and public opinion. I selected these think tanks due to the large number of potential cases. A single article (not including outgoing links, affiliate links, images, and/or audiovisual information) was treated as a discrete case. I collected newspaper/op-ed style articles from these groups, as it was challenging to find robust press release coverage, reports, and/or research papers that contained anti-trans discourse across all examined think tanks. Hereafter, this category of actors will be referred to as Think Tanks.

The last discursive actor grouping was right-wing/socially conservative media outlets. This grouping was selected to capture the distinct, influential discourses of a specific and highly mobilized sub-culture in Canada. Examining this grouping revealed how mainstream politics and news are presented and/or contested within a specific ideological 'ecosystem'. These actors often 'spoke' directly to this mobilized sub-culture via their framing of anti-trans discourses. This meant that they often contained framings and/or arguments that may not have been captured and/or discussed by other groups. These actors were excellent to study as a purposeful and contrasting grouping against the mainstream sources of politics and media. In analyzing these actors, I expected to capture sub-cultural anxieties, populist rhetoric, and/or cultural grievances

which were not expressed in other sources. I selected True North and Action4Canada,[40] as they both contained trans-hostile discourses which were articulated toward highly mobilized sub-cultures of alt-right/socially conservative audiences. They contained the greatest number of potential cases.[41] A single article (not including outgoing links, affiliate links, images, and/or audiovisual information) was treated as a discrete case. Hereafter, this category of actors will be referred to as Alt-Right New Media.

In addition to methodologically triangulating any differences that may be present between discursive actors, I also examined the dataset by time period: from 2000 to 2023. I chose this period of time in order to examine the dataset across three periods; 2000-2009, 2010-2019, and 2020-2023. I decided to examine the data across these time periods as, during the data collection and filtering period, I noted colloquially that each decade seemed to be characterized by distinct trends regarding the presence of anti-trans discourses. By empirically examining the data by time period, I could determine what trends existed across this 23-year period and track any interesting or surprising findings for comparison. Beginning with the early 2000s, I found in the process of reading and compiling potential cases that this period seemed to be characterized by little to no anti-trans discourses in print media. In Canada, LGBTQ+ discourses in the early 2000s were generally marked by discussions which prioritized LGB (lesbian, gay, bisexual) rights, especially when the *Civil Marriage Act* came into effect in 2005.[42] Any trans-hostile cases from the this

[40] Action4Canada, n.d.
[41] Note: Action4Canada is a newer website, having been established in 2020. I was concerned about the data being skewed by alt-right/socially conservative websites that had no pre-established online presence prior to the 2020s. I therefore examined other known alt-right/socially conservative Canadian websites, such as Rebel News, the Alberta Report, and the Western Standard for similar articles containing anti-trans discourse. These organizations' websites have existed from the early 2000s to the mid 2010s, making them longer established and therefore presenting the possibility of a longer timeline of established anti-trans discourse. However, upon utilizing the same search terms for these other sources, I discovered from a preliminary analysis that the earliest and most apparently anti-trans articles did not appear until 2019, further suggesting that anti-trans discourse in Canada has only recently become widely publicized in mainstream print media.
[42] *Civil Marriage Act,* S.C. 2005, c. 33

time period were expected to be few in number, as mainstream anti-trans discourses circulating widely in the arenas of politics and media had not yet become a widespread phenomenon in Canada.[43] Thus, the early 2000s would provide a 'baseline' which would demonstrate the extent to which widely produced/disseminated anti-trans discourses were simply not prevalent during this period, making the data trends in subsequent decades all the more striking. The next period of analysis, the 2010s, were expected to be characterized by a steadily growing presence of anti-trans discourses. As the 'transgender tipping point'[44] exploded across Canada, the production/dissemination of trans-hostile discourse was expected to increase in the latter half of this period. Lastly, the early 2020s were expected to be characterized by a sudden explosion of anti-trans discourses. 2023 was selected as the final year due to the constraints on available sources during the data collection process (which took place during 2024) and because this year was characterized by sudden increases in anti-trans laws, policies, media coverage, and discourses that permeated Canadian politics and media. By examining the data across these three time periods, the dissertation will effectively integrate the quantitative data trends with the qualitative sociocultural and political shifts across the landscape of Canadian politics and media.

Part 3: Processing, Filtering, and Quality Control

Using auto-word searching, 2,319 potential cases were initially identified. Cases that were determined to be duplicates (367), devoid of anti-trans discourse (201), and/or which were LGB-specific (128) were not included. This left me with 1,623 potential cases. It was determined that cleaning, coding, and generating macro analyses for all of these cases would require too much time and too many resources to complete. Therefore, a sampling technique was devised to select 500 cases. This was determined to be a sufficiently robust dataset while also taking into

[43] Prosser, 1998; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005; Stryker and Whittle, 2006
[44] Steinmetz, 2014

consideration the time and resources required for coding. Accordingly, the 1,623 potential cases were each first assigned a number. This was based on their alphabetical appearance in the digital folders by title in descending order. I utilized a semi-randomized sampling technique[45] to select the set of cases to be analyzed. A semi-randomized sampling technique combines elements of random sampling with a level of input from the researcher. This sampling techniques produces datasets which ensure that points of interest are included, while minimizing researcher bias via the randomness of the sampling technique. The majority of cases were randomly selected to provide a representative dataset using random number generation. Cases were selected to ensure that each discursive actor's sample size reflected its proportion within the total potential case pool. By employing auto-word searching, specific events and/or topics were also hand-selected. These cases pertained to New Brunswick's Policy 713 and Saskatchewan's Bill 137, as these landmark pieces of policy/legislation were of great interest; I wanted to contextualize the specific moments in time when these bills were being considered by their respective legislatures against a broader overview of anti-trans discourses in Canada. 500 cases were selected to comprise the dataset. An additional 50 cases were selected to conduct the initial pilot testing in the same manner. The pilot testing was designed to verify the validity and reliability of the coding dictionary and provide an opportunity for revisions and testing if needed. Cases were uploaded into QDA Miner and cleaned by correcting any formatting errors that occurred during the process, such as formatting paragraphs exactly as they appeared in the original text. No text was altered in any way. The cases were skim-read one last time to ensure that the dataset appeared sufficiently varied, was proportionate to each actor's sample size, and contained relevant keywords and phases.

[45] Daniel, 2012

Part 4: Data Characteristics

The table below shows the distribution of the 500 cases selected by time period and by actor. The unequal distribution of the cases means that, when discussing the findings in the content chapters, I will always further break down the overall results by time period and by discursive actor. This will ensure that the inequality in the distribution of the cases does not obfuscate any important period-specific and/or actor-specific trends. I will discuss the substantive implications of the distribution of the cases by year and by actor in Chapter 4.

Table 2.2.2 – Case Distribution by Decade and by Time Period

	2000-2009	2010-2019	2020-2023	Actor Total
Politicians	0	34	53	**87**
MSM Newspapers	0	90	151	**241**
Think Tanks	0	36	35	**71**
Alt-Right New Media	0	5	96	**101**
Time Period Total	**0**	**165**	**335**	**500**

Part 5: Conclusion

This part described how the dataset that would be the subject of analysis throughout this dissertation was selected. The study of words requires careful consideration as to whose words will be considered when addressing one's research questions. To that end, 500 cases were selected over a 23-year period from Hansard transcripts, national mainstream newspapers, think tanks, and alt-right/socially conservative media outlets. The cases were selected from a period of January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. The scope and objectives of this dataset were discussed, as this dissertation will seek to investigate 'what' anti-trans actors are saying over an extended period of time from a robust dataset of diverse and representative discursive actors. Comparisons between decades and between discursive actors will highlight any interesting or

surprising variations in the data and demonstrate the extent to which the anti-trans backlash has proliferated since the early 2020s. The collection and filtering process was also explained in detail, with cases being semi-randomly selected to establish a dataset that was representative of anti-trans discourses in Canada while also ensuring sources pertaining to New Brunswick and Saskatchewan's legislative enactments in 2023 were present. Finally, the data characteristics were examined with the breakdown of the actors' contributions of cases by decade being displayed. To avoid skewing the data, it was explained that all generated macro analyses will be examined for the presence of relevant data, the presence of that data cross-referenced by time period, and the presence of the data cross-referenced by discursive actor in each subsequent content chapter.

2.2.3: Methodology – Interpretive Framework – The Coding Dictionary

How were the selected cases analyzed? How could the empirical data be consistently, reliably, and validly generated? A custom coding dictionary was created as the interpretive framework for this dissertation. It was designed to answer the research questions and provide empirical macro-analyses generated from the codes. It was designed to capture as many concepts about and/or related to anti-trans discourse in Canada as possible. There are 10 code sections in the coding dictionary, as well as a Variables Table. The full coding dictionary can be consulted in Appendix 1. For the sake of brevity, each section will be summarized here. An additional description of each relevant section will also be discussed in each chapter when it is applicable.

The first section of the coding dictionary was called 'Section 1: Bibliographic Information (Variables Table)' in Appendix 1, which provided the legend of the bibliographic information that was captured; this section was comprised of most of the variables in the Variables Table in QDA Miner. An important note is that other sections of the coding dictionary were categorized

as Variables in QDA Miner. Any sections that describe additional Variables in QDA Miner will be indicated as such. This section captured important information about each case, such as the date of publication (if known), the source, the author(s) name(s) and gender(s) (if known), and from which source the case originated.

The second section of the coding dictionary contained codes for capturing important topics and sub-topics. This section was called 'Section 2: 'What' Are Anti-Trans Actors Discussing: Topics' in Appendix 1 and was called 'Main Topics 1' in QDA Miner. This was the first section of Codes in QDA Miner. This section flagged and tracked a variety of topics and sub-topics that anti-trans actors discussed. Topics were defined as the main subject matter around which a case's contents were centered/based and were grouped thematically into eight topics categories. The top five most prominent/prevalent sub-topics per case were coded. This was applied to the entirety of the case, including the title and contents.

The third section of the coding dictionary contained the positions codes, which were part of the Variables Table. It was called, 'Section 3: Positions and Arguments' in Appendix 1. This section was used to indicate the stance of a given case based on how explicitly it articulated anti-trans discourses. The first positions variable indicated how 'intense' this stance was. The second positions variable was an open tab to clarify the reasoning for the coding selection. The third positions variable was an open tab to highlight and/or copy key quotes that exemplified the overall stance of the case. These position variables were coded for once per case.

The fourth section in the coding dictionary contained the codes designed to track explicit arguments and sub-arguments. This section was called 'Section 4: What Explicit Rhetorical Strategies Do Anti-Trans Actors Employ?' in Appendix 1 and was called 'Explicit Arguments 2' in QDA Miner. This section contained 10 argument categories with thematically grouped sub-

arguments. Every instance of an identified explicit argument was coded. One paragraph was treated as the smallest possible unit of analysis, with contiguous paragraphs being coded as one code where present. The entire case was treated as the largest possible unit of analysis. Each case was then coded per this standardized sizing. The data were aggregated based on case count to determine the broad trends over time and by discursive actor. The absolute and relative percentages were compared.

The fifth section of the coding dictionary was called 'Arguments About Other Topics (Explicit Arguments)'. This section originally only coded for the presence of explicit arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro- or anti-trans arguments. However, these codes were later broken out further into separate sub-topics for a more granular analysis. This new section was created to code for specific explicit arguments that were not about pro- or anti-trans topics themselves but appeared in conjunction with them. These arguments were re-coded with a single code per case, as these arguments were consistently about a singular topic. This approach provided some additional interesting data for analysis. A single case could therefore contain up two explicit codes for any applicable anti-trans and pro-trans related topics. One paragraph was treated as the smallest possible unit of analysis, with contiguous paragraphs being coded as one code where present. The entire case was treated as the largest possible unit of analysis. Each case was then coded per this standardized sizing. The data were aggregated based on case count to determine the broad trends over time and by discursive actor. The absolute and relative percentages were compared.

The sixth section of the coding dictionary contained codes for the implicit anti-trans discourses. This section was called 'Section 6: What Implicit Rhetorical Strategies Do Anti-Trans Actors Employ?' in Appendix 1 and was called 'Implicit Representations 3' in QDA

Miner. This section contained 10 argument categories with sub-arguments thematically grouped to each category. Just as with the explicit arguments, every instance of an identified implicit argument was coded. One paragraph was treated as the smallest possible unit of analysis and contiguous paragraphs could be coded as one code where present. The entire case was treated as the largest possible unit of analysis. Each case was then coded per this standardized sizing. The data were aggregated based on case count to determine the broad trends over time and by discursive actor. The absolute and relative percentages were compared.

The seventh section of the coding dictionary was called 'Arguments About Other Topics (Implicit Arguments)'. Just as with the explicit arguments, this section originally only coded for the presence of implicit arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro- or anti-trans arguments. However, these codes were later be broken out further into separate sub-topics for a more granular analysis. Therefore, this new section was created to code for specific implicit arguments that were not about pro- or anti-trans topics themselves but appeared in conjunction with them. These arguments were re-coded with a single code per case, as these arguments were consistently about a singular topic. This approach provided some additional interesting data for analysis. A single case could therefore contain up to two implicit codes for any applicable anti-trans and pro-trans related topics, respectively. One paragraph was treated as the smallest possible unit of analysis, with contiguous paragraphs being coded as one code where present. The entire case was treated as the largest possible unit of analysis. Each case was then coded per this standardized sizing. The data were aggregated based on case count to determine the broad trends over time and by discursive actor. The absolute and relative percentages were compared.

The eighth section of the coding dictionary focused on the type(s) of evidence anti-trans actors utilized to support their claims. This section was called 'Section 8: Evidence Used By

Anti-Trans Actors' in Appendix 1 and was called 'Evidence 4' in QDA Miner. Different types of evidence were tracked, and every instance of a type of evidence was assigned a code. Cited and uncited statistics, cited and uncited studies, attributed and unattributed anecdotes, and/or relying on 'experts' were all tracked. Cited/attributed information was defined as any citational information that was clearly linked to a source. An example would be an outgoing link in reference to a quote. All uncited/unattributed information was defined as any information that was provided without any clear context or source. An example would be a quote without any indication as to its origin. This allowed for an examination of the types of evidence anti-trans actors provided to support their claims and to explore if certain type(s) of evidence were utilized more frequently over time and/or by discursive actor. One paragraph was treated as the smallest possible unit of analysis and contiguous paragraphs could be coded as one code where present. The entire case was treated as the largest possible unit of analysis. Each case was then coded per this standardized sizing. The data were aggregated based on case count to determine the broad trends over time and by discursive actor. The absolute and relative percentages were compared.

The ninth section of the coding dictionary was an internal coding process. It was called 'Section 9: Engagement Level of Cases' in Appendix 1 and was captured by the 'ENGAGE' and 'WHYENG' Variables in QDA Miner. On a scale from one to 10 – with one being the lowest, and 10 being the highest – a code was applied based on how interesting each case was from a 'relevance' perspective. One to four were considered uninteresting/not relevant; five to seven were average/somewhat relevant; eight to nine were excellent examples of the topic they are discussing; a 10 was an exemplary case that must be studied. Cases that ranked eight or higher needed to have an explanation in an additional open tab to provide a brief justification for the

ranking. This section was useful for internal tracking when drafting qualitative analyses of the quantitative macroanalyses. Each case received a single number rating.

The tenth and last section of the coding dictionary was the Varia section. This was called 'Section 10: Varia' in Appendix 1 and was called 'Varia 5' in QDA Miner. This category contained additional miscellaneous codes for different subjects of interest. The first section focused on comparisons between Canada and the United States, as the anti-trans discourse in the United States has been compared to Canada's own anti-trans movement.[46] One code per case was assigned, with the entire case being treated as the unit of analysis.

The second part of the Varia section was called 'Metaphorical Tone' and captured the overall 'tone' of how anti-trans discourse was presented and whether it was generally punitive or nurturant. This theoretical framework was based on Saurette and Gordon's[47] reworkings of Lakoff,[48] wherein the Strict Father and Nurturant Parent models were applied and coded to capture the overall tone via quantitative data collection (which is contained in Chapter 8). One paragraph was treated as the smallest possible unit of analysis and contiguous paragraphs could be coded as one code where present. The entire case was treated as the largest possible unit of analysis. Each case was then coded per this standardized sizing. The data were aggregated based on case count to determine the broader trends over time and by discursive actor. The absolute and relative percentages were compared.

The final part of the Varia section was the 'Broader Representational Politics Framings' section. During pre-reading, it was noted that various framings were utilized to direct the 'contours' of how anti-trans discourse was presented. Seven codes were created based on these

[46] Greaves, 2020; MacDonald, 2020; Christley, 2022; James, 2022l Montpetit, 2022; Perry, Gruenwald, and Scrivens, 2022
[47] Saurette and Gordon, 2015
[48] Lakoff, 1996

observations to determine how prevalent these framings were. These framings were operationalized based on Saurette and Gordon's work,[49] in which they described framings as the pre-structuring of context to direct the outcome of a given discourse. (This definition of framing is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8). Transphobia, sexism, heteronormativity, homonormativity, homophobia, white supremacy, and/or Christonormativity were all tracked. This analysis was placed in its own section since judgments about the presence/absence of these framings are more subjective than the previous characteristics discussed. One paragraph was treated as the smallest possible unit of analysis and contiguous paragraphs could be coded as one code where present. The entire case was treated as the largest possible unit of analysis. Each case was then coded per this standardized sizing. The data were aggregated based on case count to determine the broader trends over time and by discursive actor. The absolute and relative percentages were compared.

When conducting coding, three rounds were conducted (two initial coding sessions and a final coding session) to ensure internal reliability and validity. Later on in the process, another three rounds were conducted to ensure the 'Other Arguments' sections were also reliable and valid. The same coding process was undertaken for the codes. From there, macro-analyses were generated to analyze trends from the raw data. The findings were then calculated as relative percentages and qualitatively examined. These findings will be presented and discussed in the content chapters of this dissertation.

2.2.4: Methodology – Conclusion

An MM methodological approach has been described in this chapter. This methodological approach will shape the dissertation's research design in executing on an investigation of the

[49] Saurette and Gordon, 2015

research questions. Its strengths have been clearly described, and its potential shortcomings have been effectively mitigated. This research design is an optimal choice for gathering, analyzing, and discussing the results of the dataset both quantitatively and qualitatively. The interpretive framework, a custom coding dictionary, was also described in detail. Each section was described and it was explained how each section of coding was systematically applied to the dataset. By adhering to this methodological research design, I am confident that potential biases have been minimized in the coding process itself, providing empirical data that is replicable, reliable, and valid.

2.3: Chapter Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter, I set out to address two goals: to establish the theoretical framework for this dissertation, and to explain and justify my methodological approach. An FCDA theoretical framework was selected as the structure for this dissertation. I explained that this framework rests on the supposition that the study of speech is significant, and that political speech is a site for rich data to examine. Additionally, from an FCDA standpoint, examining the power dynamics at play is a central component. Language is described as political and social in nature, and the struggle of hegemonic and contested meaning of language shapes many aspects of modern politics. Discovering empirically 'what' anti-trans actors are discussing is an original contribution to the disciplines of trans studies and gender studies. This research will be conducted while maintaining a distinctly trans-affirmative and trans justice-oriented position which asserts that understanding anti-trans discourse is crucial to slowing, stopping, and reversing its normalization.

Secondly, the methodological approach – an MM research design – was discussed. An MM methodology provides a clear structure for generating empirical data which can be replicated and

established as reliable and valid with a robust qualitative approach to contextualizing those results. The various strengths of this methodological framework were discussed, and concerns regarding potential shortcomings were addressed and mitigated. The dataset was explained and justified; the process of collection, processing, quality control, and sampling were discussed. The interpretative framework, a custom coding dictionary, was also explained in detail and how it would systematically be applied to the dataset.

CHAPTER 3: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Have the research questions posed in Chapter 1 already been thoroughly addressed in the literature? What works already exist on this subject? This literature review will address these questions. The goal of this chapter is to examine the state of the literature and to validate the study of the questions posed in this dissertation as worthwhile, original contributions to the field of trans studies and gender studies. The first sub-section broadly examined trans-centric discourse analyses from Europe, Australia, and the US. This provided a foundation for understanding what anti-trans discourses exist elsewhere in the world. The key findings from these studies were synthesized, and gaps and/or questions that still existed in the literature were identified. The second sub-section examined Canadian trans-centric discourse analyses to determine what work has been done on this topic specifically. Based on the review of the literature, the focus on the research questions posed in this dissertation was clearly validated by identifying distinct gaps in the field of study that have not yet been thoroughly and comprehensively addressed. Finally, this chapter will conclude by discussing the merits of the selected research design with a discussion of key insights generated from the literature review.

3.1: Literature Review – Anti-Trans Critical Discourse Analyses in Europe, Australia, and the US

There are several discourse analysis studies on anti-trans discourses from various regions/countries. They critically examined aspects of political sessions, legislation, legacy media, social media, the advertisement industry, the entertainment industry, and more. The studies discussed in this section pertained to anti-trans discourses from Europe, the US, and Australia.

One of the most striking discoveries was that almost every study found evidence for the following broad discourse categories: bathroom bills; grooming/sexualization; freedom of

speech/parental rights; healthcare; biological essentialism/inherent physical differences; sports bans/fairness; overemphasis on scientific research; and 'gender-critical' feminism.

3.1.1: Discourse Type 1 – Bathroom Bills

'Bathroom bills' are pieces of legislation that require people to use public bathrooms that are in accordance with their 'biological sex'. In America, 19 states have laws in effect that restrict trans people's public bathroom access as of July 1, 2025.[50] These bills have been introduced in US legislatures in astounding numbers recently. Kulakowski[51] described how campaigns to overturn anti-discrimination policies strategically focused their campaigning on the premise of keeping 'men' out of women's bathrooms. These fears stem from cultural anxieties surrounding male sexual predators abusing these policies to access homosocial spaces and abuse women.[52] Per Kulakowski, "[i]n 2023 alone, eight states introduced bills which restrict access to public accommodation; four have been enacted".[53] According to Murib,[54] who analyzed 71 US bills introduced between 2014 and 2018, these bathroom bills generally take two forms: they legalize discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people existing in public spaces, or they make the act of being trans and/or gender non-conforming a criminal act. These bills were justified as 'safety measures', but per Osworth and Edlin, who examined bathroom policies in schools, "…bathrooms that are separated through biological and binary definitions of sex act as a panoptic form of surveillance within public schools—ultimately as another means to police gender expression and identity of youth".[55] Trans people were presumed to be predatory,

[50] LGBT Map, 2026
[51] Kulakowski, 2024
[52] Edell, 2026; Kulakowski, 2024
[53] Kulakowski, 2024, p. 66
[54] Murib, 2020; Edell, 2026
[55] Osworth and Edlin, 2025, p. 4

psychologically disturbed, sexually disordered, and/or malicious in their attempts to gain access to ‘forbidden’ spaces for personal sexual gratification.[56]

3.1.2: Discourse Type 2 – Grooming/Sexualization

A substantial number of sources found anti-trans discourses that conflated transness with (hyper)sexualization, especially in the form of grooming children for sexual abuse. Cazarin et al.[57] conducted an analysis of newspaper coverage in Spain and the US and found that self-described ‘anti-gender activists’ would claim to seek protection for ‘innocent children’ from ‘evil threats’. Ekström[58] analyzed the videos from YouTube channels run by Swedish far-right and adjacent actors to analyze the persuasive techniques they utilized. These YouTubers relied on discourses of protection as well, arguing that gender-affirming practices were ‘early sexualization’, priming children for grooming and victimization. These discourses relied upon cisheteronormative frameworks that positioned cisheterosexual childhood sexual development as ‘normal’, and all other forms of sexual development as ‘abnormal’. Ugo Laquièze[59] mapped 70 key tweets from the social media platform X (formerly known as Twitter) for digital anti-gender campaigns in France. This study found that actors utilized ‘save our children’ discourses, in which they portrayed trans people and drag queens as groomers. In Bower-Brown’s[60] study on anti-trans ‘safeguarding’ discourses pertaining to gender diversity in schools in the UK found that cisheterosexual ‘innocence’ was the presumed norm for children. Conservative groups mobilized to ‘protect’ this ‘innocence’ from the perceived intrusions into this delicate sexual development posed by LGBTQ+ education and curricula in schools. Evans[61] examined a dataset

[56] schilt and westbrook, 2015
[57] Cazarin et al., 2025
[58] Ekström, 2025
[59] Ugo Laquièze, 2025
[60] Bower-Brown, 2024
[61] Evans, 2024

of 557 tweets and 64 audiovisual files that contained queerphobic hate speech centered on predation libel. Evans found that these tweets contained accusations of pedophilia and grooming against trans people and drag queens, presuming that their 'non-normative' presentation/gender expression was also an indicator of sexual disorder.[62] Despite a lack of evidence[63] to support these claims, sexual predation of children was a pervasive discourse.

3.1.3: Discourse Type 3 – Freedom of Speech/Parental Rights

Anti-trans discourses pertaining to human/civil rights were commonplace. These often presented in two forms. Trans rights (such as anti-discrimination laws, legal protections for accessing healthcare, etc.) were portrayed as being in opposition to or infringing upon freedom of speech/expression. Or, anti-trans discourses argued that 'parental rights' superseded the rights of trans children and youth. The first type of argument posited that the language in anti-discrimination bills, laws, and policies infringed upon the right of freedom of speech/expression.[64] This type of argument was also portrayed as a form of censorship that prevented individuals, groups, and organizations from safely engaging in controversial discussions without fear of legal and/or governmental reprisal. The second type of argument was often intertwined with the first. This type of argument focused on 'parental rights'. These discourses portrayed school boards and local/national governments as hiding children's activities from parents – specifically, hiding the child's decision to self-identity as trans without informing the parents.[65] This was portrayed as a violation of 'parental rights', or the right of parents to make decisions for their children without outside interference. This discourse was often

[62] Evans, 2024
[63] schilt and westbrook, 2015
[64] Montiel-McMann, 2023; Evans, 2024
[65] Murib, 2020; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026

paternalistic and positioned parents as authorities while discrediting children, teachers, school board members, doctors, psychologists, childcare development specialists, and pro-trans activists as un(der)qualified and/or secondary in their input. 'Parental rights' discourses typically reinforced power relations of dominance and objectification[66] that fostered property-like paradigms of parental ownership over children.[67]

3.1.4: Discourse Type 4 – Healthcare

Healthcare was a common thread of anti-trans discourse. These discourses were highly critical and/or skeptical of trans healthcare, including gender-affirmative care. These discourses described gender-affirmative care as 'dangerous', 'medically unnecessary', 'experimental/untested', and/or a form of medically sanctioned 'mutilation'.[68] These discourses presented a few strands of argumentation in their rejection of trans healthcare. Firstly, these discourses portrayed surgical and hormonal treatments as dangerous for interfering with 'normative' childhood sexual development. Children were conceptualized as cisgender and heterosexual within this framework, and major interventions were framed as 'causing' a change toward transness/queerness, which was 'unnatural'. These treatments were therefore discussed as unnecessary at best, and child abuse at worst. Preoccupations with children's future reproductive capabilities was another strand of argumentation; gender-affirmative care can include permanent medical sterilization, which generated cultural anxieties around the future cisheteronormative reproductive capabilities of children's bodies. Given that reproductive roles are heavily sexed/gendered and tied to sex/gender roles, this 'disruption' not only violates these roles, but

[66] Murib, 2020; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026
[67] Ashley, 2024
[68] Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; Scott, 2026

also limits the reproductive capabilities of future citizens to physically and culturally perpetuate these norms. This has recently culminated in discussions pertaining to 'rapid-onset gender dysphoria' (ROGD), transness as a 'social contagion', and/or discussions about detransition rates. ROGD and/or transness as a 'social contagion' portrays transness as a choice (positioned against the 'biological reality' of one's sex), popular among children and youth who were experiencing peer pressure, seeking community, and/or were experiencing mental health difficulties.[69] This choice was often portrayed as made impulsively and without any prior 'warning signs' as to the child's transness. Parental distress was often highlighted in these discourses as the focal point and source of tension/anxiety, such as in the Australian documentary on 'the trans craze' Desjardins and Hepburn discussed in their study.[70] Another topic of medical anti-trans discourse was detransition. Detransition can be defined as "the process of stopping, reversing, or changing one's previous transition process".[71] Detransition was often tied to cultural anxieties pertaining to reproductive capability. Women who once identified as trans were typically highlighted to illustrate the 'damage' permitting children and youth to transition can cause; these women were often medically sterilized and could not naturally reproduce as a result of receiving gender-affirmative care. Detransition was portrayed through this lens of paternalistic 'concern' and 'worry' regarding the (cisheteronormative) reproductive capabilities of trans children and youth as they grew older and the risk it posed to leaving them with lifelong regret.

[69] Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Ekström, 2025; Scott, 2026
[70] Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024
[71] Kinney, 2025, p. 61

3.1.5: Discourse Type 5 – Biological Essentialism/Inherent Physical Differences

Perhaps one of the most pervasive forms of discourse was the 'biological essentialism/inherent physical differences' paradigm that guided many of the logics associated with anti-trans discourse. This foundational form of discourse argued that 'biological sex' was inherently gendered, fixed and unchanging. It also argued that (cisgender) men and women were inherently physically distinct from each other, and that (cisgender) men were physically superior to (cisgender) women.[72] These anti-trans discourses were based on the justification that if sex was fixed, unchanging, and impossible to alter, then by necessity there were particular cultural, legislative, and biomedical 'realities' that could not be ignored. This line of argumentation was often interwoven with paternalistic discourses of 'care' and 'concern' for women's rights (which will be discussed in more detail in Discourse Types 6 and 8) by framing (cisgender) men's 'inherent physical dominance' as dangerous. It was also utilized to illustrate and justify the rejection of trans women from women's spaces (such as prisons, rape crisis centres, sport, and gendered public washrooms) due to these inherent 'biological differences'. Specific discourses that relied upon this paradigm will be discussed in greater detail below.

3.1.6: Discourse Type 6 – Sports Bans/Fairness

Sports bans are decisions by sports governing bodies, school boards, governments, and other authoritative organizations to ban trans people from participating alongside cisgender competitors. These bans typically focused on banning trans women from participating in women's sports categories.[73] These arguments were often couched in the 'biological sex'

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[72] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

[73] Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; Scott, 2026

paradigm and emphasized ‘inherent physical differences’ between (cisgender) men and women as justification. These governing bodies often cited biomedical research that reified cisheteronormative and white supremacist[74] presumptions about the human body, thereby ranking them against hierarchies of ‘normativity’ and ‘biological determinism’. Male athletes were assumed to be stronger, faster, and more capable than female athletes, which was attributed to experiencing a ‘male puberty’. This was often a condition for banning trans women from participating in women’s sports. Moreover, preoccupations with having ‘male and female’ athletes sharing homosocial spaces such as changing rooms and public washrooms raised ‘concerns’ regarding the risk of sexual assault against (cisgender) women.

3.1.7: Discourse Type 7 – Emphasis on Scientific Research

The justification for many of these anti-trans discourses relied upon referencing scientific knowledge. These discourses readily engaged with scientific information that supported the ‘biological sex’ paradigm.[75] Scientific information that reified the sex/gender binary was presented as justification for portraying ‘biology’ as the ultimate determinant of gender. Rand[76] reported on the leaked emails between prominent US organizations that *Mother Jones*[77] had obtained as evidence of this strategic focus on scientific research. These emails revealed a collaborative effort to craft language that would be featured in anti-trans state legislation and manufacture pseudoscientific evidence to justify it, including the creation of papers that supported the apparent ‘biological realities’ and ‘inherent physical differences’ between the sexes. These scientific endeavours necessitated the erasure of intersex people and sexual

[74] Jakubowska, 2024
[75] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026
[76] Rand, 2025
[77] Pauly, 2023; Zoledziowski, 2023

ambiguity from the discussion,[78] and reinforced concepts such as the sexed brain as 'scientific fact'. By referring to scientific research, anti-trans actors framed their arguments within the authority of objectivity, scientific and scholarly knowledge, and intellectual (and moral) superiority.

3.1.8: Discourse Type 8 – 'Gender-Critical' Feminism

'Gender-critical feminism' has become a prolific transnational movement that articulates anti-trans discourse by discussing feminist language and concepts. 'Gender-critical' feminism is a movement of feminists who subscribe to trans-exclusionary feminist paradigms. Most notably, these groups posit that centering 'gender' as a political axis of organizing detracts from the importance of feminist mobilization centered on sex-based oppression.[79] 'Gender-critical' feminism portrayed sexual difference as the source of (cisgender) women's oppression. Trans women were portrayed as interlopers, liars/deceivers, attempted rapists, predators, and/or imitators of 'true' womanhood. Trans rights were often situated as superseding women's rights, which were fragile and unstable; if efforts to support trans people were made, then (cisgender) women would suffer. This group couched their arguments in feminist language to portray their movement(s) as supportive of women's rights and dichotomously framed trans rights as misogynistic toward (cisgender) women.

3.1.9: Discourse Implications

This examination of the literature regarding anti-trans discourses from European, Australian, and American perspectives was insightful for understanding the transnational anti-

[78] Rippon, 2019; Orr, 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Arraiza Zabalegui, 2024
[79] Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

trans movement. These studies employed CDA (critical discourse analysis) and studied datasets of national newspapers, social media accounts, audiovisual media, legislators' discursive strategies, and other sociocultural and legal sources for anti-trans discourses.

However, they still contained some critical gaps relevant to this dissertation's main line of investigation. While Canada was mentioned in a few studies for comparative purposes,[80] none of the sources discussed above focused on anti-trans discourse in Canada as the primary topic of study. Moreover, some studies' datasets were bound within narrow time windows,[81] representing a sample size that spanned months or a few years. These contributions to tracking anti-trans discourses are undoubtedly needed to understand when, how, and under what circumstances anti-trans discourse becomes normalized. However, more information is needed in tracking these discourses longitudinally to contextualize this recent transnational shift. Additionally, while some sources examined a variety of actors (such as politicians, newspapers, and social media accounts),[82] the majority tended to focus their studies on one type of discursive actor, or a cluster of similar discursive actors. This made direct comparisons between different types of discursive actors difficult without additional literature for reference material. Lastly, some sources had substantial datasets to examine anti-trans discourses;[83] however, these studies tended to focus on short-form social media contents.[84] Social media is an increasingly prevalent sector of public life that informs sociocultural trends, policy, and law. That being said, very few studies had substantial datasets (i.e., 500+ cases) of mainstream print media and/or transcripts of legislators' debates, which are typically more substantial in length on average. Lastly, this body of literature

[80] Jakubowska, 2024; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026
[81] Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Osworth and Eldin, 2025
[82] Rand, 2025; McLoughlin, 2026
[83] McLoughlin, 2026
[84] Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Ekström, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025

is still quite small; more discourse analysis studies on anti-trans discourse are needed to provide greater nuance.

Below, the most directly applicable studies that have been conducted on anti-trans discourses in the Canadian cultural context will be examined.

3.2: Literature Review – Anti-Trans Critical Discourses in the Canadian Cultural Context

The previously discussed studies have been insightful for understanding the prominent anti-trans discourses across Europe, Australia, and the US. But what about Canada? This section of the literature review will examine CDA studies conducted in the Canadian cultural context on anti-trans discourses. This list of studies is noticeably short; at the time of writing this dissertation, only two studies whose contents examined anti-trans discourses in Canada by employing CDA were found. This demonstrates a clear gap in the literature that this dissertation will address. Below, these sources and their findings will be examined in detail.

3.2.1: Canadian Anti-Trans Critical Discourse Analysis Studies

The literature of Canadian discourse analyses that examine political speech pertaining to trans people/trans rights/transness addressed a variety of topics. These topics included discussion of medical discourses and sociocultural discourses;[85] media representations of parental and trans youth advocacy;[86] childhood development and teaching children about gender variance;[87] and the utilization of trans people in political speech to advance partisan agendas.[88] These discourse analyses are important contributions to the broader body of literature that examines how trans people/trans rights/transness are represented in political speech within Canada. However, studies that specifically examined *anti-trans discourses* in Canada were scarce.

[85] Hitomi, 2018; Dominic, 2021
[86] Dyer et al., 2025
[87] Malins, 2017; Herriot and Callaghan, 2018
[88] Dangoisse and Perdomo, 2020

In searching for works that analyzed anti-trans discourses in Canada utilizing a CDA methodology, only two were found: Anderson et al.'s[89] study and Vipond and Dietzel's[90] study. These studies will be discussed in detail to determine what anti-trans discourses in Canada these scholars have noted in their works.

Anderson et al.'s work examined the recent legislative changes brought about by Alberta's Bills 26, 27, and 29. These bills were passed under Premier Danielle Smith's United Conservative Party (UCP) between 2024 and 2025. These bills have rolled back trans rights in the arenas of health, education, and sport. They limit the usage of different names and pronouns to that which children have been assigned at birth in scholastic settings (unless parental consent has been obtained). These bills also limit trans children and youth's access to gender-affirmative care before the age of 16 (in the case of hormone therapy) and/or 18 (in the case of surgical intervention). Anderson et al. studied how these education policy discourses in Alberta were situated in a broader landscape of anti-trans policymaking via the announcements for these bills. These policymaking decisions, they argue, are demonstrative of a resurgence in movements that seek to position children as parental property.[91] They examined policy announcements and early responses via a CDA research design to determine how parental rights-based legislation contradicted the rights of children in Alberta, especially in relation to the United Nations' *Resolution on the Rights of the Child.*[92]

'Parental rights' movements in Alberta have become shaped by the colonization of neoliberal rhetoric regarding a 'free' society; the (nuclear, heterosexual, cisgender) family unit is

[89] Anderson et al., 2025
[90] Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[91] Ashley, 2024
[92] UN General Assembly. (1990). Resolution on the rights of the child (A/RES/44/25). UN General Assembly. (2023). Rights of the child (A/RES/78/187).

often portrayed as a ‘last bastion’ of organizing in the realm of conservative parenthood and politics. ‘Parental rights’ paradigms approached from this perspective assert parents posses primary authority over their children, and that they should have authority over the kind of education their children receive. These groups criticize the UN’s *Resolution on the Rights of the Child* as interfering with parental authority, and their ability to instill cisheteronormative values into their children. As Anderson et al. say, “[t]he extent to which a parent has rights over their child’s gender or sexual orientation remains at the crux of parental rights advocacy in Canada”.[93] Due to a common misconception that education on LGBTQ+ topics is the same as explicit instruction on sexual acts and activities, many ‘concerned parents’ groups have mobilized in support of the UCP’s anti-trans legislation.

Of the policy announcements and responses they examined, Anderson et al. found several anti-trans discourses at play. One of the most prevalent type of discourse underscoring Smith’s announcements were the reification of biological essentialism. The ‘biological sex’ paradigm was presented as objective scientific fact when describing children’s and youths’ trans bodies. The announcement also positioned discussions of gender identity as a ‘sensitive’, ‘controversial’, and/or ‘divisive’ topics. This distanced discussions about the rights of trans children and youth from their lived experiences and decontextualized the discussion into something unrelated to trans people. Moreover, the employment of the term ‘child’ or ‘children’ was a discursive strategy that reinforced notions of cisheteronormative ‘childhood innocence’ and positioned LGBTQ+ discussions as ‘adult’ in nature; therefore, children ought to be ‘protected’ from this ‘divisive’ topic. The announcement also alluded to the ‘social contagion’ theory of transness, such as ROGD, which was presented as a temporary ‘change’ brought on by puberty and peer

[93] Anderson et al., 2025, p. 55

pressure. There was also a distinct pro-natalist focus in justifying the policy decision by centering the preservation of trans children's and youths' ability to reproduce in the future by 'refusing to take away their options'. Overall, these anti-trans discourses mirrored many of the persuasive techniques discussed in the studies based in Europe, Australia, and the US.

The second source comes from Vipond and Dietzel. They conducted interviews with 56 participants from the LGBTQ+ community. The purpose of this study was to critically examine how discourses of 'protecting children' were weaponized against trans people/trans rights in Canada. They conducted their interviews via Zoom and email and then utilized a CDA framework to examine their findings. Three major themes emerged: that 'protecting children' discourses were couched in assumptions that trans people were pedophiles and/or sexually disordered; that trans rights were framed as 'gender ideology', 'indoctrination', and/or 'propaganda'; and lastly, that trans rights posed a 'threat' to 'parental rights'. Interviewees reported that the discourse of 'protecting children' was linked to accusations of trans people being pedophiles, grooming children, and/or abusing them sexually. As Vipond and Dietzel stated, "[i]nflammatory and stigmatising language, including ableist tropes, was used to suggest that trans people are mentally ill, immoral, and putting children in danger or causing them harm by virtue of being trans".[94] These discourses were presented in a framework of an ethics of care and a duty to protect children from harm. Another major theme was participants' reports on transness being portrayed as 'gender ideology' and/or 'propaganda' aimed at children. 'Gender ideology' was discussed as false, especially when positioned against 'biological sex' and/or 'science' and maliciously targeted at children to 'turn' them trans. Lastly, the third major theme from this study positioned 'protecting children' as synonymous with protecting 'parental rights'.

[94] Vipond and Dietzel, 2026, p. 8

This discourse argued that trans-inclusive education ought to be rejected on the basis that parents are the ultimate authorities, arbiters, and gatekeepers as to what their children should be taught and exposed to in the public sphere. These discourses positioned parents as uniquely qualified to make decisions about their children, unlike professionals (such as teachers or doctors) or state institutions (such as schools and health agencies).

These two studies are vital pieces for contextualizing this dissertation in relation to the existing literature. What is immediately apparent is that there is currently very little published on this subject. While both studies employ clear methodical frameworks for examining their datasets, they are small-scale studies with few types of discursive actors – a curated selection of policy announcements and 56 interviews of LGBTQ+ people, respectively – and they were not longitudinal in nature, which would effectively illustrate the extent to which anti-trans discourses have proliferated in Canada.

3.3: Literature Review – Validation of Research Questions

In reviewing the state of the literature regarding discourse analyses of anti-trans discourse in Canada, it was discovered that few studies currently exist (or are at least publicly available), and these studies, while valuable interventions into elements of anti-trans discourse in Canada, do not in their totality concretely, robustly, and thoroughly answer the following research questions:

1. What are the main topics, positions and evidence discussed in anti-trans discourse in Canada?
2. What are the explicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
3. What are the implicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
4. What metaphorical tones do anti-trans actors employ?

5. What broader representational political framings to anti-trans actors employ?
6. What contemporary dog whistles do anti-trans actors employ?
7. Are there any differences in the above elements over time and/or between actors?

To that end, this dissertation's intervention will evidently provide much-needed data on the state of anti-trans discourses in Canada found in print media and mainstream politics. Answering these research questions will generate replicable, reliable, and valid data for study. This dissertation has rigorously validated this distinct empirical gap and is structured to effectively address it via the results discussed in the proceeding content chapters. This study justifies its scope by constructing a rigorous theoretical framework and complementary methodological approach to gather, analyze, code, and examine macro-analyses via qualitative discussions. This design will capture many facets of anti-trans discourse in Canadian media and politics. This dissertation consequently stands as a significant contribution to the disciplines of trans studies and gender studies, offering original insights that will shape the ongoing conversations from theoretical implications to practical applications.

3.4: Literature Review – Conclusion

This literature review examined two broad queries: to determine what discourse analysis studies currently exist on anti-trans discourse, broadly speaking; and secondly, what discourse analysis studies currently exist on anti-trans discourse in Canada specifically. The purpose of this literature review was to establish the validity of the research questions and to ensure that this dissertation would be making an original and important contribution. To answer the first question, studies of discourse analyses based in Europe, Australia, and the US were examined. This section analyzed the findings from various studies. Those studies examined a variety of social media websites, legislative processes, educational initiatives, and newspaper articles. The

studies were synthesized based on the overarching thematic discourses they contained. These studies were useful for establishing a broad understanding of what anti-trans discourses currently exist transnationally. However, it was noted that these studies had several limitations, such as not being longitudinal in scope; focusing on one kind of discursive actor; having limited datasets; focusing on short-form media; and the totality of studies was quite small, making it difficult to draw concrete conclusions about anti-trans discourse globally.

When examining Canada-specific discourse analyses, the pool of available sources was even smaller. This limited literature is indicative of the research gap on anti-trans discourse in Canada. Moreover, these studies were also limited in longitudinal scope, focused on one type of discursive actor, and had limited datasets. Their insights into facets of anti-trans discourse in Canada are important; overall, however, this dissertation's contribution as a robust, sustained, longitudinal study of anti-trans discourses using an MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis) research design is readily apparent. By addressing the research questions, this dissertation will provide much-needed empirical data as to the shape and scope of the anti-trans backlash in Canada.

3.5: Chapter Conclusion

The state of the literature regarding critical discourse studies done on anti-trans discourse was examined. Studies on anti-trans discourses from Europe, Australia, and the US were analyzed and synthesized to establish what has been done and what research questions have been thoroughly and comprehensively addressed. It was noted that the literature overall was not robust in terms of sheer numbers, and several gaps and questions were left unanswered. The few available Canada-specific discourse analyses studies were also examined. They also had similar limitations as the other studies. This literature review validated that the research questions have

not yet been conclusively addressed, and that this dissertation will provide original data and will serve as an important contribution to the literature.

With these goals thoroughly addressed, the analytical tools, theoretical structure, methodological approach, and justification for this dissertation have all been well established. In the following chapters, the findings will be presented, and the results will be discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 4: DISTRIBUTION OF CASES, POSITIONS, AND TYPES OF EVIDENCE

Abstract

This chapter examines the distribution of cases, positions, and type(s) of evidence utilized by anti-trans actors in Canada. The dataset was examined via MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis). Sourcing various newspapers, think tanks, right-wing media outlets, and Hansard transcripts, cases were collected between January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. Utilizing a custom coding dictionary and QDA Miner, a macro-analysis was generated and then qualitatively examined.

Three notable findings emerged: 1) There has been a sharp explosive increase in anti-trans discourse in the 2020s compared to earlier decades, especially in 2023; 2) A strong increase in explicitly anti-trans stances and fewer implicit and/or mixed stances over time and across actor were in evidence; and finally, 3) The ubiquitous use of attributed anecdotes were utilized to support/legitimate anti-trans claims.

4.1: Introduction

From 2019 onward, instances of anti-trans discourses have surged in Canadian news, politics, and legislative processes. Anti-trans actors have politicized discourses related to trans rights and/or transness and have presented a variety of evidence to support their claims.

This chapter examines the distribution of cases, the dominant positions articulated therein, and the type(s) of evidence utilized to support trans-hostile claims. 500 cases were selected and examined from Canadian newspapers, Hansard transcripts, think tanks, and right-wing media outlets. A custom coding dictionary was created in QDA Miner to code these sources. A systematic MM (mixed methods) research design was implemented to map and survey anti-trans

rhetoric in Canada over an extended period, from January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. The results of these findings are presented below.

4.2: Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Chapter Structure

The research questions this chapter will answer are as follows:

1. What is the distribution of cases of anti-trans rhetoric by time period and by actor?
2. What are the dominant positions?
3. What type(s) of evidence is/are used to support anti-trans claims?

The objectives of this chapter are to determine the distribution of cases of anti-trans discourse, the dominant positions in Canadian discourse on trans rights/transness, and what type(s) of evidence anti-trans actors utilized to support their claims.

It was anticipated that there would be a shift in focus over time and across actor groupings. It was expected that there would be a minimal presence of cases from the early 2000s, as the literature[95] suggested a lack of robust sociocultural and/or legal discourses pertaining to trans people/transness/trans rights in mainstream media or politics during this time. A steady growth of anti-trans discourse in the 2010s was expected as trans rights became more widely discussed among the mainstream media and general public. Yet another increase in anti-trans discourse was expected to take place in the 2020s as the anti-trans backlash proliferated. Right-wing media outlet actors were expected to have the highest number of cases containing anti-trans discourse, as this grouping often discussed controversial and/or politicized topics with great frequency.

Additionally, it was hypothesized that the dominant positions toward trans people would also shift over time and by actor. A greater presence of mixed positions in the 2000s and 2010s was expected; more explicitly anti-trans positions in the 2020s were expected. Right-wing media

[95] Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005; Stryker and Whittle, 2006; Stryker and Aizura, 2013; Stryker and Blackston, 2023

outlets and think tank groupings were anticipated to have some of the highest numbers of explicitly anti-trans positions.

It was hypothesized that the type(s) of evidence presented by anti-trans actors would focus on citing statistics and/or attributed anecdotes across the decades and would increase sharply during the 2020s.[96] Politicians and newspapers were expected to rely upon cited statistics the most, whereas think tanks and right-wing media outlets were expected to utilize anecdotes (attributed and unattributed) more frequently than other actors.

This chapter will explore these questions and hypotheses; the findings will be presented in the order set out below.

In section 4.3, an overview of the overall distribution – both over time and between various types of actors – of the cases that made up the dataset will be presented. These results give a clear sense of the relative intensity of anti-trans discourse in broader Canadian political discussion over time, as well as the distribution of anti-trans discourse across different types of discursive actor.

In sections 4.4 and 4.5, respectively, the types of positions that anti-trans actors articulated and the type(s) of evidence they provided substantiate their positions will be presented. These results are provided at both an overall level and broken down by time period and by discursive actor.

In sections 4.3 through 4.5, the most important findings will be presented with short explanations as to why they are worth noting. A more robust discussion of the broader potential implications of these findings will be provided at the chapter conclusion, as it was determined that providing a more holistic approach first was appropriate to discuss the results after the

[96] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

concrete findings have been demonstrated. As such, the conclusion section contains: (i) a compressed synthesis of the main findings of sections 4.3 through 4.5, and (ii) a discussion of the broader implications of these findings are provided.

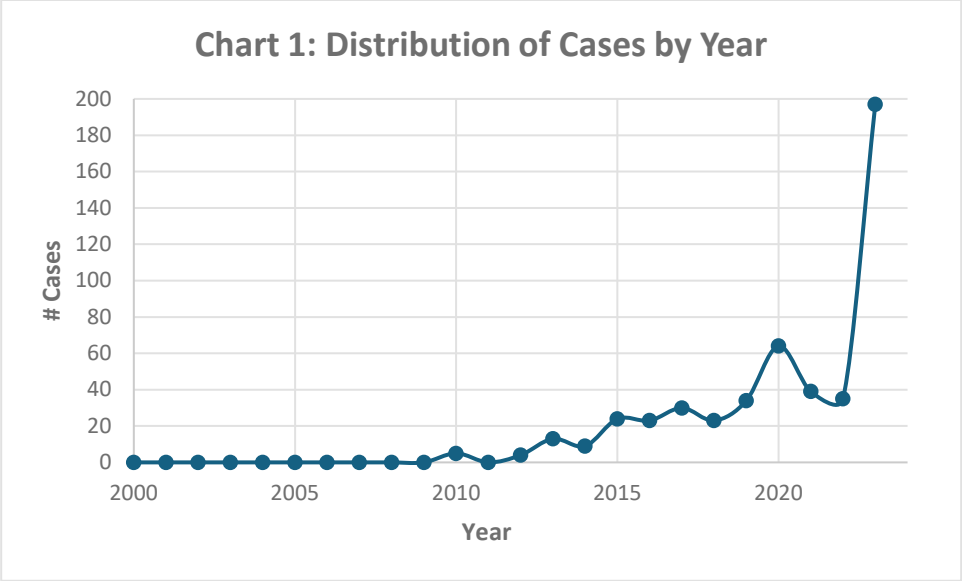
4.3: Distribution of Cases

While observers and participants have engaged in considerable speculation about the quantity, growth and source of anti-trans discourse in Canada, there has been virtually no robust study of those elements in the existing literature. The first part of this project therefore examined how frequent anti-trans discourse was in Canadian political discourse from 2000 to 2023 and how that discourse was distributed across various sources (i.e., in legacy media, the think tank sphere, and the political realm). The dataset was analyzed overall, and two charts were generated that that showed the overall distribution of cases according to these two variables.

4.3.1: Distribution of Cases by Year (2000-2023)

How frequent has anti-trans discourse in Canada been over time? Has it been relatively consistent? Has there been gradual growth or decline? Have there been ebbs and flows? The following chart answers these questions by displaying the distribution of the 500 cases year-by-year to track changes in case concentration over time.

The preliminary hypotheses were: A relative absence was expected in the 2000s. A steady increase was expected in the 2010s, as awareness of trans people/transness/trans rights grew. In the 2020s, a sharp yet steady spike was expected as discussions of anti-trans discourse became more widespread.



Three salient findings emerged from this chart. The first was that, from 2000 to 2009, there were zero cases that fit the selection criteria for this dissertation, and thus no cases from this decade were included in the analysis. The second finding was that from 2010 to 2019, there was a general trend of steady, if slight, growth. Lastly, the third finding was that, while there have been some fluctuations in an overall trend of growth from year to year, extreme and uncharacteristic growth from 2022 to 2023 was evident. It is suspected that this explosive growth was a backlash response to the previous decade's pro-trans shift in politics and legislation.[97]

While these three findings are relatively in line with the hypotheses listed above, the findings of each decade all depart notably from my expectations. For example, the fact that not a single anti-trans case of discourse between 2000 and 2009 fit the selection criteria fundamentally highlights the degree to which anti-trans discourse in Canadian politics and media is a relatively recent phenomenon. This, of course, is very different than saying that anti-trans policies or positions is a very recent phenomenon. Rather, the relatively recent emergence of anti-trans

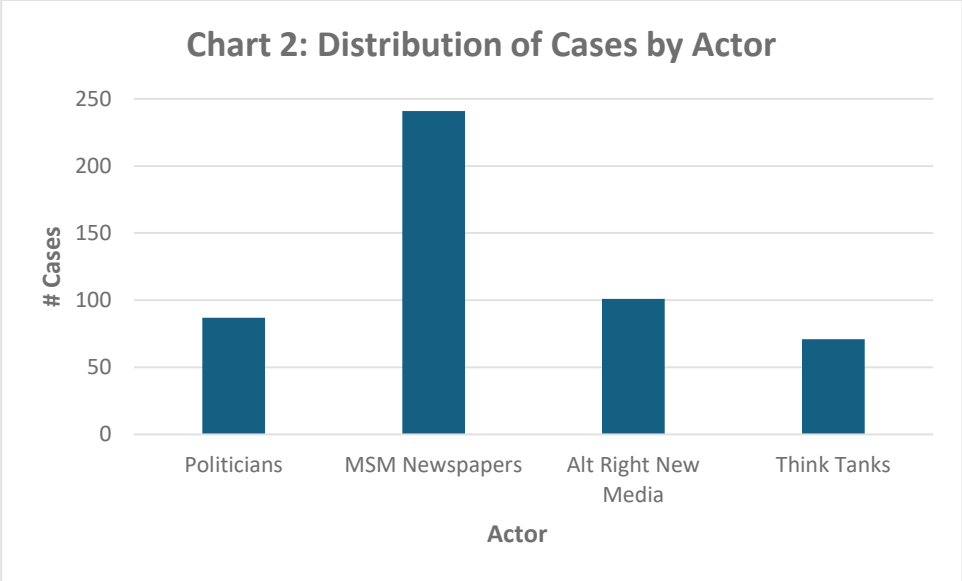
[97] Steinmetz, 2014; Turner, 2023; Facts, stats and WAGE's impact - Government of Canada, 2025

discourse is much more likely to be a sign of it being a reaction to more mainstream pro-trans rights discourse and policies – elements which began to gain more visibility in the 2010s and beyond. Moreover, while there was a rise of anti-trans discourse between 2010-2022, it was less significant than expected. Finally, the explosion in 2023, and to a lesser degree the spike in 2020, was much greater than anticipated – again, suggesting that the salience and intensity of this discourse is likely highly linked to specific events and actors (not only in Canada, but perhaps also in the US and elsewhere).[98] This, of course, leads to questions about the intensity and frequency of anti-trans discourse in 2024, 2025, and 2025 (was 2023 an outlier year, or has anti-trans discourse now vaulted to a new level as its status quo?) – questions which will likely be examined in the coming years.

4.3.2: Distribution of Cases by Actor

There were similar questions to consider regarding the various types of actors participating in anti-trans discourse. How frequently does each discursive type of actor engage in anti-trans discourse in Canada? Have they all produced relatively equal amounts of anti-trans discourse? Have there been one or more actors who have produced the bulk of it? Four types of key actors were identified in the production/dissemination anti-trans discourse in Canada: Politicians, MSM Newspapers, Think Tanks, and Alt-Right New Media. It was hypothesized that the largest contribution of cases to emerge from MSM Newspapers and Alt-Right New Media sources; that Politicians would be the third largest, and that Think Tanks would be the smallest category. The following chart answers these questions by displaying the distribution of cases in the dataset by actor.

[98] Steinmetz, 2014; LGBT Map, 2026



Two findings were immediately apparent: Firstly, that MSM Newspapers were the main producer/disseminator of anti-trans discourse compared to other actor groupings. Secondly, it is intriguing that, given this dissertation's methodology, Politicians, Think Tanks, and Alt-Right New Media were all roughly comparable in the overall breakdown of cases when distributed by actor.

Contextually, discovering that Politicians, Think Tanks, and Alt-Right New Media contained similar case counts was surprising. A stronger quantitative presence for Alt-Right New Media was expected given qualitative observations of intense and memorable preoccupations with anti-trans discourse in-text.

4.4: Positions

This section asks questions regarding the distribution of stances (or positions) articulated in the dataset. Do anti-trans actors express anti-trans stances explicitly or implicitly? Which do they tend to favour? Are mixed (elements of pro- and anti-trans discourse) stances ever present? If so, to what degree? Have there been changes in the presence of explicit, implicit, and/or mixed positions over time? Are there differences between discursive actors? These questions will be

answered here. Below, the position of every case in the dataset has been analyzed. This analysis was conducted for the overall distribution of cases, by time period, and by actor.

4.4.1: Distribution of Dominant Positions

This sub-section is dedicated to examining the breakdown of the overall distribution of positions present in the dataset. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, three main types of positions were identified; these positions defined the Positions coding. As such, when identifying a case as having one of three positions present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following:

- YES 1: Strongly/explicitly supports ANTI trans stance and/or critiques PRO trans stance.
- YES 2: Mildly/implicitly supports ANTI trans stance and/or critiques PRO trans stance.
- MIXED: Mixed stances regarding ANTI trans views and/or critiques PRO trans views, or vice versa.

Two additional open tab sections that corresponded with this selection of positions were created: POSIT2 and POSIT3. They were structured in the following manner:

1. What is the position? [POSIT2 – Open tab. Describe briefly]
2. What is an example that exemplifies this case's position? [POSIT3 – Open tab. Describe briefly, quotation sampling here]

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Most cases would contain a YES 1 (explicitly anti-trans) position.
- YES 2 (implicitly anti-trans) and MIXED (elements of pro- and anti-trans stances) would be present in moderate numbers.
- The presence of YES 1 positions would increase over time as the anti-trans backlash gained momentum.
- YES 2 and MIXED positions would decrease over time as expressions of anti-trans rhetoric 'hardened' over time.
- The presence of YES 1 would be strongly present across all actors and especially prevalent in Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media.

What findings emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table 4.4.1a – Positions by Case		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
YES 1	394	79%
YES 2	72	14%
MIXED	34	7%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

The findings have been highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were interesting due to their prominence were highlighted in green; findings that were interesting due to their absence were highlighted in red; findings that were interesting for other reasons were highlighted in yellow; and any findings that were in line with the hypotheses were left uncoloured (white).

Just as expected, YES 1 positions comprised the majority of the dataset. It seems that when anti-trans actors articulated anti-trans discourse, they were usually explicit/overt in their articulations. YES 2 and MIXED were also present, but to much smaller degrees; this was also to be expected.

Table 4.4.1b – Positions by Time Period							
		2000-2009		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Cases Totals	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**0**	**0%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100%**
YES 1	394	0	0%	115	70%	279	83%
YES 2	72	0	0%	31	19%	41	12%
MIXED	34	0	0%	19	12%	15	4%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were stable and expected were highlighted in blue; findings that were stable and interesting were highlighted in yellow; findings with significant increases were highlighted in green; findings with significance decreases were highlighted in red.

As anticipated, the presence of YES 1 positions increased over time. YES 2 and MIXED both decreased over time, especially the latter. When articulating anti-trans views, it seems that implicit messaging became less prevalent in the 2020s compared to the 2010s. Mixed cases that contained elements of pro- and anti-trans positions became rarer over time as well. Anti-trans discourse, it seems, has indeed 'hardened' in its articulations over time.

Table 4.4.1c – Positions by Actor

	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
YES 1	54	62%	185	77%	57	80%	98	97%
YES 2	32	37%	23	10%	14	20%	3	3%
MIXED	1	1%	33	14%	0	0%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that had minimal (but expected) variation were highlighted in blue; findings that had minimal (but interesting) variations were highlighted in yellow; findings with significantly higher-than-average variation were highlighted in green; findings with significantly lower-than-average variation were highlighted in red. Actors were compared via two points of cross-referencing: firstly, the

findings were examined by comparing the relative frequencies of different actors against their corresponding overall relative percentage. Secondly, the findings were examined *between* actors for comparative purposes.

Politicians had a higher-than-average relative percentage for YES 2 compared to other actors. This grouping utilized more dissembling and/or subtle language to convey anti-trans discourse, such as couching discussions in language of 'concern' regarding various medical, sociocultural, and political topics.

MSM Newspapers had a higher-than-average relative percentage for MIXED compared to other actors. This was unsurprising, as MSM Newspapers reported on topics from a variety of sociopolitical perspectives, with some authors/interviewees/op-ed writers/etc. reporting on current events containing both pro- and anti-trans discourse.

Think Tanks had a higher-than-average relative percentage for YES 2, which was also expected. As with Politicians, Think Tanks presented anti-trans discourses through subtler and more implicit lenses, such as expressing 'concern' for interest groups (i.e., cisgender women and children) interacting with trans people.

Alt-Right New Media had a higher-than-average relative percentage for YES 1, which was expected. This grouping was the most explicitly forthcoming in articulating anti-trans positionalities. Their positions were cohesively 'hardened' in their articulations of anti-trans discourse.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, there were two actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: YES 1 from Politicians and YES 2 from Alt-Right New Media.

4.5: Evidence

This section is dedicated to examining the breakdown of type(s) of evidence that anti-trans actors utilized to support their claims. What type(s) of evidence were most utilized? What type(s) of evidence are most common in certain time periods and/or among certain types of actors? This section will answer these questions. Below, the type(s) of evidence present in every case of the dataset were analyzed. This analysis was conducted for the overall distribution of cases, by time period, and by actor.

4.5.1: Distribution of Types of Evidence

The breakdown of the overall distribution of type(s) of evidence present in the dataset was conducted below. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, seven types of potential evidence were identified; these codes defined the Evidence category. As such, when a case was identified as having any or all these seven types of evidence present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following:

1. Cited Statistics: Does the case contain cited statistics, percentages, or other quantitative/numerical data to support the presented arguments/narratives?
2. Uncited Statistics: Does the case contain uncited statistics, percentages, or other quantitative/numerical data to support the presented arguments/narratives?
3. Cited Studies: Does the case contain cited studies to support the presented arguments/narratives?
4. Uncited Studies: Does the case contain uncited studies to support the presented arguments/narratives?
5. Attributed Anecdotes: Does the case contain attributed anecdotes, quotes, or other qualitative data to support the presented arguments/narratives?
6. Unattributed Anecdotes: Does the case contain unattributed anecdotes, quotes, or other qualitative data to support the presented arguments/narratives?
7. Experts: Does the case contain information from ‘experts’ to justify and/or explain the presented arguments/narratives?

The following hypotheses were as follows:

- Anecdotes (both Attributed and Unattributed) and Statistics (both Cited and Uncited) would be highly prevalent as forms of ‘storytelling’ to justify/legitimate anti-trans claims.

- Studies (Cited and Uncited) and Experts would also be present in moderate numbers.
- All types of evidence were expected to increase over time, with Anecdotes (Attributed and Unattributed), Statistics (Cited and Uncited), and Studies (Cited and Uncited) increasing the most dramatically.
- The presence of Statistics (Cited and Uncited) and Studies (Cited and Uncited) would be especially prevalent for Politicians and MSM Newspapers.
- The presence of Anecdotes (Cited and Uncited) and Studies (Cited and Uncited) would be especially prevalent for Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media.

What findings emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table 4.5.1a – Distribution of Types of Evidence by Case		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
4.1 Cited Statistics	167	33%
4.2 Uncited Statistics	41	8%
4.3 Cited Studies	56	11%
4.4 Uncited Studies	12	2%
4.5 Attributed Anecdotes	499	100%
4.6 Unattributed Anecdotes	14	3%
4.7 Experts	82	16%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Several interesting findings emerged from the macro-analysis. Firstly, Attributed Anecdotes were present in almost all 500 cases. Attributed anecdotes were a ubiquitous type of evidence and fundamental format of disseminating information to support anti-trans claims. Secondly, Cited Statistics were also highly prevalent. Providing sourced information was often utilized to promote the 'scientific objectivity' of anti-trans claims. By contrast, Uncited Studies and Unattributed Anecdotes were almost entirely absent from the dataset, which was surprising. It seems that, when information like studies or anecdotes were provided, they were generally given some form of citation or attribution. Lastly, Experts were anticipated to be more prevalent

than the mere 16% that was represented in the dataset. While present, references to the testimony of 'experts' to validate anti-trans claims were not widespread.

Table 4.5.1b – Distribution of Evidence by Time Period

		2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Case Totals	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**500**	**0**	**0%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100%**
4.1 Cited Statistics	167	0	0%	56	34%	111	33%
4.2 Uncited Statistics	41	0	0%	9	5%	32	10%
4.3 Cited Studies	56	0	0%	12	7%	44	13%
4.4 Uncited Studies	12	0	0%	5	3%	7	2%
4.5 Attributed Anecdotes	499	0	0%	164	99%	335	100%
4.6 Unattributed Anecdotes	14	0	0%	8	5%	6	2%
4.7 Experts	82	0	0%	33	20%	49	15%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The breakdown of the type(s) of evidence by time period was quite notable for the overall *stability* of the relative percentages between decades. As was noted above, it was hypothesized that all type(s) of evidence, but especially both Anecdotes (Attributed and Unattributed), Statistics (Cited and Uncited), and Studies (Cited and Uncited) would increase dramatically over time as an emphasis on scientific information to support anti-trans claims became more prevalent. However, this was not the case, as the occurrence rates of type(s) of evidence in use remained relatively stable across the decades.

Table 4.5.1c – Distribution of Evidence by Actor								
	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
4.1 Cited Statistics	13	15%	98	41%	31	44%	25	25%
4.2 Uncited Statistics	4	5%	16	7%	5	7%	16	16%
4.3 Cited Studies	2	2%	31	13%	12	17%	11	11%
4.4 Uncited Studies	0	0%	4	2%	3	4%	5	5%
4.5 Attributed Anecdotes	87	100%	240	100%	71	100%	101	100%
4.6 Unattributed Anecdotes	4	5%	5	2%	5	7%	0	0%
4.7 Experts	6	7%	58	24%	17	24%	1	1%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

MSM Newspapers had higher-than-average relative percentages for Cited Statistics and Experts compared to other actors. MSM Newspapers tended to employ cited information and/or consulted 'experts' to justify anti-trans claims, perhaps to provide a sense of legitimacy to and scholarly rigour, regardless of the quality and/or truthfulness of the claims.

Think Tanks also had higher-than-average relative percentages for Cited Statistics and Experts, which was somewhat surprising. Like the MSM Newspapers, Think Tanks presented cited information and/or consulted 'experts', seemingly to legitimate anti-trans claims, regardless of the quality and/or truthfulness of the claims.

Alt-Right New Media had a higher-than-average relative percentage for Uncited Statistics compared to other actors. This finding was reasonable when qualitatively examining the cases, as

the Alt-Right New Media grouping seemed to employ a comparatively high number of unsourced data to support their claims.

There were two actors with lower-than-average relative percentages as well: Politicians (Cited Statistics; Cited Studies; Experts) and Alt-Right New Media (Cited Statistics; Experts). These findings directly contradicted the hypotheses for Politicians. It seems that Politicians relied on cited sources of numerical/quantitative information less often than other actors. Likewise, Alt-Right New Media also contained lower numbers for Cited Statistics and Experts.

4.6: Conclusions

This chapter has mapped and surveyed the distribution of cases, positions, and type(s) of evidence present in anti-trans discourses in Canada over a 23-year period. It sought to answer the following research questions: What is the distribution of cases of anti-trans discourse by time period and by actor? What are the dominant positions? What type(s) of evidence is/are used to support anti-trans claims? Several interesting results were discovered. The general findings are summarized below.

4.6.1: Key Findings

Distribution of Cases

- Over the last 20 years there has been significant, and very recent, growth of anti-trans discourse in Canada – with literally no anti-trans discourse found between 2000-2009; constant but quite moderate/gradual growth between 2010-2019; and then very significant growth in 2020-2023, with a spike in 2023 that represented triple the previous annual high.
- In terms of actors, it was discovered that much of this discourse (almost 50%) was found in MSM Newspapers, with the other three actors (Politicians, Think Tanks, and Alt-Right New Media) contributing in roughly equal proportions, the other half of cases.

Positions Findings

- The dominant position (at 79%) in the dataset was ‘YES 1’ – explicitly expressed anti-trans positions. ‘YES 2’ (implicit anti-trans stances) was the second most frequent position, at 14%. Together, these accounted for up 93% of the dataset, suggesting that anti-trans discourse is largely characterized by unambiguous and explicit anti-trans positions with very little moderate and/or nuanced positioning.

- Notably, a strong movement over time towards the 'YES 1' stance was discovered – with it increasing from 70% in 2010-2019 to 83% in 2020-2023, as well as a clear decrease in the other more nuanced positions (during the same periods, YES 2 decreased from 19% to 12% and MIXED decreased from 12% to 4%). This suggests that over the last 13 years, anti-trans discourse has become increasingly explicit and 'hardened' in the positions it is communicating.
- Finally, in terms of any differences between actors, it was notable that Alt-Right New Media discourse was characterized almost entirely by strong and explicit anti-trans positions with 97% of that discourse coded as YES 1. Politicians, in contrast, were the most 'nuanced' with 37% of their discourse as YES 2 and only 62% as YES 1. MSM newspapers and Think Tanks were between those two extremes, with 77% and 80% respectively falling into YES 1 and the rest into either YES 2 or MIXED.

Evidence Findings

- The two predominant forms of evidence in the dataset were Cited Statistics (33%) and Attributed Anecdotes (100%), the latter of which appears to be a fundamental format in the dissemination of anti-trans discourse. Sharing information that contained 'storytelling' elements – and which were clearly linked to an individual, group, and/or organization – informed how anti-trans discourse was presented throughout the entire dataset.
- In terms of differences between actors, MSM Newspapers and Think Tanks both relied on Cited Statistics and Experts to support their claims, employing more 'legitimate' forms of evidence to back anti-trans claims. Alt-Right New Media, by contrast, utilized Uncited Statistics at higher rates than other actors, demonstrating comparatively less rigorous citational practices when sourcing data and information to support their claims.

4.6.2: Implications

The Presence Of Cases: 2023, An Explosive Year for Anti-Trans Discourse

The distribution of cases was heavily skewed toward 2023. 197 of the 500 cases were concentrated in this year alone. Not only does this support the qualitative observation of a surge in anti-trans discourse in Canada during the 2020s, but it also points to 2023 specifically being a year of explosive growth. There were several implications that could be drawn from this discovery. Firstly, this clearly demonstrated that anti-trans discourses in Canada did not seem to be as strongly prevalent prior to this year. Various influences may have shaped this trend; these may include the erosion of trust in public institutions and conspiracy theories associated with the

pandemic and lockdown[99], the freedom convoy which converged upon and occupied Ottawa's streets for several weeks[100], and Pierre Pollievre's vocal condemnations of then-Prime Minister Trudeau[101] by utilizing anti-trans rhetoric, for example. Given the burgeoning pro-trans laws, organizations, initiatives, and/or cultural events that characterized the 2010s, this backlash may be a right-wing/socially conservative response to these trends to 'restabilize' institutions that were perceived as threatened by pro-trans discourses. Trans rights arguably eroded at the provincial level in 2023 with the passing of Policy 713 in New Brunswick and Bill 137 in Saskatchewan. These findings also lead one to wonder: if the dataset were extended into the rest of the decade using the same data collection methods, what information would emerge? Was 2023 a spike, with the presence of anti-trans discourse returning to pre-2023 levels? This could suggest that 2023 was an outlier year; but if so, then why? Has there been a plateau of similarly high numbers, suggesting (perhaps) a 'new normal' in the presence levels of anti-trans discourse in Canada? A brief spike would suggest that, for a 'snapshot' of Canada's history, anti-trans discourse was extremely prevalent before returning to more 'typical' levels. If this is the case, then an examination into what 'worked' during 2023 (and what subsequently did not 'work') in the following years would be a fascinating glimpse into how anti-trans actors successfully pivoted and where, how, and why their initiatives lost momentum. By contrast, a higher sustained presence of anti-trans discourse is obviously more concerning, as it could suggest the heightened normalization of anti-trans discourses within the Canadian media and/or legal spheres. Further research positioning that year's results within a broader study of the decade as a whole and would help to contextualize these findings.

[99] Montigny, 2025
[100] Fact Sheet: Freedom Convoys' and Anti-Vaccine Demonstrations in Canada, 2022
[101] Montigny, 2025

‘Owning It’: Explicitly Stated Positions Are Strongly Prevalent

It was anticipated that most of these cases would be categorized as explicit in their articulations of anti-trans discourse (YES 1). Anti-trans actors tended to utilize direct language and/or clearly advocated their stances, goals, and/or agendas. Dissembling language was less prevalent overall and became even less prevalent over time. It was also noted that the Alt-Right New Media grouping was almost entirely explicit in its articulation of anti-trans stances. It is possible that the overall distribution of positions in the dataset may be skewed toward explicit stances, as they are easier to identify. But it is important to note the prominence of this position reflects the nature of how anti-trans discourse has been communicated over time and by actor. The explicit nature of most of the discourse in the dataset indicates that this may be a key feature of how discourses on polarizing topics are discussed. This distribution also emphasizes the directness of anti-trans discourse in Canada.

The degree to which the dominance of explicit anti-trans positions characterizes other anti-trans discourse that fall well outside those represented by this dataset is, however, an open question. While there is no real reason to expect that anti-trans discourse in other formats (i.e. television, radio, social media, popular culture including film, music or videogames, etc.) would be more moderate than this dataset (and in fact, I would hypothesize that many of those formats would demonstrate even stronger levels of explicit anti-trans positions), it is possible that certain formats might have a larger percentage of less explicit positioning. Thus, further research into other types and sites of anti-trans discourse would be valuable additions to this dissertation.

The Power of a Good Story: Anecdotes and their Universal Presence

Attributed Anecdotes were universally present across the dataset. This finding points to two important implications. Firstly, anti-trans actors relied heavily upon the anecdote as a form

of evidence when communicating with their audiences and/or to further their goals and agendas. This may be due to the power of 'storytelling' and its ability to evoke strong emotion as well as to feel relatable and knowable where other forms of evidence – such as statistics, studies, and aggregate data – may not. Secondly, anecdotes that had some form of attribution may have made the findings seem more trustworthy and credible. There were surprisingly few unattributed anecdotes in the dataset. It seems that anecdotes which were tied to an individual, group, and/or organization were widely utilized, perhaps because the 'human element' was more readily apparent when compared to anecdotes that had no clear attribution in which to ground the contents and narrative. Anecdotes from parents, teachers, detransitioners, (cisgender) women, 'gender-critical' feminists, pundits, politicians (especially along party lines, i.e., generally conservatives) were widely utilized to convey anti-trans discourse. The power of 'storytelling' is therefore not only an important form of evidence for anti-trans actors – it is a key mode of communication.

CHAPTER 5: TOPICS AND SUB-TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Abstract

This chapter examines the most prevalent topics and sub-topics utilized by anti-trans actors in Canada. The dataset was examined via MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis). Various newspapers, think tanks, right-wing media outlets, and Hansard transcripts were sourced between the dates of January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. Utilizing a custom coding dictionary and QDA Miner, a macro-analysis was generated and then qualitatively examined.

Several notable findings emerged: 1) Discourses pertaining to trans identity/transness proliferated; 2) Western/Canadian culture was evoked when articulating anti-trans discourse; and 3) Racism profoundly undergirded the topics of discussion – despite only being strategically evoked on occasion.

5.1: Introduction

This chapter examines the topics and sub-topics anti-trans actors discussed. The top five most prevalent topics that comprised a given case were coded. 500 cases were selected and examined from Canadian legacy media sources, Hansard transcripts, think tanks, and right-wing media outlets. A custom coding dictionary was created in QDA Miner to code these cases. A systematic MM (mixed methods) research design was implemented to map and survey anti-trans discourse in Canada over an extended period; from January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023.

5.2: Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Chapter Structure

The research questions this chapter will answer are as follows:

1. What are the topics anti-trans actors discuss?
2. What specific talking points do anti-trans actors privilege in their discussions?

The objectives of this chapter are to determine what main topics were discussed in anti-trans discourse. It was anticipated that several important shifts would occur over time and between discursive types of actor. I hypothesized that cases from the 2000s would have a pathologizing focus on trans healthcare, as gender affirmative care was one of the most prevalent mainstream topics of discussion during that period.[102] Given the general lack of mainstream political organizing around trans rights at this time, any cases from this time period were expected to be sourced from newspapers. By the 2010s, however, a broader range of topics was expected to become more commonplace as trans people/transness/trans rights became more widely known to the public. A greater variety of actors producing/disseminating information was also expected to increase. Lastly, another shift toward legislative and rights-based discussions, such as 'parental rights' and 'women's sex-based rights'[103] were expected to characterize the 2020s. All actors were expected to drive these discussions more robustly as legislation, political trends, and/or sociocultural discourses began to shift in the 2020s.

This chapter explores these questions and hypotheses and shares these findings in the order set out below.

In section 5.3, an overview of the main topics of discussion that have characterized anti-trans discourse in Canada will be provided. The results of the cross-referencing analyses of the main topics of discussion were also shared – and highlighted any notable and surprising findings that emerged when the overall results were broken down by time and type of discursive actor.

Section 5.4 provides a bullet-point list synthesizing the sub-topics results. These sub-topics broke out the topic categories into specific codes to offer more concrete information on the

[102] Prosser, 1998; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005
[103] Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Ganshorn, 2023; Hanisch et al., 2013; Earles, 2019; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Thurlow, 2024

frequency of specific themes, concepts, and ideas. These findings were also broken down by time period and by actor and highlight any key findings across those dimensions. The full set of tables and sub-topic prose analyses are provided in Appendix 4 for readers who wish to read the entire breakdown.

In sections 5.3 through 5.4, the most salient findings were discussed with short explanations as to why they are worth noting. A more robust discussion of the broader potential implications of these findings can be found in the chapter conclusion, as it was determined to be more appropriate to discuss them holistically after the concrete findings were demonstrated.

5.3: Topics

When seeking to understand and map a previously unexplored body of discourse, one of the first characteristics that large scale discourse analysis usually examines is the question of the main topics of discussion of that discourse. 'What' a discourse is primarily talking about is certainly one of the most important direction-setting elements of that discourse. This is particularly relevant in the case of anti-trans discourse because, while there has been much speculation as to the question of the growth and sourcing of anti-trans discourse in Canada, there have been no robust studies that have determined the main topics of this discourse writ large.

As such, this dissertation tracked and analyzed both the main topics of discussion (discussed in this section) and sub-topics of discussion (provided in bullet-form in section 5.4) in Canadian anti-trans discourses between 2000 and 2023. A 'topic of discussion' was defined in a very straightforward way – i.e. as the main issue(s) and/or subject matter(s) that were the focus of discussion in each individual case. The five most prevalent/prominent main issue(s) and/or subject matter(s) were coded per case.

The coding dictionary was designed to capture as many of these topics as possible. In the pre-reading and piloting stage, eight broad topic categories were identified and created based on thematic closeness and/or relevance. The categories are:

1. Basic Concepts: Basic concepts associated with trans people such as trans identity and/or names and pronouns.
2. Science, Biology and Medicine: Medicine and/or healthcare-related topics pertaining to (de)transition and/or gender affirmative care.
3. Intersectionality – Identities: Identity-focused interest groups such as women and children.
4. Intersectionality – Isms: A category for tracking discussions of structural forces, such as misogyny and racism.
5. Common Talking Points: Common talking points like pronoun bills or transness in school curricula.
6. Politics and Law: Politics and the law, and their interrelationships to trans people/trans rights.
7. Culture, Ideology and Religion: Topics like patriotism or religious sentiment.
8. Social Convention: Focused on morals and/or social norms.

In each case, up to a maximum of the top five most prominent/prevalent topics were coded per case. By examining the distribution of cases by topic, the most common subjects upon which anti-trans actors focused the discussion (by frequency) were tracked. What data emerged? The results of these macro-analyses were as follows.

5.3.1: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Topic Presence – Overall

The first step taken was to examine the absolute and relative frequency of the various topics of discussion within this discourse. It was believed that the results of this analysis would offer insight into some of the main preoccupations of Canadian anti-trans discourse, as well as helping to determine the degree to which contemporary assumptions about/portraits of anti-trans discourse[104] are valid or, conversely, need revision. The hypotheses were as follows:

[104] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

- The topic category Basic Concepts was expected to be highly prevalent. This category pertained to aspects of trans identity. High levels of engagement with 'identity politics' discourse[105] were expected, based on the literature.
- The topic category Science, Biology and Medicine was expected to be highly prevalent. Based on the literature,[106] preoccupations with gender affirmative care were expected to be frequent.
- The topic category Intersectionality – Identities was expected to be highly prevalent. Heightened preoccupations[107] with interest groups (such as women and girls) and their interactions with trans people were expected to be frequent, based on qualitative observations of the dataset and the literature review.
- The topic category Intersectionality – Isms was not expected to be prevalent. Based on the literature regarding anti-trans discourses,[108] discussions of structural power dynamics were not expected to be frequent.
- The topic category Common Talking Points was expected to be one of the most prevalent topic categories on this list. This hypothesis was based on the prevalence of these discourses in the literature.[109]
- The topic category Politics and Law was expected to be one of the most significant topic categories, as the literature revealed preoccupations with the tension between trans rights and other human/civil rights.[110]
- The topic category Culture, Ideology and Religion was expected to be highly prevalent. According to the literature, many anti-trans discourses relied upon appeals to 'traditional values', neoliberal capitalistic discourse, and/or religious justification of systemic cisnormativity.[111]
- Finally, the topic category Social Convention was expected to be highly prevalent. Appeals to morality, virtue, right conduct, social contracts, and/or societal norms – and how transness supposedly 'violates' these norms – were frequently discussed in the literature.[112]

The table below displays the overall distribution of topics within the dataset.

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[105] Trans PULSE Canada, 2023; Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; De Jong, 2020; Braunstein, 2022; Goetz and Mayer, 2023; Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al, 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026; Goktas, 2023; Howansky et al., 2021; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

[106] Rippon, 2019; Orr, 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Arraiza Zabalegui, 2024

[107] Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Ganshorn, 2023; Hanisch et al., 2013; Earles, 2019; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Thurlow, 2024

[108] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

[109] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

[110] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Cossman, 2018; Dalwood, 2021; DeGagné, 2021; Brightman et al., 2024

[111] Lakoff, 1996; Serano, 2007; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Campbell et al., 2019; De Jong, 2020; Crasnow, 2021; Ericsson, 2018; DeGagné, 2021; Linander et al., 2024

[112] Hill and Willoughby, 2005; Stanely and Smith, 2011; Girshick, 2011; Warriner et al., 2013; Son et al., 2022

Table 5.3.1 – Topics Present by Case		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
1.1 Basic Concepts	458	92%
1.2 Science, Biology and Medicine	160	32%
1.3 Intersectionality - Identities	293	59%
1.4 Intersectionality - Isms	157	31%
1.5 Common Talking Points	351	70%
1.6 Politics and Law	331	66%
1.7 Culture, Ideology and Religion	74	15%
1.8 Social Convention	11	2%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

The findings have been highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were interesting due to their prominence were highlighted in green; findings that were interesting due to their absence were highlighted in red; findings that were interesting for other reasons were highlighted in yellow; and any findings that were in line with the hypotheses were left uncoloured (white).

Three major findings emerged from this data. Firstly, it was discovered that Basic Concepts (92%), Common Talking Points (70%), Politics and Law (66%), and Intersectionality – Identities (59%) were the largest topic categories. Secondly, it was discovered that two secondary topic categories – Science, Biology and Medicine (32%) and Intersectionality – Isms (31%) had different levels of relative frequency than expected. Thirdly, it was discovered that Culture, Ideology and Religion (15%) and Social Convention (2%) were significantly lower than

expected, particularly when considering the anti-trans discourses highlighted in existing academic studies.[113]

In terms of the findings pertaining to the most dominant topics: It was suspected that Basic Concepts, Common Talking Points, Politics and Law, and Intersectionality – Identities would be four of the most frequent topic categories. This was based on the existing literature on anti-trans discourse in Canada and abroad.[114] That said, the prevalence of these four categories exceeded expectations and arguably underlines the degree to which anti-trans discourse is, at this stage, heavily focused on these issues.

Similarly, but at a lower level, it was surprising to discover that Intersectionality – Isms (a category which primarily tracked discussions of structural power dynamics) was also quite strongly present – in over a third of all cases. This was surprising insofar as traditional understandings of contemporary right-wing discourse is usually seen as avoiding any discussion of structural power, viewing it as intrinsically connected to left-wing 'politically correct/woke' analysis.[115]

In contrast, while many observers have highlighted the degree to which anti-trans advocates have focused on gender affirmative care,[116] it was nevertheless surprising that the topic category Science, Biology and Medicine was present in only a third of all cases (32%), as it was assumed that these numbers would have been higher. Pathologizing anti-trans discourses are

[113] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[114] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[115] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[116] Chih et al., 2020; Devor et al., 2023; Coleman et al., 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Butler, 2024

well-established, and it was surprising that this topic of discussion was not as prevalent as anticipated in the wake of the anti-trans backlash.

Similarly surprising, but to an even greater degree, was the relative scarcity of cases coded under the Culture, Ideology and Religion topic category. Given the common practice of portraying anti-trans discourse as part of a broader 'culture war',[117] one would have expected a much higher frequency than merely 15%.

Perhaps most stunning for its absence, however, was the fact that, despite the existing literature identifying strong right-wing preoccupations with social convention and moral codes,[118] only 2% of all cases contained reference the Social Convention topic category. Given what is known about anti-trans actors who explicitly cleave to views based on these elements, this highlights a key question for future research – is it a case of avoiding moralizing discourse in the pursuit of expanding the appeal of their position (which has been observed with the Canadian anti-abortion movement,[119] for example)? Has anti-trans discourse created its own moral language that does not require explicit reference to pre-existing norms and standards, or is there some other explanation?

5.3.2: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Topic Presence – By Time Period

To what degree were there any significant differences in the frequency of topics over time? To answer this question, the relative distribution of main topic categories were analyzed by decade and then compared across three time periods to identify any notable differences and trends. It was hypothesized that:

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[117] Campbell et al., 2019; De Jong, 2020; Crasnow, 2021; Montigny, 2025
[118] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[119] Saurette and Gordon, 2015

- Science, Biology and Medicine would be the largest topic category of the 2000s, followed by Social Convention. Pathologizing discourses and/or 'moralistic' arguments were some the most prevalent anti-trans discourses from this period, according to the literature.[120]
- Basic Concepts, Science, Biology and Medicine, and Politics and Law would be the largest categories of the 2010s. This was based on the literature noting an increase in discussions of trans identity, trans rights, and/or gender affirmative care during the decade.[121]
- Basic Concepts, Common Talking Points, Politics and Law, Culture, Ideology and Religion, and Social Convention were anticipated to be the largest categories for the 2020s as trans-hostile discourses began to proliferate in various sociocultural and political spheres.[122]

The results are outlined in the table below.

[120] Prosser, 1998; Meyerowitz, 2002; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005; Stryker and Whittle, 2006
[121] Devor and Haefele-Thomas, 2019; Rippon, 2019; Orr, 2022; Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Cossman, 2018; Dalwood, 2021; DeGagné, 2021; Brightman et al., 2024
[122] Devor and Haefele-Thomas, 2019; Rippon, 2019; Orr, 2022; Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Cossman, 2018; Dalwood, 2021; DeGagné, 2021; Brightman et al., 2024; Campbell et al., 2019; De Jong, 2020; Crasnow, 2021

Table 5.3.2 – Distribution of Topics by Time Period							
Topics		**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Case Totals	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**0**	**100%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100%**
1.1 Basic Concepts	458	0	0%	146	88%	312	93%
1.2 Science, Biology and Medicine	160	0	0%	57	35%	103	31%
1.3 Intersectionality - Identities	293	0	0%	71	43%	222	66%
1.4 Intersectionality - Isms	157	0	0%	44	27%	113	34%
1.5 Common Talking Points	351	0	0%	120	73%	231	69%
1.6 Politics and Law	331	0	0%	100	61%	231	69%
1.7 Culture, Ideology and Religion	74	0	0%	39	24%	35	10%
1.8 Social Convention	11	0	0%	4	2%	7	2%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were stable and expected were highlighted in blue; findings that were stable and interesting were highlighted in yellow; findings with significant increases were highlighted in green; findings with significance decreases were highlighted in red.

Several interesting findings emerged from this analysis. The Basic Concepts, Common Talking Points, and Politics and Law topic categories were all highly prevalent in the 2010s and remained relatively stable in the 2020s. These findings did not align with the above-stated hypotheses, as they indicated a level of stability that was not anticipated. These topics, while highly prevalent, have not changed significantly as the anti-trans backlash has proliferated.

Three other categories were also remarkably stable – much to my surprise. The relative frequency of Science, Biology and Medicine was, firstly, at a lower relative percentage in the 2010s than anticipated, and this relative percentage remained largely stable over time. This

analysis also revealed an unexpectedly high relative percentage for 'Intersectionality – Isms' in the 2010s. This topic category was also remarkably stable over time. As was noted in the discussion of the overall data breakdown of the topic categories, this was unexpected, based on traditional portraits of contemporary right-wing discourse that suggests a general avoidance of discussions of structural power.[123] Finally, the Social Convention topic category was largely absent from the dataset in the 2010s, and remained stable into the 2020s. Once again, the lack of moralizing topics was surprising, and additional research is needed to understand this absence.

That left the only two topic categories with relative percentages that changed substantially over time. The category of Intersectionality – Identities grew significantly from the 2010s to the 2020s, an increase of 23%. Qualitatively, I noted a growing preoccupation with interest groups such as (cisgender) women and children as being 'threatened' by trans people/transness/trans rights in the dataset, corroborated by these empirical results.

By contrast, it was quite surprising to discover that Culture, Ideology and Religion declined in frequency from the 2010s to the 2020s. These topics are often associated with socially conservative/right wing political speech;[124] yet it seems that they were not as prevalent as expected in connection with anti-trans discourse and decreased in prevalence over time.

5.3.3: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Topic Presence – By Actor

Having analyzed the trends of the topics categories by time period, this section addresses the trends found when cross-referencing the findings between discursive types of actors. Were some actors significantly more engaged with certain topics than others? Were there any unique, interesting, or surprising variations between actors? To answer these questions, the relative

[123] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[124] Montigny, 2025

distribution of main topics was analyzed by type of actor and then compared to identify any notable differences in trends. The following was hypothesized:

- Politicians were expected to have high numbers in the Politics and Law and Science, Biology and Medicine topic categories. Topics such as human rights legislation and bills pertaining to healthcare fall under the purview of legislative bodies, and thus were anticipated.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have high numbers for the Basic Concepts, Common Talking Points, and Politics and Law topic categories. Newspapers report widely on laws, cultural trends, and/or breaking news events; thus, these topics were anticipated to have high traction.
- Think Tanks were expected to have high numbers for the Politics and Law and Culture, Ideology and Religion topic categories. This grouping was expected to discuss law, policy, and/or sociocultural trends pertaining to anti-trans discourse.
- Alt-Right New Media was expected to have high numbers for the Intersectionality – Identities, Common Talking Points, Politics and Law, and Culture, Ideology and Religion topic categories. This grouping was socially conservative/right-wing, and thus I expected preoccupations with a variety of anti-trans discourses to be employed by this grouping.

The results are outlined in the table below.

Table 5.3.3 – Distribution of Topics by Actor								
	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
1.1 Basic Concepts	85	98%	240	100%	43	61%	90	89%
1.2 Science, Biology and Medicine	44	51%	77	32%	20	28%	19	19%
1.3 Intersectionality - Identities	36	41%	148	61%	40	56%	69	68%
1.4 Intersectionality - Isms	3	3%	92	38%	28	39%	34	34%
1.5 Common Talking Points	33	38%	200	83%	47	66%	71	70%
1.6 Politics and Law	86	99%	137	57%	48	68%	60	59%
1.7 Culture, Ideology and Religion	11	13%	29	12%	28	39%	6	6%
1.8 Social Convention	0	0%	5	2%	5	7%	1	1%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that had minimal (but expected) variation were highlighted in blue; findings that had minimal (but interesting) variations were highlighted in yellow; findings with significantly higher-than-average variation were highlighted in green; findings with significantly lower-than-average variation were highlighted in red. Actors were compared via two points of cross-referencing: firstly, the findings were examined by comparing the relative frequencies of different actors against their corresponding overall relative percentage. Secondly, the findings were examined *between* actors for comparative purposes.

As was hypothesized, Politicians had higher-than-average relative percentages for Science, Biology and Medicine and Politics and Law compared to other actors. This grouping discussed these topics as they pertained to trans rights and/or trans healthcare legislation. Politicians contained an extraordinarily high relative percentage in the Politics and Law category – 99%. This finding was to be expected, as Politicians discussing law and politics is an expectation both of the profession itself and the setting in which the discussions took place (provincial, Parliamentary, and/or Senate legislatures).

The other grouping with a significantly higher-than-average relative percentage was Think Tanks for the Culture, Ideology and Religion topic category. Think Tanks had a relative percentage that was nearly double when compared to other actors. This was attributed primarily to the think tank Focus on the Family Canada, whose religious focus disproportionately comprised the codes captured here. However, all think tanks discussed political, economic, and/or sociocultural/religious policy work, advocacy, and/or news on politics and legislation at high rates.

There were three actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Intersectionality – Identities; Intersectionality – Isms; Common Talking Points), Think Tanks (Basic Concepts), and Alt-Right New Media (Science, Biology and Medicine; Culture, Ideology and Religion).

5.4: Sub-Topics – Synthesized Findings

Examining the breakdown of the data by topic category has revealed a wealth of knowledge. If one were to ‘drill down’ even further to the granularity of sub-topics, could even greater nuance be discovered? What specific discourses were the most prevalent? What sub-topics were most represented in the data? What sub-topics were most prevalent by time period?

What sub-topics were most prevalent when analyzed by discursive types of actor? This section will answer these questions.

For the sake of brevity, this section contains the key findings from the analysis of each sub-topic in bullet-form. The sub-topics were examined by overall relative percentage, by time-period, and by discursive type of actor. The full analysis in prose (including the tables for visual reference) are available in Appendix 4 for interested readers.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.1 – 'Basic Concepts'

- The Trans People/Transness sub-topic comprised nearly the entirety of this topic category (98%). Interestingly, this sub-topic was stable across time and by actor, suggesting a relatively high and stable presence of discussions pertaining to trans identity.
- Names and Pronouns (5%), Passing (1%), and Disclosure (2%) were present in low numbers, and all decreased over time; the latter two sub-topics 'vanished' from the dataset entirely in the 2020s (0%). These findings were somewhat surprising; a greater emphasis on pronouns especially was anticipated, based on qualitative observations of memorable cases discussing names and pronouns.
- Alt-Right New Media contained the only notable, higher-than-average variation in relative percentages when cross-referenced by actor: the Disclosure sub-topic (38%). This grouping was preoccupied with trans people being expected to disclose their 'status', especially in homosocial settings. Disclosure vanished from the dataset in the 2020s, meaning this finding was relegated exclusively to the 2010s.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.2 – 'Science, Biology and Medicine'

- Transition (47%), Conversion Therapy (32%), and Science and Biology (21%) were the largest sub-topics from this topic category. Conversion Therapy was significantly higher than expected and appeared predominantly in cases discussing Bill C-4, a bill which federally banned conversion therapy practices and was enacted in 2022.
- Detransition (0% to 8%) and Conversion Therapy (14% to 42%) were the only sub-topics that increased over time. Detransition discourses were characterized by questioning the legitimacy and safety of current best practices of gender affirmative care. Conversion Therapy discourses were characterized by portraying it as a critical service for people distressed by their (non-cisgender) identities.
- In terms of actors, Politicians had high numbers for Conversion Therapy (73%), typically in the context of debating and/or discussing Bill C-4. MSM Newspapers discussed Transition (68%), Medical Intervention (31%), and Gender Dysphoria (19%). They reported on trending legal, political, medical, and/or sociopolitical trends pertaining to trans healthcare in generally negative and/or unfavourable ways, such as questioning its safety and necessity. Alt-Right New Media discussed Transition (63%)

at higher rates than other actors. They tended to discuss harmful outcomes and/or potential complications associated with medical transition.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.3 – 'Intersectionality – Identities'

- The Children sub-topic was the largest one in this topic category (70%). By contrast, the Women (19%) and Parents (18%) sub-topics were smaller than anticipated, given the recent shifts toward 'women's sex-based rights' and 'parental rights' discourses, respectively.
- The Children sub-topic increased dramatically over time (55% to 74%), further supporting qualitative observations of a drastic shift toward discourses of 'protecting children' from transness. Surprisingly, the Women and Parents sub-topics decreased over time (38% to 14%, and 24% to 17%, respectively).
- Politicians had higher relative percentages for the Children (86%) and Parents (25%) sub-topics. These interest groups were discussed in relation to anti-trans legislation and positioned as 'needing projection' from pro-trans legislation, policies, and/or sociocultural attitudes. Think Tanks had higher relative percentages for the Parents (38%) and Men (10%) sub-topics compared to other actors. This grouping was preoccupied with maintaining 'school choice' for parents to instill their values into their children. They were also preoccupied with markers of masculinity and male gender role expectations.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.4 – 'Intersectionality – Isms'

- The Gender Binary (80%) sub-topic was the most prevalent sub-topic in this category by a significant degree. Throughout the dataset, strong preoccupations with the sex/gender binary and reifying it as 'biologically real' was extremely prevalent.
- The Gender Binary sub-topic increased dramatically over time, by 34%. This matched my hypothesis and qualitative observations that preoccupations with reifying the sex/gender binary became more frequent in the 2020s.
- Think Tanks had high numbers for the Gender Roles (36%), Bigotry (14%), Feminism (11%), and Masculinity (7%) sub-topics. This grouping discussed feminism in a negative manner, and/or emphasized the 'importance' of traditional gender roles. They also classified trans people/pro-trans actors as bigots. Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Racism (15%) and Elitism (6%), positioning trans people/pro-trans actors as 'intolerant' toward 'other opinions/beliefs'. They also portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as being in league with the 'elites' of society, working against the interests of the 'common people'.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.5 – 'Common Talking Points'

- Policing Trans Bodies (48%), Censorship (30%), Schools (19%), and Indoctrination (18%) were the largest sub-topics for this topic category.
- It was surprising to find that none of the sub-topics from this topic category increased with time. Policing Trans Bodies (51% to 34%) and Universities (12% to 2%) both decreased over time, while all other sub-topics remained stable.
- Regarding the comparisons between actors, Politicians had higher numbers for Policing Trans Bodies (52%), Schools (21%), and Fairness (15%). These topics were prevalent when discussing 'parental rights' and/or trans athletes participating in sport. MSM

Newspapers had higher numbers for Policing Trans Bodies (68%) and discussed political, sociocultural, and legal limitations to trans peoples' rights and freedoms. Think Tanks had higher numbers for Censorship (47%), Schools (34%), Indoctrination (23%), Universities (13%), and Safety of Others (13%). This grouping discussed trans people/pro-trans actors as censoring 'other opinions/beliefs', and/or discussed schools as 'battlegrounds' for the right of free speech/expression. Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Indoctrination (46%), Censorship (42%), and Sexual Harm/Disorder (17%). This grouping was strongly preoccupied with schools as sites of freedom of speech/expression, positioning trans rights as an infringement upon academic freedom, and/or positioning transness as inherently (hyper)sexual and/or sexually harmful.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.6 – 'Politics and Law'

- All sub-topics from this topic category were strongly represented in the dataset.
- Govt and Politics (65% to 80%) and Parental Rights (7% to 45%) both increased dramatically over time. These topics often appeared in cases that were critical of Trudeau's pro-LGBTQ+ federal government. They also began to proliferate around 2019 onward, as the 'parental rights' movement began to gain momentum.
- Politicians had higher numbers for Trans People and Law (86%) and Govt and Politics (88%), which was to be expected given their political and legislative engagements with trans rights. Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media both had higher numbers for Freedom of Speech (63% and 43%, respectively). Both actor groupings referred to freedom of speech/expression as being 'under attack' and often blended both legal and colloquial definitions of the phrase when discussing it in relation to trans rights.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.7 – 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'

- Canadian Culture/Values (57%) and Religion (37%) were the largest sub-topics for this topic category. The prevalence of Canadian Culture/Values was somewhat surprising, as the pre-reading and pilot testing led me to anticipate smaller relative percentages for this sub-topic.
- Traditional Culture/Values decreased over time (26% to 6%). This was surprising; calls for a 'return to traditionalism' were expected to be prevalent, but that was not a common topic of discussion.
- Politicians had higher numbers for Canadian Culture/Values (82%), often positioning pro-trans discourse/trans rights as going against 'Canadian values'. MSM Newspapers had higher numbers for Canadian Culture/Values (72%) and Western Culture/Values (14%), often discussing anti-trans topics in relation to maintaining Canada's standing as a democratic nation that fosters freedom of choice. Think Tanks had higher numbers for Religion (46%) and Traditional Culture/Values (32%), which were primarily attributed to the religious discussions from Focus on the Family Canada. This grouping discussed Christianity and/or 'traditionalism' as moral and societal goods.

Sub-Topics of Topic 1.8 – 'Social Convention'

- This topic category contained too few cases to justify a breakdown of the sub-topics for granular analysis. There is nothing to report here.

5.5: Conclusions

This chapter has mapped and surveyed the topics and sub-topics present in anti-trans discourses in Canada over a 23-year period. It sought to answer the following research questions: What are the topics anti-trans actors discuss? What specific talking points do anti-trans actors privilege in their discussions? Several interesting discoveries were made and discussed. This final chapter sub-section will discuss the key implications and expand upon the qualitative analyses below.

5.5.1: Implications

Trans Identity and Anti-Trans Discourse

One of the most surprising discoveries to come out of this chapter was that the Trans People/Transness sub-topic comprised nearly the entirety of the Basic Concepts topic category. Moreover, it was consistently prevalent when examined by time-period and by discursive type of actor. Qualitatively, I observed that anti-trans actors discussed trans identity via strategic frameworks to portray trans self-identification as 'untrue', 'dangerous', and/or 'absurd'. These tactics ranged from employed ableist discourse (i.e., trans people are insane/mentally ill/unstable), to portraying transness as 'illogical' and/or contraindicative with a biologically essentialist paradigm of sex and gender. Trans people were also portrayed as 'political agents' and/or 'elitists' seeking to install themselves in positions of sociopolitical, cultural, legal, and economic power – at the expense of the 'silent majority'. Furthermore, these actors tended to weaponize critiques of 'identity politics' to de-legitimize trans people/pro-trans actors as a divisive group seeking to impose 'gender ideology' and/or 'wokeism' onto Canadian society. By colonizing progressive and/or neo-liberal language, anti-trans actors have positioned themselves as victims of an 'extremist' ideology; a persecuted minority under attack by a 'radical' trans

lobby. This discourse effectively redirects trans discourse into the framing of a ‘culture war’, whereby anti-trans actors can justify exclusionary legislation, practices, goals, and agendas under the guise of maintaining ‘biological truth’, ‘protecting families’, ‘maintaining fairness’, and/or ‘fighting back against tyranny’.

Canadian and Western Values

A striking focal point was the frequency of discussion pertaining to Canadian and/or Western values throughout the dataset; especially when juxtaposed against the decline of the Traditional Culture/Values sub-topic. Two key implications became clear when qualitatively analyzing the dataset. Firstly, Western/Canadian values were a surprisingly prevalent force for mobilization. Trans rights, pro-trans discourse, and/or trans activism was generally framed as harmful to Western cultural hegemony, as well as to Canadian values and culture. Transness was portrayed as an ‘ideology’ that directly contradicted Western traditions of science, medicine, biology, philosophy, religion, culture, history, and politics. Transness was portrayed as both threatening to these pillars of Western hegemonic cultural norms, as well as a ‘trend’ or ‘belief’ that was inconsequential and impermanent. Sometimes both of these portrayals could be present in the same case. It was portrayed as a ‘hateful ideology’ that dogmatically foreclosed ‘controversial conversations’ and/or was portrayed as ‘anti-multicultural’; a position that was framed as entirely oppositional to a core neoliberal Canadian value.

Secondly, the general decline in discussion of ‘traditional values’ in relation to anti-trans discourse is noteworthy. Generally speaking, the anti-trans movement has heavily colonized progressive and/or neo-liberal language, which may not be compatible with arguing against transness from a ‘traditionalist’ standpoint. This was generally the case for mainstream sources, such as newspapers, Hansard transcripts, and some think tanks. However, sources such as Focus

on the Family Canada and Action4Canada tended to blend progressive language with appeals to 'traditional values', revealing an interwoven series of discourses that could be used to advance various agendas and perspectives pertaining to anti-trans discourse.

Racism, Bigotry, Elitism

Race was largely invisibilized from anti-trans discourse – which, ironically, meant that whiteness was constantly centered in anti-trans topics of discussion. Various strategies were at play to portray anti-trans actors positively and to portray trans people/pro-trans actors negatively. For example, trans people/pro-trans actors were positioned as 'racist' and 'bigoted' against immigrants and newcomers to Canada for articulating anti-trans beliefs. This was especially noteworthy when discussing Muslim parents' objections to their children learning about LGBTQ+ topics in school. This framing was based on several fascinating presumptions: 1) that 'immigrant' and/or 'newcomer' is synonymous with non-whiteness; 2) that anti-trans actors who were allying with newcomers and immigrants were implicitly framed as 'Canadian', and thus white; and 3) concepts such as 'racial diversity', 'multiculturalism', and/or 'acceptance' have been colonized by anti-trans actors and weaponized against trans people/pro-trans actors on the basis of objecting to anti-trans discourse. Race was only discussed to highlight trans people/pro-trans actors as intolerant of 'other' groups' beliefs. This invisibilized racist discourse from anti-trans discourse entirely; except when it was deliberately evoked for strategic deployment. By invisibilizing race from the discussion, whiteness was (re)centered in these discourses. Often, the audience/reader of a given case was presumed to be a white Canadian citizen, and the framing of these topics operated from this presumed perspective. Race also invisibly undergirded anti-trans discourse pertaining to children, women, and families; when evoking these interest groups in relation to trans people/transness/trans rights, children were often positioned as requiring

'protection'. However, white women, children, and families were implicitly positioned as groups 'worthy' of this 'protection', as trans people were attributed harmful and negative traits that are also stereotyped as racialized; for example, sexually aggressive, cruel, bigoted, stupid, etc. Racism was also strategically deployed to frame discussions of racism itself as 'absurd'. Sources would quote or cite pro-trans individuals, groups, and/or organizations that discussed decolonisation, anti-racist praxis, and/or intersecting forms of oppression. These discussions were positioned as ridiculous, 'virtue signalling', and/or unnecessary. Canada was often portrayed as a country free of racism, or at the very least as a country whose racism is well-checked – and thus not in need of 'radical' trans lobbies demanding its dismantlement. Racism was also generally attributed to individual bad actors, thereby also making invisible the structural forces of racism that have shaped Canada since its inception as a settler colonial state.

Moreover, referring to trans people/pro-trans actors as 'elites' often evoked anti-Semitic dog whistles, alluding to the 'secret Jewish world order' conspiracy theory. Trans people were occasionally framed as in league with powerful individuals, groups, and/or organizations that secretly control the world. These dog whistles generally appeared in the more socially conservative/right-wing and/or religious sources, framing transness as synonymous with a cabal of 'Jewish overlords' seeking to destroy white, Christian, cisheteropatriarchal culture.

These cultural anxieties pertaining to racism, bigotry, and elitism demonstrate that while race is not overtly discussed throughout the dataset, it nevertheless potently shaped racial dynamics in anti-trans discourse.

CHAPTER 6: EXPLICIT ARGUMENTS AND EXPLICIT SUB-ARGUMENTS

Abstract

This chapter examines the breakdown of explicit arguments and sub-argument utilized by anti-trans actors in Canada. It also examines arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro- and anti-trans arguments. Lastly, it examines comparisons made between Canada and the US. The dataset was examined via MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis). Sourcing various newspapers, think tanks, right-wing media outlets, and Hansard transcripts, this dataset was comprised of cases collected between January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. Utilizing a custom coding dictionary and QDA Miner, a macro-analysis was generated and then qualitatively examined.

Notable findings that emerged were: 1) Rights-based arguments were utilized to justify anti-trans legislative processes; 2) Pathologizing discourses that discredited and/or highlighted complications with gender affirmative care became prevalent; and 3) Interest groups such as women and children were portrayed as 'needing protection' from 'harm' (i.e., trans people).

6.1: Introduction

This chapter examines the explicit arguments and sub-arguments anti-trans actors have employed in Canada. It also examines arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro- and anti-trans arguments. Finally, it examines the results of coding for comparisons made between Canada and the US. 500 cases selected from Canadian legacy media sources, government transcripts of politicians, think tanks, and right-wing media outlets. A custom coding dictionary was created in QDA Miner to code these cases. A systematic MM (mixed methods) research design was implemented to map and survey anti-trans discourse in Canada over an extended period; from January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023.

6.2: Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Chapter Structure

The research questions this chapter will answer are as follows:

1. What explicit arguments, sub-arguments, and arguments about other topics do anti-trans actors in Canada utilize?
2. With what specific explicit arguments do anti-trans actors in Canada engage?
3. What, if any, comparisons are made between Canada and the United States regarding anti-trans rhetoric?

The objectives of this chapter are to determine what explicit arguments are discussed in anti-trans discourse. I hypothesized that pathologizing and/or morality-based arguments would be the most prevalent varieties for the 2000s, albeit in small numbers. This was based on the literature which emphasized discourses centered on pathologizing gender affirmative care and/or portraying transness as 'morally wrong'.[125] I anticipated that newspapers would be the driving force of these discussions. In the 2010s, a broader spectrum of arguments were expected to become prevalent as trans rights/transness became more widely known in the mainstream culture, in the form of legal, medical, and social arguments.[126] It was anticipated that politicians, newspapers, and right-wing actors would generally drive these trends. Lastly, it was anticipated that another shift toward 'parental rights', child-centric, and/or 'women's sex-based rights'[127] discourses in the 2020s would rise. It was also anticipated that all actors would begin to articulate more frequent anti-trans explicit arguments as the anti-trans backlash shaped legislation, policy changes, and mainstream discourses on transness/trans rights in Canada.

[125] Prosser, 1998; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005
[126] Devor and Haefele-Thomas, 2019; Dyer et al., 2025
[127] Hotine, 2021; Platero, 2023; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; McIntyre, 1993; Spade, 2015; JusticeTrans, 2024; DeGagné, 2021; Ganshorn, 2023; Ashley, 2024

This chapter explores these questions and hypotheses, sharing the findings in the order set out below.

In section 6.3, an overview of the main categories of explicit arguments that have characterized anti-trans discourse in Canada were provided. The results of the cross-referencing analyses of the explicit arguments discussed were also provided. Any notable and surprising findings that emerged when the overall results are broken down by time period and type of discursive actor were discussed.

Section 6.4 provides a bullet-point list synthesizing the results of the sub-arguments breakdown, the 'other arguments' breakdown, and the breakdown of comparisons with the US. The sub-argument results were granularly examined from the argument categories into specific codes to offer more concrete information on the frequency breakdown within each category. The 'other arguments' codes were similarly broken down to sub-arguments for a more granular unit of analysis. The comparisons to the US codes tracked the presence of the code in the dataset. All these findings were cross-referenced by time period and by actor to highlight any key findings across those dimensions. The full set of tables and long-form prose analyses are provided in Appendix 5 for readers who wish to read the entire breakdown.

In sections 6.3 and 6.4, the most salient findings will be provided and discussed, with short explanations as to why they are worth noting. A more robust discussion of the broader potential implications of these findings can be found in the chapter conclusion.

6.3: Explicit Arguments

Understanding and mapping the main arguments of a previously unexplored body of large-scale discourse is a central characteristic to understanding 'what' a discourse is talking about and for surveying direction-setting elements at work. This is especially relevant for anti-trans

discourse in Canada, as there has been much speculation but no robust studies that have determined the main explicit arguments of this discourse.

As such, this dissertation tracked and analyzed both the main explicit arguments and sub-arguments of discussion in Canadian anti-trans discourse between 2000 and 2023. 'Explicit arguments' were defined in a very straightforward way – i.e. as the main argument(s) and/or subject matter(s) that were explicit articulated in each individual case.

This definition of an explicit argument is based on the conceit that an explicit argument plainly articulates its intended message *and do so* explicitly in the observable text.[128] This definition does not presume that the intention behind the message is sincere and/or objectively true; it is concerned with whether the *observable text* successfully delivers the *pertinent information it wishes to convey.* In addition, it is important to discuss 'what' an *argument* is for the purpose of this definition. Saurette and Gordon's define an explicit argumentation as, "*stating a position* and then giving reasons, principles, and evidence in favour of it" (emphasis added).[129] This definition was utilized to operationalize 'explicit arguments' for the purpose of this dissertation.

To further illustrate examples of explicit arguments and to demonstrate how it was coded, text samples have been provided. For example, to justify applying the code Propagandists to a text, one would expect to see an argument explicitly arguing that people are being 'propagandized' and/or 'indoctrinated' into supporting pro-trans discourse and would explicitly use pertinent language to convey this idea. Here is an example from an Action4Canada article, coded with Propagandists: "The provinces have implemented and endorsed the aggressive trans/LGBTQA++ curriculum into the education system and are *deliberately indoctrinating*

[128] Saurette and Gordon, 2015
[129] Saurette and Gordon, 2015, p. 189

children into trans ideology" (emphasis added).[130] Providing another example, applying the Gender Binary code would require an in-text example of an explicit argument pertaining to the sex/gender binary. Here is an example of this code pulled from a Focus on the Family Canada article: "Like you, we believe that God created *two sexes, male and female,* and that he has a design for our sexuality" (emphasis added).[131] This definition of an explicit argument was applied systematically throughout the coding process to the entire dataset when coding for explicit arguments and sub-arguments.

The coding dictionary was designed to capture as many of these explicit arguments as possible. In the pre-reading and piloting stage, 11 broad categories of explicit arguments that were created based on thematic closeness and/or relevance. The categories were:

1. Legality, Rights and Govt: Arguments associated with trans rights, 'parental rights', freedom of speech/expression, and arguments for or against politicians/the government pertaining to their stances on trans rights.
2. LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality: Arguments associated with LGBTQ+ venues/subculture, drag shows, (hyper)sexuality, sex work, and/or pornography.
3. Gender Roles and Heteronormativity: Arguments associated with the sex/gender binary, gender roles, and/or heteronormativity and homonormativity.
4. Medical Intervention: Arguments associated with science and biology, gender dysphoria, (de)transitioning, and/or hormone replacement therapy (HRT).
5. Women and Children: Arguments associated with women's rights, single-sex spaces, protecting these interest groups from harm, and/or harm towards women, children, and families.
6. Racism and Immigration: Arguments associated with intolerance and anti-immigrant sentiment, or else with multiculturalism and pro-immigrant sentiment.
7. Ability and Ableism: Arguments associated with exploitation of mentally ill people, mental illness, and/or transness as a 'social contagion'.
8. Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship: Arguments associated with censorship, lying/deception, indoctrination, and/or 'speaking out' about/against injustice.
9. Common Talking Points: Arguments associated with teaching transness in schools, trans people participating in sport, and/or policing trans bodies.
10. Culture, Ideology and Religion: Arguments associated with support for 'traditionalism', capitalism, and Western/Canadian culture, or condemning liberalism and/or socialism/communism.

[130] Action4Canada, n.d.
[131] Canfield., 2023

11. Arguments About Other Topics: Secondary/supplementary arguments. These arguments appeared in conjunction with either pro- or anti-trans arguments. These arguments will be examined in their own chapter section.

In each case, every instance of an explicit argument was assigned a code; the results were then aggregated by case. Trends of the most frequent explicit arguments were then examined via macro analysis and qualitative observation. What data emerged? The results of the analyses are as follows.

6.3.1: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Explicit Argument Presence – Overall

The absolute and relative frequency of the various explicit arguments within this discourse was examined in this sub-section. The hypotheses were as follows:

- The Legality, Rights and Govt[132] argument topic was expected to be highly prevalent. According to the literature, rights-based discourses have become an important avenue for advancing anti-trans legislative efforts. This was expected to be reflected in the dataset as well.
- The Gender Roles and Heteronormativity argument topic was expected to be highly prevalent. The reification of the sex/gender binary was a central throughline in the literature.[133] It was therefore expected to be frequently present in the dataset.
- The Medical Intervention[134] argument topic was expected to be highly prevalent. Anti-trans actors have long employed pathologizing discourses that delegitimized medical intervention like gender affirmation surgery; this was expected to be a common throughline in the dataset.
- The Women and Children[135] argument topic was expected to be highly prevalent. A burgeoning 'gender-critical' feminist movement has positioned trans rights as being in opposition to women's rights and 'parental rights' in recent years.
- The Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship argument topic was expected to be highly prevalent. The literature[136] indicated preoccupations with perceptions of the deplatforming and censorship of anti-trans discourse that I expected to see reflected in the dataset.

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[132] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; George, 2019; Nash and Browne, 2020; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

[133] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

[134] Rippon, 2019; Orr, 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Arraiza Zabalegui, 2024

[135] Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Ganshorn, 2023; Hanisch et al., 2013; Earles, 2019; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Thurlow, 2024

[136] Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; Scott, 2026

- The Common Talking Points[137] argument topic was expected to be highly prevalent. Based on the literature,[138] discourses pertaining to the policing trans bodies, arguments against trans women's participation in sport, and other talking points have proliferated in recent years.
- The Culture, Ideology and Religion[139] argument topic was expected to be highly prevalent. Anti-trans actors were expected to generally favour Western cultural hegemony and/or Christonormative religio-cultural arguments against transness/trans people/trans rights.
- Based on the literature,[140] the Racism and Immigration, Ability and Ableism, and LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality argument categories were expected to be only somewhat prevalent in the dataset.

The table below displays the overall distribution of arguments within the dataset.

Table 6.3.1 – Explicit Arguments Present in Cases

	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
2.1 Legality, Rights and Govt	318	64%
2.2 LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality	113	23%
2.3 Gender Roles and Heteronormativity	235	47%
2.4 Medical Intervention	153	31%
2.5 Women and Children	172	34%
2.6 Racism and Immigration	40	8%
2.7 Ability and Ableism	51	10%
2.8 Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship	129	26%
2.9 Common Talking Points	31	6%
2.10 Culture, Ideology and Religion	122	24%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

The findings have been highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were interesting due to their prominence were highlighted in green; findings that were interesting due to their absence were highlighted in red; findings that were interesting for other reasons were

[137] Orr, 2022; Rippon, 2019; Gurrly et al., 2023; Barras, 2025; Cleland et al., 2022; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Hartmann-Tews, 2023; Larsson and Auran, 2024; Parks Pieper, 2022; Teetzel, 2020; Travers, 2024
[138] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[139] Campbell et al., 2019; De Jong, 2020; Crasnow, 2021; Braunstein, 2022; Butler, 2024
[140] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

highlighted in yellow; and any findings that were in line with the hypotheses were left uncoloured (white).

Three major findings emerged from the data. Firstly, it was discovered that Legality, Rights and Govt (64%), and Gender Roles and Heteronormativity (47%) were the largest argument categories. Secondly, it was discovered that that Women and Children (34%), Medical Intervention (31%), Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship (26%), Culture, Ideology and Religion (24%), and LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality (23%) were all present in roughly a third to a fifth of cases – which was unexpected. Lastly, Common Talking Points (6%) was surprisingly absent from the dataset.

It was anticipated that Legality, Rights and Govt and Gender Roles and Heteronormativity would be extremely prevalent in the dataset. This expectation was based on the review of the literature, the pre-reading, and the pilot testing results. Rights-based arguments have positioned trans rights as operating in contention with other human/civil rights. This is a common throughline in the dataset, especially as it pertains to 'women's sex-based rights' and 'parental rights' arguments.[141] Likewise, the reification of the sex/gender binary as 'natural' and 'biological' was also extremely common.[142]

That being said, several categories that did not meet expectations. Women and Children, Medical Intervention, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, and Culture, Ideology and Religion were all present in lower numbers than expected. It should be noted that these argument

[141] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Butler, 2024; Murib, 2020; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026

[142] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

categories were still highly prevalent; however, I had anticipated an even greater frequency for these arguments, based on the literature.[143]

Finally, it was quite surprising to discover that Common Talking Points was largely absent from the dataset. The literature indicated that discussions pertaining to policing trans bodies, preventing trans athletes' participation in sport, and preventing transness from being taught in scholastic settings were expected to be frequent areas of explicit argumentation.

6.3.2: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Explicit Argument Presence – By Time Period

To what degree were there any significant differences in these findings over time? To answer this question, the relative distribution of explicit arguments was analyzed by time period to identify any notable differences and trends. The hypotheses were as follows:

- Medical Intervention was expected to be the largest argument category of the 2000s. According to the literature, pathologizing and/or morality-based discourses regarding trans people's bodies were some of the most prevalent types during this decade.[144]
- It was anticipated that Medical Intervention and Legality, Rights and Govt would be the largest argument categories for the 2010s. Trans rights and/or gender affirmative care discourses were expected to proliferate during this period as medical and legal barriers were lowered for trans people.[145]
- The Legality, Rights and Govt, Gender Roles and Heteronormativity, Medical Intervention, Women and Children, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, Common Talking Points, and Culture, Ideology and Religion argument categories were all expected to proliferate in the 2020s. Various medicalized, legal, political, and sociocultural discourses[146] were expected to become significantly more prevalent.

The results are outlined in the table below.

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[143] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

[144] Prosser, 1998; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005

[145] Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Arraiza Zabalegui, 2024; Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Cossman, 2018; Dalwood, 2021; DeGagné, 2021; Brightman et al., 2024

[146] Bettcher, 2007; Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

Table 6.3.2 – Distribution of Explicit Arguments by Time Period							
		2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Case Totals	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**500**	**0**	**0%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100 %**
2.1 Legality, Rights and Govt	318	0	0%	108	65%	210	63%
2.2 LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality	113	0	0%	46	28%	67	20%
2.3 Gender Roles and Heteronormativity	235	0	0%	114	69%	121	36%
2.4 Medical Intervention	153	0	0%	52	32%	101	30%
2.5 Women and Children	172	0	0%	62	38%	110	33%
2.6 Racism and Immigration	40	0	0%	20	12%	20	6%
2.7 Ability and Ableism	51	0	0%	21	13%	30	9%
2.8 Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship	129	0	0%	50	30%	79	24%
2.9 Common Talking Points	31	0	0%	10	6%	21	6%
2.10 Culture, Ideology and Religion	122	0	0%	50	30%	72	21%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were stable and expected were highlighted in blue; findings that were stable and interesting were highlighted in yellow; findings with significant increases were highlighted in green; findings with significance decreases were highlighted in red.

Two surprising discoveries emerged from the dataset. Firstly, it was quite surprising to discover that most of the argument categories remained stable over time. The Legality, Rights and Govt, Medical Intervention, Women and Children, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, and Common Talking Points argument categories remained stable from the 2010s to the 2020s. Despite the apparent rise in anti-trans discourse in recent years, explicit forms of argumentation seemingly have not quantitively increased.

The other important observation of note is that three argument categories decreased over time; Gender Roles and Heteronormativity, Racism and Immigration, and Culture, Ideology and Religion. This was a striking finding, as it contradicted the above-stated hypotheses, and begs the question as to why these explicit arguments may have decreased over time. It could stand to reason that anti-trans actors are avoiding religious discourses in the pursuit of expanding the appeal of their position (as Saurette and Gordon demonstrated about the modern Canadian anti-abortion movement),[147] as well as distancing themselves from discourses that open them to accusations of racism and/or intolerance. However, the decrease in prevalence of arguments in the Gender Roles and Heteronormativity category was quite surprising, especially when factoring in qualitative observations of a strong preoccupation with the sex/gender binary. This finding indicates just how crucial it is to track these discourses quantitatively to gain insight into how anti-trans discourses trend longitudinally, as the findings can be quite surprising.

6.3.3: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Explicit Argument Presence – By Actor

The question of whether there any significant differences in the findings between actors will be addressed in this sub-section. Were some actors significantly more likely to engage with specific argument categories than others? How did actor types compare against one another? To answer these questions, the relative distribution of the main categories was analyzed by type of actor to identify any notable differences and trends. The hypotheses were as follows:

- Politicians were expected to have high numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt and Medical Intervention argument categories, particularly in relation to topics such as Bill C-4 and/or when discussing gender affirmative care for trans children and youth.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have high numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt, Medical Intervention, and Common Talking Points argument categories. Newspapers report on trending legal, medial, and sociocultural events, and thus were expected to make explicit arguments in relation to trans people/transness/trans rights int these arenas.

[147] Saurette and Gordon, 2015

- Think Tanks were expected to have high numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt, Women and Children, and Culture, Ideology and Religion argument categories. This grouping was comprised of organizations that prioritized political, economic, legal, and/or religious (i.e., Christian-specific) research initiatives; thus, these types of arguments were expected to be prevalent.
- Alt-Right New Media was expected to have high numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt, LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality, Gender Roles and Heteronormativity, Medical Intervention, Women and Children, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, and Culture, Ideology, and Religion argument categories. This grouping was expected to have strong preoccupations with a variety of explicit anti-trans arguments, including legal, medical, sociocultural, sexual, and religious anti-trans discourses.[148]

The results are outlined in the table below.

[148] Serano, 2007; Bettcher, 2007; Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024

Table 6.3.3 – Distribution of Explicit Arguments by Actor								
	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
2.1 Legality, Rights and Govt	79	91%	118	49%	59	83%	62	61%
2.2 LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality	11	13%	57	24%	10	14%	35	35%
2.3 Gender Roles and Heteronormativity	19	22%	131	54%	44	62%	41	41%
2.4 Medical Intervention	18	21%	88	37%	17	24%	30	30%
2.5 Women and Children	25	29%	74	31%	31	44%	42	42%
2.6 Racism and Immigration	3	3%	15	6%	10	14%	12	12%
2.7 Ability and Ableism	1	1%	31	13%	7	10%	12	12%
2.8 Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship	4	5%	60	25%	22	31%	43	43%
2.9 Common Talking Points	3	3%	21	9%	3	4%	4	4%
2.10 Culture, Ideology and Religion	27	31%	36	15%	35	49%	24	24%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that had minimal (but expected) variation were highlighted in blue; findings that had minimal (but interesting) variations were highlighted in yellow; findings with significantly higher-than-average variation were highlighted in green; findings with significantly lower-than-average variation were highlighted in red. Actors were compared via two points of cross-referencing: firstly, the findings were examined by comparing the relative frequencies of different actors against their corresponding overall relative percentage. Secondly, the findings were examined *between* actors for comparative purposes.

Politicians had only one higher-than-average relative percentage compared to other actors: Legality, Rights and Govt. This finding was to be expected, as this grouping presented explicit anti-trans arguments pertaining to legislative contexts, such as passing bills that would impact trans rights in Canada.

MSM Newspapers had a higher relative percentage for Gender Roles and Heteronormativity compared to other actors. Qualitatively, it was observed that numerous articles contained explicit arguments that reified the sex/gender binary. Much of this discourse centered around the denial of trans self-identity and/or positioning it against 'biological truth', especially when presenting trans self-identity claims as a falsehood and/or an absurdity.

Think Tanks contained several relative percentages that were high compared to other actors: Legality, Rights and Govt, Gender Roles and Heteronormativity, Women and Children, Racism and Immigration, and Culture, Ideology and Religion. Think Tanks presented a variety of legal, cultural, and religious explicit arguments. They positioned trans rights as in contention with human/civil rights. They positioned trans people as 'threatening' to women, children, and families. They discussed the preservation of 'Christian values' and freedom of religion as being 'threatened' by trans rights. They positioned the sex/gender binary as 'biologically real'. They also positioned trans people/pro-trans actors as 'racist/intolerant' of anti-trans beliefs.

Alt-Right New Media contained many relative percentages that were high compared to other actors: LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality, Women and Children, Racism and Immigration, and Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship. As with the Think Tanks grouping, the Alt-Right New Media grouping contained many explicit arguments, such as 'protecting' women and children from 'harm'; critiquing the 'racism/intolerance' of trans people/pro-trans actors; 'speaking out'

against the perceived deplatforming and censorship of anti-trans beliefs; and/or arguing that transness was (hyper)sexual in nature.

There were three actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality; Gender Roles and Heteronormativity; Medical Intervention; Women and Children; Racism and Immigration; Ability and Ableism; Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship), MSM Newspapers (Legality, Rights and Govt; Culture, Ideology and Religion), and Think Tanks (LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality; Medical Intervention).

6.4: Explicit Sub-Arguments – Synthesized Findings

Examining the breakdown of the data by explicit argument category has revealed a wealth of knowledge. If one were to 'drill down' even further to the granularity of sub-arguments, could even greater nuance be discovered? What specific discourses were the most prevalent? What sub-arguments were most represented in the data? What sub-arguments were most prevalent by time period? What sub-arguments were most prevalent when analyzed by discursive type of actor? This section will answer these questions.

For the sake of brevity, this section contains the key findings from the analysis of each sub-argument category. The sub-arguments were examined by overall relative percentage, by time period, and by discursive type of actor. The full analysis in prose (including the tables for visual reference) are available in Appendix 5 for interested readers.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.1 – 'Legality, Rights and Govt'

- Freedom of Speech (64%), Silencing (54%), and Parental Rights (51%) were the largest sub-arguments for this argument category.
- The Parental Rights (15% to 69%) sub-argument increased dramatically over time as anti-trans discourse shifted toward a child-centric focus in the late 2010s and early 2020s.
- The Rights sub-argument decreased dramatically over time (55% to 7%), which was surprising. Explicit arguments that positioned trans rights as conflicting with other human/civil rights were less frequent then anticipated in the 2020s.

- MSM Newspapers had high numbers for the Parental Rights (63%) sub-argument. They reported on legislative, political, and/or sociocultural events pertaining to this topic. Think Tanks had high numbers for Freedom of Speech (83%) and Silencing (83%). They argued that trans rights infringed upon Canadians' freedom of speech/expression. They also argued that trans rights were utilized to silence anti-trans beliefs. Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Parental Rights (65%), presenting a variety of legislative, political, and/or sociocultural arguments that supported/promoted 'parental rights' movements.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.2 – 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality'

- Sexual Harm (54%), Hypersexual (42%), and Bathroom Danger (35%) were the largest sub-arguments from this argument category.
- Sexual Harm (33% to 69%), Hypersexual (28% to 51%), and Porn (4% to 18%) all increased dramatically over time. These arguments portrayed trans people as sexually predatory and/or maliciously seeking to sexually harm to others.
- Surprisingly, Bathroom Danger (41% to 31%) decreased somewhat over time. While these arguments may have been qualitatively memorable, they did not quantitatively increase over time.
- Politicians had high numbers for Bathroom Danger (91%). They argued against trans women entering women's washrooms on the basis of 'safety' frequently. Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Sexual Harm (66%), Hypersexual (57%), Porn (20%), and Venues (11%) compared to other actors. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with transness as a (hyper)sexual phenomenon, as sexually 'deviant', and/or a sign of violent sexual disorder. They also argued against transness in public venues and/or LGBTQ+ venues and events in general.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.3 – 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity'

- Gender Binary (93%), Cis As Normal (92%), and Straight As Normal (23%) were the largest sub-arguments for this argument category. The reification of the sex/gender binary and heterosexuality were persistent throughlines across the dataset.
- The Cis Queer (10%) sub-argument was surprisingly prevalent. Anti-trans actors made homonormative/homonationalistic arguments positioning cisgender queer people positively in comparison to trans people.
- Straight As Normal (19% to 26%) and Cis Queer (5% to 15%) both increased slightly over time.
- MSM Newspapers had high numbers for Cis Queer (15%) compared to other actors. This grouping tended to make homonormative/homonationalistic arguments in support of cisgender queer people when compared against trans people. Think Tanks had higher numbers for Gender Binary (100%) and Cis As Normal (100%). This grouping reified the sex/gender binary as 'natural' and 'biologically real' frequently and explicitly argued that cisgender self-identity was 'normal'.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.4 – 'Medical Intervention'

- HRT, Etc. (86%), Transition (47%), and Gender Dysphoria (25%) were the largest sub-arguments from this argument category. Pathologizing anti-trans discourses have been re-invigorated as the anti-trans backlash has grown in recent years.

- Detransition (23%) was lower than expected, given how prolific this argument has seemingly become based on qualitative observations. However, this may be due to the relative newness of this talking point entering into anti-trans discourse only recently.
- Every sub-argument except for Conversion Therapy (10% to 5%) increased dramatically over time; medicalized explicit arguments seemed to have become highly prevalent in recent years.
- Politicians had high numbers for Transition (56%) and Detransition (56%) compared to other actors. This grouping argued that medical transition was needlessly invasive and/or that detransition and regret were problematic outcomes of gender affirmative care. Think Tanks had high numbers for Transition (65%) and Gender Dysphoria (35%) compared to other actors. This grouping argued that negative outcomes and complications associated with medical transition were unacceptable, and/or questioned/rejected gender dysphoria claims (especially among children and youth). Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for HRT, Etc. (93%), Transition (73%), Gender Dysphoria (37%), and Conversion Therapy (13%). Similar to Think Tanks, this grouping argued that gender affirmative care was medically harmful, and/or portrayed hormone replacement therapy as 'unnecessary'. They also explicitly supported conversion therapy as necessary for those who sought a 'cure' to trans 'conditions'.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.5 – 'Women and Children'

- All sub-arguments from this argument category were highly prevalent in the dataset. This argument category demonstrated the massive proliferation of arguments centered around interest groups such as women, children, and families.
- Every sub-argument (except for Anti-Woman) increased dramatically over time. These arguments portrayed anti-trans actors as champions of women's, children's, and families' rights. They also portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as actively harming women, children, and families by supporting trans rights.
- In terms of actors, Politicians had high numbers for Hurt Children (64%) and Hurt Families (36%). This grouping portrayed trans people/pro-trans rights as 'harming' children and families via their support for trans rights. MSM Newspapers had high numbers for Anti-Woman (34%). This grouping contained many cases arguing that trans rights were detrimental to 'women's sex-based rights' in Canada. Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for all sub-arguments within this category, except for Anti-Woman. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with trans people/pro-trans actors as harming children and families, as well as portraying anti-trans actors as working in the interests of (cisgender) women, children, and families.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.6 – 'Racism and Immigration'

- The Racist (98%) and Intolerant (76%) sub-arguments were highly prevalent, although the argument category itself was relatively small. Anti-Racist (15%) and Tolerant (13%) were only somewhat prevalent. Anti-trans actors argued that trans people/pro-trans actors were 'racist/intolerant' of 'other cultures' that articulated anti-trans beliefs.
- Both Racist (80% to 95%) and Anti-Racist (10% to 20%) increased over time. It seems that arguments that portrayed anti-trans actors positively as well as arguments that portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors negatively became more prevalent over time.

- Alt-Right New Media had higher rates for Racist (100%) and Intolerant (83%), arguing that trans people/pro-trans actors were 'anti-multicultural' regarding 'other' cultures' beliefs.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.7 – 'Ability and Ableism'

- Mentally Ill (82%) and Social Contagion (41%) were the most prevalent sub-arguments in this argument category. Transness was often discussed as a mental illness and/or as a 'communicable' phenomenon, especially among children and youth.
- Mentally Ill (57% to 100%) and Social Contagion (29% to 50%) both increased dramatically over time.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media both had higher numbers for Social Contagion (57% and 67%, respectively). These groupings were especially preoccupied with the 'virality' of transness and finding ways to 'stop the spread', especially among children and youth.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.8 – 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship'

- Propagandists (41%), Censoring (40%), Wokeism (28%), and Fight Back (27%) were the largest sub-arguments for this argument category. Explicit arguments portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as 'propagandists', as supporting 'woke ideology', and/or as censoring 'opposing viewpoints'. Additionally, calls to action to 'fight back' against pro-trans discourse was prevalent throughout the dataset.
- The Fight Back (2% to 43%), Liars (4% to 10%), Propagandists (20% to 54%), Hateful (2% to 10%), and Wokeism (16% to 35%) sub-arguments all increased notably over time. Arguments that portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors negatively, and/or calls to 'fight back' became more frequent in the 2020s.
- Think Tanks had high numbers for Censoring (68%), Wokeism (36%), Special Treatment (27%), and Bad Faith (18%). This grouping explicitly argued that trans people/pro-trans actors sought out 'special treatment'. They argued that trans people/pro-trans actors did not approach trans discourses in good faith. They described trans rights and 'wokeism' negatively and as detrimental to Canada's culture. Lastly, they argued that trans people/pro-trans actors censored 'opposing viewpoints'. Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Fight Back (53%). This grouping was especially vocal in their calls to action to 'fight back' against pro-trans discourse in Canadian culture and society.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.9 – 'Common Talking Points'

- Ruin Sports (81%) was the largest sub-argument for this argument category. Trans athletes were portrayed as 'ruining' (cisgender) women's sports due to their 'physical/biological advantages'. They were also portrayed as 'dangerous' to cisgender (women) athletes by sharing public spaces such as locker rooms and washrooms.
- Policing Bodies (10%) and Not At School (10%) has surprisingly small relative percentages.
- Only Ruin Sports (50% to 95%) increased over time and did so dramatically. This explicit argument became the most widely disseminated/produced sub-argument from this category by the 2020s.

- Politicians had high numbers for Policing Bodies (33%) when discussing the 'necessity' of managing trans bodies via policy and legislation. Think Tanks discussed Not At School (67%) at high numbers, arguing for 'school choice' and parents having greater control over school curricula. Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Ruin Sports (100%). They argued that trans athletes participating in sport was 'dangerous', 'meaningless', and/or 'unfair' to the (cisgender) athletes participating.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.10 – 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'

- Pro-Religion (52%), Anti-Religion (37%), and Christian Values (27%) were the largest sub-arguments for this argument category.
- Surprisingly, Traditional Values (7%) and Culture Wars (5%) were largely absent from the dataset.
- Anti-Religion (22% to 47%) and Pro-Religion (44% to 58%) both increased notably over time. Anti-trans actors were portrayed as protecting religious freedoms. Trans people/pro-trans actors were portrayed as threatening religious freedoms by supporting trans rights.
- MSM Newspapers had high numbers for Culture Wars (14%), discussing trans rights as divisive and/or polarizing. Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Pro-Religion (67%), Anti-Religion (50%), Christian Values (38%), and Commies (13%). They explicitly argued that anti-trans actors sought to protect religious freedoms. They explicitly argued that trans people/pro-trans actors were stifling religious freedom in Canada. They also linked transness to non-capitalistic forms of socioeconomic organizing and discussed this negatively.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments

- Human Rights (18%) and Wokeism (14%) were the largest sub-arguments for this argument category, but they were only present in moderate numbers.
- Wokeism doubled over time (7% to 16%), demonstrating the rates at which this line of argumentation has increased. 'Wokeism' was often portrayed as an oppressive form of censorship that stifled 'controversial' political speech.
- Human Rights (13% to 19%) and Schools (2% to 6%) increased over time.
- Politicians had high numbers for Human Rights (33%), Legislation (27%), and Conversion Therapy (17%). This grouping discussed conversion therapy, often describing it as an important therapeutic tool that should be available to the public as a matter of personal choice.
- Alt-Right New Media had high relative percentages for Wokeism (37%), Sexualization (10%), and Indoctrination (8%). They critiqued/condemned concepts, groups, and organizations perceived as 'woke' and/or dogmatic, as well as anything sexually 'explicit/obscene'.

Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments

- (Pro) Human Rights (16%) was the most prevalent sub-category. The corresponding arguments often centered on the importance of preserving human/civil rights.
- Only (Pro) Prisons changed over time (8% to 2%), decreasing slightly in the 2020s. Prisons were portrayed as ultimately important (if somewhat flawed) institutions that served an important sociocultural and political role in Canadian life.
- Politicians and MSM Newspapers both had slightly prevalent relative percentages for (Pro) Human Rights (20% and 21%, respectively). Politicians discussed human/civil rights and advocated for their preservation. MSM Newspapers reported on human rights in a similar manner, often featuring articles that discussed the importance of protecting human rights from erosion or backsliding.

Absolute and Relative Frequency of 'Comparisons to the US'

- It was surprising to discover that Comparisons to the US were largely absent from the dataset (7%). A greater focus on comparisons between Canada's anti-trans backlash and the one taking place in the US was expected. Unlike the hypotheses, there were no notable variations to report via-a-via the cross-reference of these findings by time period or by actor.

6.5: Conclusions

This chapter has mapped and surveyed the explicit arguments and explicit sub-arguments present in anti-trans discourses in Canada over a 23-year period. It sought to answer the following research questions: What explicit arguments, sub-arguments, and arguments about other topics do anti-trans actors in Canada utilize? With what specific explicit arguments do anti-trans actors in Canada engage? What, if any, comparisons are made between Canada and the United States regarding anti-trans discourse? Several interesting discoveries were made and discussed. The sub-section below will discuss some key implications and expand upon the qualitative analyses below.

6.5.1: Implications

Rights-Based and Legislative Arguments

Rights-based and legislative arguments were widespread in the dataset. Anti-trans actors positioned trans rights as being in contention with, or even in opposition to, other human/civil

rights per Canada's Constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As such, they often portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as pushing for legislative and/or juridical changes to Canada's legal systems that would inhibit the rights and freedoms of its citizens. This was framed as a possibility via advocacy for trans rights at the expense of the majority of Canadians. Another common line of argumentation centered on 'parental rights', wherein parental authority over children's wellbeing was given precedence to children's bodily autonomy and physical safety. This often manifested in parental entitlement[149] with property-like paradigms that conceptualized children as 'belonging' to their parents. Additionally, proponents of 'parental rights' often portrayed children using different names and pronouns in scholastic settings without parental knowledge or consent as secretive, especially when teachers and school staff and administration are aware of these changes. This discourse evoked cultural anxieties pertaining to adults abusing children in secret. Portraying 'pronoun bills' as 'protecting parental rights' reframed arguments about children and youth maintaining autonomy and safety within the scholastic environment as detrimental to parental consent and familial stability/unity.

Pathologizing Medical Discourses

Medicalized discourses that pathologized transness were widespread in the dataset. A large bulk of the explicit arguments pertained to HRT, especially in the context of children being administered this treatment to alleviate symptoms of gender dysphoria. Numerous frameworks were at play, and they often supported one another in interwoven arguments. Firstly, HRT was often called into question as a potentially dangerous, unsafe, medically understudied, and/or 'experimental' treatment, especially for children. Transitioning was often portrayed negatively. Complications, associated risks, regret rates, and/or side effects were all highlighted as

[149] Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Bower-Brown, 2024; Anderson et al., 2025

undesirable outcomes of pursuing gender affirmative care. Anti-trans actors called into question its efficacy and the 'cost/reward' balance of administering HRT to children and the subsequent, potentially lifelong 'consequences'. They also emphasized detransitioners to lend credence to these arguments. Accounts with highly emotional language featuring detransitioners who regretted their transition were prevalent – especially in evoking the permanency of choices like surgical intervention. These accounts served to subtly reinforce cisheteronormative frameworks regarding the 'naturalness' of cisgender identity, as well as to frame transitioning at a young age as leading to regret later in life. Many of these arguments also interplayed with discourses that delegitimatized, downplayed, and/or outright rejected gender dysphoria claims; it was often portrayed as a trauma response, a misplaced diagnosis for anxiety or depression, and/or a 'fad' among children and youth searching for community and belonging. Rates of desistence for gender dysphoria were also often cited, and children who were not 'encouraged' to identify with their gender dysphoria were often portrayed as 'outgrowing' their trans identity and re-integrating into a cisgender identity later in life. (This was typically portrayed as *the* aspirational goal for children and youth experiencing gender dysphoria.) All these discourses together portrayed gender affirmative care as pathologizing and/or medically unnecessary and called into question the legitimacy of treatment options for trans people seeking gender affirmative care.

Women, Children, and Families: Interest Group Arguments

Paternalistic arguments that centered around 'protecting' women, children, and families from 'harm' (i.e., trans people, transness, trans rights, etc.) were widely prevalent in the dataset. Anti-trans actors portrayed themselves as operating in these groups' best interests. They often framed protestations to trans women accessing women's bathrooms, prisons, and sporting events as protecting (cisgender) women's 'sex-based rights', as well as prioritizing the comfort and

safety of (cisgender) women. These discourses relied upon several assumptions. Firstly, they presumed that victims of sexual assault were always cisgender women, and that the assault was always perpetrated by a (presumed) man, which consisted of non-consensual penetration. This framing was utilized to rationalize 'protection' discourses, which were also applied to children. Children were portrayed as impressionable and/or vulnerable to abuse, and transness was portrayed as potentially harmful to their (cisheteronormative) development. Women and children experiencing 'harm' in this manner also raised concerns and/or inflamed cultural anxieties pertaining to damaged familial cohesion and/or safety of the (nuclear) family unit. Sexual violence could cause disunity and/or stress within the family unit, as well as create opportunities for women and children to 'choose' transness later in life. Thus, 'protecting' these groups from the 'dangers' of transness was presented as an important, feminist, 'pro-family' cause. By contrast, these groups often framed trans people/pro-trans actors were either ignorantly or maliciously working toward goals and agendas that would 'harm' women, children, and the (nuclear) family unit by creating opportunities to 'expose' them to transness. If trans women were permitted into public washrooms, then (cisgender) women might be assaulted. If transness were taught in schools, then children may become 'confused' and experience distress as to their self-identity and sexed/gendered 'reality'. Anti-trans actors therefore argued against transness/trans people/trans rights as 'harmful' to these groups.

CHAPTER 7: IMPLICIT ARGUMENTS AND IMPLICIT SUB-ARGUMENTS

Abstract

This chapter examines the most prevalent implicit arguments and sub-arguments utilized by anti-trans actors in Canada. It also examines arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro- and anti-trans arguments. The dataset was examined via MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis). Sourcing various newspapers, think tanks, right-wing media outlets, and Hansard transcripts, this dataset was comprised of cases collected between January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. Utilizing a custom coding dictionary and QDA Miner, a macro-analysis was generated and then qualitatively examined.

Some notable findings were: 1) Discourses portraying transness as inherently (hyper)sexual and therefore incompatible with public life proliferated in the early 2020s; 2) The reification of heteronormative sexual/gendered relations and the sex/gender binary were widespread; and 3) Discourses pertaining to the perceived censorship, silencing, and/or deplatforming of anti-trans beliefs proliferated.

7.1: Introduction

Anti-trans discourse has become increasingly widespread in Canadian news, politics, and legislative processes. Numerous implicit forms of argumentation have been utilized to support anti-trans claims.

This chapter examines the implicit arguments anti-trans actors have employed. It also examines the results of the coding from the 'Arguments About Other Topics' section for implicit argumentation. 500 cases were selected and examined from Canadian legacy media sources, Hansard transcripts, think tanks, and right-wing media outlets. A custom coding dictionary was created in QDA Miner to code these cases. A systematic MM (mixed methods) research design

was implemented to map and survey anti-trans discourse in Canada over an extended period; from January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023.

7.2: Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Chapter Structure

The research questions this chapter will answer are as follows:

1. What implicit arguments, sub-arguments, and arguments about other topics do anti-trans actors in Canada utilize?
2. With what specific implicit arguments do anti-trans actors in Canada engage?

The objectives of this chapter are to determine what implicit arguments are discussed in anti-trans discourse. I hypothesized that during the 2000s, implicit arguments would be focused on medicalized and/or morality-centric discourses.[150] It was anticipated that newspapers would be the driving actors from this period. In the 2010s, a broader spectrum of legal, medical, social, and political arguments was anticipated to proliferate as pro-trans movements gained momentum and circulated widely in the mainstream culture.[151] All actors were expected to demonstrate an increased engagement with implicit anti-trans arguments in response to this cultural shift. In the 2020s, another shift was anticipated as 'parental rights', child-centric trans rights discussions, and/or 'women's sex-based rights'[152] discourses began to proliferate. By this time, all actors were expected to have robust implicit articulations of anti-trans discourses.

This chapter explores these questions and hypotheses and shares the findings in the order set out below.

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[150] Prosser, 1998; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005
[151] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Devor and Haefele-Thomas, 2019; Butler, 2024
[152] Gill-Peterson, 2018; Buntain et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Amery, 2023; Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Howansky et al., 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; Goktas, 2023; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

In section 7.3, an overview of the implicit arguments that have characterized anti-trans discourse in Canada will be provided. The results of the cross-referencing analyses of the implicit arguments discussed will also be presented, highlighting any notable and surprising findings that emerged when the overall results were broken down by time and type of discursive actor.

Section 7.4 provides a bullet-point list synthesizing the results of the sub-arguments breakdown and the 'other arguments' breakdown. The sub-argument results were granularly examined from the argument categories into specific codes to offer more concrete information on the frequency breakdown within each category. The 'other arguments' codes were similarly broken down to sub-arguments for a more granular unit of analysis. All of these findings were cross-referenced by time period and actor and highlighted any key findings across those dimensions. The full set of tables and long-form prose analyses are provided in Appendix 6 for readers who wish to read the entire breakdown.

In sections 7.3 and 7.4, the most salient findings will be and provided and discussed, with short explanations as to why they are worth noting. A more robust discussion of the broader potential implications of these findings can be found in the chapter conclusion.

7.3: Implicit Arguments

Understanding the argumentations of previously understudied bodies of discourse is a central pre-requisite to understanding 'what' a discourse is talking about and for surveying direction-setting elements at work. This is especially relevant for anti-trans discourse in Canada, as there has been much speculation but no robust studies that have determined the main explicit arguments of this discourse.

As such, this dissertation tracked and analyzed both the main implicit arguments and sub-arguments of discussion in Canadian anti-trans discourse between 2000 and 2023. 'Implicit arguments' were defined in a very straightforward way – i.e. as the main argument(s) and/or subject matter(s) that were implicitly embedded in each individual case. But what constitutes an 'implicit argument'? How does one operationalize this idea into actionable data points for which one could reliably code? Additionally, what were the justifications for what was considered an 'implicit argument' in the first place? These theoretical considerations will be addressed before proceeding with the breakdown of the data.

Implicit arguments require theoretical work to operationalize. This dissertation relied on van Dijk's concept of the Ideological Square[153] to first determine the dimensions of how discourse can be structured. This concept details positive self-descriptions and negative other-descriptions for in-groups and out-groups, respectively. Van Dijk states that ideologies are often organized by a "positive self-schema";[154] when examining ideological structures of discourse from an in-group/out-group polarization framework, there are typically four types of emphases. The first is positive self-descriptions; the second is an emphasis on negative other-descriptions; the third is the de-emphasis of negative self-descriptions; and the final axis is de-emphasizing positive other-descriptions. This Ideological Square was employed by closely reading the cases for its presence via the following linguistic devices: the use of pronouns; lexical choice; and syntactic mitigation.

Pronouns were analyzed for their utilization in cases to implicitly construct arguments. Pronoun use was employed to establish trans people/pro-trans actors as 'other' and belonging to the out-group, while positioning anti-trans actors/cisgender people as 'the norm' and belonging

[153] Van Dijk, 2016
[154] Van Dijk, 2016, p. 72

to the in-group. An example of this pronoun use can be found in this quote from an Action4Canada article: "In this report *we* will focus on how *they* are sexualizing *our* children, right under *our* noses" (emphasis added).[155] The use of pronouns here clearly designates Action4Canada authors and readers as members of the in-group, with 'our' children as belonging with/to this group. Trans people are designated as the out-group. Within the context of this article, a clearly dichotomous categorisation of 'us' and 'them' is employed throughout; the 'us' category is described positively and the 'them' category is described negatively.

The second linguistic device, lexical choice, centers around the use of adjectives. These are designed to positively emphasize the in-groups' ideological virtues and to highlight the out-groups' ideological vices. They are also employed to de-emphasize unfavourable in-group traits and de-emphasize positive out-group traits. Here is a passage from a True North article that illustrates this: "The Conservative Party of Canada's national convention in Quebec City saw considerable pushback against … *rampant* woke ideologies…" (emphasis added).[156] The use of the term 'rampant' here implies that 'woke ideology' is out of control, orchestrated by the out-group. This is portrayed negatively. This is contrasted to party leader Pierre Pollivre's statement that Québecois people "[should] not apologize for their culture, language or history. They celebrate it. All *Canadians* should do the same" (emphasis added).[157] The article frames celebrating Québec culture as important, and integral to Canada's broader culture. Poilievre, Québec culture, and Canadian culture are portrayed positively and as members and/or representatives of the in-group.

[155] N.A., n.d.
[156] Cantin-Nantel, 2023a
[157] Cantin-Nantel, 2023a

The third linguistic device was to analyze the syntactic mitigation. This device was employed by examining the grammatical construction of sentences. For example, in a True North article, the author states that, "[a]ntifa swarmed True North's Harrison Faulkner while covering the event".[158] The use of the term 'swarmed' here is meant to indicate a violent mob, garnering sympathy for Faulkner (a named, individual, in-group member) and sentiments of hostility toward 'antifa' (the faceless, aggressive, collective out-group). Despite the fact that no violence was explicitly described in this sentence, the used of the term 'swarmed' evokes violent imagery, which further serves to dehumanize the out-group. In another example, the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms reported on a trans woman's accusations of discrimination from a beauty pageant. In explaining the logistics of allowing a trans woman to participate, the article states: "These women would also *be seen by* Yaniv in various states of undress…" (emphasis added).[159] The use of the passive voice in the context of the article portrays Yaniv (a trans woman) as a sexual aggressor, and the (cisgender) women contestants as hapless victims.

By structuring this analysis via the Ideological Square and these three linguistic devices, implicit argument and sub-argument coding questions were coded to determine when, how, and in what ways language was utilized to implicitly portray various groups positively or negatively.

The coding dictionary was designed to capture as many of these implicit arguments as possible. In the pre-reading and piloting stage, 11 broad categories of implicit arguments were created, based on thematic identified closeness and/or relevance. The arguments were:

[158] Cantin-Nantel, 2023b
[159] Carpay, 2020

1. Legality, Rights and Govt: Arguments associated with trans rights, 'parental rights', freedom of speech/expression, and arguments for or against politicians/the government pertaining to their stances on trans rights.
2. LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality: Arguments associated with LGBTQ+ venues/subculture, drag shows, (hyper)sexuality, sex work, and/or pornography.
3. Gender Roles and Heteronormativity: Arguments associated with the sex/gender binary, gender roles, and/or heteronormativity and homonormativity.
4. Medical Intervention: Arguments associated with science and biology, gender dysphoria, (de)transitioning, and/or hormone replacement therapy (HRT).
5. Women and Children: Arguments associated with women's rights, single-sex spaces, protecting these interest groups from harm, and/or harm towards women, children, and families.
6. Racism and Immigration: Arguments associated with intolerance and anti-immigrant sentiment, or else with multiculturalism and pro-immigrant sentiment.
7. Ability and Ableism: Arguments associated with exploitation of mentally ill people, mental illness, and/or transness as a 'social contagion'.
8. Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship: Arguments associated with censorship, lying/deception, indoctrination, and/or 'speaking out' about/against injustice.
9. Common Talking Points: Arguments associated with teaching transness in schools, trans people participating in sport, and/or policing trans bodies.
10. Culture, Ideology and Religion: Arguments associated with support for 'traditionalism', capitalism, and Western/Canadian culture, or condemning liberalism and/or socialism/communism.
11. Arguments About Other Topics: Secondary/supplementary arguments. These arguments appeared in conjunction with either pro- or anti-trans arguments. These arguments will be examined in their own chapter section.

In each case, every instance of an implicit argument was assigned a code; the results were then aggregated by case. Trends of the most frequent implicit arguments were then examined via macro analysis and qualitative observation. Implicit arguments were also directly compared to explicit results to determine when, how, and under what circumstances explicit and/or implicit articulations of anti-trans arguments were utilized. What data emerged? The results of the analyses are as follows.

7.3.1: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Implicit Argument Presence – Overall

The absolute and relative frequency of the various implicit arguments within this discourse were examined. It was believed that the results of this analysis would offer an important window

into some of the main preoccupations of Canadian anti-trans discourse within the dataset. The hypotheses were as follows:

- The Legality, Rights and Govt argument category was expected to be highly prevalent.[160] This hypothesis was based on the literature, as rights-based discourses have become an important avenue for advancing anti-trans legislative efforts in recent years.
- The LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality argument category was expected to be highly prevalent. Discourses portraying transness as inherently (hyper)sexual and/or 'dangerous'[161] were prevalent throughout the literature review and thus were expected in the dataset as well.
- The Gender Roles and Heteronormativity argument category was expected to be highly prevalent.[162] The reification of the sex/gender binary was highly prevalent throughout the literature review and thus was expected in the dataset.
- The Women and Children argument category was expected to be highly prevalent.[163] These interest groups have become focal points for many anti-trans arguments in recent years. Thus, it was expected that this category would be highly prevalent.
- The Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship argument category was expected to be highly prevalent. The literature[164] revealed that trans people/pro-trans actors were often portrayed as 'deceptive' and/or 'propagandists', and so these arguments were also expected in the dataset.
- The Common Talking Points argument category was expected to be highly prevalent.[165] Based on the literature, discussions pertaining to policing trans bodies, teaching transness in schools, and/or trans women's participation in sport were expected to be highly prevalent.

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[160] Spade, 2015; George, 2019; Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Nash and Browne, 2020; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

[161] Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

[162] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Howansky et al., 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; Goktas, 2023; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

[163] Gill-Peterson, 2018; Buntain et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Amery, 2023; Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Howansky et al., 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; Goktas, 2023; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

[164] Serano, 2007; Bettcher, 2007; Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al., 2025; Colliver et al., 2021; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

[165] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

- The Culture, Ideology and Religion argument category was expected to be highly prevalent.[166] Implicit discourses that privileged preserving 'Christian values' and/or Western cultural hegemony were expected to be important implicit arguments.
- The Medical Intervention, Racism and Immigration, and Ability and Ableism argument categories were all expected to be somewhat prominent. Most of these discussions were expected to be overt rather than covert.

The table below displays the overall distribution of arguments within the dataset.

Table 7.3.1 – Implicit Arguments Present in Cases

Total Cases		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
3.1 Legality, Rights and Govt	212	42%
3.2 LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality	165	33%
3.3 Gender Roles and Heteronormativity	326	65%
3.4 Medical Intervention	103	21%
3.5 Women and Children	308	62%
3.6 Racism and Immigration	81	16%
3.7 Ability and Ableism	47	9%
3.8 Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship	306	61%
3.9 Common Talking Points	58	12%
3.10 Culture, Ideology and Religion	208	42%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

The findings have been highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were interesting due to their prominence were highlighted in green; findings that were interesting due to their absence were highlighted in red; findings that were interesting for other reasons were highlighted in yellow; and any findings that were in line with the hypotheses were left uncoloured (white).

[166] De Jong, 2020; Braunstein, 2022; Goetz and Mayer, 2023; Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al, 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

Three major findings emerged from the data. Gender Roles and Heteronormativity (65%), Women and Children (62%), Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship (61%), Legality, Rights and Govt (42%), and Culture, Ideology and Religion (42%) were the largest implicit argument categories. Secondly, it was discovered that LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality (33%) and Medical Intervention (21%) were present, but at lower rates. Lastly, Common Talking Points (12%) was unexpectedly absent from the dataset.

In terms of the findings pertaining to the most dominant topics: It was anticipated that Gender Roles and Heteronormativity, Women and Children, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, Legality, Rights and Govt, and Culture, Ideology and Religion would be extremely prevalent in the dataset. This expectation was based on the review of the literature, pre-reading, pilot testing results. Implicit arguments centered around the reification of the sex/gender binary, traditional gender roles, and/or cisheteronormative cultural frameworks were strong preoccupations for anti-trans actors.[167] Arguments that pertained to 'protection' for women and children against the 'harms' of trans people/transness/trans rights were also prevalent. Rights-based arguments that positioned trans rights as detrimental to other human/civil rights,[168] arguments pertaining to anti-trans views being deplatformed and/or censored,[169] and/or arguments pertaining to the preservation of 'Christian values', 'traditionalism', and/or Western cultural hegemony[170] were also prevalent throughout the dataset. Compared to the explicit argument categories, far more implicit argument categories were present in large numbers. This was unexpected and

[167] Hotine, 2021; Platero, 2023; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; McIntyre, 1993; Spade, 2015; JusticeTrans, 2024; DeGagné, 2021; Ganshorn, 2023; Ashley, 2024
[168] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Butler, 2024; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[169] MacDonald, 2020; McKelvey et al., 2022; Momani and Deschamps, 2021; Montigny, 2025
[170] MacDonald, 2020; McKelvey et al., 2022; Momani and Deschamps, 2021; Montigny, 2025

demonstrates a fascinating juxtaposition between overt and covert lines of argumentation that anti-trans actors employ.

Next, Medical Intervention was only somewhat prevalent, as was anticipated. The majority of arguments pertaining to trans healthcare and/or gender affirmative care were generally explicitly stated, rather than implicitly suggested. It was also discovered that the LGBTQ+ Events, Drag, Sexuality argument category was present in lower numbers than anticipated. Compared to the numbers for the corresponding explicit argument category, which was roughly equivalent, it seems that this line of argumentation is not as prevalent overall as I had anticipated.

Finally, it was quite surprising to discover that Common Talking Points was largely absent from the dataset. A much higher frequency was expected than merely 12%. Just as with the explicit argument categories, this implicit category was also low. Despite these talking points have a strong qualitative impact, these arguments seemed to be, overall, rather absent from the dataset.

7.3.2: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Implicit Argument Presence – By Time Period

To what degree were there any significant differences in these findings over time? To answer this question, the relative distribution of implicit arguments was analyzed by decade and then compared for any notable differences and trends. The hypotheses were as follows:

- The Common Talking Points argument category was expected to be the largest category of the 2000s. Implicit arguments portraying trans topics as a 'morality issue' were expected to be the most frequent variety.[171]
- The Medical Intervention, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, and Culture, Ideology and Religion argument categories were expected to be the largest argument categories of the 2010s. Per the literature, these implicit arguments seemed to become more prevalent as mainstream awareness for trans people/trans rights grew.[172]
- The Legality, Rights and Govt, Gender Roles and Heteronormativity, Medical Intervention, Women and Children, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, Common

[171] Prosser, 1998; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005; Serano, 2007; Bettcher, 2007
[172] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Butler, 2024; De Jong, 2020; Braunstein, 2022; Goetz and Mayer, 2023; Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al, 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

Talking Points, and Culture, Ideology and Religion argument categories were expected to be the largest argument categories of the 2020. The literature review revealed a variety of legal, social, political, interest group, and religious-focused arguments. These were expected to be prevalent in the dataset.[173]

The results are outlined in the table below.

Table 7.3.2 – Distribution of Implicit Arguments by Time Period

		2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Total Cases	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**0**	**0%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100%**
3.1 Legality, Rights and Govt	212	0	0%	93	56%	119	36%
3.2 LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality	165	0	0%	71	43%	94	28%
3.3 Gender Roles and Heteronormativity	326	0	0%	140	85%	186	56%
3.4 Medical Intervention	103	0	0%	44	27%	59	18%
3.5 Women and Children	308	0	0%	88	53%	220	66%
3.6 Racism and Immigration	81	0	0%	30	18%	51	15%
3.7 Ability and Ableism	47	0	0%	26	16%	21	6%
3.8 Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship	306	0	0%	114	69%	192	57%
3.9 Common Talking Points	58	0	0%	39	24%	19	6%
3.10 Culture, Ideology and Religion	208	0	0%	76	46%	132	39%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

[173] Trans PULSE Canada, 2023; Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; De Jong, 2020; Braunstein, 2022; Goetz and Mayer, 2023; Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al, 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026; Goktas, 2023; Howansky et al., 2021; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were stable and expected were highlighted in blue; findings that were stable and interesting were highlighted in yellow; findings with significant increases were highlighted in green; findings with significance decreases were highlighted in red.

This table contained several unexpected findings. Firstly, it was incredibly surprising to discover that only one category quantitatively increased over time; Women and Children. By contrast, the majority of the argument categories decreased over time, and rather drastically.

The Women and Children argument category increased between the 2010s and the 2020s, confirming qualitative observations that these interest groups became 'rallying points' in the proliferation of anti-trans discourse. It was noted that a growing number of implicit arguments portrayed trans people/transness/trans rights as 'harmful' to women, children, and families.

However, this implicit argument category was the exception. By contrast, most other implicit argument categories decreased dramatically over time. These numbers revealed something important about the nature of anti-trans discourse in Canada when compared to the explicit argument category results. When examining these discoveries side-by-side, a fascinating 'story' about the nature of how anti-trans discourse has evolved begins to emerge. Overall, it may not necessarily be that explicit arguments have generally *increased,* but that dissembling/subtle forms of argumentation seemed to have *decreased,* which might make explicit forms of argumentation seem that much more apparent. The contrast between the trends of the explicit and implicit arguments analyzed here is a fascinating one, and highlights the necessity of empirically examining anti-trans discourse in Canada to understand its dimensions.

7.3.3: Absolute and Relative Frequency of Implicit Argument Presence – By Actor

This sub-section will address any significant differences in the findings between discursive type of actor. Did some actors engage with certain forms of argument significantly more than others? How did actor types compare against one another? To answer these questions, the relative distribution of the main categories was analyzed by type of actor to identify any notable differences and trends. The hypotheses were as follows:

- Politicians were expected to have prevalent numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt, Women and Children, and Culture, Ideology and Religion argument categories[174]. A variety of legal/rights-based, interest group, and/or sociocultural implicit arguments were anticipated for this grouping when discussing various bills and/or policies pertaining to trans people/trans rights.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have prevalent numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt, Medical Intervention, and Women and Children argument categories. This grouping reported on sociopolitical and/or legal trends, breaking news events, and/or topics of interest pertaining to trans people, and implicit arguments centered around these topics were anticipated.
- Think Tanks were expected to have prevalent numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, and Culture, Ideology and Religion argument categories. These arguments aligned with the Think Tanks' research and lobbying initiatives and thus were anticipated.
- Alt-Right New Media was expected to have prevalent numbers in the Legality, Rights and Govt, LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality, Women and Children, and Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship argument categories. Based on the literature, this grouping was expected to implicitly argue that trans people/transness were sexually 'dangerous' and/or 'oppressive' against the rights and personal beliefs of non-trans groups.[175]

The results are outlined in the table below.

[174] Ashley, 2024; Spade, 2015; Hébert, 2020; Hébert and Singer, 2022; Ganshorn, 2023
[175] Serano, 2007; Bettcher, 2007; Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Colliver et al., 2021; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024

Table 7.3.3 – Distribution of Implicit Arguments by Actor								
Total Cases	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
3.1 Legality, Rights and Govt	60	69%	68	28%	44	62%	40	40%
3.2 LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality	21	24%	71	29%	27	38%	46	46%
3.3 Gender Roles and Heteronormativity	48	55%	166	69%	54	76%	58	57%
3.4 Medical Intervention	12	14%	58	24%	14	20%	19	19%
3.5 Women and Children	52	60%	136	56%	47	66%	73	72%
3.6 Racism and Immigration	11	13%	32	13%	19	27%	19	19%
3.7 Ability and Ableism	10	11%	21	9%	9	13%	7	7%
3.8 Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship	30	34%	130	54%	60	85%	86	85%
3.9 Common Talking Points	13	15%	33	14%	6	8%	6	6%
3.10 Culture, Ideology and Religion	36	41%	74	31%	46	65%	52	51%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that had minimal (but expected) variation were highlighted in blue; findings that had minimal (but interesting) variations were highlighted in yellow; findings with significantly higher-than-average variation were highlighted in green; findings with significantly lower-than-average variation were

highlighted in red. Actors were compared via two points of cross-referencing: firstly, the findings were examined by comparing the relative frequencies of different actors against their corresponding overall relative percentage. Secondly, the findings were examined *between* actors for comparative purposes.

Politicians had only one relative percentage that was higher compared to other actors: Legality, Rights and Govt. This result was to be expected, as employing both explicit and implicit legislative/rights-based arguments were relevant for this grouping.

Think Tanks had several relative percentages that were higher compared to other actors: Legality, Rights and Govt, Gender Roles and Heteronormativity, Racism and Immigration, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, and Culture, Ideology and Religion. This grouping expressed rights-based arguments, sex/gender and sexuality arguments, arguments centered on racism and intolerance, arguments of deception and/or censorship, and lastly, religious arguments. These implicit argument categories almost perfectly mirrored the explicit argument results for Think Tanks. This grouping generally presented anti-trans arguments that portrayed transness as detrimental to other human/civil rights, as inherently (hyper)sexual, pro-trans actors/trans people as 'intolerant' of other 'beliefs', and/or pro-trans discourse as 'indoctrination' and/or as 'censorship' of anti-trans beliefs.

Alt-Right New Media had several relative percentages that were higher compared to other actors: LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality, Women and Children, Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship, Culture, Ideology and Religion. Interestingly, this group had higher relative percentages for the following explicit argument categories: LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality, Women and Children, Racism and Immigration, and lastly Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship. This demonstrates a strong overlap and consistency on which arguments the Alt-Right New

Media grouping focuses. Implicitly, there seemed to be a greater emphasis on religious anti-trans arguments. Otherwise, this grouping generally presented anti-trans arguments that portrayed transness as inherently (hyper)sexual, transness as 'harmful' to women and children, pro-trans actors/trans people as 'intolerant' of other 'beliefs', and/or pro-trans discourse as 'indoctrination' and/or as 'censorship' of anti-trans beliefs.

All actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (LGBTQ+ Events, Drag, Sexuality; Gender Roles and Heteronormativity; Medical Internation; Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship), MSM Newspapers (Legality, Rights and Govt; Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship; Culture, Ideology and Religion), Think Tanks (Common Talking Points), and Alt-Right New Media (Gender Roles and Heteronormativity; Common Talking Points).

7.4: Implicit Sub-Arguments – Synthesized Findings

Examining the breakdown of the data by implicit argument category has revealed a wealth of knowledge. If one were to 'drill down' even further to the granularity of sub-arguments, could even greater nuance be discovered? What specific discourses were the most prevalent? What sub-arguments were most represented in the data? What sub-arguments were most prevalent by time period? What sub-arguments were most prevalent when analyzed by discursive type of actors? This section will answer these questions.

For the sake of brevity, this section contains the key findings from the analysis of each sub-argument category. The sub-arguments were examined by overall relative percentage, by time period, and by discursive type of actor. The full analysis in prose (including the tables for visual reference) are available in Appendix 6 for interested readers.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.1 – 'Legality, Rights and Govt'

- Anti-Govt (57%) and Silencing (50%) were the largest sub-arguments from this argument category.
- Parental Rights (18%) was significantly lower than anticipated. It may be that articulations of 'parental rights' were generally explicitly stated and/or were not discussed with subtler forms of argumentation very frequently.
- Anti-Govt (44% to 67%) and Parental Rights (11% to 24%) both increased over time as critiques of the (federal) government for its pro-LGBTQ+ stance proliferated. Additionally, arguments supporting 'parental rights' as necessary/important proliferated in the 2020s.
- Silencing (65% to 39%) and Rights (35% to 24%) decreased over time.
- Politicians had high numbers for Anti-Govt (63%) and Rights (47%). They implicitly argued that trans rights were infringing upon other human/civil rights and/or critiqued the Trudeau federal government for its pro-LGBTQ+ legislation and political stances. Think Tanks had high numbers for Anti-Govt (73%) and Parental Rights (30%). This grouping critiqued the Trudeau federal government for pro-LGBTQ+ legislation/stances and/or portrayed 'parental rights' as a necessary right that needed to be 'protected'.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.2 – 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality'

- Hypersexual (81%) and Sexual Harm (67%) were the largest sub-arguments for this argument category. Implicit arguments portrayed trans people/transness as inherently (hyper)sexual and/or sexually 'dangerous' to the public.
- Porn (28%) was also surprisingly prevalent.
- Bathroom Danger (19%) was surprisingly absent from the dataset. Greater engagement with this line of argumentation was expected.
- Sexual Harm (45% to 83%), Hypersexual (75% to 86%), and Porn (11% to 40%) all increased notably over time. Implicit argumentations that portrayed trans people as sexually 'deviant' and/or 'harmful' to the public, especially women and children, increased.
- Interestingly, Bathroom Danger decreased over time (25% to 16%), contradicting expectations.
- Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Hypersexual (91%), Sexual Harm (80%), and Porn (54%). This grouping frequently argued implicitly that transness was inherently (hyper)sexual, sexually 'dangerous', and/or pornographic in nature.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.3 – 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity'

- Cis As Normal (80%), Gender Binary (79%), and Gender Role Threat (65%) were the most prevalent sub-arguments from this argument category. These implicit arguments framed the sex/gender binary as 'natural', and/or argued that transness was 'threatening' to the stability of traditional gender roles.
- Straight Threat (26%) and Straight As Normal (25%) were somewhat prevalent. Heteronormative implicit argumentations portrayed heterosexual desires and ways of being/knowing as 'natural', juxtaposing all other forms of sexuality as 'unnatural' by comparison.

- Gender Binary (71% to 85%), Cis As Normal (72% to 85%), and Gender Role Threat (49% to 77%) all increased over time. As the anti-trans backlash grew, a key characteristic was the reification of the sex/gender binary as 'natural'.
- Politicians had high numbers for Gender Binary (94%) and Cis As Normal (94%). This grouping implicitly argued that the sex/gender binary was 'natural', usually when justifying anti-trans legislation.
- MSM Newspapers had high numbers for Gender Role Threat (77%). This group was preoccupied with the 'confusion' transness introduced to traditional gender roles.
- Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Gender Role Threat (76%). This grouping implicitly argued that transness/trans people were 'threatening' to the stability of traditional gender roles.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.4 – 'Medical Intervention'

- HRT, Etc. (50%), Transition (50%), and Gender Dysphoria (26%) were all highly prevalent sub-arguments within this argument category.
- Conversion Therapy (14%) and Addiction (12%) were surprisingly prevalent. These discourses portrayed conversion therapy as an important therapeutic tool. They also portrayed HRT as 'addictive/experimental', leading to lifelong 'dependency'.
- Detransition (19%) was present in lower numbers than anticipated.
- Transition (36% to 59%), Detransition (11% to 25%), Addiction (7% to 15%), and Gender Dysphoria (20% to 31%) all increased notably over time. There were strong implicit preoccupations with gender affirmative care and gender dysphoria as unnecessary, dangerous, and/or medically sanctioned 'mutilation'.
- Politicians had high numbers for Detransition (33%) and Conversion Therapy (33%). This grouping implicitly argued against medical access to gender affirmative care for trans children and youth when discussing detransition rates. They also implicitly argued about keeping conversion therapy legal. Think Tanks had high numbers for Detransition (57%). This grouping reported on detransition/regret rates to justify opposition to gender affirmative care, especially for children and youth. Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Transition (68%) and Conversion Therapy (21%). They implicitly argued that medical transition was risky and unnecessary. They also implicitly argued that conversion therapy was a necessary therapeutic practice to 'treat' transness in people.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.5 – 'Women and Children'

- Hurt Children (51%), Protect Children (47%), Hurt Families (39%), and Protect Families (44%) were all highly prevalent. Anti-trans actors were portrayed as working in the interests of children and families. By contrast, trans people/pro-trans actors were portrayed as working against the interests of children and families.
- Anti-Woman (19%) and Pro-Woman (12%) were surprisingly absent from the dataset, based on qualitative observations of discussions regarding women's rights being 'threatened' by trans rights.
- Protect Children (25% to 56%), Hurt Families (27% to 44%), and Protect Families (20% to 53%) all increased over time. Implicit arguments that portrayed anti-trans actors as heroic in their efforts to 'save' children and families from the 'harms' of trans

rights were observed. By contrast, trans people/pro-trans actors were implicitly portrayed as 'harming' families by 'promoting' transness.

- Anti-Woman (35% to 12%) and Pro-Woman (24% to 8%) both decreased dramatically over time, which was surprising based on the memorable qualitative cases discussing 'women's sex-based rights'.
- Politicians had high relative percentages for Protect Children (60%), Protect Families (52%), and Anti-Woman (27%). This group emphasized trans people/pro-trans actors as infringing upon women's rights when promoting trans rights. They also employed implicit arguments that portrayed anti-trans actors as working in the best interests of children and families.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media both had high numbers for Hurt Children (60% and 70%, respectively) and Hurt Families (53% and 59%, respectively), arguing that trans people/pro-trans actors were 'harming' children and families by furthering trans rights and creating instability within the (nuclear) family unit.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.6 – 'Racism and Immigration'

- Racist (77%) and Intolerant (72%) were the most prevalent sub-arguments from this argument category. Implicit arguments portrayed pro-trans actors/trans people as bigoted towards 'other' cultures.
- Anti-Racist (23% to 35%) and Intolerant (23% to 37%) both increased over time. Anti-trans actors were portrayed as 'anti-racist/tolerant' more often in the 2020s than the 2010s. Trans people/pro-trans actors were also increasingly portrayed as 'intolerant' of 'other cultures' in the 2020s.
- Politicians had high numbers for Anti-Racist (45%) and Tolerant (45%). This grouping implicitly portrayed anti-trans actors as 'open minded' toward 'other cultures'. Think Tanks had high numbers for Racist (84%). This grouping implicitly argued that pro-trans actors/trans people were 'racist' toward 'other cultures'.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.7 – 'Ability and Ableism'

- Mentally Ill (79%) and Social Contagion (40%) were the most prevalent sub-arguments from this category.
- Mentally Ill (77% to 81%) and Social Contagion (15% to 71%) both increased over time. Transness was implicitly portrayed as a mental illness/symptom of mental illness. The Social Contagion sub-argument also rose sharply in the early 2020s as transness was portrayed as a 'disease' that could be 'spread' via 'exposure'.
- Politicians had high numbers for Mentally Ill (90%). This grouping implicitly argued that legislation which 'encouraged' transness could be mentally and/or emotionally 'harmful', especially to children and youth.
- Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Mentally Ill (86%) and Social Contagion (86%). Similarly, in the case of Politicians, this grouping portrayed transness as 'harmful', especially to children and youth. They also argued that transness could be 'spread' like a virus, especially among children and youth; 'stopping the spread' was a strong preoccupation for this grouping.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.8 – 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship'

- Propagandists (78%), Censors (58%) Fight Back (53%), and Liars (40%) were the largest sub-arguments from this argument category. These arguments implicitly portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as 'deceptive' and/or 'dogmatic'. Implicit arguments also compelled the public to 'fight back' against the 'tyranny' of pro-trans discourse.
- Elites (1% to 8%), Propagandists (64% to 86%), Hateful (23% to 33%), Wokeism (26% to 40%), and Fight Back (36% to 63%) all increased over time. Implicit arguments portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as hateful and/or as maliciously spreading propaganda. Calls to action to stop 'gender ideology' and/or 'wokeism' also increased over time.
- Bad Faith (29% to 7%), Special Treatment (46% to 18%), and Too Much (18% to 5%) all decreased over time, which was unexpected.
- Politicians had high numbers for Too Much (20%). This grouping implicitly argued that trans rights were being taken 'too far' and thus were infringing upon other human/civil rights.
- Think Tanks had high numbers for Censors (67%), Special Treatment (42%), and Bad Faith (33%). They implicitly argued that pro-trans actors/trans people acted in bad faith and/or demanded special treatment. They also implicitly argued that anti-trans beliefs were being censored.
- Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Propagandists (92%), Censors (71%), Fight Back (64%), Wokeism (42%), Hateful (36%), and Elites (15%). This grouping was especially preoccupied in its implicit portrayal of pro-trans actors/trans people as: the beneficiaries of cultural and political privileges; deceptive/liars; dogmatic in their beliefs; propagandists; and/or censoring opposing 'viewpoints'. They also implicitly made calls to action to 'fight back' against pro-trans discourse.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.9 – 'Common Talking Points'

- Policing Bodies (64%) was the largest sub-argument from this argument category.
- Ruin Sports (19%) and Not At School (10%) were surprisingly absent from the dataset.
- Ruin Sports (10% to 37%) and Not At School (8% to 16%) both increased over time. These implicit arguments portrayed trans participation in sport as 'unfair/unnecessary' and/or opposed teaching LGBTQ+ topics in schools.
- Unexpectedly, Policing Bodies (87% to 16%) decreased dramatically over time, contradicting my hypothesis.
- Politicians had high numbers for Policing Bodies (100%); in fact, all cases from this grouping contained this implicit argument. MSM Newspapers had high numbers for Ruin Sports (27%). This grouping implicitly argued that trans people would 'ruin' sports due to their 'biological advantages'. Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media had high numbers for Not At School (33% and 33%, respectively), implicitly arguing that transness should not be taught in a scholastic environment.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.10 – 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'

- Pro-Religion (22%) and Un-Canadian (20%) were the largest sub-arguments from this argument category.
- Interestingly, Un-Canadian (24% to 18%) and Traditional Values (24% to 17%) both decreased with time.
- Anti-Religion (18% to 20%) and Pro-Religion (24% to 20%) remained stable over time, despite expectations that they would increase.
- Politicians had high relative percentages for Pro-Religion (47%) and Anti-Religion (33%). Trans people/pro-trans actors were implicitly portrayed as working against the protection of religious freedom. By contrast, anti-trans actors were implicitly portrayed as working in the best interests for religious freedoms in Canada.
- Think Tanks had high relative percentages for Traditional Values (39%), Un-Canadian (33%), Culture Wars (28%), and Anti-Religion (24%). This grouping implicitly argued for the preservation of Western cultural hegemonic concepts and ideals, such as traditional gender roles, social conservatism, and/or religious (Christian) cultural frameworks. They also implicitly argued that trans people/pro-trans actors were exacerbating 'culture wars'.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments

- Human Rights (3%), Legislation (2%), Wokeism (2%), and Freedom of Speech (1%) were surprisingly absent from the dataset, despite expectations that these implicit arguments would be prevalent.
- Human Rights (8% to 1%), Legislation (6% to 1%), Medical Treatment (5% to 0%), and Wokeism (5% to 1%) all decreased over time, which was surprising.
- No notable variations between actors existed. There is nothing of note to report here.

Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments

- (Pro) Human Rights (4%), (Pro) Legislation (1%), and (Pro) Freedom of Speech (1%) were all largely absent from the dataset, despite expectations that these implicit arguments would be somewhat prevalent.
- None of the sub-categories increased over time; (Pro) Human Rights (12% to 2%) and (Pro) Medical Treatment (6% to 1%) both decreased over time.
- No notable variations between actors existed. There is nothing of note to report here.

7.5: Conclusions

This chapter has mapped and surveyed the implicit arguments and implicit sub-arguments present in anti-trans discourses in Canada over a 23-year period. It sought to answer the following research questions: What implicit arguments, sub-arguments, and arguments about other topics do anti-trans actors in Canada utilize? With what specific implicit arguments do anti-

trans actors in Canada engage? Several interesting discoveries were made and discussed. The sub-section below will discuss the key implications and expand upon some qualitative analyses.

7.5.1: Implications

(Hyper)sexual Arguments

Throughout the dataset, implicit arguments portrayed transness as inherently (hyper)sexual and/or sexually 'dangerous'. These discourses are well-established[176] and have been (re)invigorated in the wake of the anti-trans backlash in Canada. These implicit argumentations conflate gender and sexuality, thus portraying transness as 'obscene' and/or 'inappropriate' outside of (or even within) sexual circumstances. 'Public displays' of transness were portrayed as inherently sexually violating to the general populace, who did not 'consent' to participate in and/or witness transness 'in action'. This line of argumentation was utilized to justify opposition to LGBTQ+ events and venues such as drag story times, pride events, and/or Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) in schools. They also portrayed transness as inherently sexually 'dangerous'; trans people were conceptualized as inherently predatory and/or sexually aggressive. This is another decades-old discourse,[177] portraying transness as a means of accessing single-sex spaces, especially 'men' (i.e., trans women) accessing women's/children's spaces to sexually assault them. It also implies that trans identity is not genuine or real, but a means of deception for fulfilling 'deviant' sexual desires. The prevalence of these implicit arguments during this anti-trans backlash highlights the extent to which these older discourses have been revitalized in an ever-evolving and flexible sociopolitical movement to normalize anti-trans discourse in Canadian society.

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[176] Serano, 2007; Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

[177] Serano, 2007; Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

Cisheteronormative Arguments

Cisnormative and/or heteronormative discourses were highly prevalent in the dataset. These arguments centered around the sex/gender binary as 'natural' and 'biological', as well as the supposed 'normalness' of heterosexual desire, sexual acts, and self-identity. The reification of cisheteronormative sociocultural frameworks and power dynamics de-legitimized trans and/or queer self-identities as choices, trauma responses, fleeting fancies, and/or depraved and 'sinful' lifestyles when positioned against the 'natural' heterosexual and cisgender ideal. These systems worked in tandem to reinforce the sex/gender binary and heterosexuality as normative; two mutually exclusive, complimentary sexes/genders that experienced mutual (heterosexual) attraction were culturally constructed and policed. Implicit argumentations that portrayed transness/trans people as a 'threat' to the stability of traditional gender roles were also present.

Arguments of Deception and Censorship

The dataset contained implicit arguments that portrayed trans people as liars, propagandists, and/or censors quite prevalently. There were also frequent calls to action, wherein appeals to 'fight back' against the 'tyranny' and 'dogma' of pro-trans discourse were evoked. Anti-trans actors often portrayed legal, sociocultural, and/or personal repercussions for articulating anti-trans discourse as a combination of aggressive 'propaganda' campaigns to 'normalize' transness in Canadian culture and society, as well as evidence of the deplatforming, silencing, and/or censorship of anti-trans beliefs. They also portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as liars, deceivers, and/or untruthful in their conduct, speech, and actions, making anything they say or do suspicious. These implicit arguments portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as untrustworthy and deliberately hiding nefarious goals/agendas.[178]

[178] Bettcher, 2007; Colliver et al., 2021

CHAPTER 8: METAPHORICAL TONE, REPRESENTATIONAL POLITICS, AND DOG WHISTLES

Abstract

This chapter examines the metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse in Canada, the broader representational political framings utilized to shape discourses, and discusses the creation of an index of contemporary anti-trans dog whistles. The anti-trans backlash was examined via MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis). Sourcing various newspapers, think tanks, right-wing media outlets, and Hansard transcripts, this dissertation found cases between January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. Utilizing a custom coding dictionary and QDA Miner, a macro-analysis was generated and then qualitatively examined.

Several notable findings emerged: 1) Anti-trans discourse in Canada was characterized by an overwhelmingly punitive metaphorical tone; 2) Transphobic, sexist, and heteronormative framings were the most prevalent forms of pre-structuring information; and 3) There were no exhaustive lists of contemporary dog whistles at the time of researching and writing this dissertation; therefore, an index was constructed to capture them and can be utilized as a research tool for future studies.

8.1: Introduction

Anti-trans discourse has become increasingly widespread in Canadian news, politics, and legislative processes. The metaphorical tone can be an insightful subject of study to learn about how actors discuss/present a particular topic of discussion. Similarly, the use of representational political framings to shape discourse and lead an audience to an intended outcome and/or conclusion is a common persuasive device, and one that anti-trans actors have employed. These techniques are designed to shape the nature of how information is presented. It was used to frame

anti-trans discourse to suit specific goals and intentions. Lastly, key dog whistles were noted and compiled into an index.

This chapter examines the metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse in Canada and the broader representational political framings anti-trans actors have employed to shape the 'impact' of their arguments to lead to a desired outcome and/or conclusion. 500 cases from Canadian legacy media sources, Hansard transcripts, think tanks, and right-wing media outlets were selected and examined. A custom coding dictionary was created in QDA Miner to code these cases. A systematic MM (mixed methods) research design was implemented to map and survey anti-trans discourse in Canada over an extended period; from January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023.

8.2: Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Chapter Structure

The research questions this chapter will answer are as follows:

1. What is the overall metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse in Canada?
2. Are there larger representational political framings present? If so, what are they?
3. What are the key types of dog whistling?

The objectives of this chapter are to determine the overall metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourses in Canada; to determine what key types of representational political framings are at play; and to note contemporary anti-trans dog whistles in one index. It was hypothesized that the overall metaphorical tone would be punitive in the 2000s; what little information was discussed during this period was expected to generally condemn transness. Newspapers were expected to be the driving actor. In the 2010s, it was anticipated that the overall tone would trend toward nurturant but begin to skew toward punitive once again in the 2020s. It was anticipated that politicians and mainstream newspapers would drive this nurturant metaphorical tone when

reporting on these trends in the 2010s. The punitive metaphorical tone of the 2020s was expected to be driven by all actors as the anti-trans backlash proliferated. In terms of the broader representational political framings, it was anticipated that transphobic, sexist, heteronormative, and/or homophobic framings would be the most common types across all examined decades. These discourses were expected to be constructed in such a way as to lead audiences toward specific conclusions that were trans-hostile, disparaging of women/valorized patriarchal cultural norms, and/or reified heteronormative relations between (cisgender) men and women, especially via framing queerness as 'abnormal'. Newspapers were expected to be the driving actor in the 2000s; all actors were expected to utilize these representational political framings increasingly in the 2010s and 2020s0. There were no prior hypotheses to present regarding the presence of dog whistles.

Section 8.3 examines the results on persuasive techniques. An overview of the presence of the Metaphorical Tone that characterized anti-trans discourse in Canada was provided. This framework[179] was applied to capture the metaphorical tone of the discourse in general. These findings were examined by overall presence, by time periods, and by discursive type of actor.

In section 8.4, an overview of the Broader Representational Political Framings that anti-trans actors have employed was provided. These framings shaped their arguments and were designed to lead their audiences to desired outcomes and/or conclusions. Seven framings that shaped the articulation of ideas, arguments, and other persuasive techniques were identified. These findings were examined by overall presence, by time periods, and by discursive type of actor.

[179] Saurette and Gordon, 2015; Lakoff, 1996

Lastly, section 8.5 presents the index of contemporary dog whistles. While examining the data, it was noted that anti-trans dog whistles were consistently present. At the time of writing this dissertation, I could not find an exhaustive list that explained all these dog whistles and situated them within the literature. An index was therefore compiled and grounded in the literature as a research tool that may be utilized to track anti-trans discourse in future research endeavours.

In sections 8.3 through 8.4, the most salient findings were discussed and provided with short explanations as to why they are worth noting. Conversely, a more robust discussion of the broader potential implications of these findings was relegated to the chapter conclusion. This was deemed a more appropriate place to discuss them holistically after providing the empirical results. As such, the conclusion contains (i) a compressed synthesis of the main findings of sections 8.3 through 8.5 and (ii) a discussion of the broader implications of these findings.

8.3: Metaphorical Tone

This section of Chapter 8 is dedicated to analyzing the results of coding for the presence of metaphorical tone. But what is 'metaphorical tone'? How is it defined? How does one operationalize it? This section will answer these questions.

When describing metaphorical tone, Saurette and Gordon provide this description: "[it is] the overall "tone" or "sensibility" of a given political discourse as evidenced and communicated by the metaphors, analogies, and the emotive language it employs".[180] The use of metaphor is a pervasive linguistic device in political speech. Saurette and Gordon operationalized their definition of metaphorical tone to analyze the overall 'sensibility' of anti-abortion debates in the US and Canada. Their basis for this theoretical framework drew from Lakoff's works. Lakoff's

[180] Saurette and Gordon, 2015, p. 274

central thesis is that political 'world views' are shaped by sets of metaphors that determine how people understand and evaluate political discourses. Saurette and Gordon describe Lakoff's theory of "two ideal-type ur-metaphors",[181] which Lakoff termed the Strict Father and the Nurturant Parent models in his work. These metaphorical frameworks explain the internal coherence of American conservative and liberal political ideal-type world views, respectively.

Based on this framework, Saurette and Gordon developed their approach to tracking metaphorical tone in their study of anti-abortion arguments in Canada and the US. They revised Lakoff's work by positioning the Strict Father and Nurturant Parent not as dichotomously opposed ur-metaphors, but as a spectrum of metaphorical tone as it applies to political world views on anti-abortion debates. Reworking these concepts from binary political mindsets to a spectrum of metaphorical tone allowed Saurette and Gordon to track the overall tone of the anti-abortion debates in the US and Canada. They reworked Lakoff's frameworks to test for metaphorical tone, rather than assuming that the anti-abortion debate (especially in Canada) was shaped by a Strict Father framework. Saurette and Gordon wanted to determine if the Strict Father tone was indeed the dominant metaphorical tone, which would indicate that the contemporary Canadian anti-abortion discourse "continue[d] to employ at least one important implicit rhetorical strategy similar to the traditional model".[182] They coded their data to determine whether a metaphorical tone existed, and whether it fell into the Strict Father or Nurturant Parent frameworks, if present. In the same vein, this thesis deployed Saurette and Gordon's theoretical framework of the Strict Father and Nurturant Parent models as spectrums of metaphorical tone to capture one important aspect of the body of anti-trans discourse: its overall portrayal of transness, trans people, and/or trans rights. One must then ask, 'What is Strict Father

[181] Saurette and Gordon, 2015, p. 272
[182] Saurette and Gordon, 2015, p. 274

and Nurturant Parent metaphorical tone, and how does one study it?'. To answer this question, Lakoff's work must be briefly summarized.

Lakoff is a cognitive scientist whose work centers around deconstructing and naming the components of (often implicit) metaphors that shape American political discourse.[183] These models were articulated from a cognitive sciences paradigm, in which Lakoff sought to construct exhaustive frameworks on the worldviews of conservatives and liberals in the US.[184] His work posits that a major part of the mechanisms of one's political conceptualizations occur unconsciously. The mind makes connections based on one's social and cultural knowledge of one's political paradigms; from this, Lakoff posited that American conceptualizations of liberal and conservative worldviews can be mapped onto cognitive models that have internal logic, consistency, and priorities – despite the appearance of a supposed 'paradox of values'. Lakoff called these models the Strict Father and the Nurturant Parent models, and they mapped onto conservative and liberal American world views, respectively. Based on the foundational conceit that, cognitively speaking, people draw on metaphors that comprise their understanding of 'common sense', he delineated the different clusters of 'moral bookkeeping' that determined how justice, fairness, and authority were categorized, as well as what each model valued as the 'highest moral good'. In so doing, Lakoff proposed that conservatives and liberals frequently misunderstood each other's politics and agendas due to reversed priorities – despite drawing from near-identical metaphors, cultural conceptions of 'moral bookkeeping', and the role of each member in society to create the ideal state that enables each person to pursue 'the good life'.

The Strict Father model rests on the notion that 'children' (at times literal children, but more broadly speaking, anyone who does not possess moral authority) must be instructed by

[183] Saurette and Gordon, 2015, p. 272
[184] Lakoff, 1996

their ‘parents’ (at times literal parents, but more broadly speaking, anyone who is in a position of moral authority) toward self-reliance and self-discipline, so they might pursue the ‘greatest good’, which is the pursuit of one’s self-interest. When everyone is enabled to pursue their self-interest, society flourishes. To teach these values, ‘children’ must be raised with ‘tough love’, including punishment. Punishment is a form of ‘parental’ love, as it will lead the ‘child’ toward self-discipline and self-reliance. Nurturance is present within this model, but usually toward literal children, or else toward those who are most ‘deserving’ of nurturance – but not at the expense of ‘parental authority’. Instilling these values engenders ‘good character’, which – once fixed in childhood or late adolescence – is unchanging. This is why those who are deemed ‘immoral’ are treated with hostility under this model, as they have a ‘weak character’ due to lack of self-discipline – and they can lead others astray, leading to a ‘fallen’ moral standing from which one cannot recover. These people and their actions (which are inherent to their moral weakness and often fall into dichotomous categories of ‘good’ and ‘evil’) create moral ‘erosion’ or ‘decay’ in society and must therefore be isolated or else severely punished for the detrimental influence they possess on others.

The Nurturant Parent model, by contrast, rests on the notion that ‘children’ (at times literal children, but more broadly speaking, anyone who does not possess moral authority) come to respect and emulate their ‘parents’ (at times literal parents, but more broadly speaking, anyone who is in a position of moral authority) by observing their ‘parents’ who encourage open questioning, sensitivity, cooperation, and above all, interdependence. Interdependence is the highest moral good under this model, as a society relies on people being connected to one another to survive; fostering healthy, respectful, and nurturing connections with others leads to creating a nurturing world. The ‘child’, in observing their ‘parents’, seeks to emulate their

nurturance and thus gains mastery of their own needs, and can in turn nurture others. People are assumed to be capable of constant moral growth, and almost every moral quandary exists along scalar dimensions in this framework; there is very little dichotomous good-or-evil thinking present. Those who are deemed 'immoral' under this model are treated through a variety of lenses, depending on the severity of the negative moral impact of their actions; generally, however, restitutive means of 'balancing the moral books' will be pursued.

Both models rely on the notion of 'moral bookkeeping'. Morality is conceptualized, by both conservatives and liberals, as a series of debts, credits, interests, and transactions. Those who are 'morally bankrupt' (an actual metaphor to describe someone who is attributed with a lack of morality) are often in 'debt' for causing moral harm. The only way to right this wrong is to 'pay back' their 'debt', sometimes with 'interest'. Those who are in a 'surplus' of morality may provide 'credits' to others, which increases their moral standing and provides an opportunity for another to 'repay them'. Those whose deeds are deemed too immoral may have to make hefty payments to 'rebalance the books' (i.e., the death penalty, life sentences in jail, etc.). Both models approach moral bookkeeping as important ways of tracking and promoting 'good moral credit'.

Based on Saurette and Gordon's reworking of Lakoff's political models, I have created codes to track the presence of the Strict Father and Nurturant Parent models to determine the overall metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse in Canada. Compared to other conservative debates – such as anti-abortion, anti-feminist, anti-equity/affirmative action debates, etc. – what tone dominates anti-trans discourse? Does anti-trans discourse take a more punitive or a more nurturing tone? Based on the pre-reading and pilot testing results, it was expected that anti-trans discourse would skew heavily toward a punitive (i.e., Strict Father) tone overall. If this is the

case, then it would be an interesting juxtaposition with other contemporary political discourses in Canada today (such as the more nurturing tones Saurette and Gordon found in their analysis of Canadian anti-abortion debates).[185] This tone may also change over time or when comparing discursive actors against one another.

In the section below, the results of this coding will be presented in the following manner: each section will contain two tables displaying the overall presence of the data, the data cross-referenced by time period, and the data cross-referenced by actor. The first table in each section will demonstrate the result of tracking for the presence of any metaphorical tone; the following table will break down the frequency of each type of metaphorical tone – Strict Father and Nurturant Parent.

8.3.1: Categories and Sub-Categories of 'Strict Father or Nurturant Parent'

This section will examine the breakdown of the arguments and sub-arguments of the Nurturant Parent or Strict Father codes from the coding dictionary. When identifying a case as having either a Strict Father or Nurturant Parent metaphorical tone present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following codes:

1. Nurturant Parent or Strict Father Model: The presence or absence of the Nurturant Parent and/or Strict Father models in anti-trans discourse.

   A) Strict Father: If the metaphorical tone was determined to match the Strict Father requirements, then this code was applied.
   B) Nurturant Parent: If the metaphorical tone was determined to match the Nurturant Parent requirements, then this code was applied.

The hypotheses were as follows:

[185] Saurette and Gordon, 2015

- Strict Father was expected to be highly prevalent in the dataset. Based on the literature,[186] the overall metaphorical tone was expected to be largely punitive with trans-hostile sentiment throughout.
- Nurturant Parent was expected to be largely absent from the dataset.
- Strict Father was expected to increase over time, while Nurturant Parent would decrease over time; this would reflect the heightened intensification of the anti-trans backlash into the 2020s.
- Politicians and MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Nurturant Parent. The range of individuals discussing these topics was expected to create a broad spectrum of metaphorical tones.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Strict Father, as these groupings were expected to have a more cohesive (and punitive) overall metaphorical tone.

What data emerged? The tables below present the information of the broad category followed by the sub-category tables.

Table 8.3.1a – Distribution of 'Strict Father or Nurturant Parent' Present in Cases

	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
6.2 Nurturant Parent or Strict Father	366	43%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

The findings have been highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were interesting due to their prominence were highlighted in green; findings that were interesting due to their absence were highlighted in red; findings that were interesting for other reasons were highlighted in yellow; and any findings that were in line with the hypotheses were left uncoloured (white). The presence of these models were highly prevalent in the dataset; almost half of all cases contained a metaphorical tone.

[186] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

Table 8.3.1b – Distribution of Sub-Categories of 'Strict Father or Nurturant Parent' by Case		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases	**366**	**100%**
6.2.1 Nurturant Parent	10	3%
6.2.2 Strict Father	356	97%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

As was hypothesized, the Strict Father model was overwhelmingly represented in the dataset. Many of the elements of the Strict Father model fit with established and more traditional aspects of conservatism. This included favouring rigid hierarchies, rewards and punishments for good and bad behaviour, and patriarchal norms for societal ordering. Transness was often discussed in terms of 'weakness of character', as evidence of 'moral/social decay', and/or the result of being led into 'deviant lifestyles' by other 'failed' moral subjects. One notable departure from Lakoff's model is that proponents of the Strict Father model seldom contained religious trappings in their articulation. By contrast, the Nurturant Parent model – which favours nurturance, interdependence, and collaboration – was largely absent from the dataset. When present, it often portrayed trans people as 'in need of aid', as individuals/groups who had experienced harm and deserved compassion for their 'suffering'.

Table 8.3.1c – Distribution of 'Strict Father or Nurturant Parent' by Time Period						
	2000-2009		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases	**0**	**100%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100%**
6.2 Nurturant Parent or Strict Father	0	0%	59	36%	305	91%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were stable and expected were highlighted in blue; findings that were stable and interesting were highlighted in yellow; findings with significant increases were highlighted in green; findings with significance decreases were highlighted in red. The presence of a metaphorical tone in the selected cases increased dramatically over time.

Table 8.3.1d – Distribution of Sub-Categories of 'Strict Father or Nurturant Parent' by Time Period

	2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases	**0**	**0%**	**61**	**100%**	**305**	**100%**
6.2.1 Nurturant Parent	0	0%	9	15%	1	0%
6.2.2 Strict Father	0	0%	52	85%	304	100%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

As per the hypotheses, the metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse trended toward the Strict Father model over time. Qualitatively, there appeared to be an increased prevalence of punitive language and metaphor denigrating the 'moral character' of trans people as 'weak/immoral/sinful'. This was often characterized as stemming from a lack of 'discipline' and/or 'tough love' from the Canadian government, from school systems, from (liberal) parents, from social media, and/or from other cultural influences that 'led people astray'. The Nurturant Parent model decreased over time, 'disappearing' entirely from the dataset in the 2020s. This demonstrates the extent to which a nurturant tone has become less prevalent in anti-trans discourses in recent years.

Table 8.3.1e – Distribution of 'Strict Father or Nurturant Parent' by Actor								
Varia	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
6.2 Nurturant Parent or Strict Father	55	47%	170	40%	49	42%	91	46%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that had minimal (but expected) variation were highlighted in blue; findings that had minimal (but interesting) variations were highlighted in yellow; findings with significantly higher-than-average variation were highlighted in green; findings with significantly lower-than-average variation were highlighted in red. Actors were compared via two points of cross-referencing: firstly, the findings were examined by comparing the relative frequencies of different actors again their corresponding overall relative percentage. Secondly, the findings were examined *between* actors for comparative purposes. At the category level, there were no notable variations in relative percentages between actors. There is nothing notable to report here.

Table 8.3.1f – Distribution of Sub-Categories of 'Strict Father or Nurturant Parent' by Actor								
Varia	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**55**	**100%**	**170**	**100%**	**46**	**100%**	**95**	**100%**
6.2.1 Nurturant Parent	0	0%	2	1%	8	17%	0	0%
6.2.2 Strict Father	55	100%	168	99%	38	83%	95	100%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Think Tanks had a higher-than-average relative percentage for Nurturant Parent, which contradicted the above-stated hypothesis. This group's results were skewed by the cases from Focus on the Family Canada. This think tank was surprisingly characterized with a more Nurturant Parent metaphorical tone. Focus on the Family Canada appeared to adopt a more nurturant tone to foster religious belief via encouragement. In so doing, transness was portrayed as a 'sad choice' that could be addressed via prayer, scriptural wisdom, and church attendance. It tended to discourage punitive tactics regarding transness to avoid negative associations with religion. However, given that the presence of the Nurturant Parent model was restricted to the 2010s, it seems that this characterization of metaphorical tone did not 'carry over' into the 2020s. Think Tanks had a lower-than-average relative percentage for Strict Father, which I did not anticipate. Compared to other actors, they relied less upon elements of the Strict Father model – such as rigid hierarchies, rewards and punishments, and emphasizing self-interest. This seemed to be, once again, influenced by Focus on the Family Canada.

8.4: Broader Representational Political Framings

This section of Chapter 8 is dedicated to analyzing the presence of broader representational political framings in the dataset. What are 'representational political framings'? How is this concept defined and operationalized? How will codes be applied to capture this concept? What does the analysis reveal when examining the breakdown of representational political framings by time period or by discursive actor? These questions will be answered here.

Firstly, the term 'representational political framings' must be defined and operationalized. 'Framing' has many definitions in the study of political speech, but a common component is "the idea that *pre-structuring* the overall context/design of an object, event, or discourse can have a significant impact on its final shape and reception" (emphasis added).[187] Generalized patterns of representation exist and can be tailored to suit a framing that directs the 'momentum' of a discourse toward a desired outcome, including the framing of political speech. In the study of political movements, framing is an effective persuasive device to guide discourses toward a desired outcome, while precluding other possibilities from existing in that 'space'. As discussed in the theory section of Chapter 2, language is shaped by social interrelations to give it meaning, and by the struggle to control speech. The framing of political speech is therefore an effective persuasive technique to shape the direction and reception of a given discourse.

Researchers in many fields have identified various types of broad representational patterns that tend to privilege certain identities/practices/policies/etc. in the articulation of political speech. One common persuasive device is the use of stereotypes. Stereotypes can be defined as, "… inflexible assumption(s) about an individual or group, usually based on appearance and/or social role, for example, age, class, disability, ethnicity, marital status, religion, sexuality. These

[187] Saurette and Gordon, 2015, p. 225

assumptions are used to justify discrimination and oppression towards the individual or group targeted".[188] In this dissertation, broader representational political framings will be examined as a pre-structuring framework that guides discourse toward a desired outcome/conclusion via the use of stereotypes to reinforce the presentation of information as legitimate. Seven framing devices have been identified and will be coded throughout the dataset: transphobia, sexism, heteronormativity, homonormativity, homophobia, white supremacy, and Christonormativity. Each of these framings will be briefly defined and operationalized below.

Transphobia can be defined as, "…what occurs in a broader social context that systematically disadvantages trans people and promotes and rewards antitrans sentiment".[189] Transphobic framings are designed to pre-structure discourses that guide audiences toward a desired outcome; namely, the rejection of trans self-identity claims. Transphobia systematically disadvantages trans people and promotes trans-hostility. This can be expressed via biological essentialism, the curtailment of trans rights, the denial of legal trans healthcare, religious rejection, and other forms of oppression. Transphobic framings preclude any possibility in the legitimacy of trans self-identity claims, as well as critiques and/or interrogations into the legitimacy of cisnormative and/or cisgenderist sociocultural, medical, or legal frameworks.

Sexism can be defined as, "[consistent] assumptions, beliefs, theories, stereotypes, and broader cultural narratives that represent men and women as … different … Sexist ideology will also encompass *valorizing* portrayals of patriarchal social arrangements…" (emphasis in original).[190] Sexist framings portray women as inherently inferior to men by masculinist and patriarchal cultural standards. Sexist framing also portrays patriarchal social arrangements

[188] Oxford Reference, 2018
[189] Bettcher, 2014
[190] Manne, 2017

positively and even frames them as beneficial to women. Sexism systematically disadvantages women by presupposing that women are incapable of matching men's abilities and thus relegates them to culturally 'lesser' roles. Sexist framings preclude any possibility of equality and/or celebrations of womanhood/femininity outside of patriarchal and masculinist cultural norms.

Heteronormativity can be defined as, "1) reinforces the dominant heterosexual code with its hierarchy, normalization, and exclusion; 2) is a pervasive system that needs to be addressed, questioned, and challenged in terms of sexuality; 3) is the privileging of heterosexuality; 4) is linked to the oppression of LGBTQ people; and 5) is inherent in heterosexual institutions and social codes".[191] Heteronormative framing privileges heterosexuality as the only possible (and legitimate) form of sexuality/sexual relation between individuals. This erases non-heterosexual sexuality and precludes the possibility of variance in the expression of human sexuality. Heteronormative framing portrays heterosexual sexuality as 'normal' and positions all other forms of sexuality as 'abnormal'. This framing systematically oppresses LGBTQ+ people by privileging heterosexuality above all others.

Homonormativity can be defined as, "… the ways that gay men and lesbians became the primary identities represented in the LGBT rights movements of the 1980s and 1990s. The "T" in LGBT was too often an afterthought. … homonormativity is a politic of queer assimilation. Homonormativity is antiqueer in that it reifies heteronormativity and establishes cultural norms for the "right way" to be gay or lesbian. In this capacity, homonormativity perpetuates gender, sexuality, and racial stereotypes for gay men and lesbians".[192] Homonormative framing precludes the possibility of LGBTQ+ ways of being/knowing that exist outside of Western cultural ideals; or, it precludes this possibility as being 'socially acceptable'. Homonormative

[191] Marchia and Sommer, 2019
[192] Robinson, 2016

framing disadvantages all LGBTQ+ people by fragmenting coalitions of solidarity through the creation of avenues for specific LGBTQ+ subsets to access aspects of heteronormative privilege, and/or by oppressing all other LGBTQ+ people who cannot, or will not, adhere to cultural standards of sexual/gendered expression.

Homophobia can be defined as, "a contemporary social scientific term coined in the field of psychology to describe negative attitudes toward lesbians, gay men, and same-sex sexuality".[193] This includes institutionalized homophobia, which "refers to instances where homophobic or anti-same-sex sexuality ideologies are ingrained in the social and cultural institutions of a society". Likewise, social homophobia "can be considered the public or interactional manifestation of institutionalized homophobia. It is the "doing" of homophobia—the action of reifying homophobia".[194] Homophobic framings preclude the possibility of non-heterosexual sexuality/sexual relations as part of human sexual variance. Instead, homophobic framing positions non-heterosexual sexuality as 'abnormal' and 'a choice' compared to the 'normal' and 'natural/biological' framing of heterosexuality. Homophobic framing fosters hostility toward non-heterosexual sexualities.

White supremacy can be defined as, "(1) a particular kind of oppressive social system, sub-national or national or international, coming into existence (2) in a time period in which race has emerged as a significant social category and social reality, and (3) whiteness and nonwhiteness are recognized racial identities, and (4) whites have and exert differential power in creating and controlling the evolution of the social system in question, and/or in blocking changes to it that would substantially reduce their domination, whose end is originally (5) the systemic, significant, and illicit differential advantaging of all or most whites as a group with respect to

[193] Bolen and McGreehan, 2024, p. 650
[194] Bolen and McGreehan, 2024, p. 652

nonwhites as a group in various important social spheres".[195] White supremacist framing precludes the possibility of racial justice, de-colonization efforts, and/or anti-racist practices. It also asserts that whiteness is inherently superior, and that non-white people are inherently inferior. This forecloses interrogations of white privilege, systemic racism, colonization, and/or white fragility. It normalizes racism and white supremacy as invisible, making white privilege 'fade into the background' and attributes white success to 'individual success/progress/intelligence/effort/etc.'.

Christonormativity can be defined as, "Christian hegemony, which normalizes Christianity, bestows privilege and advantages on those who embrace Christianity, and marginalizes everyone else. Christian privilege is embedded in our laws, policies, schools and workplaces. In schools, for example, the curriculum, dress codes, cafeteria food, and even the calendar reinforce Christian values and practices as universal norms, where their underlying Christian foundation is often invisible to all except those who are marginalized and excluded by such practices".[196] This precludes inter-faith dialogue, the dismantling of Christian privilege, and/or dismantling systemic Antisemitism and Islamophobia. It invisibilizes cultural Christianity as 'normal' and positions Christian frameworks as 'universal'. This framing also portrays Christian discourse/beliefs/religious tenets as the only legitimate 'religious world view'.

8.4.1: Categories and Sub-Categories – 'Broader Representational Political Framings'

This section will examine the breakdown of the categories of the Broader Representational Political Framings section. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, seven framing categories were identified. The definitions were discussed above and will not be repeated here. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Broader

[195] Mills, 2018, pp. 475-476
[196] Ferber, 2012

Representational Political Framings present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following seven categories:

1. Transphobia
2. Sexism
3. Heteronormativity
4. Homonormativity
5. Homophobia
6. White Supremacy
7. Christonormativity

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Transphobia was expected to be the largest political representational framing. The majority of the cases were selected based on the presence of anti-trans discourse, and thus it was expected that most of these cases would contain transphobic framings.
- Sexism and Heteronormativity were also expected to be highly prevalent, as these concepts are often intertwined with transphobic discourse.[197]
- Transphobia, Sexism, and Heteronormativity were expected to increase over time as the anti-trans backlash proliferated.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Transphobia.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Transphobia, Sexism, and Heteronormativity.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Transphobia, Sexism, and Heteronormativity, and Christonormativity.

The tables below present the information of the broad category followed by the sub-category tables. What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table 8.4.1a - Distribution of 'Broader Representational Political Framings' Present in Cases

	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
6.3 Broader Representational Political Framings	438	51%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

[197] Warriner et al., 2013; D'Urso and Pace, 2019; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024

The findings have been highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were interesting due to their prominence were highlighted in green; findings that were interesting due to their absence were highlighted in red; findings that were interesting for other reasons were highlighted in yellow; and any findings that were in line with the hypotheses were left uncoloured (white). The presence of Broader Representational Political Framings was indeed highly prevalent in the dataset; over half of all cases contained some form of representational political framing.

Table 8.4.1b – Distribution of Sub-Framings of 'Broader Representational Political Framings' by Case

	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
6.3.1 Transphobia	421	84%
6.3.2 Sexism	114	23%
6.3.3 Heteronormativity	89	18%
6.3.4 Homonormativity	13	3%
6.3.5 Homophobia	47	9%
6.3.6 White Supremacy	9	2%
6.3.7 Christonormativity	37	7%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Transphobia was the most prevalent form of representational political framing. The selection criteria for this dissertation necessitated cases containing anti-trans discourse, and so this finding was to be expected. Sexism was not as prevalent as expected; given that much of the current backlash has been centered around tensions between trans rights and (cisgender) women's rights, a greater frequency of sexist framings was expected. Lastly, the extent to which

Heteronormativity was absent from the dataset was surprising; it seems that this form of representational political framing was not as frequently employed as I anticipated.

Table 8.4.1c – Distribution of 'Broader Representational Political Framings' by Time Period

	2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**0**	**100%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100%**
6.3 Broader Representational Political Framings	0	0%	59	36%	183	55%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that were stable and expected were highlighted in blue; findings that were stable and interesting were highlighted in yellow; findings with significant increases were highlighted in green; findings with significance decreases were highlighted in red. The presence of representational political framings increased notably over time.

Table 8.4.1d – Distribution of Sub-Framings of 'Broader Representational Political Framings' by Time Period

	2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**0**	**0%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100%**
6.3.1 Transphobia	0	0%	134	81%	287	86%
6.3.2 Sexism	0	0%	48	29%	66	20%
6.3.3 Heteronormativity	0	0%	53	32%	36	11%
6.3.4 Homonormativity	0	0%	7	4%	6	2%
6.3.5 Homophobia	0	0%	19	12%	28	8%
6.3.6 White Supremacy	0	0%	6	4%	3	1%
6.3.7 Christonormativity	0	0%	24	15%	13	4%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Unlike what I had hypothesized, it was discovered that the majority of representational political framings remained stable over time. In fact, the only framings that changed significantly – Heteronormativity and Christonormativity – both decreased over time. This was quite surprising.

Table 8.4.1e – Distribution of 'Broader Representational Political Framings' by Actor

	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
6.3 Broader Representational Political Framings	58	50%	217	51%	67	57%	96	48%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

The findings were highlighted using the following criteria: findings that had minimal (but expected) variation were highlighted in blue; findings that had minimal (but interesting) variations were highlighted in yellow; findings with significantly higher-than-average variation were highlighted in green; findings with significantly lower-than-average variation were highlighted in red. Actors were compared via two points of cross-referencing: firstly, the findings were examined by comparing the relative frequencies of different actors against their corresponding overall relative percentage. Secondly, the findings were examined *between* actors for comparative purposes. There were no notable variations between actors for the presence of Broader Representational Political Framings. There is nothing notable to report here.

Table 8.4.1f– Distribution of Sub-Framings of 'Broader Representational Political Framings' by Actor								
	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
6.3.1 Transphobia	54	62%	212	88%	56	79%	98	97%
6.3.2 Sexism	10	11%	64	27%	19	27%	21	21%
6.3.3 Heteronormativity	17	20%	27	11%	30	42%	15	15%
6.3.4 Homonormativity	2	2%	8	3%	3	4%	0	0%
6.3.5 Homophobia	6	7%	11	5%	19	27%	11	11%
6.3.6 White Supremacy	1	1%	5	2%	2	3%	1	1%
6.3.7 Christonormativity	8	9%	8	3%	16	23%	5	5%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Think Tanks contained higher-than-average relative percentages for Heteronormativity, Homophobia, and Christonormativity. This grouping portrayed anti-trans discourse in a manner that reified heteronormative, homophobic, and Christonormative stereotypes about trans people/transness as 'immoral', 'choosing a sinful lifestyle', and/or 'sexual deviants'. Alt-Right New Media contained a higher-than-average relative percentage for Transphobia, which was anticipated. This grouping stereotyped trans people/transness as 'abnormal', 'false', and/or 'going against biology' more often than other actors. Politicians had lower-than-average relative percentages for Transphobia and Sexism, which was surprising. This grouping relied on these framings less often than other actors.

8.5: Anti-Trans Dog Whistle Index

In closely reading 500 cases containing anti-trans discourse, many contemporary dog whistles were identified. However, as of this dissertation's completion, I struggled to find a concrete and exhaustive list of contemporary anti-trans dog whistles that have been identified in the literature. Notably, finding a single source containing as many contemporary dog whistles as possible that have emerged in the wake of the anti-trans backlash could not be located. I did not feel that an index could be reliably generated before coding began, nor through the process of pilot coding. As such, I was unable to code for these dog whistles specifically during the coding phase. However, I decided that creating an exhaustive list of contemporary dog whistles would be an insightful piece of additional information. This index was created so that it could used as a coding dictionary in future research and/or for other researchers. The end result of this effort, therefore, was not (as in the case of the other questions posed throughout this dissertation) a set of quantitative macro analyses results capturing the relative frequency of these dog whistles. Rather, the end product of this section was the creation of the index itself. The potential utility of this index as a coding tool for future research is in itself a significant contribution to the literature, even if it was not applied to the coding dictionary for this dissertation.

The index of contemporary dog whistles is provided below. An explanation as to how the term 'dog whistle' was operationalized will be provided. Each dog whistle keyword and/or phrase was provided, and an explanation of its coded messaging was supplied, with sources from the literature to support this explanation.

Dog Whistle Definition

This index was created as an exhaustive index of contemporary anti-trans dog whistles. I posit that dog whistles were utilized by anti-trans actors as a means of surreptitiously promoting their views via coded language. To that end, a dog whistle for the purpose of this index has been defined as:

1) A statement made using coded language. Taken literally, the statement is often innocuous and/or appears to be unrelated to the topic of interest. However, the language is designed to be coded so that in-groups may identify one another and discuss their shared views surreptitiously.[198]
2) This coded language is meant to be undetectable to out-groups. This is by design; those who are viewed as potential recruits may be introduced to the topics slowly via dog whistles and other tactics. On the other hand, those that are othered are not meant to understand the coded messages. If discovered and/or accused, the lack of literal/textual reference is designed to grant plausible deniability.[199]
3) The dog whistle's implicit, coded meaning is derived from the subcultural context in which it is created. This means that the coded message 'embedded' within the text is made meaningful based on the in-group's intention. This also further contributes to the possibility of plausible deniability and widespread dissemination into mainstream cultures, as the 'hidden' meaning – while still relevant to the original intention of the dog whistle – may not be known to out-groups.

8.5.1: Dog Whistle Index

1. The Trans/Gay Agenda[200]

The 'Establishment'[201] (often 'Big Pharma'[202] and/or 'Globalists'[203]) are forcing transness/queerness onto Western nations. The presumption here is that this 'agenda' would have negative consequences if carried out, and that this would lead to the breakdown of the traditional nuclear family structure, traditional gender roles, heteropatriarchal gender relations, and/or white

[198] López, 2014; Rodwell, 2020; Bonikowski and Zhang, 2023; Busby, 2020; Salvati et al., 2024
[199] López, 2014; Rodwell, 2020; Bonikowski and Zhang, 2023; Busby, 2020; Salvati et al., 2024
[200] Callender, 2023; Bettinsoli, Napier, and Carnaghi, 2022; Perkins and Ortiz Soto, 2022
[201] Enders et al., 2023; Uscinski et al, 2021; Abadi et al, 2024; de León, Makhortykh, and Adam, 2024
[202] Ladini, 2022; Mattsson and Johansson, 2022; Lamberty and Imhoff, 2018; Drążkiewicz and Harambam, 2024
[203] Lockwood, 2021; Hagemeister, 2022; Allington, Hirsh, and Katz, 2023; Önnerfors and Krouwel, 2021

racial dominance. This dog whistle often has ties to anti-Semitic conspiracy theories[204] that posit a secret Jewish world order is undermining/erasing/destroying white cisheteropatriarchal cultural norms and/or Western cultural hegemony. The 'gay/trans' agenda implies that LGBTQ+ people are part of secret organizations with regimented goals to infiltrate Western cultural institutions to erode them from the inside.

2. Transgenderism/Genderism[205]

The term used to refer to the 'indoctrination' of people (especially children and youth) into transitioning. This also refers to a broader existential and cultural anxiety around the destabilization of the sex/gender binary as 'natural' and 'fixed'. The portrayal of transness as an ideology, political stance, and/or dangerous medical practice is positioned against 'biological fact' to de-legitimize it.

3. Gender Ideology[206]

A term that refers to a wide range of practices, tactics, and social norms that are considered to be central to LGBTQ+ groups' 'beliefs'. Transness is positioned as a set of beliefs and ideas that are not 'real' and have no 'legitimate' basis in reality when compared to 'science', 'biology', and 'common sense'. 'Gender ideology' is discussed in similar ways to the 'gay/trans agenda' as an organized movement designed to infiltrate institutions (notably schools) to indoctrinate people (notably children) into subscribing to these 'beliefs'. Gender ideology is portrayed as harmful to the perpetuation of Western cultural hegemony and to cisheteronormative traditional gendered relations. Cultural anxieties surrounding 'gender ideology' also often displaces concerns from

[204] Lockwood, 2021; Hagemeister, 2022; Allington, Hirsh, and Katz, 2023; Önnerfors and Krouwel, 2021
[205] Corredor, 2019; Butler, 2024
[206] Corredor, 2019

other economic, environmental, sociocultural, and geopolitical precarities of the modern world.[207]

4. Detransition/Regret[208]

Narratives of detransition and regret are used to delegitimize (medical) transition. Rather than approaching the topic of detransition and regret from a place of nuance, these arguments are designed to imply that people are being pressured, rushed, and/or coerced into gender affirmation surgery; and that detransition is the pre-ordained trajectory of all trans people because their 'biological imperatives' of cisheteronormativity will eventually resurface.[209] Discussions of detransition rates are often utilized to present arguments against gender affirmative care, especially for children and youth. Discussions of detransition also capture existential and cultural anxieties pertaining to (white) reproductive futurity, as gender affirmative care can result in medical sterilization and/or difficulties with biological reproduction. The 'queering' of cisheteronormative pubertal and/or reproductive milestones is presented as an 'aberration' from the 'norm', with detransition and regret as the only viable outcome of this 'tragic' interference with 'biology'.

5. Biological Sex/Biological Men and Women/Natal Men and Women/Sex Matters[210]

The notion that sex is fixed, mutually exclusive, complementary, and inherently gendered. This 'biological reality' does not account for intersex people or those whose phenotypical expressions of their sex do not align with strict white supremacist, cisheterosexual, racist, and ableist cultural norms, to say nothing of gender variance and trans self-identity. With 'biological

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[207] Butler, 2024
[208] Irwig, 2022; Cohn, 2023; Jorgensen, 2023; MacKinnon, Expósito-Campos, and Gould, 2023; Vandenbussche, 2022; Sanders et al., 2023
[209] Irwig, 2022; Cohn, 2023; Jorgensen, 2023; MacKinnon, Expósito-Campos, and Gould, 2023; Vandenbussche, 2022; Sanders et al., 2023
[210] Orr, 2022; Rippon, 2019; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024

sex' positioned as the concrete and immutable 'reality' from which gender is made intelligible, sex and gender are portrayed as material and unchanging realities. This line of reasoning has become a central focal point for justifying the exclusion of trans people from gendered recognition and/or homosocial spaces. Trans people are often referred to as their 'biological sex' (i.e., sex assigned at birth) to delegitimize trans self-identity claims and to re-center 'biological sex' as 'real'. By referring to trans people as 'biological men/women', this notion of an unchanging biological sex (and its inherently gendered nature) becomes a self-reinforcing system.[211]

6. References to the Trans Suicide/Depression/Anxiety Rates[212]

A multifaceted dog whistle: this topic can be approached from various lines of argumentation. Typically, trans people are portrayed as mentally ill and seeking self-harming methods to address underlying trauma and/or distress, which is then exploited by the medical establishment via guiding them toward transition. Trans people are occasionally portrayed as 'victims' of the medical establishment (usually when they are children),[213] or as people who are 'sick' and thus whose wishes should not be respected (children and/or adults).[214] Likewise, the trans suicide rates are often framed as causally linked to transition. This is an oversimplification of how systemic cisnormativity/cisgenderism contributes to trans depression, anxiety, and suicide rates.

[211] Orr, 2022; Rippon, 2019; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024
[212] Kia et al., 2021; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Hatfield, 2022
[213] Austin et al., 2022; Gorse, 2022; Kingsbury et al., 2022
[214] Cramer et al., 2022; Rabasco and Andover, 2021

7. Protecting Children/Save The Children[215]

A well-established dog whistle. It posits that trans/queer people are a threat to children's safety, particularly that trans/queer people are pedophiles who want to sexually abuse children. All sexualities, family structures, and ways of being/knowing that differ from cisheteronormative cultural frameworks are immediately rendered as suspicious and/or dangerous.[216] Additionally, this dog whistle is structured based on the presumption that cisheteronormative pubertal, sexual, and reproductive milestones are the only 'normative' forms of childhood physical and sexual development. Any queer/trans childhood development is positioned as 'abnormal' and indicative of hypersexual dysfunction. This dysfunction is positioned as possible via grooming and the sexual exploitation of children.

8. Leave Our Kids Alone/Let Kids Be Kids[217]

An argument that children are being exposed to 'gender ideology' at young and impressionable ages. It implies that wherein all children are 'naturally' cisgender and heterosexual, exposure to trans/queer people can 'turn' them trans/queer. It also frames introductions to LGBTQ+ people/ideas/concepts as equivalent to explicit sexual instruction. This is based on discourse that children are susceptible to peer pressure, lack the ability to give informed consent, cannot consider long-term consequences, and/or that their sense of identity and self-knowledge is not developed like an adult's.[218]

[215] Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Amery, 2023; Langarita et al., 2023; Horton et al., 2024
[216] Leveille, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024
[217] Bloch, 2023; Nicholas, 2020
[218] Bloch, 2023; Nicholas, 2020

9. What Is A Woman?[219]

While part of a long-standing discussion in feminist theory,[220] this question in the context of anti-trans discourse carries a specific meaning and intended goal. It is based on a reference to a 2022 online American movie by the same name.[221] The question, when asked, is meant to 'expose' the 'hypocrisies' of pro-trans logic regarding sex and gender by revealing discrepancies in their logic of defining 'woman'. The implicit (and only correct) definition is meant to be, 'an adult biological female'. It likewise puts the burden of proof onto trans/queer people to justify their existence wherein they are positioned as never being able to 'win' the debate.[222]

10. Woman: Adult Human Female[223]

A definition that implicitly frames a woman as someone who is assigned female at birth. This definition of woman that is meant to 1) reinforce the 'biological sex' paradigm as an indisputable truth, and 2) used to claim that trans women do not face the same struggles as 'real' women, such as misogyny.[224]

11. Protect Women[225]

The assumption that (white, cisgender, heterosexual) women are under threat of sexual assault by trans/queer people. It rests on paternalistic discourses that position women as biologically 'inferior' to men and thus requiring protection from 'deviant' men. The phallus is framed as a destructive force that can be wielded as a weapon against women, who must be

[219] Folk, 2022
[220] Bettcher, 2025
[221] Folk, 2022
[222] MacKinnon, 2023
[223] Staff Pride Network, n.d.; Atwood, Morgenroth and Olson, 2024; Morgenroth et al., 2024a; Morgenroth et al., 2024b; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024
[224] Staff Pride Network, n.d.; Atwood, Morgenroth and Olson, 2024; Morgenroth et al., 2024a; Morgenroth et al., 2024b; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024
[225] McNamarah, 2023; Arayasirikul et al., 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Serano, 2007

protected from it to preserve their sexual and reproductive currency.[226] This also applies to anyone who is 'suspected' of being trans/queer due to their appearance, especially if they are gender non-conforming and/or racialized.[227]

12. Protect Lesbians[228]

A longstanding dog whistle within lesbian separatist communities. It relies on similar reasoning as the above dog whistle wherein the phallus is seen as destructive and paternalistic discourses position women as needing protection from men. Here, the phallus is positioned as a phantasmal threat of corrective rape to 'turn' lesbians heterosexual. As such, trans women are viewed as male interlopers attempting to seduce and rape lesbians.[229]

13. Women's Sports Are Being Infiltrated/Protect Women's Sports[230]

The argument that men and women are biologically distinct and that men have 'natural physical advantages' over women. As such, allowing trans women (framed as 'men') to participate in women's sports gives them an 'unfair advantage', as well as increasing the risk of harassment and sexual assault of 'biological women'[231] in homosocial spaces such as changing rooms and locker rooms. This is often couched in language of 'concern' for 'fairness' and 'safety'.

14. Defending Sex Based Rights/Protect Single Sex Spaces[232]

The argument to advocate for women's rights based on 'biological sex'. The assumption is that men and women are biologically distinct from one another and that to achieve true equality, these different 'biological realities' must be reflected in legislation and sociocultural changes to

[226] McNamarah, 2023; Arayasirikul et al., 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Serano, 2007
[227] Lewis and Grzanka, 2016; Simpson, 2017; Snorton, 2017; Nicholas, 2020; Bey, 2022; Hsu, 2022
[228] Beck, Habed, and Henninger, 2024; Schotten, 2022; Platero, 2023
[229] Beck, Habed, and Henninger, 2024; Schotten, 2022; Platero, 2023
[230] Teetzel, 2020; Orr, 2022; Fischer, 2023; Jakubowska, 2024
[231] Teetzel, 2020; Orr, 2022; Fischer, 2023; Jakubowska, 2024
[232] Amery, 2023; Butler, 2024

address their unique needs.[233] However, this argument is weaponized against trans people by invalidating their lives experiences and reifying the sex/gender binary as 'biologically real'. This also raises concerns about having 'single-sex' spaces to 'protect' women from men without addressing the misogynistic cultural norms that position women as needing 'protection' from men in the first place.

15. Misgendering Trans Men/Women and/or Nonbinary People[234]

A refusal to use the correct pronouns of a trans person to invalidate their self-identity and lived experience. The surreptitious and deliberate choice to misgender someone is also meant to highlight the 'ridiculousness' of their self-identification.[235]

16. Kink and Other Derogatory Sexual Implications[236]

The argument that engaging in kink and/or 'non-normative' sexual acts and desires is immoral. The connections between the kink community and trans/queer people are used as evidence for sexual proclivities that are dangerous, 'dirty', hedonistic, and/or disgusting. The sexualization of trans/queer people[237] dovetails with assumptions and misinformation about kink to portray these groups as sexually deviant and who actively seek to harm others via their sexual practices.

17. Watchful Waiting/Wait-And-See[238]

An approach to medical transition wherein people (especially children) are encouraged to wait before receiving gender affirmative care. While this approach may seem reasonable and

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[233] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025
[234] Brightman et al., 2024; Nielsen, Kuo, and Zhao, 2023; Goldberg and Beemyn, 2021
[235] Brightman et al., 2024; Nielsen, Kuo, and Zhao, 2023; Goldberg and Beemyn, 2021
[236] Hart and Cutler-Broyles, 2021; Arps et al., 2021; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Stein, 2021; Szpilka, 2024
[237] Hart and Cutler-Broyles, 2021; Arps et al., 2021; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Stein, 2021; Szpilka, 2024
[238] Ashley, 2019a; Ashley, 2019b

may work on a case-by-case basis, it is ultimately based on the premise that all children are cisgender and heterosexual and that with time, they will 'realize' this 'truth'.[239] The delaying or prevention of transition is designed to both discourage people from expressing their transness/queerness as well as to enforce strict medical and legal gatekeeping around transitioning.

18. Parental Rights[240]

'Parental rights' is a term that refers to a variety of legal rights and protections afforded to parents to raise their children. However, in this context, it is used to justify anti-trans legislation targeting trans children and youth.[241] Parental rights are positioned as superseding the rights of children so that parents can make informed choices to protect and instill their desired values into their children. It prevents children and youth from accessing resources and assistance outside of the family structure. It can also create dangerous and abusive situations wherein children can be surveilled, 'outed', and/or prevented from seeking gender affirmative care.

19. 'Rapid-Onset Gender Dysphoria'/Social Contagion[242]

The argument that transness/queerness is a social contagion. This is mainly used as an argument regarding children and youth, who are thought to be highly susceptible to peer pressure and a desire to 'fit in' to find social acceptance. This implies that, if transness/queerness is a social contagion, that 1) it is inherently bad and/or dangerous and must be stopped, and 2) that enforcing cisheteronormative sex/gender ideals is the 'cure'.[243] It also positions transness as a

[239] Murib, 2020; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026
[240] Ashley, 2024; Spade, 2015; Hébert, 2020; Hébert and Singer, 2022; Ganshorn, 2023
[241] Ashley, 2024; Spade, 2015; Hébert, 2020; Hébert and Singer, 2022; Ganshorn, 2023
[242] Shalizi and Thomas, 2011; Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023
[243] Shalizi and Thomas, 2011; Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

'sudden' phenomenon in which children exhibit no prior 'warning signs' and adopt a (false) trans identity in an attempt to find community and belonging amongst their peers.

20. Exploratory/Reparative Therapy (Conversion Therapy)[244]

Conversion therapy. Exploratory/reparative therapy is premised on the assumption that cisheteronormativity is natural, whereas transness/queerness are 'unnatural', and actively causes the individual harm. By 'curing' them, the person can be returned to a 'healthy' state of being. It is framed as a therapeutic approach to 'curing' LGBTQ+ gender identity and sexuality, but conversion therapy has been thoroughly proven to be harmful and ineffective.[245]

21. J. K. Rowling/The *Harry Potter* Franchise[246]

A famous author of the children's book series, *Harry Potter.* The author has since become hostile toward trans people and now infamously utilizes her platforms to spread anti-trans discourse. This has drawn support from anti-trans actors and trans-exclusionary radical feminists (TERFs)/'gender-critical' feminists.[247] References to J. K. Rowling and/or the Harry Potter franchise when discussing trans people are often alluding to Rowling's extremely vocal anti-trans discourse.[248]

8.6: Conclusions

This chapter has tracked the frequency of metaphorical tone and broader representational political framings present in anti-trans discourses from a dataset of 500 newspaper articles, Hansard transcripts, think tanks, and alt-right media outlets over a 23-year period. It also listed an exhaustive index of contemporary anti-trans dog whistles and explained their logics grounded

[244] Joz, Cannoot and T'Sjoen, 2023; Ashley, 2023; Ashley, 2020; Kinitz et al., 2022
[245] Joz, Cannoot and T'Sjoen, 2023; Ashley, 2023; Ashley, 2020; Kinitz et al., 2022; Cooper et al., 2025
[246] Miller, 2024; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Thurlow, 2024; Tudisco, 2023; Uspenskiy, 2022; Butler, 2024; Stryker and Blackston, 2023
[247] Glassman, 2023; Serano, 2007; Butler, 2024; Stryker and Blackston, 2023
[248] Miller, 2024; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Thurlow, 2024; Tudisco, 2023; Uspenskiy, 2022; Butler, 2024; Stryker and Blackston, 2023

in the literature. It sought to answer the following questions: What is the overall metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse in Canada? Are there larger representational politics framings present? If so, what are they? What are the key types of dog whistling? A synthesis of the key findings will be provided below.

8.6.1: Key Findings

Categories and Subcategories 'Metaphorical Tone'

- A punitive (i.e., Strict Father) metaphorical tone was overwhelmingly represented in the dataset (97%). A nurturant (i.e., Nurturant Parent) metaphorical tone was largely absent from the dataset (3%).
- It was discovered that a Strict Father metaphorical tone characterized both decades and increased dramatically over time (85% to 100%). By contrast, the Nurturant Parent metaphorical tone decreased and disappeared from the dataset over time (15% to 0%).
- In terms of the breakdown by actor, Think Tanks had notably higher numbers for the Nurturant Parent metaphorical tone (17%) and lower numbers for the Strict Father metaphorical tone (83%). This grouping tended to present anti-trans discourse in a more nurturing tone and to frame Christianity as a loving path to salvation for those who made an 'unfortunate lifestyle choice' (i.e., transness).

Categories and Subcategories 'Broader Representational Politics Framings'

- Transphobia was the largest framing device (84%). As the selection criteria necessitated cases to contain anti-trans discourse, it was expected that anti-trans discourse would frequently contain transphobic framings.
- Sexism (23%) and Heteronormativity (18%) were the second and third most frequent framings, respectively.
- Most representational political framings remained stable over time, which did not align with the stated hypotheses. Heteronormativity (32% to 11%) and Christonormativity (15% to 4%) framings both decreased over time.
- Think Tanks had higher numbers for Heteronormativity (42%), Homophobia (27%), and Christonormativity (23%). Alt-Right New Media contained higher numbers for Transphobia (97%), which was anticipated.

Anti-Trans Dog Whistle Index

- The dog whistle index demonstrated that contemporary dog whistles often portrayed transness as 'harmful' to interest groups such as women and children. Transness was also frequency portrayed as an 'ideology' that was 'illogical' and lacking in internal consistency, as well as oppositional to the 'realities' of 'biology' and 'science'. By couching these dog whistles in language that presented itself as 'logical', 'concerned', and/or 'protecting minority interests', these dog whistles have effectively portrayed anti-trans discourse as 'reasonable' and 'caring', compared to the 'illogical' and 'uncaring' practices of pro-trans actors/trans people.

8.6.2: Implications

Metaphorical Tone: A Punitive Focus

Saurette and Gordon's model was employed in this thesis to test the metaphorical tone of the dataset. As was expected, the overall metaphorical tone in the dataset was extremely punitive. Transness/trans rights/trans people were portrayed in such as way as to highlight their supposed 'abnormality' and/or moral 'weakness'. Per Lakoff's description of the Strict Father model, the role of 'parent' is to guide their 'child' toward the highest moral good, which is the pursuit of self-interest via self-discipline. Transness was generally portrayed as symptomatic of a 'soft touch'; on other words, a lack of discipline, rewards, and punishments for good and bad behaviour. It is the failing of 'parents' (i.e., parents, governments, cultural norms, etc.) who do not instruct their 'children' (i.e. individuals) to become 'self-disciplined' in their sex/gender expression, and thus they become 'weak', which is a fixed and intrinsic characteristic in adulthood. Part of this self-discipline is learning how to properly enact one's assigned gender (and sexuality) at birth; any 'deviation' from this 'norm' is not only 'unnatural', but 'immoral'.

These findings were fascinating, albeit expected. This punitive metaphorical tone reveals that conservative discourse in Canada may be bi-tonal depending on the subject matter, with nurturant and punitive frameworks. For example, Saurette and Gordon's work on the anti-abortion movement in Canada[249] revealed a shift toward a nurturing metaphorical tone in portraying women as 'victims' of a pro-abortion culture. By framing abortion as harmful to women, anti-abortion activism has been positioned in recent years as a movement to 'protect' women from harmful medical practices and a culture that encourages 'murder'. This nurturant metaphorical tone contrasted starkly with the punitive focus of the anti-trans backlash, which

[249] Saurette and Gordon, 2015

portrayed transness as something which must be stopped via sociocultural and legal 'punishment'. This may also explain the shift toward a child-centric focus. By focusing on children – whose moral dispositions are considered to be 'in flux' – it may still be possible to shape them into moral citizens who embrace the self-discipline of their assigned sexes/genders at birth and create a 'strong' moral foundation to resist the 'immorality' and 'weakness' of transness. When this rhetoric was expressed, however, it had elements of the Nurturant Parent model as well – portraying children as requiring 'protection' from 'harm', and that it was the sociocultural, political, and legal responsibilities of parents, teachers, and the state to create the means by which children would be 'shielded'.

Broader Representational Political Framings: Pre-Structuring Reality

It was discovered that various representational political framings were present in the dataset. These framings pre-structured what information was presented, how it was presented, and guided the audience toward a desired outcome and/or conclusion. Anti-trans actors made use of this persuasive technique to shape what concepts, ideas, and discourses were presented; and crucially, it also precluded other forms of critique and/or engagement. The most prevalent framings were transphobic, sexist, and heteronormative framings that relied upon stereotypes to pre-structure their claims. These framings presented information that positioned transness as strange, abnormal, hypersexual, absurd, disgusting, etc. By pre-structuring transness in this light, cases that gave it 'the benefit of the doubt' but ultimately concluded that transness was a negative force were designed to seem well-balanced and reasonable. Additionally, cases that pre-structured transness negatively and re-doubled their efforts to present it as such were positioned as 'proving' their claims by providing information that supported their 'hypotheses'. These transphobic framings precluded any possibility of portraying transness positively, or even

ambivalently, depending on the case. Similarly, sexist framings portrayed (cisgender) women as having their 'sex-based interests' protected via policing of homosocial spaces such as public washrooms. However, this framing often presented these 'protections' as possible only due to a strict separation of the sexes, which were bound by their biology; women as passive, and men as aggressive. This framing precluded any critique of sexist cultural norms that reified these stereotypes, or any opportunity to ask why women should *need* to be protected from men in the first place. Finally, heteronormative framings presented sexuality, gendered norms, and interrelations between men and women strictly through a heterosexual lens. Presumptions and stereotypes about the kinds of relationships men and women may have to each other existed only through the lens of sexual, romantic, and/or reproductive partnership. Other possible relations between men and women – as well as queer relations and/or relations that include people who exist beyond the sex/gender binary – were precluded from existing within these discussions. Queer relations were often erased entirely or were framed as 'abnormal' when discussed. Queer/trans expressions of gender and sexuality were often compared against the 'biological imperatives' of heterosexuality and found lacking.

Dog Whistle Index: The 'Care' and 'Logic' of the Anti-Trans Backlash

There were a variety of contemporary dog whistles that were tracked and compiled in this index. These dog whistles utilized coded keywords and/or phrases to embed messages that supported anti-trans discourse and provided plausible deniability if discovered/accused by out-groups. Many of these dog whistles often had one or both of the following goals: to portray anti-trans actors as kind and logical; and/or to portray trans people/pro-trans actors as unkind and illogical. These dog whistles, for example, often appealed to 'common sense' claims; they portrayed anti-trans people as concerned for and caring about the well-being of (cisgender)

women and children. These often appeared in refrains such as ‘let kids be kids’ or ‘protect women’s sports’. By contrast, pro-trans actors were portrayed as not caring for the well-being of women and children. These dog whistles were constructed to position trans people/pro-trans actors as cruel and illogical. For example, these dog whistles portraying LGBTQ+ topics in schools as indoctrinating children into ‘gender ideology’, or inclusive sports policies as ‘exposing’ cisgender women to ‘sexual danger’ in public changing rooms and washrooms. These dog whistles allude to the perceived ‘cruelties’ of pro-trans actors/trans people who were, at best, misguided in their attempts to promote equality, or, at worst, actively and maliciously trying to harm vulnerable groups. By also appealing to ‘common sense/logic’, these dog whistles were designed to portray pro-trans discourse as ‘hypocritical’ and/or ‘illogical’. Asking a pro-trans actor ‘what is a woman?’ was meant to conclusively end any discussion, as the only ‘reasonable’ answer by this logic could be: ‘an adult biological female’.

In framing trans people/pro-trans actors as cruel and illogical – and anti-trans actors as caring and logical – via coded language, dog whistles could disseminate anti-trans discourse when they were shared both purposefully and inadvertently as ‘reasonable’ interventions into trans discourses. However, this is exactly what makes them so insidious – and dangerous – in normalizing anti-trans discourse in Canada.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

Since 2019, anti-trans discourse has proliferated sharply in Canada. It has permeated the country's mainstream politics and media, as well as niche right-wing/socially conservative groups and organizations. This anti-trans backlash is a surprising departure from the general trends in LGBTQ+ rights and mainstream media coverage in Canada over the past two decades. Therefore, this dissertation set out to determine 'what' anti-trans actors were saying by tracking trends in anti-trans discourse. In so doing, the goal of this dissertation was to understand the contents and scope of this discourse – and to propose potential countermeasures to halt its normalization. Therefore, an MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis) was conducted on cases gathered between January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023. A total of 500 cases were collected and coded. This was done by employing a custom coding dictionary in QDA Miner. The macro-analyses were generated and then qualitatively examined for context. The findings were examined by the overall breakdown, as well as by time-period and by actor. I sought to answer the following key research questions:

1. What are the main topics, positions and evidence discussed in anti-trans discourse in Canada?
2. What are the explicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
3. What are the implicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
4. What metaphorical tones do anti-trans actors employ?
5. What broader representational political framings to anti-trans actors employ?
6. What contemporary dog whistles do anti-trans actors employ?
7. Are there any differences in the above elements over time and/or between actors?

The cases were coded in six rounds of coding (three initial rounds and three follow-up rounds) to ensure internal reliability and validity. The findings were then separated into five content chapters based on thematic grouping. In Chapter 4, the overall distribution of cases, the positions (stances), and the type(s) of evidence utilized were examined. Chapter 5 was dedicated to examining the breakdown of the topics and sub-topics present in the dataset. Chapter 6 covered the breakdown of the explicit arguments and sub-arguments. Chapter 7 mirrored Chapter 6 in covering the breakdown of the implicit arguments and sub-arguments. Chapter 8 analyzed the breakdown of the presence of metaphorical tone and the broader representational political framings. It also introduced the contemporary dog whistle index.

Given that the content chapters contained the key findings in a combination of prose and bullet-point form, it was decided that those summaries would not be restated here. This conclusion chapter will instead address the thematic, theoretical, and practical implications of the dissertation's findings.

In the proceeding sections of this conclusion, the 'Key Thematic Findings' section will discuss 10 of the most significant, surprising, and/or notable qualitative implications that were discovered in the process of analyzing the macro-analyses results. The second section, 'Theoretical and Practical Implications', lists some potential theoretical implications these findings hold for trans studies and gender studies. It also provides some suggestions for organizational and tactical considerations to counter anti-trans discourse. Finally, in the 'Suggestions for Further Research' section, potential areas of study for future projects will be discussed.

9.1: Key Thematic Findings

This section contains a discussion on 10 of the most significant, surprising, and/or notable implications that were discovered in the process of analyzing the macro-analyses results.

9.1.1: The Colonization of Liberal Language

Throughout this dissertation, it was apparent that anti-trans actors have colonized progressive language and/or movements to suit their goals and agendas. A variety of rhetorical strategies were utilized[250] to effectively disseminate/produce anti-trans discourse in Canadian society. Just as Saurette and Gordon observed this shift within the Canadian anti-abortion movement,[251] similar tactics were at play to mobilize this anti-trans backlash and normalize anti-trans discourse in Canadian mainstream politics and media. Anti-trans actors have colonized language to portray themselves as champions for the rights of women, children, and parents. They portrayed themselves as attentive to the unique needs of these groups, which were positioned as being 'threatened' by trans rights. They have also colonized the language of neoliberal values such as 'multiculturalism', 'religious freedom', and 'Canadian values' to justify/champion their causes, especially when forming coalitions with (non-white and/or non-Christian) groups who opposed pro-trans legislation, rights, and/or sociocultural discourses. According to the literature on FCDA (feminist critical discourse analysis),[252] this shift exemplifies how language is constructive, hegemonic, and simultaneously contested; the struggle over words is a key feature of modern political speech. Anti-trans actors appealed to neoliberal Canadian values by centering anti-trans discourse as 'taking a stand' against 'injustice', thus co-

[250] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[251] Saurette and Gordon, 2015
[252] Van Dijk, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001; Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates, 2001; Lazar, 2005

opting various pro-trans and broader social justice/human rights movements to normalize anti-trans discourse as a positive social movement that deserves to be supported.

In general, the tactic of victim inversion was employed throughout the dataset. These groups were strongly preoccupied with perceived victimizations[253] for supporting/articulating anti-trans discourse. The power dynamics and structural institutions were portrayed as being 'flipped' by anti-trans actors to mobilize political action. This was especially apparent in the Alt-Right New Media sources, in which trans people/pro-trans actors were portrayed as powerful and organized forces of 'elites' who were slowly infiltrating all levels of society and eroding Canadian culture to place themselves into positions of power. This was apparent in the pervasive focus on freedom of speech/expression.[254] Trans rights were consistently positioned as operating in opposition to other human/civil rights for Canadians. With this basic legal and sociocultural tenet seemingly 'under attack', these groups often issued calls to action to 'fight back' against the 'tyrannical' and 'oppressive' regime of the Trudeau government[255] and mainstream legacy media for its 'one-sided' portrayal of transness. Typically, anti-trans actors were qualitatively observed as positioning themselves as perpetual outsiders, victims, and/or the maligned 'common folk' who have been unjustly oppressed by a powerful institutionalized force. Thus, by 'fighting back', they were both rebellious/revolutionary and positioning themselves as the victors in a (culture) war who would eventually triumph. This populist rhetoric of demanding the unrestrained sovereignty of the 'common people' from the corrupt 'elites' speaks to a general trend toward populist rhetoric that has proliferated in Canadian mainstream culture and media in

[253] Hsu, 2022; Hsu, 2024; Styker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Serano, 2007; Bettcher, 2007; Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[254] McIntyre, 1993; Spade, 2015; Cossman, 2018; DeGagné, 2021; Ganshorn, 2023; Ashley, 2024
[255] Smith, 2020; Mulé, 2020; Momani and Deschamps, 2021; Preston, 2024; Montigny, 2025

recent years.[256] Overall, this colonization of neoliberal language has proven to be effective in producing/disseminating anti-trans discourse within Canada's legal and media spheres.

9.1.2: Respectability Politics and Trans People

A common theme throughout the content chapters was a persistent engagement with respectability politics as they pertained to trans people/transness. These themes were especially prevalent in chapters 6 and 7 (the explicit and implicit arguments chapters), as well as Chapter 8 (notably in the metaphorical tone and broader political framings results). Trans people were frequently portrayed as too demanding, too vocal, too 'extreme', and/or too hostile in their pursuit of rights and/or swaying sociocultural attitudes. Trans people/pro-trans actors were portrayed as pushing 'too hard' for radical change that would destabilize Canadian society. Responses to this 'extremism' ranged from called for incrementalism and disparaging pro-trans discourse as demanding 'too much, too soon', to calling for a total cessation of discussions pertaining to trans rights. Trans people were often discussed in a hostile manner as (existentially, interpersonally, and/or sexually) threatening to the status quo. Alongside these discussions, however, trans people were also frequently portrayed as pathetic, unreasonable, emotional, and/or deserving of derision. Frequently, trans people were framed from the outset as difficult and/or unreasonable. By contrast, anti-trans actors were rhetorically constructed by newspapers, think tanks, media outlets, and some political actors as reasonable, thoughtful, nuanced, and/or authoritative and respectable in their responses to transness/trans people/trans rights discourses. However, this does not mean that anti-trans discourse is uniformly perceived as calm or rational; for its targets, such discourse may instead be experienced as hostile, fearful, or threatening.

[256] Laclau, 2005; Norris and Inglehart, 2019; Braunstein, 2022

Another interesting observation was the 'glimpse' of insight gained into how trans people/pro-trans actors have responded to this shift in framing and portrayal. In cases wherein trans voices/pro-trans voices were present, such as interviewees and/or the rare author/reporter articulating pro-trans discourse, they often appealed to their audiences by relying upon respectability politics. Trans people/pro-trans actors generally appealed to normative markers of success and cultural integration. They discussed marriage and raising children; home ownership; financial success; and discussed a desire for acceptance, freedom, and choice. This was a particularly salient throughline when discussing trans women in sport and in prisons. Sport and prisons are highly gendered spaces, and trans people/pro-trans actors would appeal to arguments of feminine 'discomfort' around men to advocate for trans women's access to these spaces. They would frame trans women as 'in danger' from men, should they be forced to compete and/or reside alongside them. They also appealed to neoliberal feminist values of choice, bodily autonomy, freedom from governmental overreach, and/or stereotypical markers of femininity to support claims of trans inclusion in women's spaces. Arguments that centered on trans justice frameworks outside of these neoliberal markers of success were practically non-existent in the dataset. Overall, these respectability politics were characterized by both anti-trans actors and the occasional trans people/pro-trans actor as appeals to normativity. By seeking acceptance as intelligible and normative subjects, however, homonormative/homonationalistic discourses dominated the discourse. There was little discussion of trans coalitions beyond these concepts, nor discussions of worldbuilding methods that abandoned 'normativity' for other potential avenues.[257] It must be noted that since the dataset was comprised of anti-trans discourse, these alternative discussions by and for trans people/pro-trans actors were scarcely represented. But

[257] Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco, 2014; Bey, 2022; Faye, 2022

these discourses certainty do exist,[258] and continue to flourish in personal, interpersonal, cultural, regional, national, activist, and academic spaces. The use of respectability politics and calls for trans people to constantly strive to appeal to the sensibilities of non-trans populations is just one of many tactics that dehumanizes trans people and normalizes anti-trans discourse couched in the language of 'respectability'.

9.1.3: Legislation and Rights-Based Argumentations

In Chapters 5, 6, and 7, I noted the extensive utilization of topics and arguments pertaining to legislation and rights-based anti-trans discourses. Legislative and rights-based arguments focused on discussions of human/civil rights. These rights were often positioned as zero-sum; when one group gained legal status and protections, another group would 'lose out'. As such, trans rights were positioned as directly oppositional to a variety of other groups' human/civil rights; most notably, (cisgender) women's rights, 'parental rights', and to a lesser extent, the right to religious freedom/expression.

When discussing federal laws such as Bill C-16, for example, 'men in women's washrooms' discourses were evoked as justification to reject or revise the bill. Among the lines of reasoning to rationalize stances against adding 'gender identity and expression' as a protected category under the Criminal Code, opponents framed this protection as giving potential perpetrators of sexual assault 'legal loopholes' if they evoked this clause while on trial. However, in addition to the complexities of sexual assault cases and the difficulties associated with proving (or disproving) guilt from a legal standpoint, this clause was treated as a right that would protect perpetrators of sexual violence in all circumstances, for fear of being accused of 'discrimination' against trans people and/or having the results of the case appealed. Similar

[258] Bey, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024

discourses were evoked to oppose trans women's access to women's shelters, sports, and/or prisons. The rights of (cisgender) women were framed as 'under attack' by 'woke' attitudes via harmful scenarios in which they have no legal recourse against perpetrators of sexual assault; therefore, supporting trans rights was positioned as untenably oppressive toward other groups.

These discourses did not usually make space for discussions regarding the likelihood that (cisgender) men may choose to enter women's washrooms to sexually assault them without 'pretending' to be women,[259] or that many sexual assaults are committed by intimate partners (usually cisgender and heterosexual men) against cisgender women in Canada.[260] There was also little space for discussing trans women's disproportionate rates of sexual and physical assault.[261] These rights-based and legislation-based arguments drew upon paternalistic discourses of 'concern' for the 'protection' of women from sexually violent forces; preoccupations with preserving (white, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, middle-class) women's bodies from sexual violation rested upon misogynistic frameworks that portrayed women's sexuality as currency. This was interestingly often intertwined with discourses pertaining to 'women's rights' language to justify these stances. Anti-trans actors positioned trans women's access to 'woman-only' spaces as an infringement upon the hard-fought rights of feminists. Such 'invasions' were even framed as patriarchal invasions into women's spaces – language which has been evoked by radical feminists and lesbian separatists to reject trans women and their self-identity claims.[262] These discourses therefore linked trans-exclusionary beliefs and policies directly with feminism, portraying feminist initiatives as centered around the subjugation (cisgender) women experience as a result of discrimination based on 'biological sex'. These discourses were evoked by anti-

[259] Bettcher, 2007; Serano, 2007; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024
[260] Fact Sheet: Intimate Partner Violence, 2025
[261] Facts, stats and WAGE's impact - Government of Canada, 2025
[262] Raymond, 1979; Jeffreys, 2014; Shrier, 2020

trans actors, including mainstream politicians, pundits, feminists, scholars, parents, teachers, and religious figures in their discussions against trans rights. Banning trans women from accessing public single-sex spaces such as washrooms served to reify biological, cisnormative, and cisgenderist sex/gender frameworks, as well as to maintain heteronormative relations between men and women as 'normal'.

A slightly different approach was taken with other landmark legislation debates. Anti-trans actors constructed 'choice'-based arguments in their opposition to Bill C-4, a federal ban on conversion therapy. Anti-trans actors evoked a variety of discourses, including 'the right to choose' to justify keeping the practice legal. These discourses originally pertained to the right to bodily/reproductive autonomy and freedom under the law, centered on pursuing aims that led to the least distress and greatest life satisfaction without the state interfering.[263] Anti-trans actors have colonized this language, arguing for conversion therapy to remain legal. They portrayed this stance as providing individuals a means by which they could pursue a heterosexual and/or cisgender identity if their sexuality and/or gender identity caused 'distress'. This was a fascinating line of argumentation, as it positioned cisheteronormative forms of sexuality and/or gender identity as 'normal', as no arguments for conversion therapy to aid heterosexual and/or cisgender 'cessation' were observed. It also co-opted feminist and neo-liberal language of bodily autonomy and protestations against governmental interference as justification for the support of conversion therapy – or at the very least, to argue against its criminalization. However, this discourse consistently did not engage with other considerations, such as why an individual might experience distress and wish to 'change' their gender/sexuality to 'become'

[263] MacDonald, 2020; McKelvey et al., 2022; Momani and Deschamps, 2021; Montigny, 2025; Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024

heterosexual/cisgender in the first place. Sociocultural forces that privilege cisheteronormativity and create hostile environments for LGBTQ+ people were seldom addressed. This ‘distress’ was generally individualized and portrayed as an ‘unfortunate experience’ that could be ‘cured’ via conversion therapy. Qualitative distinctions between forms of conversion therapy that were considered ‘abusive/old fashioned’ (such as electro-shock therapy) and ‘beneficial/modern’ therapeutic practices were also prevalent. The ‘modern’ forms of conversion therapy were portrayed as similar to psychotherapeutic practices such as developing healthy coping mechanisms to address ‘undesirable impulses’ (i.e., transness and/or queerness), or else seeking spiritual guidance from religious authorities. Conversion therapy has even been rebranded as ‘reparative’ and/or ‘exploratory’ therapy to distance the practice from the connotations of the original term. In so doing, anti-trans actors portrayed conversion therapy as a right that Canadians ‘deserved’ to have ‘protected’, should they seek such services.

9.1.4: Trans Rights – A Child-Centric Shift

Generally, anti-trans discourse prior to the 2020s was largely centered on a trans adults. However, beginning around the early 2020s, anti-trans discourses began to center around trans children and youth. This interest group became a central preoccupation for anti-trans discourse in recent years. While trans children and youth have also been discussed for decades in the context of anti-trans discourses,[264] discussions pertaining to trans children and youth were not as widely discussed outside of LGBTQ+ spaces. This child-centric shift seemed unprecedented in Canada’s recent history, at least to the extent of its reach and visibility. Discussions of ‘parental rights’, ‘school choice’, and/or children’s presumed inability to give informed consent to social and/or

[264] Gill-Peterson, 2018; Adami, 2025

medical transitioning[265] became heightened in the 2020s. These discourses interwove a variety of tactics and presumptions to function. Firstly, this paradigm rested on the assumption that children were impressionable, 'innocent', and/or were incapable of making decisions with lifelong implications. This paradigm presumed that children were developmentally, socially, and legally unable to comprehend the consequences of their actions, especially many decades into the future as they aged. As such, it was a parent's responsibility to make those important decisions for their children, and to guide them into becoming adults who would then be capable of forming their own opinions and making their own decisions. However, this discourse often stripped down the nuance of children's developmental milestones into a binary category of child/adult. While young children are already capable of having a strong internal sense of gender identity,[266] adolescents are generally at different developmental stages from toddlers or pre-pubescent children[267] and can advocate for their own needs effectively. Moreover, transness is often conflated with overt sexuality. By flattening discourses regarding age-appropriate milestones so as to portray transness as an 'adult' topic, this discourse frames all children and youth as 'too young' to make decisions about their bodies and identities (at least without parental guidance). Moreover, the language of 'child' and/or 'children' was often evoked to conjure cultural imagery of childhood innocence; a period of childhood development in which sexuality is considered 'dormant'.[268] In conflating transness with overtly sexual acts, protestations to children's trans self-identity claims were often portrayed as 'protecting childhood innocence'. As such, legislative and sociocultural shifts in positioning parents as 'protectors' of children against 'sexualization' has become a predominant form of anti-trans discourse in recent years. This tactic

[265] Rights of Children, 2025; How to Access Gender Affirming Care – Government of Canada, 2024
[266] Gill-Peterson, 2018; Adami, 2025
[267] Gill-Peterson, 2018; Adami, 2025
[268] Gill-Peterson, 2018; Adami, 2025

has proven to be extremely effective; websites, public protests, sociocultural debates, and/or legislative debates have proliferated to address the 'crisis' of children self-identifying as trans. Adultist assumptions about children's ability to provide informed consent, to have a deep sense of self, and/or the ability to express their needs has undergirded the logics of this child-centric shift.

9.1.5: Parental Rights – Social and Legal Perspectives

One of the most widespread legislation/rights-based lines of argumentation was centered around 'parental rights'. 'Parental rights' encapsulates a variety of rights afforded to parents and guardians;[269] however, the use of this phrase in relation to anti-trans discourse has a specific focus and scope. In 2023, there was a sharp increase in the presence of the term 'parental rights' in relation to anti-trans discourses. This specific usage positioned 'parental rights' as including the right to be informed of a child's change in gender identity, gender expression, and/or forms of address (i.e., names and pronouns) in a scholastic setting. This term flourished, borne out of inaccurate and unsupported portrayals of the roles of teachers had in relation to trans students, and to address cultural anxieties of childhood gender variance. Whether the student ultimately decided to 'come out' to their parents, the scholastic environment might have been one of few options for exploring self-identity safely. Several school boards, prior to this movement, often explicitly recommended that teachers operate with discretion and allow the child to lead, according to their needs and comfort.[270] Trans children and youth were presumed to be able to accurately assess the risks of 'coming out' at home and be entitled to privacy when at school.[271] However, anti-trans actors portrayed this phenomenon as a widespread, almost conspiracy-like

[269] Ashley, 2024
[270] OSSTF School Boards with Guidelines, 2024
[271] OSSTF School Boards with Guidelines, 2024

movement with scores of children ‘secretly’ self-identifying as trans at school. During the surge of the ‘parental rights’ movement, these policies were portrayed as encouraging students to keep secrets from their parents, which fragmented the stability of the (nuclear) family unit and created opportunities for teachers and staff to abuse children. The New Brunswick Conservative government under then-Premier Blaine Higgs was the first jurisdiction to alter a provincial educational policy, Policy 713, that limited students’ autonomy and privacy in scholastic settings by requiring parental consent (and therefore knowledge) for teachers and staff to refer to them by different names and/or pronouns. This line of argumentation was framed as protecting ‘parental rights’; the rights of parents and guardians to make informed decisions in the best interests of their children. By not keeping parents up-to-date on their children’s scholastic activities, Higgs’ caucus argued that parents could not operate in the best interests of their children. However, by creating a scenario in which trans students may perceive their only options as to either ‘stay in the closet’ or be ‘outed’ to potentially unreceptive family members, many proponents of trans rights and children’s rights have argued that these ‘pronouns bills’ could create opportunities for trans students to be harmed. Anti-trans actors would often counter these arguments by stating that most parents were not ‘abusive’, and/or a culture of openness with parents meant that some children might experience difficulties in the name of protecting parents’ rights, which was portrayed as a ‘necessary evil’. Trans people/pro-trans actors were also portrayed as accusing all parents of being abusive toward their children. These discourses around child safety/autotomy and parental knowledge/consent were effective strategies in generating skepticism toward these school policies. Trans people/pro-trans actors were portrayed as unreasonable, jumping to conclusions, and/or assuming the worst of their community members and fellow constituents. In these discussions, parental authority over children’s wellbeing was given precedence to

children's autonomy (and safety). However, this often manifested in parental entitlement[272] with property-like paradigms in how children, and their rights, were conceptualized. This form of anti-trans discourse has gained immense traction and proven to be effective in Canada, as it has become a point of contention in the balance between children's needs for privacy and bodily autonomy, and parental knowledge to make the best decisions for their children.

9.1.6: Families in Peril

A throughline of anti-trans actors' preoccupation with the (nuclear) family unit was present throughout the thesis. Transness/trans people/trans rights were often framed as dangerous, injurious, and/or perilous to the continued stability of the (nuclear) family structure. Based on cisgenderist and cisnormative conceptualizations of gender and sexuality, the (nuclear) family unit's continued existence was presumed to rest on clear gender roles, sexual roles, and hierarchical relations of power to operate. Transness questions the basis of cisheteronormative conceptualizations of gender and sexuality and thus was rhetorically threatening to not only to the nuclear family structure's continued existence, but to its primacy as the best and 'only' legitimate form of family. Lakoff's work on the Strict Father and Nurturant Parent models of politics[273] was reworked akin to Saurette and Gordon's theoretical framework to examine the characteristics of the body of discourse's metaphorical tone and revealed interesting aspects to how the nuclear family unit was positioned as 'imperilled' by transness. The metaphor of the nation as a family (the head of the nation as the 'father', the government as the 'mother', and its citizens as its 'children') also reveals how transness can be conceptualized, threatening not simply to the microcosm of the (nuclear) family unit, but the stability of the nation. Legal systems, medical guidelines, sociocultural norms, and economic policies are all informed by

[272] Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026
[273] Lakoff, 1996

cisheteronormative conceptualisations of sex and gender, and how sexed/gendered citizens operate within these institutions' confines. When transness challenges the basis of sexed/gendered cisnormative and cisgenderist presuppositions, it imperils the basis of the Strict Father model that relies upon clearly defined (and 'biologically' pre-determined) sex/gender roles that privileged (cisgender) men over (cisgender) women. This questions the need for (cisgender, heterosexual) men to lead their households and nations, for (cisgender, heterosexual) women to obey their husbands, and for (cisgender, heterosexual) children to obey their 'parents' (both literal and societal) in perpetuating this system of sociopolitical ordering.

According to Lakoff, both the Strict Father and Nurturant Parent models of 'the nation as family' rests on American conceptualizations of morality.[274] If the morals of what makes a 'good' family – and a 'good' nation – are challenged, then this is positioned as 'immoral' unto itself. The preservation of patriarchal, cisheteronormative gender roles and the (nuclear) family unit via the (re)enforcement of the sex/gender binary and traditional gender roles also reinforced the stability of the nation, and of the nation's morality. Transness was portrayed as a 'deviance' from the norm, and dangerous to the continuation of 'moral' families and society. It was portrayed as a corrupting influence on moral individuals, which may be in part why anti-trans actors have shifted toward focusing on trans children and youth. Adults may be 'lost' forever, and 'set in their ways'; however, if children must be instructed in what is moral, and if they are thought to be more 'impressionable', then it may prove fruitful to focus on cultural anxieties around children not reaching (cisgender, heterosexual) milestones and therefore 'choosing' not to take the 'moral' path. Women, too, were often portrayed as being 'tricked' by trans people/pro-trans actors with promises of fulfilling 'lifestyles' while experiencing disillusionment with

[274] Lakoff, 1996

womanhood/femininity; this discourse has become more frequent in recent years as rates of detransition have become an increasingly prevalent talking point. Regret rates were often highlighted to 'prove' that detransitioners, many of whom were assigned female at birth, have 'returned' to their 'true' selves – but often at a great cost, such as the surgical removal of their reproductive organs. Cultural anxieties surrounding (white) women's ability to reproduce were entangled in discourses that portrayed transness as temporary and a phenomenon that would desist with time. Finally, when 'men' (i.e., trans women) 'abandoned' their male status, they were presumed to be 'failures', liars, traumatized, sexually repressed, and/or mentally unwell. For all that they attempted to distance themselves from their 'inherent' maleness, however, trans women could not change the 'biological truth' of their bodies (according to this discourse). This was portrayed as inescapable, most notably in discourses portraying trans women as predators and rapists in waiting; their 'male' sexuality would always assert itself. Anti-trans actors portrayed transness as an attack on the sanctity of the (nuclear) family on all fronts – to the masculinity and moral leadership of 'men/fathers', to the nurturing and reproductive capacity of 'women/mothers', and to the future (cisheteronormative) development of moral, obedient 'children'. Therefore, it is not surprising that anti-trans actors discussed transness with great urgency as a force that must be stopped to prevent the total dissolution of the (nuclear) family unit, the nation, and morality itself.

9.1.7: Reifying the Sex/Gender Binary

One of the most pervasive paradigms that undergirded the dataset was a 'biological sex' paradigm that essentialized 'sex' as inherently gendered and mutually exclusive. Portrayals of

'inherent physical differences'[275] began to proliferate sharply at the onset of the 2020s. Scientific, biological, and/or academic frameworks that supported this cisnormative/cisgenderist approach were privileged by anti-trans actors as 'objective truth' that 'proved' sex was 'real'. The sex/gender binary was often framed as normative, 'natural', biologically predetermined, and/or 'common sense'. Language that centered trans people's sexes/genders assigned at birth (i.e. 'natal male', 'biological woman', 'female-born child', etc.) were commonplace as tactics of invalidating trans self-identity and simultaneously highlighting their 'biological sex markers'. In producing/disseminating discussions that centered the sex/gender binary through cisnormative and cisgenderist lenses, anti-trans actors were strongly preoccupied with 'course-correcting' any potential complications to this framework (which may have been exacerbated by the unprecedented scale of pro-trans discourse that proliferated during the 'transgender tipping point' of the early to mid-2010s).[276] The frequency with which anti-trans actors discussed the sex/gender binary suggests they may be strongly invested in its sociocultural mechanisms and ideological frameworks.

The reification of cisheteronormative sex/gender binary frameworks and power dynamics were also evoked to de-legitimize trans and queer self-identities as choices, trauma responses, fleeting fancies, and/or 'depraved/sinful' lifestyles when positioned against the 'natural' and 'fixed' cisheterosexual ideal. These systems worked in tandem to reinforce the sex/gender binary and heterosexuality as normative; two mutually exclusive, complimentary sexes/genders that experienced mutual (heterosexual) attraction were culturally constructed and policed; however, variation in human lived experience (including queer and/or trans self-identity) could not be

[275] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026
[276] Steinmetz, 2014

permissible under this framework. Anti-trans actors were therefore unsurprisingly vocal proponents of cisnormative, cisgenderist, and/or heteronormative frameworks that reinforced oppressive power dynamics toward queer and/or trans individuals via the reification of the sex/gender binary and heterosexuality as the only 'natural' and 'true' expressions of gender, sex, and sexuality.

9.1.8: Trans Predators – Old Discourses, Revitalized

In chapters 6 and 7 of this dissertation, a troubling throughline of anti-trans arguments[277] emerged: the re-invigoration of the 'sexual predator' stereotype. This is a long-standing stereotype and has existed at least since gender incongruence was first categorized as a diagnosable disorder.[278] Trans people were presumed to be sexual deviants due to their non-cisgender expressions of gender, which was conflated with sexuality. Various 'causes' for transness[279] were historically presumed to stem from unresolved sexual developmental milestones, childhood sexual trauma, and/or lack of properly modeled sex/gender roles to develop the 'correct' gender schema. Many assumptions about the 'abnormality' of these variations of gender and sexuality stemmed from Western cisnormative and cisgenderist frameworks. All other forms of gendered/sexual expression were considered 'aberrations' from the 'norm' and evidence of sickness/mental illness, anti-social behaviour, and/or maladaptive coping mechanisms. The very potentiality of non-heterosexual desires and acts also created the possibility of other modes of relationality beyond the heterosexual institution of marriage and reproduction. This framing of transness fomented hostility toward suspected 'interlopers' of homosocial spaces and/or forms of relationality grounded in cisheteronormative relational

[277] Serano, 2007; Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024
[278] Krafft-Ebing, 1898; Hirschfeld, 1933; Benjamin, 1966
[279] Krafft-Ebing, 1898; Hirschfeld, 1933; Benjamin, 1966

frameworks. Trans people and/or gender non-conforming people face disproportionate rates of violence in homosocial spaces such as public washrooms, prisons, and athletic events[280] due to their perceived 'violation' of this space. Trans women were presumed to be 'threatening' by evoking male sexual violence into these 'women-only' spaces. The sheer reminder of the spectre of the phallus and its destructive sexual potential[281] shaped anti-trans discourses pertaining to trans people in homosocial spaces such as public washrooms. Regardless of the nature of the trans women's operative state, and/or the fact that many (cisgender) women in Canada tend to experience sexual violence from intimate partners (who are overwhelmingly cisgender and heterosexual men) more often than from strangers,[282] these discourses continue to thrive. Similar discourses have been constructed to negatively portray trans people in relation to children. Framing trans/gender nonconforming individuals as child sexual predators is a longstanding strain of anti-trans/queer discourse.[283] Trans people have been portrayed as sexually 'defective', and thus allegedly feel attraction and sexual desire toward children. This line of discourse has fuelled accusations of child molestation/predation against pro-trans actors/trans people for decades. Arguments against Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), student-teacher confidentiality of disclosure, public LGBTQ+ events and venues, teaching transness in schools, drag story time events, and other instances of LGBTQ+ interacting with the public have been portrayed as opportunities to 'sexualize' children and/or to expose them to abuse. The inflammation of cultural anxieties around childhood sexual innocence, parental authority, and/or governmental

[280] Stanley and Smith, 2011; Earles, 2019; Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025
[281] Stanley and Smith, 2011; Earles, 2019; Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025; Butler, 1990; Butler, 2024; Stryker and Blackston, 2023
[282] Facts, stats and WAGE's impact - Government of Canada, 2025 Fact Sheet: Intimate Partner Violence, 2025
[283] Krafft-Ebing, 1898; Hirschfeld, 1933; Benjamin, 1966; Serano, 2007; Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

overreach have coalesced into effective sociocultural and political campaigns to fight against trans rights in the name of "sav[ing] our children". This was a common refrain from the 1 Million March For Children[284] campaigns that surged in popularity across the country starting in 2023, exemplifying accusations of trans predation against (cisgender) women and children.

Transness was also constructed as inherently (hyper)sexual and/or pornographic in nature – the very existence of a trans person was sexualized. In Canada, cultural norms pertaining to childhood as a period of sexual innocence drove anti-trans discourses of positioning transness as not only incompatible with children, but as actively dangerous to their wellbeing and future sexual development. Many scholars[285] have discussed how transness is portrayed as overly sexualized, which further marginalizes transness, upholds stigma, and burdens trans people/pro-trans actors with the onus of proof that their communities are not comprised of sexual predators. These well-established discourses continue to thrive with great success by capitalizing on cultural anxieties around women, children, sexuality, and childhood innocence, as well as phenomena like 'wokeism' and 'political correctness' as symptoms is a greater societal ill that places women and children in danger.

9.1.9: Medicalized Arguments – Hormones, (De)Transition, and Gender Dysphoria

Anti-trans actors have effectively mobilized anti-trans medical discourses, which comprised a significant subset of the topics and arguments found in the dataset. In particular, anti-trans actors discussed HRT (hormone replacement therapy), transitioning/detransitioning, and gender dysphoria to criticize gender affirmative care.

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[284] Bueckert, 2023
[285] Serano, 2007; Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

Medical discourses that pathologized transness were widespread in the dataset. Much of the discourse pertained to HRT, especially in the context of children and youth being administered this treatment to alleviate symptoms of gender dysphoria. Numerous frameworks were at play, and they often supported one another in interwoven arguments. Firstly, HRT was often interrogated/criticized/questioned as a potentially dangerous, unsafe, medically understudied and/or 'experimental' treatment – especially for children. Medical transitioning was portrayed negatively. Anti-trans discourses often emphasized potential complications, associated risks, regret rates, and/or side effects when opposing gender affirmative care. Discourses of doubt were evoked, criticizing its efficacy and the 'cost/reward' balance of administering HRT to children due to potential lifelong 'consequences'. Occasionally, HRT was also portrayed as 'addictive', despite a dearth of evidence to support this claim.[286] HRT has not been found to be an addictive substance; however, this discourse began to proliferate in the early 2020s, which could destabilize trust in medical professionals and standards of care for trans patients. This is especially salient for trans children and youth in Canada who require parental consent to undergo gender affirmative care.[287] The 'blame' for the unprecedented rates of trans children and youth seeking services has been placed on the medical establishment, doctors, psychologists/psychiatrists, the government, and/or the legal system for easing access and reducing barriers.

An interesting line of discourse that emerged during the 2020s was a growing engagement with discussions pertaining to detransition. Detransition is the desistence of some or all forms of gender affirmative care and/or self-identification with one's gender identity.[288] This can also

[286] Bewley and Bewley, 1992; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Rissman and Lynch, 2023
[287] How to Access Gender Affirming Care – Government of Canada, 2024
[288] Coleman et al., 2022; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Slothouber, 2020; Rissman and Lynch, 2023; Lawson et al., 2024; Jorgensen, 2023; Jorgensen et al., 2024 Rackliff et al., 2025; MacKinnon et al., 2025

indicate a 'return' to self-identifying as cisgender, or as another gender identity; it can be temporary or permanent. It was discovered that anti-trans actors discussed detransition in strategic ways. One of the most notable frameworks portrayed detransition as a 'preventable tragedy'. Adults and teenagers who had detransitioned (back to a cisgender self-identity) were often highlighted in this framework. Their feelings of regret, sadness, anger, and/or grief related to their transitions were centralized. Detransitioners who had undergone irreversible surgical interventions – especially those who could no longer biologically reproduce – were especially highlighted. These detransitioners were generally (white) cisgender women who had self-identified as trans for a period of time. They discussed feeling 'rushed' and/or 'pressured' to transition and felt unfulfilled even after their treatments. These narratives were often utilized to warn against the pitfalls of gender affirmative care, especially for children and youth. These frameworks also served to subtly reify the sex/gender binary as 'natural' and 'biologically pre-determined', demonstrating the tragic results of when one 'strayed' from one's assigned sex at birth. Unfortunately, detransition is still understudied and few resources are available to provide a nuanced discussion, or to create clear medical and/or therapeutic guidelines.[289] However, the strategic nature of these discussions on detransition has also highly stigmatized this topic,[290] making it currently challenging to debate these claims while lacking robust data.

Many of these arguments also interplayed with discourses that de-legitimatized, downplayed, and/or outright rejected gender dysphoria claims; it was often portrayed as a trauma response (especially to childhood sexual trauma), a misplaced diagnosis for anxiety and/or depression, or even a 'fad' among children and youth searching for community and belonging.

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[289] Coleman et al., 2022; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Slothouber, 2020; Rissman and Lynch, 2023; Lawson et al., 2024; Jorgensen, 2023; Jorgensen et al., 2024 Rackliff et al., 2025; MacKinnon et al., 2025

[290] Coleman et al., 2022; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Slothouber, 2020; Rissman and Lynch, 2023; Lawson et al., 2024; Jorgensen, 2023; Jorgensen et al., 2024 Rackliff et al., 2025; MacKinnon et al., 2025

Rates of desistence for gender dysphoria were also often cited uncritically, and children who were discouraged from 'identifying' with their gender dysphoria were often portrayed as 'outgrowing' it and re-integrating a cisgender identity later in life. All these discourses together portrayed gender affirmative care as pathologizing and/or medically unnecessary, calling into question the legitimacy of treatment options for gender dysphoria.

It was evident that medical discourses tended to portray transness via ableist paradigms that de-legitimized trans lived experience by rendering them as 'mentally unwell/insane',[291] and uncritically portraying all aspects of transness as medically unnecessary and/or dangerous. From a composite model of disability[292] framework, one must ask how these anti-trans discourses can be interrogated and criticized while making space for the reality that medical transition can in fact potentially lead to lifelong health complications. How can these discourses be countered while making space for people who remain anxious, depressed, and/or dysphoric post-transition? How can discussions of regret and detransition be given space while rejecting anti-trans actors' claims that transness is universally 'fake'? Making space for complicated medical discourses while rejecting anti-trans premises and/or framings will be an important theoretical and practical tactic to effectively speak to these medical discourses going forward.

9.1.10: Transness as Social Contagion – How to 'Stop the Spread'?

A subtler throughline present throughout the dataset was the portrayal of transness as a 'social contagion'. In this framework, transness was conceived as an 'illness' and/or 'affliction' which could be 'transmitted' much like a virus. It 'infected' otherwise 'healthy' (i.e., cisgender) individuals and 'turned them trans'. This 'disease' may be 'transmitted' socially and was often

[291] Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Chouinard, 2025; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[292] Baril, 2015

theorized as creating 'outbreaks' via social media. By 'exposing' unprecedented numbers of people to transness, the 'infection' could spread exponentially. Children and youth were positioned as especially 'susceptible' to this 'illness', as they were portrayed as having permeable identities and gender schemas until they reached adulthood, at which point it 'solidified'. Children who have experienced trauma, who are anxious/depressed, who are chasing after 'fads', and/or who are searching for community among their peers were positioned as especially liable to 'fall victim' to transness. In 2018, Littman's paper on ROGD (rapid-onset gender dysphoria) posited that children who otherwise demonstrated no 'symptoms' of transness suddenly began self-identifying as such, often due to influences from social media and their peers. The paper was re-published with corrections[293] in PloS One. However, the study still faced critiques as to the validity and reliability of its methodology, findings, and conclusions drawn based on the data[294] and sampling techniques. Regardless, the term ROGD (along with 'social contagion') has proliferated widely in anti-trans spaces.

Emergent qualitative observations indicate that preoccupations with transness as a 'social contagion' and findings ways to prevent and/or reverse the 'spread' to children and youth was a priority, especially among parents. Additionally, the suddenness of the child's self-identification with transness was thought to indicate a lack of authenticity, truthfulness, and/or long-lasting shift in how the child in question understood their gender identity. If the 'social contagion' of transness was indeed potentially real, and if ROGD was a social phenomenon and/or medical diagnosis, then further research is needed to better understand it. However, broadly speaking, if transness among children and youth was conceptualized as a 'virus' that could be 'spread', then

[293] Shalizi and Thomas, 2011; Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023
[294] Shalizi and Thomas, 2011; Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

finding effective 'quarantine measures' and eventual 'cures' and/or 'inoculation' may be a framework through which anti-trans actors conceptualize *all* transition journeys. Anti-trans actors (such as parents, politicians, doctors, psychologists, and academics) who advocated for the 'watchful waiting' approach, limited and/or monitored social media access, seeking psychological evaluations, and other techniques to 'cure' children of transness presumed that transness was an aberration from cisheteronormative 'natural' childhood development. This discourse not only reified biologically essentializing paradigms of sex/gender, self-identity, and childhood development,[295] but also contained ableist discourses as well. The search for 'cure' to 'restore' the trans child/youth's mind and body to a cisgender one created a dichotomy in which transness was like a sickness, and cisness was like healthfulness. This discourse pertaining to 'curing' a population of a social 'sickness' draws disturbingly close parallels to eugenicist rhetoric regarding people deemed 'mentally ill' and/or developmentally 'slow'.[296] This discourse has become more prevalent in recent years, and could be weaponized against resources, curricula, and safe spaces for trans children and youth to thrive. These ableist, cisgenderist, and cisnormative framings of transness as a 'social contagion' were typically discussed in relation to discourses that heightened cultural anxieties around children and ensured they developed 'correctly' into good, upstanding, (cisheterosexual) citizens.

9.2: Theoretical and Practical Implications

This dissertation has revealed a wealth of knowledge regarding anti-trans discourse in Canada. The findings detailed here have revealed the extent to which anti-trans discourse has become 'hardened' and proliferated sharply in legacy media and mainstream politics during the 2020s. These findings have many implications for theoretical approaches as well as practical

[295] Gill-Peterson, 2018
[296] Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Davis, 2017; Pyne, 2020; Pyne, 2021; Baril, 2023; Kafer, 2024

implications for organizing and developing tactics to address this burgeoning trend. This section of the conclusion will first address some theoretical implications these findings have revealed in relation to trans studies and gender studies. It will then propose some potential practical and tactical implications for how to utilize this information to address anti-trans discourse in Canada.

9.2.1: Theoretical Implications

The findings detailed throughout this dissertation contain various theoretical implications for discussing anti-trans discourse in Canada. This sub-section drew upon concepts outlined in the 'high theory' literature review found in Appendix 3 where applicable.

The plethora of pathologizing and ableist anti-trans discourses present throughout the dataset has been established; therefore, the intersection of disability studies and trans studies provides an excellent entry point into discussing medicalized anti-trans discourses that position transness as 'insane' and/or 'abnormal'. Trans self-identification, gender affirmative care, and/or surgical interventions were portrayed as 'medical mutilation' and/or as the 'insane/mentally ill' desires of 'disturbed' individuals. Individually, both trans studies and disability studies contributed important theoretical works with which to discuss these topics. However, trans studies as a discipline must reckon with these discourses while also acknowledging the very real disabling, impairing, and/or debilitating potential of gender affirmative care. Likewise, transness is still under-discussed within disability studies' theoretical frameworks, and cisnormative/cisgenderist assumptions about the mind/body are still prevalent. Employing a composite model of disability[297] framework, insofar as it is applied to trans issues within the field of trans disability studies, seeks to incorporate subjective, personal dimensions with socio-political and subjective dimensions – while acknowledging that lived experiences are socially

[297] Baril, 2015; Baril, 2023

situated. This model therefore takes an expansive approach, not just an integration of both the medical *and* social approaches to transness and to disability.

By critically examining ableism within trans studies theorizations of transition, and by interrogating the cisnormativity/cisgenderism within disability studies, these disciplines can better address important gaps in their respective fields and forge theoretical, academic, and activist alliances. The composite model of disability is crucial for engaging with topics such as detransition, ROGD, and the administration of hormone therapy to trans children and youth. Within a composite model of disability, the potential complexity of these lived experiences – and the challenges posed by physical, mental, medical, and social barriers – can be discussed. While many people who seek out and receive gender affirmative care may be satisfied with their results, it is nevertheless true that some individuals may still experience difficulties. Space must be made for a plethora of lived experiences pertaining to trans/disabled realities. For example, detransitioners who are medically sterile and desire to have children must be welcome to share their experiences and lead activist, academic, medical, and social initiatives. Beyond the flattened anti-trans framing that positions detransition as the 'tragic but inevitable outcome' of all trans people, a composite model of disability would make space for detransitioners' grief, acknowledging that pain. Creating alliances to theorize together about social and medical options for detransitioners such as support groups, advocacy groups, gender affirmative procedures like reconstructive surgery, therapeutic practices, and alternative family planning options could be explored. Similar paths can be taken with ROGD and hormone therapy. ROGD is often characterized by the 'suddenness' with which children and youth begin to identify as trans. What resources could be made available for these youth and for their parents? What would these resources look like? If this is indeed a sudden change from how they self-identified previously,

then how can medical professionals, therapists, activists, teachers, and parents contribute to these conversations in an affirming manner that respects the child's autonomy and self-identity? These questions also apply to administering hormone therapy to trans children and youth. While puberty blockers are reversible, it is important to consider that hormone therapy may have longitudinal health implications. Some studies indicate potential negative health outcomes for people who are on hormone therapy for extended periods of time but are currently few in number. If there are negative health risks involved, then further research is needed before potential healthcare recommendations can be made. If hormone therapy does indeed lead to higher risks of negative health outcomes, then how can trans studies and disability studies grapple with this information? If transness might lead to one being less 'healthy' – a concept that is often tied to morality – then how will trans studies and disability studies discuss it? How will these disciplines advocate for trans/disabled people, especially in periods of heightened trans-hostility? These questions open discussions for nuanced theorization about trans/disabled lived experience beyond dichotomous paradigms of wellness/illness, contentment/despair, and social/medical approaches to transness *and* disability.

I will now discuss these findings in relation to transfeminist literature as discussed in Appendix 3 – specifically a form of transfeminism that is trans justice-oriented; critical of transmisogynoir; anti-carceral and abolitionist; and supportive of bodily autonomy and critiquing adultist assumptions about children's ability to consent. Questions regarding the extent to which anti-trans discourse is now driven by TERF/'gender-critical' feminism still remains open. More research is needed to determine how Canadian TERF/'gender-critical' feminists deploy feminist language to re-conceptualize feminism as synonymous with trans-exclusionary practices, portraying 'biological sex' is the sole determinant of women's oppression, and the role

(cisgender) women play in these movements. The colonization of neoliberal (and feminist) language was also a notable shift. Post-feminist discourse often individualizes 'choice' and invisibilizes the structures individuals navigate. In that same vein, anti-trans discourse has clearly shifted toward presenting transness as a 'choice', and an 'ideology' with powerful backers (i.e., Trudeau's government, intellectuals, liberals, etc.). Moreover, these findings reveal tensions between respectability politics and radical rejections of structural forces.

Transfeminist scholarship provides insightful theoretical frameworks with which to approach these findings. Bey[298] rejected 'Black', 'trans', and 'feminist' as demographic labels in their limited capacity for organizing and instead re-framed these terms as the basis for political and theoretical orientations toward a politics of liberation. Abandoning tactics that appeal to 'normativity' opens up liberatory possibilities that transcend frameworks which reject Black, trans, feminist humanity in the first place. This perspective centers justice for trans people as liberatory; it demands a society that is trans-affirming and actively strives to create a space wherein trans life thrives. Transfeminist scholarship is also deeply critical of transmisogynoir. The structural violence imposed upon Black transfemininity/womanhood reveals the intersections of oppression that rely upon hierarchies of 'worthy' bodies to determine one's intelligibility, and therefore, one's humanity. TERF/'gender-critical' feminism in Canada, for example, centers whiteness by evoking paternalistic discourses of 'protection' for (white, cisgender) women against racialized and masculinized 'others'. Bey's theorizations are also anti-carceral and abolitionist; the power of the state to determine which bodies may be imprisoned, jailed, deported, displaced, debilitated, and/or killed is untenable. Anti-carceral justice paradigms envision alternative forms of harm reduction, reparations, care, community, and the dismantling

[298] Bey, 2022

of policing bodies that serve the biopolitical and necropolitical mechanisms of the state. This perspective also critiques the limitations of neoliberal 'choice' discourses by revealing how structural forces (such as the state, hegemonic sociocultural norms, political systems, etc.) all heavily influence the boundaries of 'choice', especially pertaining to trans children and youth. Adultist perspectives disenfranchise children's voices and knowledge about their own bodies and minds; it dichotomously positions adults against children, relegating trans children and youth as 'too young' to understand their own needs. Exploring perspectives that respect children and youth opens conversations of transness beyond ageist assumptions and provides greater nuance for discussions of 'bodily autonomy', including children and youth consenting to medical transition.

Throughout this dissertation, discourses were underscored by demands and/or expectations that trans people conform to respectability politics to receive support. Respectability politics materially shape the social reality of a culture, of which Canada is no exception. Trans populations are disproportionately targeted for violence, and respectability politics plays an important role. Portraying transness as overtly sexual and/or inherently pornographic, for example, feeds into cultural expectations of trans people as 'deviants' who wish to 'expose' others to their 'lifestyle' without consent. Respectability politics keeps trans people (and trans allies) arguing these same tired talking points just to be viewed as 'normal people', which requires communities to abandon those who never can, or choose not to, appeal to homonormative/homonationalistic narratives of 'good trans people'. However, it must be noted that many may struggle to survive without appealing to respectability politics. This movement must account for many perspectives. While various scholars contend that moving away from respectability politics – and toward a politics of trans liberation – should be a collective goal,

finding ways to decouple from respectability politics necessitates care and nuance. Transfeminist literature provides avenues of exploration and worldbuilding that explore various approaches to the hegemonic cultural frameworks of 'humanity' and 'normativity' to envision a just and trans-affirming future.

Lastly, I will discuss backlash theory and populist rhetoric and its theoretical implications for this dissertation. It is apparent from the distribution of cases that, as of 2023, Canada has experienced a surge in anti-trans cases in mainstream political and legacy media arenas. Moreover, the overall metaphorical tone of the cases, especially from the 2020s, was punitive in nature. This backlash against the 'transgender tipping point' of the early 2010s seems to be part of a larger turn toward conservative sociocultural and political trends. This trend seemingly began to 'harden' as Canada was plunged into lockdown measures for COVID-19.[299] This turn toward sociopolitical conservatism coupled with the utilization of populist rhetoric by prominent figures in Canadian politics may have capitalized on the landscape at an optimal time for anti-trans discourse to proliferate widely. Moreover, the lack of general knowledge regarding trans people/transness/trans rights in Canada provided ample opportunity for the spread of dis/misinformation and disruptive news to perpetuate stereotypes and foster trans-hostility against trans people. This populist rhetoric has effectively framed trans people/pro-trans actors as oppressors wielding an 'extremist' ideology against the Canadian populace. Subsequently, anti-trans actors were portrayed as the victims of this 'ideology' who were 'under attack' from a 'radical trans lobby'. Critically, however, these discourses often portrayed anti-trans actors as ultimately prevailing in the 'culture war'. This framing is necessary to portray anti-trans actors as heroic when reacting to an 'unprovoked' attack from a powerful (yet simultaneously weak)

[299] Mattsson and Johansson, 2022; Enders et al., 2023

enemy. Backlash theory and populist rhetoric capture how the anti-trans backlash has arisen to address cultural anxieties pertaining to the destabilization of sex/gender categories.

9.2.2: Practical Considerations

Anti-trans discourse operates from a variety of perspectives with different aims, goals, and presumptions that underlie them. There are equally as many organizational and tactical implications for engaging with these discourses to stymie the normalization of anti-trans discourse in Canada. A constant throughline in how to respond to these discourses rests with the tension between relying on respectability politics and advocating for a radically different structuring of society that cultivates a trans-affirmative future. The practical considerations listed below tend to focus on engaging with anti-trans actors and/or with people who are skeptical, uncertain, and/or neutral about trans people/trans rights/transness. Depending on the circumstances and individuals involved, different tactics will be more effective than others. It is up to one's discretion to determine what tactics may be the most effective in that moment. The utilization of respectability politics is complicated; relying solely on these approaches forecloses exploration of worldbuilding that envisions a society beyond the bounds of white supremacist capitalistic cisheteropatriarchy. However, such tactics may be useful for shifting perceptions first toward a place of neutrality regarding trans people. While many scholars and activists posit our collective goals should center around struggling together toward a trans-affirmative future beyond the restrictive structures of Canada's current societal structuring, referring to respectability politics may be a useful tactic in some circumstances to first grow our coalitions of allies, supporters, community members, friends, family, and communities. Tailoring one's use of tactics (while keeping a broader goal of total societal restructuring in mind) to the situation at

hand remains the most effective way of having a robust debate that may change hearts and minds for the better. Some practical considerations are detailed below.

1. **To those with the time, energy, and resources to debate trans rights: Engage with these topics strategically but vocally.**

Trans rights have been a prolific topic of conversation for over two decades in mainstream Canadian politics and media. Amid the sharp increase in anti-trans discourses that occurred as of 2023, it is reasonable to assume that debates pertaining to trans rights will continue to go through periods of intense political discussion and periods of relative quiet. It is therefore crucial for trans people and pro-trans actors to develop a variety of debate strategies for different circumstances. For example, lobbying politicians for more robust pro-trans legislation, petitioning school boards to support LGBTQ+ students, teachers, and staff, and/or advocating for trans-positive policy changes within public and private sectors may require different debate 'tool kits' than public protests or online discussions. When possible – accounting for time, energy, and safety considerations – trans people, and especially pro-trans actors such as allies, should be vocal in their support for trans rights in public debate settings. Positively speaking about trans people and our lived experiences may provide insight into aspects of our lives that remain deeply misunderstood by the general public. Moreover, it is important to robustly and vocally support pro-trans societal changes when they occur, such as celebrating legislative efforts to secure trans rights. Employing the use of social media, newspapers, television channels, streaming services, and other forms of media are excellent ways to reach the public. Additionally, visible and vocal support makes pro-trans discourse seem appealing. While 'majority rules' is not indicative of a correct and/or morally justified position, people are more likely to at least consider other stances if they appear to have widespread support and appeal. As such, being vocal in celebrating

victories for the trans community and vocally supporting our rights in public spaces is already a significant organisational tactic in the trajectory toward a trans-affirming culture.

2. Consider the deployment of language carefully.

This tactic is complicated, to say the least. A constant tension that social justice initiatives and political movements must contend with is the question of language. This consideration is manifold, but the most salient here is navigating tensions between respectability politics and advocating for radical change. For example, trans people being stereotyped as child predators and rapists places the burden of proof on our communities to satisfactorily meet cisgender standards that our communities are not, in fact, comprised of people who sexually abuse others. Language, as this entire dissertation has sought to demonstrate, is a powerful tool that shapes the contours of political speech. Debates for trans rights may be more productive when appealing to an audience's sensibilities rather than challenging them. While many activists and scholars argue that respectability politics in general does little to generate productive opportunities for struggling toward dismantling oppressive systems of power, one must consider how language may both hinder and serve this goal. Moreover, trans communities and LGBTQ+ communities create new terminology to describe various lived experiences at remarkable speeds. Rejecting interest, support, and/or resources from those who demonstrate support for our cause, but who struggle with the plethora of terms and theoretical frameworks in which our community is well-versed, could be a mistake. Understanding the circumstances of one's audience is crucial; discernment is needed to know what kind of language will likely garner a specific reaction. Overall, a variety of tactics are needed to win supporters, form coalitions of solidarity with other marginalized groups, and to work toward a trans-affirmative future together.

3. Reclaim feminist and progressive language from anti-trans actors.

Anti-trans discourse has undergone major shifts in recent years by colonizing feminist and progressive language. This language has re-framed anti-trans discourse as a political movement seeking recognition and support. It often relies upon rights-based discourses that conceptualize human/civil rights as a zero-sum game; gains for trans people necessitate that someone else 'loses out'. As such, this language has been effective in conveying anti-trans discourses as reasonable, well-meaning, and/or seeking justice. It also positions trans people/pro-trans actors as oppressors who silence opposition.

Here are some potential strategies to reclaim feminist and progressive language from anti-trans actors:

- Question claims that trans rights are harmful or detrimental, especially to non-trans groups. Ask about specific passages or terminology in policies, bills, and debates that support these claims; be open, but inquisitive. Provide arguments that the protection of trans rights sets precedents for continued campaigns to equalize marginalized groups' treatment according to the law. Support pro-trans legislative, policy, and justice initiatives openly and vocally.
- Discuss trans rights utilizing feminist language. Discuss transness in relation to medical access, family planning, parental leave, labour laws, social media, politics, the news, culture, the arts, education, and more. Discuss transness in relation to liberatory possibilities, worldbuilding, and trans-affirmative futures. Become familiar with feminist language and discuss transfeminist approaches to trans rights where possible.
- Reject definitions of women that are only classified by 'biological sex'. Discuss how even women categorized as 'cisgender' may not technically meet these standards (i.e. being intersex, being born without reproductive organs, having hormone deficiencies, etc.). Actively question and challenge these assumptions. Provide definitions of women/womanhood that captures many lived experiences. Be mindful of definitions that may be exclusionary. Discuss the flexibility and nuance of gender and how universalizing definitions fail to capture the entirety of womanhood. Challenge essentializing paradigms of sex and gender.
- Discuss trans womanhood/femininity. Learn about trans womanhood/femininity and the variety of lived experiences that are available from communities, in academia, biographies, documentaries, social media, and other resources. Describe these experiences to humanize them. Question claims that reject trans women's self-identification.
- Discuss trans manhood/masculinity. Learn about trans manhood/masculinity and the variety of lived experiences that are available from communities, in academia,

biographies, documentaries, social media, and other resources. Describe these experiences to humanize them. Question claims that reject trans men's self-identification.

- Discuss gendered experiences beyond the binary. Engage in conversations of gender that does not presume and/or reify the existence of only two sexes/genders. Learn about trans experiences and the variety of lived experiences that are available from communities, in academia, biographies, documentaries, social media, and other resources. Describe these experiences to humanize them. Question claims that reject trans people's self-identification.
- Discuss trans experiences in ways that are complex and challenging. Challenge the perception that gender expression and gender identity are always cohesive and congruent. Consider how all people (not just trans people) can have unique lived experiences that are difficult – or impossible – to categorize in clearly gendered labels. Avoid using binary descriptive language when discussing gender and embrace language that accounts for a multiplicity of lived experiences.
- Get into the habit of not assuming someone's gender identity. Ask for someone's name and pronouns and take the lead by offering your own. Suggest 'pronoun go-arounds' in which everyone introduces themselves. Be respectful of someone's name and pronouns and correct others whenever possible.
- Reject claims that homogenize trans children and youth's lived experiences. Challenge the notion that transness is an 'adult' topic with no place for discussion in relation to children. Question claims that children and youth cannot know they are trans. Highlight how these concerns are never brought up when children present as cisgender and heterosexual. Bring nuance to the discussion by referring to literature on children's development. Do not assume that children are incapable of having a clear sense of self; advocate for the respect of children's bodily autonomy. Advocate for children's rights and discuss these topics with others. Get involved with parents, teachers, activists, and advocates who support children's rights.
- Discuss solidarity with trans people as progressive and socially conscious. Reject claims that 'trans lobbies' exist and are powerful and/or oppressive forces. Memorize and prepare statistics that demonstrate how trans people are disproportionately under-privileged. Call for trans-affirming programs, laws, and sociocultural attitudes.
- Engage in mutual aid practices, worldbuilding practices, and collaborate with local, regional, and national communities. Work together to envision a trans-affirmative future. Challenge racist rhetoric and engage deeply with anti-racism and critical race theory scholarship. Protest against the carceral system, the police, as structural forces that harm our communities. Advocate for alternative forms of justice, harm reduction, and reparations. Get involved with local groups that prioritize direct action, grassroots activism, and working toward a better collective future. Consider donating (i.e. labour, time, knowledge, funds, etc.) to pro-trans organizations. Demonstrate in favour of pro-trans movements. Vote for pro-trans legislation and policy. Advocate for better healthcare for trans people and eliminate barriers to gender affirmative care. Disseminate pro-trans literature, especially literature created by trans people.

4. Develop effective counterstrategies for major anti-trans discourses.

One of the most effective strategies to stymie the normalization of anti-trans discourse is to engage with counter-discourses.

- Do not assume that anti-trans actors are homogenous. As this dissertation has indicated, anti-trans actors can be: TERFS/'gender-critical' feminists; academics and intellectuals; politicians; pundits; celebrities and influencers; alt-right/right-wing/socially conservative groups; religious organizations; and many more. These groups may have differing agendas, goals, and perspectives. Just because they may superficially share similar articulations of anti-trans discourse does not necessarily mean they can all be debated in the same manner.
- Do not ignore the false, misleading, and/or contradictory nature of many anti-trans discourses. Highlighting these shortcomings may be persuasive to some, such as individuals who are not deeply entrenched within these debates. By contrast, anti-trans actors will likely either have explanations for these shortcomings that suit their worldviews, and/or they will not perceive them as shortcomings in the first place. This is an important consideration for approaching these debates from a place of flexibility and nuance.
- If one chooses to debate topics of discussion pertaining to transness, it is important to remember that the purpose of a debate is to effectively persuade an audience to agree with one's position. Debates are effective when one can convince an audience to agree with the reasons that explain why a given position is the best one. Therefore, it is important to comprise various lists of reasons that will be persuasive to a variety of arguments. To someone experienced with these debates, tactics that lean toward respectability politics may not even begin to scratch the surface of solidarity and support. However, it may be crucial to first guide someone toward neutrality, or perhaps even indifference to trans people before they consider arguments that support our communities. This will not feel adequate; but it may be a necessary step toward fostering a trans-positive attitude later.
- Refer to statistics, trusted experts, peer-reviewed studies, and other scientifically legitimate sources when debating anti-trans discourses. Dispute disruptive media and dis/misinformation claims about trans rights/trans people/transness. Ask where they got the information and how they verified the claims made within it. Offer your own information.
- Refer to trans people and the broader LGBTQ+ community in everyday life. Find quotes, video clips, movies, art, music, books, journal articles, and other sources that display various aspects of our individual and collective identifies. Only display information that is publicly available and do not 'out' someone you know personally. Discuss the community positively.

5. **Cultivate robust coalitions of trans people and pro-trans actors across many disciplines, fields, and sectors.**

One of the most vital aspects of supporting trans people is to create coalitions of solidarity among trans people and pro-trans actors across a variety of disciplines, fields, and sectors. Stereotypical portrayals of trans people may relegate us to specific locales, such as protesting in the streets, locked away in gender studies programs, and/or attempting to infiltrate schools and changing rooms for nefarious purposes. Therefore, it is crucial that we are collectively visible in many fields, and that our supporters are likewise visible in all parts of society. Connection is essential. Making connections with the trans people and pro-trans actors within the fields of endocrinology, medicine, psychotherapy, social work, pro-trans/trans-affirming feminist spaces, Black, Brown, and Indigenous organizations, disability rights movements, economics, political studies, governmental organizations, charities, pro-trans/trans-affirming religious organizations, and the non-profit sector are just a few spaces where vocal and visible networking would strengthen coalitions of connection, community, resource sharing, and career opportunities. Moreover, mentoring younger generations of people passionate about social justice initiatives would provide opportunities for cisgender youth to interact with trans people, who are still a statistically small portion of Canada's population. It is also crucial to have the support of families, communities, and parents who have trans family members, are trans themselves, and/or who wish to support our community. Individual levels of desired visibility must be respected as effectively as possible to prevent 'outing'. By making connections, trans people and pro-trans actors will have ample opportunities to organize, challenge prevailing norms, support inclusive legislation, and work together toward a trans-affirmative future.

6. Be angry; but find joy, too.

The injustices of being trans living in a cisgenderist and cisnormative world can be difficult to face. It may be challenging to find happiness in a world that seems insistent on killing us. We still hold vigils every year for our lost siblings, mentors, elders, lovers, and friends. We still must weigh the merits and consequences of being 'out', knowing that the people around us may treat us differently. Our lives are often deeply misunderstood, and our pain is capitalized upon for content generation, media attention, and to exacerbate hostility toward us. It is easy to give in to despair when the world feels hostile at every turn; therefore, harnessing the power of trans rage and trans joy are two critical axes of collective organizing and personal wellbeing. This is not to say that we must not feel sadness and grief; to accept that many of us are anxious and depressed; to acknowledge that many of us struggle against the terrible weight of the world pressing down on us. Sadness is an emotional response to these structural forces that inhibit our lives, and we must make space for that sadness. In addition to this sadness, however, I think our communities benefit from openly discussing the rage we feel at the injustice of living in a society that is cruel to us. I think there is tremendous potential in catharsis, in motivating ourselves, in connecting with other marginalized groups by shoring up and naming the rage within us. The rage I felt throughout this process of reading through 500 cases of anti-trans discourse was at times overwhelming; I felt deep anger at how my communities are constantly being vilified and targeted. Naming rage for what it is and feeling it deeply can be extremely beneficial.

In addition to rage, there is another source of affective power I wish to discuss; one that is not mutually exclusive to rage, but one that complements it. That is joy; specifically, trans joy. I have long been fascinated with sources of trans joy such as gender euphoria, community events, trans relationships (i.e. familial, platonic, queerplatonic, romantic, sexual, friendship, etc.), art,

music, poetry, and more. Finding sources of joy, revisiting them as needed, and fostering their presence in our lives is, I believe, one of the most critical skills we must navigate to remind ourselves of the full spectrum of feeling. We must guard it fiercely, but share it openly; we must be open to it as a form of connection to the self and to the other. Some of the most joyous moments of my life have come from connecting with other trans people over a joke that reduced us to tears. Some of my most treasured memories come from being affirmed by other trans people, and affirming them in turn. Sharing art, music, poetry, knowledge, and good food have done tremendous things for my inner sense of self and my willingness to live in an unkind world. I believe that having fun, being silly, sitting in moments of profound contentment, and fostering connections are, quite simply, why many of us are still here. It is the reason so many of us find things that bring us happiness. Our communities thrive in moments of joy. We know the pangs of grief, sadness, despair, and rage. We are intimately familiar with their contours. It is equally crucial to nurture moments of happiness, so that we may all collectively partake of each other's splendor and vibrancy. Trans joy is a gift; one I believe can change lives for the better.

9.3: Suggestions for Future Research

In this final section of Chapter 9, I will discuss some potential trajectories for future research projects.

This dissertation conducted its analyses based on the aggregate data present in the cases, rather than every instance of coding. This was an effective means of studying broader trends. An additional study published on every instance of coding would highlight minute differences and would complement this project's results. Therefore, a comparative study on these findings at the aggregate (case) level and the micro-trend (instance) level is recommended.

I would also recommend additional studies conducted on anti-trans discourse in Canada over the entirety of the 2020s once the decade has passed. Understanding how these topics, arguments, and discussions have trended over the decade will better situate this dissertation's findings and contextualize them within a decade-long trend. Retroactively analyzing the sharp growth of anti-trans discourse in 2023 would provide immense theoretical, academic, and practical knowledge for understanding the extent to which these discourses have proliferated in Canadian culture and society and remained prevalent.

Additional studies conducted on the 2000s would also serve to ground these anti-trans discourses into a robust longitudinal trend. This would also serve to demonstrate the extent to which this backlash has grown and the speed with which it has spread in Canadian politics and media during the early 2020s.

I also recommend studies of critical discourse analyses on the topics, arguments, and discussions that comprise pro-trans discourses in Canada for comparative purposes. This could provide insight into what discourses have proven to be successful in portraying transness/trans people/trans rights and how these discourses can be mobilized to counter growing stigmas and the normalization of anti-trans discourses in Canada.

I would also suggest that the coding dictionary be utilized to conduct more critical discourse analyses studies like this dissertation to capture a more fulsome representation of anti-trans discourse in Canada. I recommend additional studies conducted on anti-trans discourse disseminated and/or produced by key actors of television, music, and social media as well, as online ecosystems function as major forms of information production and dissemination.

I recommend similar studies be undertaken on French Canadian legislation and mainstream media to highlight any similarities, differences, and notable findings that exist between

Anglophone and Francophone anti-trans discourse. Additional regional studies – such as Atlantic Canada, the Prairies, the West, Central Canada, and the North – would granularly demonstrate what discourses are more effective in specific regional environments and which have national appeal.

Finally, more critical discourse analysis studies conducted on anti-trans backlashes in other countries, such as the Europe, Australia, and the US would provide rich data in their own right and be useful for comparative purposes with Canada.

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1: CUSTOM CODING DICTIONARY

Objective

The objective of this coding dictionary is to map and survey the discourses utilized by anti-trans actors in Canada. This was conducted via MMFCDA (mixed methods feminist critical discourse analysis). Cases were gathered within a custom date rage (January 1st, 2000, to December 31st, 2023) from selected sources. The sources are publicly available texts from newspapers, think tanks, alt-right media sites, and Hansard transcripts of provincial and federal sittings.

Coding Information

The codes will be carried out in order as presented below. Coding was carried out three times to ensure internal reliability and validity in the applicability of coding. An additional round of three coding sessions was subsequently conducted to granularly break out additional sections for greater accuracy. Both coding sessions were conducted as two initial readings, following by a final third reading.

Pilot Testing

Prior to usage, this coding dictionary was pilot tested with 50 texts (non-duplicates, distinct cases from the final dataset) to ensure internal reliability and validity. Upon successful completion of pilot testing and necessary edits being implemented, this coding dictionary was used to generate quantitative macroanalysis that were then qualitatively examined.

Research Questions

1. What are the main topics, positions and evidence discussed in anti-trans discourse in Canada?
2. What are the explicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
3. What are the implicit rhetorical strategies utilized by anti-trans actors?
4. What metaphorical tones do anti-trans actors employ?
5. What broader representational political framings to anti-trans actors employ?
6. What contemporary dog whistles do anti-trans actors employ?
7. Are there any differences in the above elements over time and/or between actors?

SECTION 1: BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (VARIABLES TABLE)

1. Basic bibliographic information for each unit of analysis (i.e., case).

- FILE = Name of case file. Same title as the case itself from original source, albeit sometimes shortened to be saved to the laptop due to character limits.
- FOLDER = Folder under which each case is saved on the laptop. Organized by decade and by source (ex. Globe and Mail 2010-2019, Fraser Institute 2020-2023, etc.).
- CREATED = Time and date case was uploaded into QDA Miner.
- DOCUMENT = Type of case. All cases are listed as 'document'.
- PUB = Publication type; the text can be a Hansard transcript, a newspaper article, think tank article, or a new alt-right media article. Drop-down menu, one selected per case.
- DOP = Date of publication of the case. Listed in the year/month/day format.
- TIME = Drop-down menu with 5-year increments for publication dates to track 5-year trends. The increments were: 2000-2004; 2005-2009; 2010-2014; 2015-2019; 2020-2023.
- AUTH = Name of author(s) and/or speaker(s), when known.
- GEN1 = A field to insert the gender of the author(s) and/or speaker(s), when known. Options were Male, Female, Multiple – Specify, or Unknown.
- GEN2 = A text field to explain gender(s) when multiple author(s) and/or speaker(s) were present.
- COUNTRY = The country (or countries) that were the topic of discussion in the text. The options were: Canada; US; Intl (International – all other countries), Canada and US; Canada and Intl; Canada, US, and Intl; Other; and Unknown.
- GOVT1 = Which level(s) of the Canadian government were featured in the article/transcript. The options were: Senate; Federal; Provincial; Municipal; Multi-Level – Specify; N/A; and Unknown. N/A was selected when no mention of the government was made. Unknown was utilized when the Canadian government was mentioned, but it was ambiguous/unclear which level(s) were being referenced.
- GOVT2 = A field to further clarify if multiple levels of government were involved.
- REGION1 = Which region of Canada was mentioned in the article/transcript. The regions were: West Coast (BC); Prairies (AB, SK, MB); Central Canada (ON, QC); Atlantic Canada (NB, NF, NS, PE); Northern Territories (NU, YT, NT); and N/A (Not mentioned, federal jurisdiction, etc.)
- REGION2 = A field to explain if multiple regions were referenced or further clarification was needed.

SECTION 2: 'WHAT' ARE ANTI-TRANS ACTORS DISCUSSING: TOPICS

1. **What are anti-trans actors in Canada discussing vis-à-vis transness and/or trans people? (Identify maximum 5 of the main topics per case.)**

Category 1.1: Basic Concepts

- 1.1.1 Trans/Nonbinary/etc. People and Transness. (Primary focus = Trans people, transness, being trans, etc.)
- 1.1.2 Names and Pronouns. (Primary focus = Discussions and definitions of names and pronouns, their usage, etc.)
- 1.1.3 Passing. (Primary focus = Trans people 'passing' as cisgender, etc.)
- 1.1.4 Disclosure. (Primary focus = Disclosure of one's transness/trans identity, etc.)

Category 1.2: Science, Biology, and Medicine

- 1.2.1 Science and Biology. (Primary focus = Human biology and anatomy, endocrinology, etc.)
- 1.2.2 Medical Intervention. (Primary focus = Gender affirmation surgery, hormone replacement therapy, puberty blockers, etc.)
- 1.2.3 Gender Dysphoria. (Primary focus = Definitions and discussions of gender dysphoria, 'rapid onset gender dysphoria', treatment of gender dysphoria, etc.)
- 1.2.4 Transition. (Primary focus = Transitioning, medical transition, social transition, etc.)
- 1.2.5 Detransition. (Primary focus = Detransitioning, transition regret, etc.)
- 1.2.6 Conversion Therapy. (Primary focus = Conversion therapy, definitions and/or discussions, etc.)
- 1.2.7 Intersex People. (Primary focus = Intersex conditions, intersex people, intersex bodies, surgical corrections, consent to medical/surgical/endocrinological intervention, etc.)

Category 1.3: Intersectionality – Identities

- 1.3.1 Women. (Primary focus = Discussions of women, women's rights, etc.)
- 1.3.2 Men. (Primary focus = Discussions of men, topics related to men, etc.)
- 1.3.3 Parents. (Primary focus = Discussions of parents, childrearing, familial decision making, etc.)
- 1.3.4 Teachers. (Primary focus = Discussions of teachers, education, curricula, etc.)
- 1.3.5 Children. (Primary focus = Discussions of children, topics related to children, etc.)
- 1.3.6 Immigrants. (Primary focus = Immigrants, acculturation, citizenship, etc.)

Category 1.4: Intersectionality – Isms

- 1.4.1 Feminism. (Primary focus = Women's rights, women's issues, equality, etc.)
- 1.4.2 Gender Binary. (Primary focus = The gender binary, men and women, complementary but mutually exclusive sexes/genders, etc.)
- 1.4.3 Gender Roles. (Primary focus = Gendered division of labour, etc.)
- 1.4.4 Heterosexuality. (Primary focus = Heterosexual attraction, heterosexual intercourse, etc.)

- 1.4.5 Masculinity. (Primary focus = Maleness, masculinity, masculine attributes, gendered expectations, toughness, rationality, logic, strength, aloofness, etc.)
- 1.4.6 Femininity. (Primary focus = Femaleness, femininity, feminine attributes, gendered expectations, softness, emotionality, illogic, weakness, nurturing, etc.)
- 1.4.7 Race. (Primary focus = Discussions and definitions of race, etc.)
- 1.4.8 Racism. (Primary focus = Discussions and definitions of racism; small-scale (microaggressions, stereotypes, etc.) and/or large-scale (systemic barriers, lack of resources, eugenics, etc.))
- 1.4.9 Immigration. (Primary focus = Immigration, citizenship, permanent residency, migrant workers, visas, legal vs. illegal immigration, etc.)
- 1.4.10 Ability. (Primary focus = Ability, able-bodiedness, etc.)
- 1.4.11 Ableism. (Primary focus = Ableism, disability, physical/mental illness, neurodiversity, etc.)
- 1.4.12 Elitism. (Primary focus = Discussions and/or definitions of an 'elite', protections for the elite, etc.)
- 1.4.13 Bigotry. (Primary focus = Intolerance, fear, hatred, etc.)

Category 1.5: Common Talking Points

- 1.5.1 Policing Trans Bodies. (Primary focus = Checking ID, interrogations, body searches, harassment, etc.)
- 1.5.2 Trans People/Transness and Bathrooms. (Primary focus = Bathrooms, changing rooms, sex-segregated spaces, etc.)
- 1.5.3 Trans People/Transness in Sports. (Primary focus = Sex-segregated leagues, competitions, governing bodies, hormonal/endocrinological testing, etc.)
- 1.5.4 Trans People/Transness and Sexuality. (Primary focus = Sexuality, sexual intercourse, sexual attraction, etc.)
- 1.5.5 Trans People/Transness and Sexual Health. (Primary focus = Reproduction, giving birth, family planning, STI screening, healthcare access, etc.)
- 1.5.6 Trans People/Transness and Sex Work. (Primary focus = Pornography, prostitution, sex trafficking, etc.)
- 1.5.7 Trans People/Transness and Sexual Disorder/Harm. (Primary focus = Pedophilia, rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, etc.)
- 1.5.8 Schools and Trans People/Transness. (Primary focus = Education, curriculums, school-government relationship, parent-teacher relationship, student-teacher relationship, etc.)
- 1.5.9 Universities and Trans People/Transness. (Primary focus = Education, curriculums, protests, campus, safe spaces, policy, advocacy, etc.)
- 1.5.10 Gay-Straight Alliances. (Primary focus = Safe spaces, school campuses/scholastic settings, etc.)
- 1.5.11 LGBTQ+ Events and Venues. (Primary focus = Pride events, clubs and bars, festivals, cultural events, etc.)
- 1.5.12 Drag and Trans People/Transness. (Primary focus = Drag performances, trans people and drag, etc.)
- 1.5.13 Trans People/Transness and the Family Unit. (Primary focus = Parental involvement, familial conflict, estrangement, abuse, neglect, abandonment, etc.)

- 1.5.14 Trans People/Transness and Safety of Others. (Primary focus = Safety, protection from harm, addressing concerns, safety measures, etc.)
- 1.5.15 Trans People/Transness and Fairness. (Primary focus = Fairness, equity, preventing unfairness, barriers, etc.)
- 1.5.16 Deception and/or Betrayal. (Primary focus = Deceit, exploitation, extortion, blackmailing, betrayal, etc.)
- 1.5.17 Propaganda and Indoctrination. (Primary focus = Disseminating certain information, pushing particular paradigms/views/opinions, agendas, etc.)
- 1.5.18 Censorship. (Primary focus = Withholding information, coercion/force, intimidation tactics, deplatforming, etc.)
- 1.5.19 Social Media and Mass Communication. (Primary focus = TV, newspapers, magazines, Meta, Snapchat, TikTok, calling, texting; discussions of/about social media, information dissemination, misinformation, etc.)

Category 1.6: Politics and Law

- 1.6.1 Trans People/Transness and the Law. (Primary focus = Legislation, legal precedent, rights, privacy, marriage, divorce, family law, custody, municipal/provincial/federal law, etc.)
- 1.6.2 The Government and Politics. (Primary focus = All levels of government, discussions of politics, politicians, political proceedings, etc.)
- 1.6.3 Freedom of Speech. (Primary focus = Legal protections, liberal democracy, expression of views, etc.)
- 1.6.4 Parental Rights. (Primary focus = Protecting children from harm, instilling values, parental authority, public vs. private, etc.)

Category 1.7: Culture, Ideology, and Religion

- 1.7.1 Capitalism. (Primary focus = Discussions and/or definitions of capitalism, support for capitalism, etc.)
- 1.7.2 Communism/Socialism. (Primary focus = Discussions and/or definitions of communism/socialism, rejection of/fear of/hatred for communism/socialism, etc.)
- 1.7.3 Religion. (Primary focus = Religious traditions, tenets of faith, interfaith relations, orthodoxy/orthopraxy, religious freedoms, etc.)
- 1.7.4 Patriotism. (Primary focus = Patriotism, pride in/love for one's country, protecting one's country, etc.)
- 1.7.5 Western Culture/Values. (Primary focus = The West, Euro-North American cultural norms and values, etc.)
- 1.7.6 Canadian Culture/Values. (Primary focus = Canada, the nation, Canadian cultural norms and values, etc.)
- 1.7.7 Traditional Culture/Values. (Primary focus = Traditionalist cultural norms and values, etc.)

Category 1.8: Social Convention

- 1.8.1 Morals/Morality. (Primary focus = Right conduct, virtues, morals, etc.)

- 1.8.2 Social Norms. (Primary focus = Culture, convention, social expectations, social contracts, etc.)

SECTION 3: POSITIONS AND ARGUMENTS

1. **Is there a clear anti-trans stance, opinion, position, or argument being presented, and if so, what kind? [Variable POSIT1 – Pick one].**

- YES 1 – Strongly supports ANTI trans stance and/or critiques PRO trans stance
- YES 2 – Mildly/implicitly supports ANTI trans stance and/or critiques PRO trans stance
- MIXED – Mixed stances regarding ANTI trans views and/or critiques PRO trans views, or vice versa
- NO – Supports PRO trans stance and/or critiques ANTI trans stance, various levels of intensity
- N/A – Neutral and/or informational (neutral provision of information, unclear/ambiguous position – i.e. if you must think about what the position is, it probably falls into this category, etc.)

  - Note: If a text is designed to direct the reader toward a specific stance, it falls into one of the first four categories. Despite not having a clear conclusion or argumentative structure and tone, it can be written to be persuasive and not just informative. If it is designed to inform but not persuade, then there is no clear position.

2. **What is the position? [POSIT2 – Open tab. Describe briefly].**
3. **What is an example that exemplifies this case's position? [POSIT3 – Open tab. Describe briefly, brief quotation sampling here].**

SECTION 4: WHAT EXPLICIT RHETORICAL STRATEGIES DO ANTI-TRANS ACTORS EMPLOY?

This section contains explicitly made/stated arguments anti-trans actors employed. They could also be utilized to critique pro-trans stances.

Category 2.1: Legality, Rights and Govt

2.1.1 Freedom of Speech: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors are in favour of freedom of speech?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses anti-trans actors as protecting freedom of speech/expression, the right to freedom of speech, etc.

2.1.2 Silencing: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are in opposition to freedom of speech?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses pro-trans actors as being in opposition to freedom of speech/expression, the right to freedom of speech, etc.

2.1.3 Rights: Do they explicitly argue that trans rights violate and/or otherwise come into conflict with other legal rights?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses tension/conflict/issues between trans rights and other rights, etc.

2.1.4 Anti Govt: Do they explicitly argue that the government is forcing transness and/or trans people upon them?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans as being forced into legislation at all levels of government, etc.

2.1.5 Pro Govt: Do they explicitly argue that the government is stopping/attempting to stop the forcing of transness and/or trans people upon them?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues the government as stopping/attempting to stop trans rights movements across the country, etc.

2.1.6 Parental Rights: Do they explicitly argue that 'parental rights' are necessary, important, and/or should be protected by law?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that ‘parental rights’ are necessary and important, etc.

Category 2.2: LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality

2.2.1 Venues: Do they explicitly argue that LGBTQ+ events and venues should be banned/shut down and/or are unnecessary/unneeded?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses how events and venues for LGBTQ+ groups should be stopped, shut down, etc.

2.2.2 Sexual Harm: Do they explicitly present information on transness and/or trans people and their relationship to sexual disorders/dysfunction/harm/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses transness/trans people as inherently sexual, sexually disordered, sexual abusers, pedophiles, sex workers, etc.

2.2.3 Sex Work: Do they explicitly present information on the relationship between transness/trans people and sex work?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses transness/trans people as drawn into sex work, transness as analogous with sex work/sex acts, etc.

2.2.4 Hypersexual: Do they explicitly portray transness and/or trans people as hypersexual(ized)?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness and/or trans people as inherently sexual and sexualized objects/bodies, etc.

2.2.5 Bathroom Danger: Do they explicitly argue that trans people seeking access to gender affirming washroom facilities are dangerous, suspicious, nefarious, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues trans people seeking access to affirming washrooms as dangerous, suspicious, nefarious, etc.

2.2.6 Porn: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are attempting to or want to expose people (especially children) to pornography?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues trans people as desiring to or attempting to expose people to pornography, etc.

2.2.7 Make Porn: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are attempting to or want to create, distribute, and/or consume pornography (especially child pornography)?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Explicitly argues trans people as attempting to creating, distribute, or consume pornography, especially child pornography, etc.

Category 2.3: Gender Roles and Heteronormativity

2.3.1 Gender Binary: Do they explicitly argue that the gender binary is 'natural', 'normal', 'real', 'biological', and/or otherwise objectively true?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues the gender binary as 'natural', 'normal', 'real', 'biological', objectively true, mutually exclusive but complementary sexes, etc.

2.3.2 Cis As Normal: Do they explicitly argue for the reification, naturalization, and/or normalization of cisnormativity as 'natural' and 'normal'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that non-trans people are 'normal', etc.

2.3.3 Straight As Normal: Do they explicitly argue for the reification of heterosexuality as 'natural' and 'normal'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that non-queer people are 'normal', reifying heterosexual attraction/sexuality, etc.

2.3.4 Straight Threat: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are threatening to heterosexuality?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that transness/trans people are deceivers, liars, rapists, sexual deviants, etc.

2.3.5 Traditional Threat: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are threatening to traditional gender roles?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues for the maintenance of traditional gender roles, traditional gendered divisions of labour, etc.

2.3.6 Emasculating: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are emasculating?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that transness/trans people are not 'real men', un-masculine, 'failed men', etc.

2.3.7 Cis Queer: Do they explicitly portray transness and/or trans people negatively compared to cisgender queer people?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that transness/trans people are negative/worse compared to cis queer people, etc.

Category 2.4: Medical Intervention

2.4.1 HRT, Etc.: Do they explicitly provide information on puberty blockers, hormone replacement therapy and/or gender affirmation surgery to support their claims?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses hormone replacement therapy, surgery, etc.

2.4.2 Transition: Do they explicitly present information that suggests transitioning (i.e. medical intervention) has a negative impact on the quality of life of trans people?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses transitioning as harmful and/or increasing likelihood of suicide, substance abuse, sexual assault, trouble with the law, relationships, etc.

2.4.3 Detransition: Do they explicitly discuss detransition?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses cases of detransition, highlighting interviews/exposes/opinion pieces, etc.

2.4.4 Addiction: Do they explicitly discuss hormone replacement therapy as being addictive, dangerous, experimental, and/or unsafe, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses HRT as dangerous, addictive, etc.

2.4.5 Gender Dysphoria: Do they explicitly provide information that is meant to dismiss, deny, minimize, or otherwise call into question the legitimacy of gender dysphoria claims?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses gender dysphoria as a ‘phase’, ‘lifestyle’, ‘craze’, ‘fad’, etc.; use terms like ‘rapid onset gender dysphoria’, etc.

2.4.6 Conversion Therapy: Do they explicitly discuss conversion therapy as something useful, needed, or helpful in ‘overcoming’ transness?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses conversion therapy as helpful, important, etc.

Category 2.5: Women and Children

2.5.1 Anti Woman: Do they explicitly argue pro-trans actors are misogynistic, ‘woman-hating’, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that pro-trans actors hate women, are misogynistic, etc.

2.5.2 Pro Woman: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors are fighting against misogyny?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that anti-trans actors are 'pro woman', championing 'women's rights', etc.

2.5.3 Hurt Children: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want to expose children to harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that pro-trans actors are exposing children to harm (physical, sexual, emotional, medical, etc.), exposing children to malicious/inappropriate people/behaviours/concepts, etc.

2.5.4 Protect Children: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors want to protect children from harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that anti-trans actors are protecting children from harm (physical, sexual, emotional, medical, etc.), protecting children from malicious/inappropriate people/behaviours/concepts, etc.

2.5.5 Hurt Families: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want to expose the family unit to harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that pro-trans actors are destroying/damaging family units and parent/child relationships, etc.

2.5.6 Protect Families: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors want to protect the family unit from harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that anti-trans actors are protecting family units and parent/child relationships, etc.

Category 2.6: Racism and Immigration

2.6.1 Racist: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as racist?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that pro-trans actors are racist, hateful towards others, etc.

2.6.2 Anti Racist: Do they explicitly portray anti-trans actors as supporting 'other/all' races and/or being anti-racist?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that anti-trans actors are protecting the rights of 'other' (i.e. non-white) races/racialized groups, etc.

2.6.3 Intolerant: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as denying immigrants of their right to engage with/practice their cultural and religious beliefs?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that pro-trans actors want to deny immigrants of their right to practice their religious and cultural practices, etc.

2.6.4 Tolerant: Do they explicitly portray anti-trans actors as protecting immigrants and supporting their right to engage with/practice their cultural and religious beliefs?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that anti-trans actors are championing multiculturalism and the right to practice diverse religious and cultural practices, etc.

Category 2.7: Ability and Ableism

2.7.1 Mentally Ill: Do they explicitly portray transness and/or trans people as having a disability/mental illness/disorder/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that transness/trans people are a sickness, mental illness, disorder, etc.

2.7.2 Social Contagion: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as attempting to spread transness like a sickness, 'social contagion', etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that transness/trans people are attempting to 'infect' others with their 'illness', transness as communicable, etc.

2.7.3 Exploitative: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as taking advantage of mentally ill, developmentally delayed, disabled, etc. people?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that transness/trans people are taking advantage of people who do not understand or consent to transness, etc.

Category 2.8: Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship

2.8.1 Elites: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors belong to or are part of a group of 'elites'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans people as 'taking over', part of some group attempting to oppress the 'silent majority', etc.

2.8.2 Bad Faith: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are bad faith actors?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues trans people/transness as deceitful, liars, transness as a means to an end, malicious agendas, etc.

2.8.3 Special Treatment: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want to be treated as a special interest group?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues trans people want to be catered to, prioritized above others, given special treatment, etc.

2.8.4 Censoring: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors censor anti-trans opinions/viewpoints?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans people as censoring/silencing/deplatforming anti-trans actors, etc.

2.8.5 Fight Back: Do they explicitly argue for rallying/protesting/fighting back against the censorship of anti-trans views?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans people as censoring/silencing/deplatforming anti-trans actors and the need to 'fight back' and protect themselves/their rights from being taken away, etc.

2.8.6 Liars: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as being deceptive, manipulative, liars, blackmailers, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues trans people as deceitful, exploitative, blackmailers, liars, manipulators, etc.

2.8.7 Propagandists: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are spreading propaganda/indoctrinating others?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans people as spreading propaganda, misinformation, indoctrination, 'gender ideology', 'critical race theory', etc.

2.8.8 Too Much: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want 'too much', 'take things too far', etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans people as asking for too much, pushing rights/demands/protests 'too far', etc.

2.8.9 Hateful: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are bigoted/hateful/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans people as hateful/intolerant/bigoted toward others with opposing viewpoints, censoring/silencing others, etc.

2.8.10 Wokeism: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are part of/emblematic of 'political correctness'/'wokeism'/'woke hysteria'/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues transness/trans people as spreading 'wokeism' to silence/censor opposing viewpoints, healthy discussion, differences of opinion, freedom of speech, etc.

2.8.11 SM Recruit: Do they explicitly argue that social media/mass communication is a means for pro-trans actors to 'recruit' others?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues trans people using social media and mass communication to recruit, indoctrinate, etc. people into their 'cause', etc.

2.8.12 Speaking Truth: Do they explicitly argue for utilizing social media/mass communication as a means of combatting transness and 'spreading the truth' etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues using social media to 'combat' the rise in trans awareness, etc.

Category 2.9: Common Talking Points

2.9.1 Policing Bodies: Do they explicitly argue for the policing of trans bodies?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses physically/socially/legally/etc. monitoring and policing the bodies of trans people, etc.

2.9.2 Not At School: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people should not be discussed in scholastic settings?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that schools are not settings in which people can or should learn about transness and/or trans people, etc.

2.9.3 Ruin Sports: Do they explicitly argue that trans people in sports will ruin competitions, render results meaningless, have unfair advantages, make people uncomfortable, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly argues that transness/trans people are ruining competitions, making results meaningless, having unfair (biological) advantages, etc.

Category 2.10: Culture, Ideology and Religion

2.10.1 Traditional Values: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are threatening traditional values?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses the maintenance of traditional family structure/unit, gendered expectations, cultural and religious norms, etc.

2.10.2 Threat To Society: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as an existential threat to Canadian/Western culture/society?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses transness/trans people as 'taking over', 'destroying gender', censoring the 'silent majority', alarmist language, etc.

2.10.3 Un Canadian: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as articulating 'non-Canadian/un-Canadian values'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses transness/trans people as not part of Canada's cultural/national identity, counter to Canadian values, etc.

2.10.4 Culture Wars: Do they explicitly discuss/cite 'culture wars' when talking about trans rights/issues?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses how transness and/or trans people have exacerbated the 'culture wars', etc.

2.10.5 Capitalism: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as a threat to capitalism?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses trans people as wanting to/attempting to overthrow capitalism, etc.

2.10.6 Commies: Do they explicitly 'accuse' pro-trans actors of being communists/socialists and/or articulating communist/socialist rhetoric?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses trans people as wanting to/attempting to replace/destroy capitalism with communism/socialism, etc.

2.10.7 Anti Religion: Do they explicitly claim that pro-trans actors are anti-religion?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses transness as being hateful/bigoted/intolerant toward religion/religious values, etc.

2.10.8 Pro Religion: Do they explicitly claim anti-trans actors are pro-religion?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses anti-trans actors as seeking to protect religious freedoms for Canadians that trans people want to take away, etc.

2.10.9 Christian Values: Do they explicitly claim that anti-trans actors are Christian, hold 'Christian values', etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Explicitly discusses anti-trans actors as are Christian, want to spread Christianity, etc.

SECTION 5: ARGUMENTS ABOUT OTHER TOPICS (EXPLICIT ARGUMENTS)

This section contains explicitly made/stated arguments anti-trans actors utilized in conjunction with anti- or pro-trans arguments.

Section 2.11.1: Other Explicit Arguments (Present in Conjunction with Anti-Trans Discourse)

1. Human Rights: Do they explicitly argue against human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Legislation: Do they explicitly argue against a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Freedom of Speech: Do they explicitly argue to protect freedom of speech from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
4. Religion: Do they explicitly argue that religion/freedom of religion must be protected from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
5. Sexualization: Do they explicitly argue that sexualization/aspects of sexualization of the human body are negative/bad/evil/etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
6. Conversion Therapy: Do they explicitly argue in favour of conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Medical Treatment: Do they explicitly argue against medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Indoctrination: Do they explicitly argue against indoctrination/aspects of indoctrination (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Wokeism: Do they explicitly argue against ‘wokeism’/aspects of ‘wokeism’ (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Social Media: Do they explicitly argue against social media/aspects of social media (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
11. Universities: Do they explicitly argue that universities/aspects of universities that are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Schools: Do they explicitly argue against schools/aspects of schools that are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Sports: Do they explicitly argue that sports/aspects of sports schools that are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
14. Military: Do they explicitly argue that military/aspects of the military that are ‘soft’, ‘woke’, failing, unprepared for war, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

Section 2.11.2: Other Explicit Arguments (Present in Conjunction with Pro-Trans Discourse)

1. Pro Human Rights: Do they explicitly argue in favour of human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Pro Legislation: Do they explicitly argue for a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Pro Freedom of Speech: Do they explicitly argue for freedom of speech, especially in relation to/balanced with other human rights?
4. Pro Prisons: Do they explicitly argue in favour of prisons/aspects of prisons?
5. Pro Conversion Therapy: Do they explicitly argue against conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
6. Pro Medical Treatment: Do they explicitly argue in favour of medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Pro Cis Women: Do they explicitly argue in favour of helping/protecting/advocating for cisgender women (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Pro Family Unit: Do they explicitly argue in favour of helping/protecting/advocating for the family unit (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Pro Gender Theory: Do they explicitly argue topics using theory related to gender, such as feminist theory (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Pro Universities: Do they explicitly argue in favour of universities/aspects of universities as places of learning, higher education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
11. Pro Schools: Do they explicitly argue in favour of schools/aspects of schools as places of learning, education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Pro Sports: Do they explicitly argue in favour of sports/aspects of sports as fair/must be made fair, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Pro Military: Do they explicitly argue in favour of the military/aspects of the military as progressive, innovative, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

SECTION 6: WHAT IMPLICIT RHETORICAL STRATEGIES DO ANTI-TRANS ACTORS EMPLOY?

This section contains implicitly made arguments anti-trans actors employed. They could also be utilized to critique pro-trans stances.

Category 3.1: Legality, Rights and Govt

3.1.1 Freedom of Speech: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors are in favour of freedom of speech?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies anti-trans actors are protecting freedom of speech/expression, the right to freedom of speech, etc.

3.1.2 Silencing: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are in opposition to freedom of speech?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies pro-trans actors are in opposition to freedom of speech/expression, the right to freedom of speech, etc.

3.1.3 Rights: Does the discourse suggest that trans rights violate and/or otherwise come into conflict with other legal rights?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies tension/conflict/issues between trans rights and other rights, etc.

3.1.4 Anti Govt: Does the discourse suggest the government is forcing transness and/or trans people upon them?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans are being forced into legislation at all levels of government, etc.

3.1.5 Pro Govt: Does the discourse suggest the government is stopping/attempting to stop the forcing of transness and/or trans people upon them?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies the government is stopping/attempting to stop the trans rights movements across the country, etc.

3.1.6 Parental Rights: Does the discourse suggest that 'parental rights' are necessary, important, and/or should be protected by law?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that ‘parental rights’ are necessary and important, etc.

Category 3.2: LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality

3.2.1 Venues: Does the discourse imply that LGBTQ+ events and venues should be banned/shut down and/or are unnecessary/unneeded?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that events and venues for LGBTQ+ groups should be stopped, shut down, etc.

3.2.2 Sexual Harm: Does the discourse suggest that information on transness and/or trans people and their relationship to sexual disorders/dysfunction/harm/etc. is provided?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans people are inherently sexual, sexually disordered, sexual abusers, pedophiles, sex workers, etc.

3.2.3 Sex Work: Does the discourse suggest the relationship between transness and/or trans people and sex work is harmful?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans people are drawn into sex work, transness as analogous with sex work/sex acts, etc.

3.2.4 Hypersexual: Does the discourse portray transness and/or trans people as hypersexual(ized)?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness and/or trans people are inherently sexual and sexualized objects/bodies, etc.

3.2.5 Bathroom Danger: Does the discourse portray trans people seeking access to gender affirming washroom facilities as dangerous, suspicious, nefarious, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies trans people seeking access to affirming washrooms is dangerous, suspicious, nefarious, etc.

3.2.6 Porn: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as attempting to or wanting to expose people (especially children) to pornography?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies trans people desire to or are attempting to expose people to pornography, etc.

3.2.7 Make Porn: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as attempting to or wanting to create, distribute, and/or consume pornography (especially child pornography)?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies trans people are attempting to create, distribute, or consume pornography, especially child pornography, etc.

Category 3.3: Gender Roles and Heteronormativity

3.3.1 Gender Binary: Does the discourse suggest that the gender binary is 'natural', 'normal', 'real', 'biological', and/or otherwise objectively true?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that the gender binary is 'natural', 'normal', 'real', 'biological', objectively true, mutually exclusive but complementary sexes, etc.

3.3.2 Cis As Normal: Does the discourse suggest that the reification, naturalization, and/or normalization of cisnormativity is 'natural' and 'normal'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies non-trans people are 'normal', etc.

3.3.3 Straight As Normal: Does the discourse suggest that the reification of heterosexuality is 'natural' and 'normal'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies non-queer people are 'normal', reifying heterosexual attraction/sexuality, etc.

3.3.4 Straight Threat: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are threatening to heterosexuality?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans people are deceivers, liars, rapists, sexual deviants, etc.

3.3.5 Traditional Threat: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as threatening to traditional gender roles?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans people are destroying/threatening traditional gender roles, etc.

3.3.6 Emasculating: Does the discourse portray transness and/or trans people as emasculating?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans people are not 'real men', un-masculine, 'failed men', etc.

3.3.7 Cis Queer: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors negatively compared to cisgender queer people?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans people are negatively compared to cis queer people, etc.

Category 3.4: Medical Intervention

3.4.1 HRT, Etc.: Does the discourse suggest anti-trans actors provide information on puberty blockers, hormone replacement therapy and/or gender affirmation surgery?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies discussions of hormone replacement therapy, surgery, etc.

3.4.2 Transition: Does the discourse present information that suggests transitioning (i.e. medical intervention) has a negative impact on the quality of life of trans people?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies transness/trans people is harmful and/or increasing likelihood of suicide, substance abuse, sexual assault, trouble with the law, relationships, etc.

3.4.3 Detransition: Does the discourse suggest arguments pertaining to detransition?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies cases of detransition is 'proof' of trans unhappiness, interviews/exposes/opinion pieces, etc.

3.4.4 Addiction: Does the discourse suggest that hormone replacement therapy is addictive, dangerous, experimental, and/or unsafe, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that hormone replacement therapy is dangerous, addictive, etc.

3.4.5 Gender Dysphoria: Does the discourse suggest information that is meant to dismiss, deny, minimize, or otherwise call into question the legitimacy of gender dysphoria claims?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that gender dysphoria is a 'phase', 'lifestyle', 'craze', 'fad', etc.; uses terms like 'rapid onset gender dysphoria', etc.

3.4.6 Conversion Therapy: Does the discourse suggest that conversion therapy is useful, needed, or helpful in 'overcoming' transness?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that conversion therapy is helpful, important, etc.

Category 3.5: Women and Children

3.5.1 Anti Woman: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as misogynistic, 'woman-hating', etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people hate women, are misogynistic, etc.

3.5.2 Pro Woman: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors are fighting against misogyny?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that anti-trans actors are 'pro woman', championing 'women's rights', etc.

3.5.3 Hurt Children: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to expose children to harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that pro-trans actors expose children to harm (physical, sexual, emotional, medical, etc.), exposing children to malicious/inappropriate people/behaviours/concepts, etc.

3.5.4 Protect Children: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors want to protect children from harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that anti-trans actors protect children from harm (physical, sexual, emotional, medical, etc.), protect children from malicious/inappropriate people/behaviours/concepts, etc.

3.5.5 Hurt Families: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to expose the family unit to harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that pro-trans actors want to destroy/damage family units and parent-child relationships, etc.

3.5.6 Protect Families: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors want to protect the family unit from harm?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that anti-trans actors are protecting family units and parent-child relationships, etc.

Category 3.6: Racism and Immigration

3.6.1 Racist: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as racist?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that pro-trans actors are racist, hateful towards others, etc.

3.6.2 Anti Racist: Does the discourse portray anti-trans actors as supporting other races/being anti-racist?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that anti-trans actors are protecting the rights of other (i.e. non-white) races/racialized groups, etc.

3.6.3 Intolerant: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to expose immigrants/newcomers to harmful/racist rhetoric?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that pro-trans actors are working against immigrants/newcomers, portraying them as enemies of women/children, exposing them to 'wokeism', destroying/censoring their cultures, etc.

3.6.4 Tolerant: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors want to protect immigrants/newcomers from harmful/racist rhetoric?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that anti-trans actors are working with immigrants/newcomers as champions to protect vulnerable groups from harm caused by 'wokeism', preserving their cultures, etc.

Category 3.7: Ability and Ableism

3.7.1 Mentally Ill: Does the discourse portray transness and/or trans people as having a disability/mental illness/disorder/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are a sickness, mental illness, disorder, etc.

3.7.2 Social Contagion: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are attempting to spread transness like a sickness, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are attempting to 'infect' others with their 'illness', transness as communicable, etc.

3.7.3 Exploitative: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as taking advantage of mentally ill, developmentally delayed, disabled, etc. people?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people are taking advantage of people who do not understand or consent to transness, etc.

Category 3.8: Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship

3.8.1 Elites: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as belonging to or part of a group of 'elites'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are 'taking over', part of some group attempting to oppress/silence the 'silent majority', etc.

3.8.2 Bad Faith: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are bad faith actors?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people/transness are deceitful, liars, transness as a means to an end, malicious agendas, etc.

3.8.3 Special Treatment: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to be treated as a special interest group?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people want to be catered to, prioritized above others, given special treatment, etc.

3.8.4 Censors: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as censoring anti-trans opinions/viewpoints?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are censoring/silencing/deplatforming anti-trans actors, etc.

3.8.5 Fight Back: Does the discourse suggest rallying/protesting/fighting back against the censorship of anti-trans views?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are censoring/silencing/deplatforming anti-trans actors, discusses 'fighting back' and protecting themselves/their rights from being taken away, etc.

3.8.6 Liars: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as being deceptive, manipulative, liars, blackmailers, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people are deceitful, exploitative, blackmailers, liars, manipulators, etc.

3.8.7 Propagandists: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as spreading propaganda/indoctrinating others?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are spreading propaganda, misinformation, indoctrination, ‘gender ideology’, ‘critical race theory’, etc.

3.8.8 Too Much: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as wanting ‘too much’, ‘taking things too far’, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people are asking for too much, pushing rights/demands/protests ‘too far’, etc.

3.8.9 Hateful: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as being bigoted/hateful/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are hateful/intolerant/bigoted toward others with opposing viewpoints, censoring/silencing others, etc.

3.8.10 Wokeism: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as being part of/emblematic of ‘political correctness’/‘wokeism’/‘woke hysteria’/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are a vanguard for spreading ‘wokeism’ to silence/censor opposing viewpoints, healthy discussion, differences of opinion, freedom of speech, etc.

3.8.11 SM Recruit: Does the discourse portray social media/mass communication as a means for trans people to ‘recruit’ others?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people use social media and mass communication to recruit, indoctrinate, etc. people into their ‘cause’, etc.

3.8.12 Speaking Truth: Does the discourse suggest that social media/mass communication is a means of combatting transness and ‘spreading the truth’ etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that using social media to ‘combat’ the rise in trans awareness is useful, etc.

Category 3.9: Common Talking Points

3.9.1 Policing Bodies: Does the discourse suggest that policing trans bodies is necessary/important/etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that physically/socially/legally/etc. monitoring and policing the bodies of trans people, etc.

3.9.2 Not At School: Does the discourse suggest that transness and/or trans people should not be discussed in scholastic settings?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that schools are not settings in which people can or should learn about transness and/or trans people, etc.

3.9.3 Ruin Sports: Does the discourse suggest that trans people in sports will ruin competitions, render results meaningless, have unfair advantages, make people uncomfortable, etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are ruining competitions, making results meaningless, having unfair (biological) advantages, etc.

Category 3.10: Culture, Ideology and Religion

3.10.1 Traditional Values: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are threatening traditional values?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that the maintenance of traditional family structure/unit, gendered expectations, cultural and religious norms is important, etc.

3.10.2 Threat to Society: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as an existential threat to Canadian/Western culture/society?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are 'taking over', 'destroying gender', censoring the 'silent majority', alarmist language, etc.

3.10.3 Un Canadian: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as articulating 'non-Canadian/un-Canadian values'?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness/trans people are not part of Canada's cultural/national identity, counter to Canadian values, etc.

3.10.4 Culture Wars: Does the discourse suggest that discussions of 'culture wars' are present when discussing about trans rights/issues?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness and/or trans people have exacerbated the 'culture wars', etc.

3.10.5 Capitalism: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as a threat to capitalism?

- Answers: Yes/No

- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people want to/are attempting to overthrow capitalism, etc.

3.10.6 Commies: Does the discourse 'accuse' pro-trans actors of being communists/socialists and/or articulating communist/socialist rhetoric?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that trans people want to/are attempting to replace/destroy capitalism with communism/socialism, etc.

3.10.7 Anti Religion: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are anti-religion?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that transness is hateful/bigoted/intolerant toward religion/religious values, etc.

3.10.8 Pro Religion: Does the discourse suggest anti-trans actors are pro-religion?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that anti-trans actors are seeking to protect religious freedoms for Canadians that trans people want to take away, etc.

3.10.9 Christian Values: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors are Christian, hold 'Christian values', etc.?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discourse suggests/implies that anti-trans actors are Christian, want to spread Christianity, etc.

SECTION 7: ARGUMENTS ABOUT OTHER TOPICS (IMPLICIT ARGUMENTS)

This section contains implicitly made arguments anti-trans actors utilized in conjunction with anti- or pro-trans arguments.

Section 3.11.1: Other Implicit Arguments (Present in Conjunction with Anti-Trans Discourse)

1. Human Rights 2: Does the discourse imply arguments against some aspect of human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Legislation 2: Does the discourse imply arguments against a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Freedom of Speech 2: Does the discourse imply arguments about seeking protection for freedom of speech from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
4. Religion 2: Does the discourse imply that religion/freedom of religion must be protected from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
5. Sexualization 2: Does the discourse imply that sexualization/aspects of sexualization of the human body are negative/bad/evil/etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
6. Conversion Therapy 2: Does the discourse imply support for conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Medical Treatment 2: Does the discourse imply arguments against medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Indoctrination 2: Does the discourse imply taking a stance against indoctrination/aspects of indoctrination (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Wokeism 2: Does the discourse imply opposition to ‘wokeism’/aspects of ‘wokeism’ (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Social Media 2: Does the discourse imply that social media/aspects of social media are unfavourable/harmful/etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
11. Universities 2: Does the discourse imply that universities/aspects of universities are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Schools 2: Does the discourse imply that schools/aspects of schools are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Sports 2: Does the discourse imply that sports/aspects of sports are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
14. Military 2: Does the discourse imply that the military/aspects of the military are ‘soft’, ‘woke’, failing, unprepared for war, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

Section 3.11.2: Other Implicit Arguments (Present in Conjunction with Pro-Trans Discourse)

1. Pro Human Rights 2: Does the discourse imply support for human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Pro Legislation 2: Does the discourse imply support for a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Pro Freedom of Speech 2: Does the discourse imply support for freedom of speech, especially in relation to/balanced with other human rights?
4. Pro Prisons 2: Does the discourse imply support for prisons/aspects of prisons?
5. Pro Conversion Therapy 2: Does the discourse imply opposition to conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
6. Pro Medical Treatment 2: Does the discourse imply support for medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Pro Cis Women 2: Does the discourse imply support for helping/protecting/advocating for cisgender women (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Pro Family Unit 2: Does the discourse imply support for helping/protecting/advocating for the family unit (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Pro Gender Theory 2: Does the discourse imply that the use of theory related to gender, such as feminist theory is useful (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Pro Universities 2: Does the discourse imply that universities/aspects of universities are places of learning, higher education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
11. Pro Schools 2: Does the discourse imply that schools/aspects of schools are places of learning, education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Pro Sports 2: Does the discourse imply that sports/aspects of sports are fair/must be fair, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Pro Military 2: Does the discourse imply that the military/aspects of the military are progressive, innovative, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

SECTION 8: EVIDENCE USED BY ANTI-TRANS ACTORS

This section contains codes for types of evidence anti-trans actors presented to justify and/or 'prove' their stances. They were also used to critique pro-trans stances.

4.1 Cited Statistics: Does the case contain cited statistics, percentages, or other quantitative/numerical data to support the presented arguments/narratives?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Includes cited statistics, numerical data, etc. to support the arguments/narratives

4.2 Uncited Statistics: Does the case contain uncited statistics, percentages, or other quantitative/numerical data to support the presented arguments/narratives?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Includes uncited statistics, numerical data, etc. to support the arguments/narratives

4.3 Cited Studies: Does the case contain cited studies to support the presented arguments/narratives?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Includes cited studies, papers, etc. to support the arguments/narratives

4.4 Uncited Studies: Does the case contain uncited studies to support the presented arguments/narratives?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Includes uncited studies, papers, etc. to support the arguments/narratives

4.5 Attributed Anecdotes: Does the case contain attributed anecdotes, quotes, or other qualitative data to support the presented arguments/narratives?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Includes attributed quotes, anecdotes, etc. to support the arguments/narratives

4.6 Unattributed Anecdotes: Does the case contain unattributed anecdotes, quotes, or other qualitative data to support the presented arguments/narratives?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Includes unattributed quotes, anecdotes, etc. to support the arguments/narratives

4.7 Experts: Does the case contain information from 'experts' to justify and/or explain the presented arguments/narratives?

- Answers: Yes/No
- Definition Note: Discusses 'experts' and their opinions to justify the position, etc.

SECTION 9: ENGAGEMENT LEVEL OF CASES

1. **How engaging is this case? [Variable ENGAGE, scale 1-10].**
   - 1-4 = uninteresting
   - 5-7 = average
   - 8-9 = excellent example of a given topic (values, rhetoric, argument, etc.)
   - 10 = must-read

2. **What makes this case engaging? [WHYENG – Open tab. Write one sentence summary and indicate interesting/compelling issues; OR paste in exemplary quotes from text. Note – fill tab if ranked 8 or higher].**

   For internal coding only.

SECTION 10: VARIA

5.1 Comparisons to the US

An examination of Canada being compared to the US, where a similar anti-trans backlash has taken shape.

- How is Canada being compared to the US regarding transness, trans people, and trans rights?

5.2 Metaphorical Tone[300]

The presence or absence of the Nurturant Parent and/or Strict Father models in anti-trans discourse. These ideal types of liberal and conservative frameworks (respectively) were re-worked as spectrums. I coded for their presence to determine the overall metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse. What is the overall metaphorical tone of anti-trans discourse in Canada?

- Nurturant Parent or Strict Father Model: The presence or absence of the Nurturant Parent and/or Strict Father models in anti-trans discourse.

  A) Strict Father: If the metaphorical tone was determined to match the Strict Father requirements, then this code was applied.
  B) Nurturant Parent: If the metaphorical tone was determined to match the Nurturant Parent requirements, then this code was applied.

5.3 Broader Representational Political Framings

I coded for the presence of presence of broader representational political framings. 'Framings' were operationalized as the pre-structuring of information designed to impact the final 'shape' of the presented discourse. I noted seven broad representational political framings and coded for them, as operationalized and defined below.

Are any of the following broad representational political framings present in the cases? If YES, select applicable code(s).

5.3.1 Transphobia: "… transphobia came to describe the feelings and thoughts associated with a fear of, or disgust with, trans people. … Transphobia is believed to be rooted in sexism and functions to facilitate the expression of personal values (opposed to whatever trans people represent) and assertions of identity, especially gender or sexual identities".[301]

5.3.2 Sexism and Misogyny: Sexism is defined as "[consistent] assumptions, beliefs, theories, stereotypes, and broader cultural narratives that represent men and women as importantly different in ways … Sexist ideology will also encompass *valorizing* portrayals of patriarchal social arrangements…".[302]

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[300] Lakoff, 1996.
[301] Hill, pp. 1460-1461, 2024
[302] Manne, p. 79, 2017

5.3.3. Heteronormativity: "1) reinforces the dominant heterosexual code with its hierarchy, normalization, and exclusion; 2) is a pervasive system that needs to be addressed, questioned, and challenged in terms of sexuality; 3) is the privileging of heterosexuality; 4) is linked to the oppression of LGBTQ people; and 5) is inherent in heterosexual institutions and social codes."[303]

5.3.4 Homonormativity: "… the ways that gay men and lesbians became the primary identities represented in the LGBT rights movements of the 1980s and 1990s. The "T" in LGBT was too often an afterthought. … homonormativity is a politic of queer assimilation. Homonormativity is antiqueer in that it reifies heteronormativity and establishes cultural norms for the "right way" to be gay or lesbian. In this capacity, homonormativity perpetuates gender, sexuality, and racial stereotypes for gay men and lesbians".[304]

5.3.5 Homophobia: "Homophobia is a contemporary social scientific term coined in the field of psychology to describe negative attitudes toward lesbians, gay men, and same-sex sexuality".[305] This includes institutionalized homophobia, which "refers to instances where homophobic or anti-same-sex sexuality ideologies are ingrained in the social and cultural institutions of a society".[306] This also includes social homophobia, which "can be considered the public or interactional manifestation of institutionalized homophobia. It is the "doing" of homophobia—the action of reifying homophobia."[307]

5.3.6 White Supremacy: "White supremacy is (1) a particular kind of oppressive social system, sub-national or national or international, coming into existence (2) in a time period in which race has emerged as a significant social category and social reality, and (3) whiteness and nonwhiteness are recognized racial identities, and (4) whites have and exert differential power in creating and controlling the evolution of the social system in question, and/or in blocking changes to it that would substantially reduce their domination, whose end is originally (5) the systemic, significant, and illicit differential advantaging of all or most whites as a group with respect to nonwhites as a group in various important social spheres."[308]

5.3.7 Christonormativity: "Christian hegemony, which normalizes Christianity, bestows privilege and advantages on those who embrace Christianity, and marginalizes everyone else. Christian privilege is embedded in our laws, policies, schools and workplaces. In schools, for example, the curriculum, dress codes, cafeteria food, and even the calendar reinforce Christian values and practices as universal norms, where their underlying Christian foundation

[303] Marchia and Sommer, p. 276, 2019
[304] Bolen, 2024, pp. 642-643
[305] Bolen and McGreehan, 2024, p. 650
[306] Bolen and McGreehan, 2024, p. 651
[307] Bolen and McGreehan, 2024, p. 652
[308] Mills, 2018, pp.475-476

is often invisible to all except those who are marginalized and excluded by such practices."[309]

[309] Ferber, pp. 70-71, 2012

APPENDIX 2: KEYWORD SEARCH TERMS

This appendix contains the keywords and phrases I employed to search for relevant cases that contained anti-trans discourse. I began the search with the words listed in the first section below. These keywords and phrases contained relevant terms that generated the initial search results. The second section contains keywords and phrases that I recorded during the pre-reading phase that appeared regularly. This emergent table of keywords and phases informed subsequent rounds of searching for relevant cases from the selected sources.

A2.1: Initial Keywords and Phrases

trans; trans*; transsex; transsex*; transsexual; transsexual*; transsexuals; transsexuals*; transgend; transgend*; transgender; transgender*; transgenders; transgenders*; transgendered; transgendered*; transgendereds; transgendereds*; trans right; trans right*; trans rights; trans rights*

A2.2: Emergent Supplementary Keywords and Phrases

woke; woke*; wokism; wokism*; wokeism; wokeism*; woke ideolog; woke ideolog*; woke ideology; woke ideology*; genderism; genderism*; parental right; parental right*; parental rights; parental rights*; policy 713; policy 713*; bill 137; bill 137*; bill c-4; bill c-4*; bill c 4; bill c 4*; bill c-16; bill c-16*; bill c 16; bill c 16*; detrans; detrans*; detransition; detransition*; detransitioning; detransitioning*; biolog; biolog*; biology; biology*; biological; biological*; biological sex; biological sex*; sex reassign; sex reassign*; sex reassignment; sex reassignment*; sex reassignment surgery; sex reassignment surgery*; gender affirm; gender affirm*; gender affirmation; gender affirmation*; gender affirmative care; gender affirmative care*; cross sex hormone; cross sex hormone*; cross-sex hormone; cross-sex hormone*; hormone replace; hormone replace*; hormone replacement; hormone replacement*; hormone replacement therapy; hormone replacement therapy*; conversion therapy; conversion therapy*; pronoun; pronoun*; pronouns; pronouns*

APPENDIX 3: THE 'HIGH THEORY' LITERATURE REVIEW

A3.1: Introduction

To what scholarly disciplines can one turn to theorize about the current anti-trans backlash in Canada? What frameworks can one utilize to analyze and discuss this dissertation's findings? This 'high theory' literature review will address these questions. The goal is to provide theoretical foundations that may be referenced at various points throughout the body of the dissertation. These theoretical frameworks are important for providing lenses through which to examine the findings.

This literature review appendix will be separated into six sections. The first section briefly explains the intention to contextualize this dissertation in relation to what has been written about in the scholarly disciplines of trans studies, disability studies, and backlash theory. Additionally, this 'high theory' appendix sought to operationalize these theoretical frameworks into workable models that could be applied to discussions of the qualitative analyses.

The second section is dedicated to outlining the first of three theoretical frameworks, examining the intersection between trans studies and disability studies. In this section, the medical and social models of disability were examined. This section then discussed the 'composite model of disability' which was operationalized to examine pathologizing anti-trans/ableist discourses. This section also relayed some of the most prevalent contemporary medicalized and/or biologically essentializing anti-trans discourses, including discussions on puberty blockers/HRT, ROGD, detransition, and trans women's participation in sport.

The third section of this appendix is dedicated to examining transfeminism. This section will begin with an analysis of prevailing sex/gender paradigms to broadly guide the discussion. An exploration of the 'Wrong Body Account' and subsequent shift to the 'Beyond the Binary Account' will be discussed. This section then pivots to examining some of the scholarly works of lesbian separatists, TERFs, and 'gender-critical' feminists. These works are integral to understanding how the current 'gender-critical' trend has proliferated in recent years. Finally, this section will pivot to examine transfeminist literature by discussing foundational texts, important contributions, and operationalizing an anti-carceral, trans-justice, and pro-autonomy definition of the term.

The fourth section of this chapter is dedicated to the final theoretical framework, backlash theory. This section draws upon Faludi's work to broadly define a 'backlash'. It is examined and discussed in relation to the anti-trans backlash examined throughout this dissertation. Definitions and discussions of populism and populist rhetoric, and how they intertwine with backlash theory, will then be discussed. Finally, backlash theory and populist rhetoric well be examined in the Canadian political landscape to address assumptions and develop theoretical considerations when examining the dataset for these concepts.

The fifth section contains the conclusion, which synthesizes this literature review's goals, definitions, and findings.

A3.2: Theoretical Frameworks

Theoretical frameworks ground and contextualize research by providing structure and situating a project within a larger pre-existing area of study. This creates guidelines for how to approach a research project, as well as shaping the nature of the research questions one asks. This dissertation has been designed to contribute to the disciplines of trans studies and gender studies most directly. Trans studies and gender studies are heavily theoretical fields; creating a work that has produced empirical data means that the findings can be discussed in concert with

these theories to generate rich quantitative and qualitative results. To that end, three broad theoretical disciplines were included in this appendix to flesh out the theoretical context of this dissertation when it was applicable. These disciplines/theories were: the composite model of disability; transfeminism; and backlash theory. Please note that this 'high theory' literature review centers largely on English-language North American and European sources. In the sections below, each theoretical framework will be examined. The sections will discuss important contributors to the field and synthesize their works.

A3.3: Trans Studies, Disability Studies: Models of Disability and Gender Affirmative Care

Disability studies is a discipline that examines how disability is conceptualized, how it is lived/experienced materially, the histories of disability activism, and critically studies the power dynamics of ableism.[310] Disability is a complex topic; when, how, and under what circumstances someone is/becomes 'disabled' varies widely. Some mental, physical, intellectual, and/or developmental conditions are congenital; some are chronic; some occur after the body has experienced trauma and/or stress; some fluctuate; some are temporary. And many disabilities escape labelling, linear narratives, and/or current scientific, medical, and legal understanding. This makes the relationship to 'cure,'[311] or seeking to rid the mind/body of disability entirely, a complex one. Disabilities mark minds/bodies as 'aberrations' from the normative, able-bodied (and able-minded) Western cultural ideal.

At the intersection between trans studies and disability studies, a burgeoning body of literature is growing.[312] This literature examines how trans and/or disabled lived experiences, identities, markers, and systemic barriers may overlap and/or compound each other. In this section of the literature review, several key topics from the discipline of disability studies and its intersections with trans studies will be examined. Firstly, this sub-section will discuss and contextualize the literature pertaining to the medical, social, and composite models of disability. This will ground the discussion of how disability has been conceptualized in the broader discussion of the intersection between transness and disability. This section will also discuss how these models overlap with medicalized discourses of trans bodies. The next sub-section will briefly examine the history of gender affirmative care, tracing its histories to contemporary current best practices and standards of care. From there, an examination of most prevalent anti-trans discourses pertaining to gender affirmative care, medicalized perspectives on transness, and/or the relationship between transness and disability will be conducted. Finally, this sub-section will conclude with a summary of the main points and reaffirm the importance of examining transness and disability at the intersection of trans studies and disability studies.

A3.3.1: Disability Studies: The Medical, Social, and Composite Models of Disability

In order to contextualize anti-trans discourse in relation to disability, one must first establish how disability itself is understood. The following sub-sections will briefly summarize the main theoretical frameworks of the medical, social, and composite models of disability.[313] A summary of Alexandre Baril's[314] composite model of disability will also be conducted. These

[310] McRuer, 2006; Kafer, 2013
[311] Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017
[312] Baril, 2015; Baril, 2023
[313] Davis, 2017
[314] Baril, 2015

concepts will be explained and will inform my approach to pathologizing anti-trans discourses throughout this dissertation.

Part 1: The Medical Model of Disability

The medical model of disability[315] centers disability within the mind/body. From a biomedical perspective, disability is linked to a diagnosis of 'abnormality' within the mind/body, positing that a disability reduces an individual's quality of life.[316] As such, treatment, or 'cure,'[317] aims to correct, treat, and/or diminish the disability within the mind/body. The medical model invisibilizes systemic forces that disable and/or impair minds/bodies[318] and the power dynamics that disproportionately disable, impair, and/or debilitate certain populations.[319] The medical model's paradigm can tend toward pathologizing approaches for treatment, wherein disabled individuals' own lived experiences, wants, needs, and expectations are subsumed under ableist frameworks of 'cure'. The medical model can be punitive and compulsory, such as through non-consensual institutionalization or the forced administration of drugs and/or surgical intervention.[320] Disability scholars and activists[321] have criticized this model for placing the 'blame' of disability – and thus the onus of treatment/'cure' – onto disabled people. They have also highlighted how the medical model does not adequately account for structural forces that disable, impair, and/or debilitate the mind/body, especially of marginalized populations. Many disability scholars also protest to the notion of 'cure' itself, writing that their minds/bodies are not sites of pathology that must be rendered 'normative', and thus refuse treatment or regard the medical industrial complex[322] with suspicion and skepticism.

A medical model of disability pathologizes trans/disabled people who seek out gender affirmative care. Seeking access to puberty blockers, hormone therapy, and various surgical interventions are heavily gatekept. In Ontario, for example, one must be assessed and recommended for surgery by up to two healthcare providers, depending on the desired procedure.[323] If one cannot successfully apply for insurance coverage from the Ontario Health Insurance Plan, the individual may have to pay out of pocket, which can cost thousands of dollars.[324] Additionally, many people across Canada do not currently have a general practitioner[325] who may provide them with a referral letter and/or have the resources to direct them to other healthcare providers. Waitlists for referral letters are also long, and the wait times to be approved for surgery can take months.[326] Additionally, finding LGBTQ+-friendly providers who are willing to recommend someone for gender affirmative care can be difficult; directories[327] can provide guidance on where to begin the search, but these healthcare providers are often over-subscribed. Other healthcare providers may also be skeptical and /or hostile to a

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[315] Davis, 2017
[316] Davis, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[317] Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017
[318] Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[319] Puar, 2017; Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[320] Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Chouinard, 2025; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[321] Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Chouinard, 2025; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[322] Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Chouinard, 2025; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[323] Gender Conforming Surgery – Ontario Ministry of Health, 2023
[324] Gender Conforming Surgery – Ontario Ministry of Health, 2023; Furness, 2024; Chouinard, 2025
[325] Access to Health Care – Statistics Canada, 2023
[326] Access to Health Care – Statistics Canada, 2023
[327] TransBucket, n.d.

patient who has disclosed their trans identity and/or their desire to seek gender affirmative care. Cisnormative, cisgenderist, and ableist assumptions about the mind/body may guide healthcare providers to viewing transness/trans people as 'abnormal', 'suicidal', and/or 'crazy' for seeking out 'medical mutilation'. Additionally, even after receiving approval and a surgery date, depending on where one lives, one may be required to travel out of province/territory to access the nearest hospital or clinic that provides gender affirmative care procedures. The additional logistical challenges of travelling and reservations during recovery, for which the individual may be expected to pay, creates barriers before one has even accessed the desired services. Additionally, arranging time off work or school can open trans employees/students to scrutiny, harassment, and discrimination from their employers/educators should they disclose the nature of their request for time off.[328] Additional barriers exist for trans children and youth, as many provinces and territories have age restrictions on receiving gender affirmative care,[329] especially without parental consent. Should the parents or guardians of trans children and youth be skeptical, ambivalent, and/or hostile toward transness, they may choose not to give their consent for the procedure. This can lead to negative health and safety outcomes for trans children and youth, who may have little recourse but to wait until they reach age of majority to initiate the process themselves – all while struggling with disproportionate rates of gender dysphoria, depression or anxiety, suicidal ideation, bullying, harassment, isolation, microaggressions, and/or any other number of factors[330] that may impact their physical and mental wellbeing.

When accessing gender affirmative care, moreover, medical complications can arise, rendering the body as disabled, impaired, and/or debilitated. Even in the 'normal' course of healing from gender-affirmative surgery without complications, one's physical movement, comfort, flexibility, and range of motion may be affected. Complications with gender affirmative care can lead to: temporary or permanent nerve damage; loss of physical and/or erotic sensation; limited body movement; incontinence; chronic fatigue; chronic pain; sexual dysfunction; infertility/sterility; mood swings; infection; necrosis; adhesions; and more.[331] These outcomes can be both physically debilitating and mentally draining, especially in the face of disappointment and/or frustration for one's new reality of being disabled by something that was expected to provide relief and a sense of connection to one's mind/body.[332] The medical model of disability may account for the physical and mental strains on the mind/body as a result of gender affirmative care – which is still under-discussed in trans studies.[333] However, it does not account for the systemic barriers that disable, impair, and/or debilitate trans minds/bodies. Nevertheless, the medical model of disability does discuss various physical, mental, and/or developmental challenges the mind/body can experience, and how these effects can materially limit one's capacity to live a fulfilling and dignified life.

[328] Mason-Bish, 2020; Branzei and Zayen, 2025; Chouinard, 2025
[329] Sansfaçon et al., 2019; How to Access Gender Affirming Care – Government of Canada, 2024
[330] Facts, stats and WAGE's impact - Government of Canada, 2025
[331] Coleman et al., 2022
[332] Baril, 2015; Baril, 2023; Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006
[333] Baril, 2015; Baril, 2023

Part 2: The Social Model of Disability

The social model of disability[334] examines systemic barriers and power dynamics that disable, impair, and/or debilitate the mind/body.[335] It is often dichotomously positioned against the medical model of disability. This model discusses how disability can be rendered onto minds/bodies through legal limitations, medical abuse, and/or the stigmatization of 'non-normative' minds/bodies, to name a few. Under this model, an intersectional approach to theorizing on disability makes visible the ways in which the mind/body can become disabled. According to Puar,[336] the debilitation of minds/bodies is interwoven with conceptualizations of nationalism, colonialism, imperialism. She calls this 'debility': ongoing structural injury is forced upon nations via war, poverty, racism, environmental harm, and lack of healthcare. Debility is presented as distinct from disability; where disability is recognized and has legal and medical frameworks that define it and provide avenues of seeking healthcare, debility is hidden, normalized, and weaponized by invading/imperialist/colonial nations to enforce geopolitical hegemony and control.[337] She gives the example of how Israel's war on Palestine has created mass intergenerational casualties of war, leaving many people debilitated – but alive. This invisibilizes the systemic harm caused to Palestinians by the Israeli military, government, and media. The social model of disability makes visible what is hidden by the individualizing, 'cure'-centric paradigm of the medical model of disability.

For trans/disabled people, this model of disability situates both transphobia and ableism as societal barriers that can disable, impair, and/or debilitate the mind/body.[338] Scholars[339] have critiqued presumptions about trans/disabled minds/bodies and whether their lives are considered 'worth living'. Cisnormative and cisgenderist societal frameworks preclude trans ways of knowing from existence. Trans ways of knowing are destabilizing to the sex/gender binary and traditional gender roles, and therefore cannot be considered viable possibilities of human experience. Likewise, disability is often portrayed as 'unlivable'; disabled minds/bodies are positioned as abject under systems that reinforce normative assumptions about able-bodiedness/able-mindedness. Trans/disabled scholars and activists bring attention to the ways in which the state possess the biopolitical[340] (and necropolitical)[341] tools to determine the viability of trans/disabled lives. By challenging these structural frameworks, trans/disabled activists insist that their existences are not tragedies.

However, this model has its own limitations; the social model at times distances its theoretical frameworks from the embodied realities of disability/debility,[342] such as chronic pain, lifelong limitations of the mind/body, and/or psychological/physiological distress caused by impairments to one's quality of life.[343] The social model of disability, ironically, can invisibilize and separate disability from the mind/body, relocating it almost exclusively within structural forces. While systemic change certainly impacts barriers and limitations to a good quality of life for trans/disabled people, it cannot remove disability entirely. Total and comprehensive

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[334] Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023
[335] Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023; Chouinard, 2025; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025
[336] Puar, 2017
[337] Puar, 2017
[338] Nario-Redmond, 2020
[339] McRuer, 2006; Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; Pyne, 2020; Pyne, 2021; Baril, 2015; Baril, 2023
[340] Foucault, 1978; Foucault, 1983; Mbembe, 2003
[341] Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco, 2014
[342] Puar, 2007; Puar, 2017
[343] Puar, 2007; Puar, 2017

accessibility would not change the fact that some minds/bodies are disabled and will remain that way. While this model takes a different approach to disability than the medical model, it too still has some challenges.

Part 3: Composite Model of Disability

The composite model of disability seeks to create space to examine disability that does not dichotomize and situate disability within the strictly social or strictly medical realms. It problematizes assumptions about disability and transness by examining the limitations of disability studies and trans studies and creates ways for these disciplines to address gaps in their respective bodies of literature. Baril's article on the subject[344] explores this model in detail.

Baril theorizes that disability studies and trans studies can form academic, activist, and personal alliances by interrogating the intersection of these disciplines.[345] His article posits that a composite model of disability must attend to impairment, and how aspects of transness and trans lived experience can be disabling and/or impairing.[346] For example, gender dysphoria – an extremely common form of distress trans people experience – is little-discussed in both disability studies and trans studies as a potential disability. The constant physiological and mental impact of gender dysphoria can be impairing to the individual. Likewise, the potentially physical/psychological impairments of trans lived experience must be robustly discussed in trans studies. Trans studies distances itself from examining transness as a disability and/or the potentially disabling/debilitating aspects of trans lived experience. Trans studies has generally moved away from medicalized paradigms of transness and sex/gender. Baril argues that the discipline forecloses on potential avenues of exploration by not engaging critically with disability and impairment. There is little to no political, legal, or social movement within modern-day trans communities to petition governments to list transness as a disability, he notes.[347] Baril argues this may be borne out of concern of claw backs on trans rights, and that pathologizing discourses could reinvigorate discussions about conversion therapy,[348] non-consensual institutionalization, and/or the stripping of treatments and legal protections for trans people.[349] However, these are material possibilities for trans populations that could be enacted for any number of reasons; trans studies scholars ought to attend to these theorizations, knowing that living in a cisgenderist and cisnormative society will not change these risks. If trans studies does not attend to these concerns or engage with them critically, many trans people who consider aspects/outcomes of their transition as disability/impairment will have little space within trans studies *or* disability studies to contextualize their experiences, ground it within theory, and/or build coalitions of solidarity and community around these topics. Likewise, the cisnormative and cisgenderist treatment of transness by disability studies precludes robust, interdisciplinary engagements with how legal, judicial, and medical systems impose violence upon minds/bodies via the stringent policing of sex and gender.

This dissertation will therefore engage with pathologizing anti-trans discourses from the composite model of disability paradigm. For example, how do one theorize about detransitioners

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[344] Baril, 2015, p. 61
[345] Baril, 2015
[346] Baril, 2015, p. 68
[347] Mog and Swarr, 2008; Baril, 2015; Davis, 2017; Clare, 1999; Clare, 2017; McRuer, 2006; Baril, 2023
[348] Salway et al., 2021; Tiwana et al., 2024
[349] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Cossman, 2018; Dalwood, 2021; DeGagné, 2021; Bellemare, Kolbegger, and Vermes, 2021; Brightman et al., 2024; Branzei and Zeyen, 2025

who had their reproductive organs removed and now regret their choice? Are these individuals disabled/impaired by gender affirmative standards of care and surgical intervention, and/or by a culture that places importance on biological reproductive capacity? How should disability studies scholars and trans studies scholars discuss ROGD? What theoretical implications could be developed when engaging with discourses that portray transness as a 'social contagion'? If transness is conceptualized as a mental illness, a psychosexual disorder, and/or the result of childhood sexual trauma,[350] how does one critically engage with these topics? As tempting as it may be to completely disregard these claims, the fact of the matter is that trans-hostile discourses have proliferated widely and have a material impact on the lives of trans/disabled people. The composite model of disability provides one with the tools to discuss these discourses with nuance and consideration for messy, complicated, contradictory, and/or uncomfortable possibilities while challenging anti-trans discourse and its claims about transness *and* disability.

A3.3.2: Ableist and Pathologizing Anti-Trans Discourses

Anti-trans discourse pertaining to gender affirmative care is not new in Canada.[351] However, the anti-trans backlash has exacerbated these preoccupations with trans bodies and how they can be hormonally and surgically shaped.[352] These medical treatments raise cultural anxieties around the dichotomous framework of the sex/gender binary.

Part 1: A (Brief) History of Gender Affirmative Care, 1880s-2020s

Transness has been pathologized since the earliest proposed 'treatments' to the 'psychosexual disorder' have been put forward.[353] In this section, I will discuss some of the earliest biomedical paradigms of transness up to the 2020s.

Sex/gender has long been considered a biological and social binary in Western culture and scientific thought.[354] Intersex conditions, gender variance, and/or non-heterosexual desires/relations have been diagnosed over many decades as 'aberrations' with various forms of 'treatment' available as medical resources evolved. Before terms like 'trans' were widely used, the earliest sexologist medical texts used a variety of terms, such as 'bisexuals', 'inverts', 'transvestites', 'homosexuals', and later, 'transsexuals'.[355] Early sexology generally focused on expressions of gender variance in people who were assigned male at birth. Expressions of non-heterosexual desire and the desire to dress/live like/become a woman were often conflated.[356] One of the earliest sexological texts discussing these topics came from Richard Freiherr von Krafft-Ebing and his text *Psychopathia Sexualis, with Especial Reference to the Antipathetic Sexual Instinct: A Medico-forensic Study.*[357] This book was one of the earliest medical treatises on 'homosexuality', exploring variations of 'homosexual behaviour'. In the decades that followed since this book's publication, other sexologists began to approach 'homosexuality/transvestitism' from different perspectives. Magnus Hirschfeld[358] advocated for

[350] Krafft-Ebing, 1886; Hirschfeld, 1933; Benjamin, 1966
[351] Matte, 2014
[352] Rippon, 2019; Orr, 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Arraiza Zabalegui, 2024
[353] Krafft-Ebing, 1886
[354] Krafft-Ebing, 1886
[355] Krafft-Ebing, 1886; Hirschfeld, 1933; Benjamin, 1966
[356] Krafft-Ebing, 1886; Hirschfeld, 1933; Benjamin, 1966
[357] Krafft-Ebing, 1886
[358] Hirschfeld, 1933

treatments that did not center medical goals of 'correcting' his patients' feelings and self-identity, but to provide medical care to align their medical needs with their self-identity. His contributions to the field of sexology laid the groundwork for later sexologists to further develop medical treatments and scientific theories about transsexualism.

Harry Benjamin[359] became a widely known endocrinologist and sexologist. One of his seminal works, *The Transsexual Phenomenon,*[360] relayed his approach to gender affirmative care and treatment plans. He also created selection criteria for trans patients that reified traditional sex/gender roles, thus expecting his patients to already exhibit 'womanly' tendencies when seeking access to gender identity clinicians' services. Benjamin performed sex reassignment surgery on Christine Jorgensen, a famous Danish American transsexual woman who had been a member of the US military.[361] Her return from Denmark to America after recovering from her surgery was well-documented, introducing mainstream North American audiences to transsexualism for the first time. By appealing to cultural norms of beauty, femininity, and womanhood, Jorgensen built both a means of financial security for herself, as well as visibility for and within transsexual communities seeking sympathetic doctors and endocrinologists to perform surgeries for them. Benjamin's legacy led to the naming of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association and Standards of Care (SOC), which was conceived during the International Gender Dysphoria Symposium (IGDS) in 1977.[362] The organization has now been renamed the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH),[363] which publishes the Standards of Care for the Health of Transgender and Gender Diverse People (SOC).[364] It is considered to be the 'global gold standard' of training and education for medical professionals who treat trans and gender diverse patients. The SOC is currently in its 8th iteration,[365] and has integrated a more holistic approach to identifying gender incongruence than in previous versions.

However, the gatekeeping nature of most jurisdictions around the world that legally permit gender affirmative healthcare – combined with the bureaucracy of medical institutions and governmental approval – continues to render receiving medical care a burden on trans people. In Canada, Rupert Raj – a trans man and activist who transitioned in the 1970s – dedicated much of his life to developing transsexual communities, promoting their interests, and making transsexuals more 'socially acceptable' to the public. He has published widely circulated newsletters such as *Metamorphosis* and provided peer support to trans people though many LGBTQ+ organizations over the span of decades. Raj rallied transsexuals in the 1980s to re-frame themselves as a medical/patient-consumer group to healthcare professionals.[366] Healthcare insurance companies were beginning to object to paying for gender affirmative care treatments; therefore, Raj advised transsexuals to be active players in their transition. The 1980s and 1990s of LGBTQ+ activism in Canada were profoundly shaped by the HIV/AIDS crisis impacting communities and leading to high death tolls. Advocating for oneself in a medical setting as a transsexual, especially in a period of politicization and lack of information on the spread and

[359] Benjamin, 1966
[360] Benjamin, 1966
[361] Meyerowitz, 2002
[362] Matte et al., 2009
[363] Coleman et al., 2022
[364] Coleman et al., 2022
[365] Coleman et al., 2022
[366] Matte, 2014

characteristics of HIV/AIDS, often complicated access to medical care.[367] Moreover, transsexuals were often misrepresented in medical recordkeeping and treatment plans according to their 'biological sex' and government-issued identification, leading to their erasure.

From the 2000s to the 2010s, various organizations began to be established and/or grow in influence. For example, the Trans Access Project[368] facilitated Toronto shelters by providing standard guidelines for trans clients. The organization grew and provided "detoxification centres, AIDS hospices, housing services, sexual assault centres, youth services, legal clinics, employment centres, addiction services, hospitals, and settlement services".[369] By providing a holistic series of services, the Trans Access Project facilitated many trans peoples' medical, physical, legal, and social/communal needs. Trans communities' growing visibility has led to the creation and proliferation of various organizations that facilitate trans access to healthcare.

Part 2: Anti-Trans Medicalized Discourses

Anti-trans medical discourses take many different forms, but they all generally oppose gender affirmative care for trans people. Anti-trans actors often argue that gender affirmative care is risky, irreversible, 'experimental', and/or medically unnecessary. It is true that surgical intervention for gender affirmative care is typically irreversible; it is also true that no medical procedure is without the risk of complications.[370] However, these discourses flatten the nuance of medical intervention, especially for trans children and youth. Recently, anti-trans discourses against the use of any gender affirmative care for minors has proliferated in Canada. Children in Canada must receive parental consent[371] to receive surgical intervention. Various provincial jurisdictions have set ages that require parental consent – usually ranging from 16 to 17 years of age. These discussions typically focus on gender affirmative care; ROGD; gender dysphoria as 'social contagion'; rates of detransition; and preoccupations with trans women in sport. I will explore these topics in greater detail.

Puberty blockers have been well-documented as safe, reversible, and correlated with positive mental health outcomes for trans people.[372] They are currently considered the 'gold standard' for treating gender dysphoria in trans children and youth to delay the onset of puberty. However, there are some risks associated with future infertility outcomes and unclear therapeutic endpoints in the administration of gender affirmative care.[373] Various studies also question the order of events in prescribing puberty blockers to children and youth, uncertain if their administration leads to further medical intervention later in life (such as HRT and surgery), or if the majority of children and youth are already 'set' on this course. That said, puberty blockers are widely recommended for treatment, as delaying the onset of puberty in children is designed to promote freedom of choice and bodily autonomy; this is known as the "open future principle".[374] Bans on puberty blockers administered to trans children and youth, for example, foreclose any possibility of research to better understand how they affect children, short-term and

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[367] Jennex and Eswaran, 2020
[368] Scanlon et al., 2014
[369] Scanlon et al., 2014 p. 116
[370] Coleman et al., 2022; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Rissman and Lynch, 2023; Lawson et al., 2024
[371] How to Access Gender Affirming Care – Government of Canada, 2024
[372] Keo-Meier and Ehrensaft, 2018' Skinner et al., 2023; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Forcier, Van Schalkwyk, and Turban, 2020
[373] Coleman et al., 2022; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Rissman and Lynch, 2023; Lawson et al., 2024
[374] Jorgensen, 2023; Jorgensen et al., 2024

long-term, while denying this open future principle. Many cultural anxieties around puberty blockers seems to stem from fears of 'arrested (cisheteronormative) development' of the child. This 'interference' is entangled in cultural anxieties pertaining to childhood sexual 'innocence,'[375] due to misconceptions about transness/queerness being conflated with overt sexuality. Medical intervention is therefore often framed as dangerous, unnecessary, and/or unhealthy for the physical and mental wellbeing of the child.[376] Other countries' research initiatives – such as the UK's Cass Review[377] – have cast further doubts on the positive health outcomes of gender affirmative care for trans children and youth in recent years, further eroding trust in medical and scientific institutions and LGBTQ+ organizations worldwide.[378] Claims that children are too young to consent, and/or that malicious doctors are pressuring children and parents into hastily choosing gender affirmative care, have become commonplace. These claims also portray gender affirmative care as unhealthy. For example, claims that HRT is an addictive substance[379] has surfaced in recent years, despite a dearth of evidence to support this claim. Any other negative health outcomes associated/correlated with the use of HRT[380] require further study, as currently too few longitudinal studies exist for any definitive claims to be made. Despite this, puberty blockers and HRT are often portrayed as categorically harmful.

Discussions of the 'watchful waiting'[381] approach, which delays social and medical transition, have also proliferated. This approach is often portrayed as a reasonable alternative to 'rushing' children into transitioning,[382] and centers parental affect and the mitigation of parental distress. Preoccupations with institutions 'forcing' children into making fast and permanent medical decisions have proliferated in the early 2020s. Despite these discourses, however, many provinces and territories having legal age limits on irreversible surgical treatments,[383] have long wait times to receive consultations and treatment plans,[384] and/or have bureaucratic and medical gatekeeping[385] requirements such as referral letters and applications for provincial insurance for coverage/funding.[386] Rather, the 'watchful waiting' approach is parent-led[387] and discourages any signs of gender nonconformity and/or incongruence in the child.

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[375] Keo-Meier and Ehrensaft, 2018; Forcier, Van Schalkwyk, and Turban, 2020; Ehrensaft et al., 2020; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Skinner et al., 2023
[376] Keo-Meier and Ehrensaft, 2018; Forcier, Van Schalkwyk, and Turban, 2020; Ehrensaft et al., 2020; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Skinner et al., 2023
[377] Cass, 2024
[378] Keo-Meier and Ehrensaft, 2018; Forcier, Van Schalkwyk, and Turban, 2020; Ehrensaft et al., 2020; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Skinner et al., 2023
[379] Bewley and Bewley, 1992
[380] Coleman et al., 2022; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Rissman and Lynch, 2023; Lawson et al., 2024
[381] Ashley, 2019a; Ashley, 2019b; Ashley, 2020; Slothouber, 2020; Ehrensaft et al., 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Blais et al., 2022; Horton et al., 2024
[382] Littman, 2018; Dias and Bailey, 2023
[383] How to Access Gender Affirming Care – Government of Canada, 2024
[384] Scheim et al., 2021; Lawson et al., 2024; Bhatla et al., 2024; Bridgwater et al., 2024; Dupasquier et al., 2025; Maine, Hardy, and Wells, 2025
[385] Scheim et al., 2021; Lawson et al., 2024; Bhatla et al., 2024; Bridgwater et al., 2024; Dupasquier et al., 2025; Maine, Hardy, and Wells, 2025
[386] How to Access Gender Affirming Care – Government of Canada, 2024
[387] Ashley, 2019a; Ashley, 2019b; Ashley, 2020; Slothouber, 2020; Ehrensaft et al., 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Blais et al., 2022; Horton et al., 2024

Another interesting phenomenon that has become a central talking point in recent years is ROGD,[388] a condition characterized by children – who had not previously demonstrated any gender dysphoria/incongruence – suddenly expressing a trans identity. Lisa Littman's 2018 study interviewed respondents, parents of children in online groups who were uncertain/unsupportive of their children's transition. The apparent suddenness with which a trans self-identity was expressed by these children led Littman to consider that ROGD may be at play. The 'social contagion' aspect of ROGD also highlights the perception of this condition as a 'trend' among the youth. The study has since garnered criticism in its sampling methods and the legitimacy of its conclusions,[389] but ROGD has become a strong preoccupation for anti-trans actors regardless. ROGD is currently understudied and is inconclusively proven as a medical condition,[390] let alone one with clear diagnostic criteria and/or well-defined treatment plans. However, medical professionals, academics, and/or the parents of children who (allegedly) express ROGD claim that social media and widespread exposure to transness/trans identity online had led to a 'social contagion'.[391] This, too, is an understudied phenomenon currently[392] – transness 'spreading' by way of social exposure and/or peer pressure would be a challenging phenomenon to conclusively prove via empirical means. However, its mere potentiality as a 'disruptive' force to (cisheteronormative) childhood development and eventual (cisheteronormative) reproductive capabilities and self-identification seems to be a powerful preoccupation. The 'virality' of transness[393] among children and youth via social media is a recent phenomenon that, prior to Littman's 2018 study, I could not find much about in the way of evidence. While the newness of this phenomenon does not necessarily indicate that it is false, the totality of current medical knowledge on transness[394] do not show strong evidence for the phenomenon described in Littman's study.[395] Whether ROGD can be proven to exist with its own diagnostic criteria, or whether it is debunked as scientifically unsound, its coinage at a critical period of burgeoning trans-hostility has led to this concept proliferating at astonishing rates.

Another topic that has exploded within the literature in recent years is detransition. Detransition[396] can be defined as "the process of stopping, reversing, or changing one's previous transition process".[397] The most widely discussed form of detransition is when an individual who 'returned' to their self-identifying with their gender assigned at birth after a period of self-

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[388] Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Ashley, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

[389] Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

[390] Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

[391] Shalizi and Thomas, 2011

[392] Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

[393] Shalizi and Thomas, 2011; Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

[394] Coleman et al., 2022; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Rissman and Lynch, 2023; Lawson et al., 2024; MacKinnon, 2023; MacKinnon et al., 2023; Giordano et al., 2021

[395] Littman, 2018; Littman, 2019; Restar, 2020; Bauer et al., 2022; Diaz and Bailey, 2023; Kulatunga-Moruzi, 2023; Turban et al., 2023

[396] MacKinnon, 2023; MacKinnon et al., 2023; Giordano et al., 2021

[397] Kinney, 2025, p. 61

identifying as trans. Detransition is an emerging and complex[398] topic for which medical guidelines and treatment plans have not yet been standardized. Indeed, a growing number of detransitioners report that, while they may cease in gender affirmative care such as hormone treatments, this does not necessarily indicate a 'return' to a cisgender self-identity.[399] I have observed a burgeoning preoccupation with detransition from among anti-trans actors, particularly the relationship between detransition and womanhood/femininity.[400] Women detransitioners (individuals who self-identify as women after a period of gender exploration and/or trans self-identification) occupy a complicated space in the bioessentialist landscape of anti-trans discourse. Womanhood that is defined by the body's ability to give birth is reified as a 'biological fact'. By framing detransitioners who have had their uteruses removed to mitigate gender dysphoria as 'victims', for example, these women were portrayed as being exploited by immense social pressures and medical malpractice. Their 'markers' of womanhood were removed, creating sociopolitical anxieties around the reproductive capabilities of (white, cisgender) women's bodies. And yet their 'return' to their cisheteronormative 'destinies' (as pre-ordained by the 'inherent' sexing/gendering of the human body)[401] serves as proof that trans identify is an aberration from a natural 'order/truth' that undergirds our biological processes. By this logic, trans identity can therefore be prevented and/or denied until cessation occurs.

Another medical/biological argument that has gained traction in recent years is the denial of trans women's participation in sport on biologically essentializing grounds. These arguments claim that trans women may undergo any number of medical procedures and hormone treatments, but, even when they 'pass' as cisgender, their 'inherent maleness' cannot be altered.[402] Critically, this argument hinges on the idea that men and women are biologically distinct, and that men are inherently more athletic than women.[403] This is especially obvious in the recent shift in how women's sports are managed, both nationally and internationally. In 2020, the World Rugby Union banned trans women who underwent "male puberty" from women's contact rugby in World Rugby-sanctioned competitions.[404] Other international sports governing bodies have since followed suit,[405] ruling that trans women must undergo feminizing puberty using cross-sex hormones to be allowed to participate in the women's category. In Canada, Alberta is currently the only province that has mandated a similar ban: the *Fairness and Safety in*

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[398] Hildebrand-Chupp, 2020; MacKinnon, 2023; MacKinnon et al., 2023; Giordano et al., 2021; MacKinnon and Expósito-Campos, 2023; Vandenbussche, 2022; Janssen, 2021; Giedinghagen, 2022; Hildebrand-Chupp, 2020; Banner and Janssen, 2023

[399] Hildebrand-Chupp, 2020; MacKinnon, 2023; MacKinnon et al., 2023; Giordano et al., 2021; MacKinnon and Expósito-Campos, 2023; Vandenbussche, 2022; Janssen, 2021; Giedinghagen, 2022; Hildebrand-Chupp, 2020; Banner and Janssen, 2023

[400] Hildebrand-Chupp, 2020; Janssen, 2021; MacKinnon, 2023; MacKinnon et al., 2023; Giordano et al., 2021; Jorgensen, 2023; Jorgensen et al., 2024; Rackliff et al., 2025

[401] Hildebrand-Chupp, 2020; Janssen, 2021; MacKinnon, 2023; MacKinnon et al., 2023; Giordano et al., 2021; Jorgensen, 2023; Jorgensen et al., 2024; Rackliff et al., 2025

[402] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025

[403] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

[404] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025

[405] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025

Sport Act requires eligibility rules that limit women-only divisions to 'biological females'.[406] The ban came into effect September 1st, 2025. The sex-based divide of sport has long been criticized by athletics scholars and kinesiology scholars,[407] especially as scientific knowledge about the human body has revealed the ambiguity of 'biological sex'.[408] Current scientific frameworks categorize humans as a sexually bimodal species;[409] hormones, chromosomes, and reproductive organs[410] typically exist along bell curve-like continuums of what have traditionally been considered 'male' or 'female'.[411] However, great genetic diversity exists: factoring in chromosomal makeup, ranges of hormonal levels, and/or vast the differences in phenotypical (physical) appearances makes definitive categorization of biological sex challenging at best. Moreover, scholars have criticized these rulings as enforcing white supremacist traditional markers of masculinity and femininity.[412] Black athletes have long been considered hypermasculine in comparison to their white peers. One example is Caster Semenya,[413] a medal-winning Black South African track star. She was forced to submit to "genetic, gynecological, phycological, and endocrine 'gender verification'"[414] tests to determine her eligibility to compete as a woman in the World Championships. She was rejected from participating when the genetic and endocrinal testing revealed that she was intersex. Hers is one of many stories of international sports bodies interrogating the human body along binary, racialized, and/or able-bodied expressions to maintain rigid and mutually exclusive gender categories.

A3.3.3: Trans Studies, Disability Studies Conclusions

The intersection between disability studies and trans studies is a growing crossroads of theorization and organizing. This sub-section analyzed the medical and social models of disability, discussing their merits and shortcomings. They were also discussed in relation to trans/disabled lived experiences. Trans studies as a discipline has often neglected to examine the potentially disabling, impairing, and/or debilitating processes of medical transition, invisibilizing these experiences. Likewise, disability studies has often failed to consider trans experiences in general, reifying cisnormative and cisgenderist assumptions about the mind/body. The intersection of these disciplines is a fruitful matrix of theorizing and knowledge generation. The composite model of disability, which was discussed in detail, critiques ableist frameworks of trans studies and the cisnormative/cisgenderist presumptions in disability studies. It examines trans/disabled lived experience while considering both medical *and* social forces, including opening theoretical 'space' to discuss trans suffering. It encourages alliances between these two disciplines.

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[406] Fairness and Safety in Sport Act, 2024, 2024
[407] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025
[408] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025
[409] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025
[410] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025
[411] Teetzel, 2020; Parks Pieper, 2022; Cleland et al., 2022; Fischer, 2023; Greey and Lenskyj, 2023; Travers, 2024; Jakubowska; 2024; Barras, 2025
[412] Rippon, 2019; Orr, 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Arraiza Zabalegui, 2024
[413] Haefele-Thomas, 2019, p. 184
[414] Haefele-Thomas, 2019, p. 184

This sub-section of the 'high theory' literature review also contained a brief summary of the medical histories of trans healthcare from the 1880s into the current day. This section revealed how medicalized models have shifted over time, from treating transness as a 'psychosexual disorder' to a complex socio-medical phenomenon with many paths of potential treatment. The last sub-section analyzed contemporary anti-trans medical discourses. These included gender affirmative care, surgical intervention, puberty blockers, HRT, ROGD, 'watchful waiting', detransition, and trans women in sport. Analyzing the intersection of trans studies and disability studies is an important intervention for interweaving social and medical paradigms together to create holistic frameworks for discussing, critiquing, and investigating anti-trans discourses with nuance and care.

A3.4: Transfeminism

The next theoretical framework is an operationalized definition of transfeminism. Transfeminism focuses on the concept of 'gender' in a broad sense; it takes up feminist concerns and considerations with a distinct focus on trans identity, trans ways of being/knowing, and the structural barriers trans people face. There are many approaches to utilizing transfeminist thought, and much of the literature takes a deliberately politicized stance against the sex/gender binary as a violent systemic institution of power that enforce white, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, Western cultural norms and hegemonic frameworks.

In this sub-section, the shift from what Bettcher[415] terms the 'Wrong Body Account' to the 'Beyond the Binary Account' of sex and gender in trans studies will be discussed. The next sub-sections discuss lesbian separatism and TERF/'gender-critical' feminist paradigms. Finally, important transfeminist scholars and their works were synthesized and operationalized as a framework for analyzing and discussing the qualitative results of the dissertation.

A3.4.1: Sex, Gender and Trans Paradigms

Part 1: The 'Wrong Body Account'

Transfeminist theory has emerged from various feminist schools of thought that discuss trans peoples' place within feminism. However, trans studies and feminists have had (and continue to have) fraught shared histories. Part of this ongoing tension is due to the debates pertaining to the theoretical and scientific classifications of sex, gender, and womanhood. Early trans theorizations on the body subscribed to a medicalized paradigm of transness, or the "Wrong Body Account".[416] This account was grounded in the premise that gender dysphoria was the defining trait of transness, and that gender dysphoria was an incongruence between one's gender identity and one's biological sex. Moreover, this paradigm stated that gender identity was innate to the individual at an early age, and the 'innateness' of this gender identity validated trans claims to that gender,[417] which guided the discourse around 'treatment' of gender dysphoria.[418] Articles published during that time argued that "transsexualism"[419] was impossible to alter through psychiatric treatment. These articles claimed that these individuals' inner sense of gender was therefore immutable, and that the only course of ethical treatment was to permit hormone therapy and surgical intervention. They also argued against laws that prevented such

[415] Bettcher, 2025
[416] Bettcher, 2025
[417] Hausman, 1995; Prosser, 1998
[418] Benjamin, 1953
[419] Benjamin, 1953

medical procedures, as well as anti-crossdressing laws, in favour of legal protections for individuals suffering from these 'conditions'. This paradigm gave rise to the language of 'being trapped in the wrong body'.

Treatment plans for transsexuals continued to shift in North America in the 1960s. The 'Wrong Body Account' was the prevailing medical paradigm for diagnosing transsexuality at the time. In 1966, Harry Benjamin had published his landmark book, *The Transsexual Phenomenon,*[420] which further framed transsexualism not as a psychological issue but as a somatic disorder, grounding transsexuality within the very cells of the body, and thus inherent. He argued that the only course of treatment was therefore to medically and hormonally alter the body to close the gap of incongruence. In that same year, the Johns Hopkins University program for sex- reassignment surgery, headed by John Money, opened in the US.[421] When the Johns Hopkins program closed in 1979, the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association was formed and became the world leader for approved, evidence-based, standardized criteria for the treatment of transsexuals (and now, trans, transgender, nonbinary, and/or gender-variant people as WPATH).[422] In Canada, the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry was also founded in 1979,[423] which would also serve the province in providing gender affirmative care. These institutions began a period of large, university-based gender identity clinics, many of which still exist today in some iteration (the Clarke Institute is now part of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, or CAMH. It is one of the largest gender identity clinics in Ontario).[424] These institutions further solidified the psychological and medical criteria developed to classify and 'treat' transsexualism. 'Transsexualism' was added to the Diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) III – the same year that 'homosexuality' was removed. (Later, in 2000, transsexualism was replaced by 'gender identity disorder' in the DSM-IV and was again replaced with 'gender dysphoria' in the DSM-V, which was published in 2013).[425] Research into transsexualism during this period began to differentiate between a 'gender role' (which was still viewed as grounded in biology) and one's environment, which solidified this role at a young age; or, in the case of transsexuals, led to disharmony.[426] The term 'gender identity' further separated the notion of a social role from one's psychological and reflexive sense of self.[427]

In the midst of this paradigm's hegemonic popularity, feminist scholarship also discussed this framework and how it applied to trans experiences. Susan Stryker's essay, *My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix*[428] discussed this conceptualization of transness within a 'biological sex' framework and how transness was viewed as 'abject' and 'monstrous' for its biomedical 'perversions of nature'. This essay challenged the notion of a 'natural order' (which is itself socially constructed to categorize and understand the world) and how the trans body could be hormonally and surgically constructed as a means of mapping identity into the flesh. Styker criticized 'the village' of doctors, legislators, and trans-exclusionary radical feminists as 'creators' and enforcers of this 'natural order', demanding to be

[420] Benjamin, 1966
[421] Meyerowtiz, 2002
[422] Bettcher, 2025; Coleman et al., 2022
[423] Archeion, n.d.
[424] DSM-V, 2013
[425] DSM-V, 2013; Bettcher, 2025
[426] Money, Hampson, and Hampson, 1957
[427] Stoller, 1964
[428] Stryker, 1994

acknowledged as an individual who constructed her own sex. Stryker also discussed 'transsexual rage' as a transformative tool for political agency; by refusing to comply with cisnormative and cisgenderist expectations about transsexual affect, Stryker argued that embracing this 'monstrous' rage created space in which transsexuals – already rejected from many avenues of normativity and recognition of their humanity – could construct ways of being beyond the cisheteronormative frameworks that labeled their bodies as 'monstrous' in the first place. This critical engagement with sex and gender as interrelated but distinct categories was a precursor to the paradigm shift from the Wrong Body Account to the Beyond the Binary Account of sex and gender.

Part 2: The 'Beyond the Binary Account'

In the 1980s and 1990s, a new theoretical framework of transness began to emerge, and would overtake the highly medicalized 'Wrong Body Account' paradigm. The new 'Beyond the Binary Account' was premised upon three suppositions. Firstly, that there was a form of gender-based oppression that was distinct from sexist oppression, and it usually targeted trans, intersex, and gender-variant people. Secondly, trans, intersex, and gender-variant people were "problematically situated with respect to the *gender binary*" (emphasis in original text).[429] Thirdly, these groups were oppressed and had to become visible to contest the presumptions of the sex/gender binary. This paradigm criticized the cultural sex/gender binary as problematic. It led to the popularization of the word 'transgender' as an umbrella term, meant to bring various groups of people (including transsexuals, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings, butches, gender-variant people, and more) together.[430] However, the utility of the umbrella term was predicated on unity against the oppressive forces that enacted violence against those who were 'non-normative' and transgressed the gender binary.

Part 3: Stone's The Empire Strikes Back

In the 1970s, lesbian separatist Janice Raymond targeted Sandy Stone. Stone is an openly transsexual woman who was employed at Olivia Records, an all-woman recording company. Raymond critiqued trans womanhood and Stone in particular in her 1979 work, *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male.*[431] Stone published a 1991 reply to Raymond in her seminal work, *The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto,*[432] which is widely considered to be a foundational text of trans studies.

In her work, Stone critiqued the medicalized paradigm of transsexuality characterized by works such as Benjamin's *The Transsexual Phenomenon*. She also critiqued anti-trans feminist attacks like Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire*. Stone posited that transsexuals were an oppressed minority, and that they occupied an unknown (or perhaps more appropriately, unknowable) position that existed outside of binary conceptualizations of sex and gender. Stone presented transsexuality as a type of discourse, by proposing that the medical paradigm of transsexuality was a specific 'way' of theorizing on sex and gender. Stone's work discussed how transsexuality and transsexuals have already been defined by others. She drew on a selection of autobiographies of transsexual women to critically engage their accounts of transitioning, noting

[429] Bettcher, 2025
[430] Stryker, 2017
[431] Raymond, 1979
[432] Stone, 1991

that Raymond's work did contain some worthy discussions insofar as it was concerned with transsexual women perpetuating sexist stereotypes to be in closer proximity to femininity. Notably, these stereotypes were present in the 'after' of transition, and the clear delineation between life 'before' surgery and 'after'. They often described the total 'disappearance' of any masculine traits, behaviours, and/or interests to reinforce this femininity. However, Stone pointed out that many transsexual women equally advocated for a more complex 'middle ground' between the dichotomous nature of the male/female binary to explore their identities and to discuss transition in a less ethereal, and more complex and material, manner. She also critiqued Raymond's work for its universalizing statements which denied transsexuality's existence. Stone therefore posited that more space was needed for the generation of discourse by transsexuals, for transsexuals. She described the complexities of the medical establishment cleaving to sexist stereotypes when accessing transsexual patients, as well as many transsexuals' tacit acceptance of the sex/gender binary. At the same time, she noted that transsexual sub-cultures have developed outside of these gendered expectations and often ran against 'official' accounts of transsexuality. The only solution to disrupting these hegemonic narratives was for transsexuals to tell their own stories. This would require that post-operative transsexuals 'come out' as such and forgo the possibility of 'passing' as non-transsexual. This call to forgo 'passing' as non-transexual was counter to the prevalent discourse of transsexuality; thus, Stone portrayed this political move as *post-transsexual,* arguing that many transsexuals were currently complicit in this discourse. This prevented authentic storytelling and a variety of lived experiences that were needed to diversify the hegemonic hold on definitions of transsexuality.

Part 4: Butler's Gender Trouble

Judith Butler's seminal work *Gender Trouble*[433] shaped conceptualizations of gender and sex that still influence the disciplines of gender studies, trans studies, and queer theory today. Butler argued that identity-based politics held limited usefulness, as it would lead to exclusionary practices and the reinforcement of normative definitions of who qualified as belonging to the 'in-group'. Their work addressed how non-heterosexual expressions of gender supposedly replicated traditional patriarchal norms. This approach, they argued, presupposed a heterosexual lens of gender which obscured how gender was (or could be) re-worked in queer contexts. They proposed that gendered practices did not carry the same meaning in subcultural queer contexts as they did in broader, mainstream, heterosexual ones. They argued that queer gender performance exposed heteronormative gendered practices by subverting them, thus exposing them as not 'biological' or 'natural', but as citational and imitative in nature.[434] Butler used gay male drag as an example, stating that feminine presentations 1) could be parodied and exaggerated, and 2) were not exclusive to women. These presentations and behaviours were assigned to groups, demonstrating that gay male drag derived its meaning and recognizability of their expressions as parodies *by* 'citing' feminine expressions of gender and behaviours.

Butler's work was pivotal in questioning the 'pre-existence' of 'women' as a group. Butler posited that biological sex, just like gender, was culturally constituted. The body was represented in ways that were shaped within, and by, culture and norms. 'Biological sex' cannot exist outside of the cultural discourse that articulates its existence. Within Western cultural hegemony, the body was portrayed as sexed and contained some immutable 'essence' that was gendered. Sex

[433] Butler, 1990
[434] Butler, 1990

was the physical expression of that gendered 'essence'; men were biologically male, and women were biologically female. Butler's work challenged this notion of an inherent gendered 'essence', which also challenged the notion of inherently 'feminine' or 'masculine' behaviour. Rather, the iterative practice of 'doing' one's gender generated (and maintained) the framework that bodies had 'pre-existing' genders that were expressed via corresponding sexes. These categories are neither inherent nor stable, and did not exist 'naturally' prior to the expression of gendered behaviour. Butler's work posited that all gendered behaviour was imitative in nature and derived its meaning from culturally constructed norms which are policed and reinforced.

Part 5: Critical Engagements with the 'Beyond the Binary' Paradigm

While the 'Beyond the Binary' model proliferated within trans studies, some scholars were notably skeptical of its positioning and concerned that it would not accurately capture the realities of transsexual people; especially those who did *not* identify as existing 'beyond the binary'.[435] The works of Viviane Namaste[436] and Jay Prosser,[437] for example, were critical of this model. Namaste's works centered on the lived experiences of transsexual people, especially transsexual women sex workers. Namaste was concerned with the legal, medical, social, and sexual barriers transsexual women sex workers experienced, as well as the linguistic marginalization of francophone transsexuals in anglophone Canada. Namaste heavily critiqued the 'transgendered umbrella' for seemingly co-opting and subsuming transsexuality within itself regardless of compatibility, while also erasing transsexual experiences from view. This, she argued, obscured the immediate and real-life challenges these groups experienced whilst 'the academy' theorized about their existence and experiences. In that vein, Namaste critiqued Butler's work, arguing that while 'gender performance' as a concept may have some usefulness, Butler's use of drag was a poor entryway into discussing *gender* as a discursive category. As she stated, "The relegation of drag queens to the stage is a supplementary move that excludes transgendered people even as it includes us. Appropriate objects to look at, we are not subjects alongside whom one marches".[438] Namaste was concerned with the disappearance of binary, post-operative, transsexual people from their own narratives in an effort to move away from the pathology-heavy 'Wrong Body Account' of the preceding decades.

Prosser's work[439] also attempted to foreground a biomedical, binary, and transsexual focus in the face of a rapidly shifting academic, political, and theoretical landscape. Prosser described how the skin was 'the barrier' and therefore the "key interface"[440] between the Self and Other. He described physical transition as a liminal existence, wherein the skin was (re)shaped by hormonal and surgical intervention. In describing transsexual autobiographies detailing transitioning as a 'homecoming' to the body and finally *settling* into one's skin, Prosser expanded upon this 'biological transsexuality' in an age of rapid paradigm shifts. However, his account still portrayed much of this experience as linear, despite the complexities and potentially life-long maintenance associated with medical transition.

These distinctions between binary, post-operative transsexual experiences and the 'transgender umbrella' continued to reveal cracks and mismatches of political imagining. From

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[435] Bettcher, 2014; Bettcher, 2025
[436] Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005
[437] Prosser, 1998
[438] Namaste, 2000, p. 11
[439] Prosser, 1998
[440] Prosser, 1998, p. 65

the 2000s into the early 2010s, many youth were self-identifying with labels that captured gendered experiences 'beyond the binary', such as nonbinary, genderqueer, agender, and more.[441] These experiences were also not necessarily predicated on seeking hormone therapy and/or surgical intervention. This was around the time when the term 'trans*' emerged, motivated by the erasure of gender-variant people from transgender politics.[442] This growing movement necessitated new and constantly updating theories to capture the academic, political, and creative work that was happening. The term 'transgender' (and later, 'trans') captured a broader and more holistic approach to gender, with an emphasis on gender variation beyond the binary. In this climate of decades of rapid change, transfeminism – as well as trans-critical and trans-exclusionary feminist schools of thought – were developing.

A3.4.2: Lesbian Separatism, TERFs, and 'Gender-Critical Feminism'

Part 1: Lesbian Separatism

Lesbian Separatism is a variation of radical feminism that conceptualizes patriarchal power dynamics, institutions, and cultural hegemony as the source of women's oppression. They therefore advocated for a drastic restructuring of society to dismantle women's oppression.

While some radical feminist thinkers have supported transfeminist perspectives,[443] lesbian separatist movements have expressed hostility toward trans women. Lesbian separatism emerged from responses to mainstream feminism for its lesbophobia. These radical feminists argued that lesbophobic hostilities detracted from feminism's mission to address and dismantle sexism. They posited that heterosexist expectations of women having heterosexual relations with men and defining their self-identities in relation to men – their oppressors – kept them subjugated.[444] It was therefore critical for lesbian separatists to develop new self-identities beyond this sexist framework and to generate support for women's liberation; and thus, breaking away from having relationships with men.

Lesbian separatism and trans feminist theory came to be fundamentally in contention with one another. The 'Wrong Body Account' stated that gender was innate and fixed at a young age. Thus, trans women 'could not help' but be women. However, lesbian separatist radical feminist thought posited that gender roles were a product of patriarchal socialization. By choosing to become 'woman-identified', one politically chose to de-centralize men and center women. If gender was not 'fixed', then this challenged the lived experience of trans women, who were 'socialized' as boys and men and choosing to center sexist caricatures of womanhood.[445] One of the most eminent works of lesbian separatist scholarly work that exemplified this perspective was Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire.*

Part 2: Raymond's The Transsexual Empire

Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male*[446] was an important contribution to the lesbian separatist perspective on trans womanhood. Raymond argued that gender identity clinics were methods of solidifying sexist gender roles. She posited that

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[441] Bettcher, 2025
[442] Bettcher, 2025
[443] Dworkin, 1974; MacKinnon, 2023
[444] Bettcher, 2025
[445] Elliott, 1973
[446] Raymond, 1979

transsexuality was the 'cause' of a sexist society. The gender identity clinics turned 'men' into women and vice versa when these individuals could not be successfully molded to fulfill their biological sex roles. Raymond viewed surgical intervention as a violation of the body and called for all gender identity clinics to be shut down. She advocated against sexist oppression through educational initiatives as an alternative.[447]

Raymond named her work *The Transsexual Empire* to criticize what she viewed as a patriarchal medical establishment that perpetuated sexist oppression through surgical intervention. The medical 'empire', she claimed, was also in league with the fields of psychology and psychiatry to manufacture the need for medical intervention for transsexuals. Raymond rejected trans claims of self-identity by arguing that womanhood was determined by chromosomes and the individual's history with an assigned sex role. However, this theoretical framework strained under the realities of chromosomal variation and the conditions under which one is determined to be definitively 'socialized' into an assigned sex role. Many chromosomal variations exist; individuals born with Complete Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome have XY chromosomes but are usually socialized as women due to the external appearance of their genitalia, for example.[448] Raymond herself admitted that someone without XX chromosomes, but who was socialized as a woman, would be "practically a woman".[449] However, she later reframed this argument around bodily experiences that were likely to occur to someone with XX chromosomes (namely, menstruation and childbirth).[450] As for the second central argument, it centered on the idea that 'woman' was a term that could be reclaimed from sexist oppression. This was based in lived experience; if one had not experienced sexist oppression, then self-identifying with the term would be appropriative. However, trans women do indeed experience sexist oppression, and many trans women transition when they are young as well, meaning they have ample time to experience 'female socialization'. Additionally, the term 'woman' can be weaponized; it can be utilized to exclude Black women from womanhood and prop up white womanhood as racially superior, or it can reify heteronormative perceptions of femininity, which marginalizes queer and gender non-conforming women. If the term can be reclaimed in relation to multiple matrices of oppression *and* power, then it can also be claimed and utilized in the oppression of trans women.

A central component of Raymond's position is that any oppression that trans people might face was merely a side-effect of sexist oppression. Raymond therefore did not address trans-specific forms of oppression. For example, sympathetic medical professionals have often struggled to provide surgical and hormonal services to trans people, which Raymond did not discuss exhaustively in her work.[451] Far from gaining instant approval from the patriarchal medical establishment, advocates for transsexual surgeries were few, and often experienced hostility and marginalization themselves. The transsexual 'empire' was neither as monolithic nor as far-reaching as Raymond's account would suggest

Raymond expressed hostility toward trans people in this book. Her accounts of transness were homogenous and stereotypical, precluding any possibility of a plethora of lived experiences of trans people. She infamously wrote of trans women: "All transsexuals rape women's bodies by reducing the real female form to an artifact, appropriating this body for themselves. However,

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[447] Raymond, 1979
[448] Hughes and Deeb, 2006
[449] Raymond, 1979, p. 115
[450] Raymond, 1994
[451] Riddell, 2006

the transsexually constructed lesbian-feminist violates women's sexuality and spirit, as well. Rape, although it is usually done by force, can also be accomplished by deception".[452] She accused trans women of surreptitiously infiltrating (cisgender) women's spaces to rape them via deception by not disclosing their post-operative transsexual status. This placed the onus of disclosure onto trans women. It also presumed that all women were cisgender unless either discovered and/or revealed to be otherwise, thus reinforcing cisnormative and cisgenderist cultural norms regarding sex and gender, and indicated that if trans women did not disclose, then they were causing harm to others. This perspective did not account for the very real danger trans women may face, should they disclose their identities to individuals or groups who proved to be hostile. Moreover, Raymond's theory also viewed transsexuality as an essentially 'male' (i.e., assigned men at birth) experience, and thus minimally engaged with transsexual men in a critical manner. She tokenized transsexual men as 'props' to make transsexuality seem like a 'universal' experience across 'both sexes' to obscure its patriarchal nature and goals. While her work is seminal for lesbian separatist/TERF theory, her work leaves much to be desired from the perspective of scholarly rigour and nuance.

Part 3: TERFs and 'Gender-Critical' Feminism

'Gender-critical' feminism is a school of feminist thought that is centered on sex-based oppression as the source of women's subjugation. Stemming from earlier lesbian separatist movements, this framework posits that a focus on 'gender' detracts from the importance of feminist mobilization centered on sex-based oppression. It also portrays any gender-based oppression is a 'side effect' of sex-based violence. This form of feminism therefore generally rejects trans self-identity claims. 'Gender-critical' feminism owes much of its literature and theory to trans-exclusionary radical feminism.

'Trans-exclusionary radical feminist' was a self-description that was popularized in 2008 by an online cisgender feminist community.[453] TERFs, grounded in radical feminist thought, asserted that 'biological sex' was fixed and immutable, and that female socialization was the unifying force that defined womanhood. Academically speaking, the term TERF has been useful in distinguishing trans-exclusionary feminist theory and activism from other radical feminists who were open to trans women, such as Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon. However, in the early 2010s, the term began to be viewed as offensive, which lead to the "TERF is a slur" campaign to discourage its use.[454] This led to a shift toward the preferred term, 'gender-critical' feminist. The term 'TERF' is still discussed in academic spaces and used both by radical feminists who self-identify as such and others discussing this form of feminism.

'Gender-critical' feminism has coalesced into a growing movement, exemplified by the public statement *Forbidden Discourse: The Silencing of Feminist Criticism of Gender.*[455] It was signed by several prominent radical feminists, whose main conceit was to protest what they perceived as the unjust censorship of radical feminist critiques of trans politics of gender. Notably, the group conflated a trans-critical framework with feminism itself, and centered excluding trans women from feminist spaces to focus on sex-based oppression as a primary concern. During this time, some radical feminist contributions, such as Sheila Jeffreys's *Gender*

[452] Raymond, 1979, p. 104
[453] Williams, 2021
[454] Williams, 2021
[455] Hanisch et al., 2013

Hurts,[456] continued these arguments in the same vein as Raymond's seminal work. Jeffreys' work is notable, however, for discussing trans men in greater detail than Raymond. She argued that 'female' transition into manhood was motivated by a desire to 'escape' patriarchal abuse and the dehumanizing restrictions of womanhood – thus reinforcing both the sex-based 'truths' of men and women and providing an explanation as to the existence of trans men not as genuine men, but as victims of a patriarchal society seeking relief. Abigail Shrier's *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*[457] names the rates of medical transition as a 'transgender craze' of 'biological women' seeking gender affirmative care. Her work presented interviews with trans people (whom she labelled as 'girls'), the parents of children and youth seeking gender affirmative care, medical professionals who facilitate and provide gender affirmative care, and detransitioners, whose narratives were characterized by regret and unhappiness. These works exemplified 'gender-critical' feminism's theoretical workings that were structured around a 'biological sex' paradigm, and who characterize the oppression women face as universal and entirely sex-based.

'Gender-critical' feminism has proliferated in popularity and gained significant political momentum in recent years. The UK is noteworthy for its especially vocal 'gender-critical' feminist movement. These feminists were essential in defeating a proposition to update the Gender Recognition Act[458] that would have made gender dysphoria a self-identified medical diagnosis, instead of requiring a Gender Recognition Certificate from a medical professional.

'Gender-critical' feminism often reifies white supremacist, colonialist, imperialist, racist, and trans/queerphobic power relations. Butler's book, *Who's Afraid of Gender?*[459] describes the transnational rise of anti-trans discourse and critically analyzes its origins, its theoretical foundations, and the work that it does to maintain and restabilize the sex/gender binary.[460] They discuss how 'gender-critical' feminism from the UK has influenced global anti-trans feminist discourse. These groups – often working with or in alignment with right-wing organizations – purport that sex is the unchanging determinant of oppression, and thus view 'gender ideology', 'genderism', and/or 'wokeism' as a direct attack on the rights of 'biological women'.[461] The UK 'gender-critical' movement is part of a long tradition of British feminism that enforces colonial imperialist hegemony through the insistence that the gender binary is 'real' and 'biological', and which serves to maintain heteronormative and colonial domination over colonized populations.[462] The racism of this movement therefore reinforces 'gender-critical' ideology, which positions (white) women as in need of protection from men.[463] Pearce, Erikanen, and Vincent[464] discussed how the sex/gender binary was reinforced by these discourses and

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[456] Jeffrys, 2014
[457] Shrier, 2020
[458] Gender Recognition Act, 2004
[459] Butler, 2024
[460] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024
[461] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024
[462] Butler, 2024
[463] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024
[464] Pearce, Erikanen, and Vincent, 2020

necessitated 'evidence' as to the supposed material differences between men and women, as well as racial divides between white and non-white bodies, to justify these protectionist policies. It was for this reason that public washrooms were often contentious sites of gendered dynamics and anti-trans discourse; if sex is inherently binary and gendered, then the presence of a 'biologically male' individual in a 'female-only space' removes the safety of single-sex spaces designated for women's protection from men.[465] Many non-white bodies are viewed as inherently more masculine than white ones[466] due to racist colonial legacies.[467] Non-white women's bodies are therefore 'suspect' as to their sexed/gendered nature, as they deviate from (white, Western) gender norms.[468] Ironically, white women's association with (and ability to lay claim to) vulnerability is an exertion of whiteness; the biopolitical[469] mechanisms of the state can be evoked for the protection of white women's bodies (and sexual currency) against a masculine, non-white, 'infiltrator'/'perpetrator'/'threat'.[470]

In the Canadian context, JusticeTrans[471] also noted a backlash against the increasingly affirmative media coverage of trans youth's experiences, identities, and needs.[472] Bolstered by a growing right-wing/socially conservative backlash – including US President Donald Trump's administration embracing cisnormative, cisgenderist, and transphobic policies and stances[473] – the Canadian right has also begun to disseminate/produce strategic works campaigning against trans rights.[474] Foreign/international forces have also launched campaigns to disseminate disruptive news within Canada,[475] further inflaming political tensions and heightening cultural anxieties surrounding sex and gender in Canadian culture. By positioning the doctrine of 'complementarity of the sexes'[476] as natural, and transness as unnatural, both TERFs/'gender-critical' feminists and right-wing/socially conservative actors can reinforce bioessentialist discourses that align with their philosophies and political goals.

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[465] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024

[466] Maynard, 2017; Haefele-Thomas, 2019

[467] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024

[468] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024

[469] Foucault, 1978; Foucault, 1983; Mbembe, 2003; Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco, 2014

[470] Maynard, 2017; Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024

[471] JusticeTrans, 2024

[472] JusticeTrans, 2024

[473] Montigny, 2025

[474] Montigny, 2025

[475] Christ and De Abreu, 2020

[476] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024

Part 4: The Racist Project of 'Gender-Critical' Feminism

Given Canada's history as a nation built upon the genocide, enslavement, and forced displacement of Black and Indigenous groups,[477] the nation-state has always had a vested interested in the management of race, gender, and sexuality to justify Western hegemonic cultural superiority. The Indian Act disrupted Indigenous cultural norms and ways of knowing by imposing patriarchal, patrilineal, and binary gendered and sexual Western cultural norms onto Indigenous peoples through institutionally sanctioned violence.[478] The Act made engaging in traditional forms of Indigenous governance and culture illegal, as well as banning important traditions and ceremonies such as powwows and potlatches.[479] It also restructured traditional band councils and did not recognize hereditary chiefs. This Act legally enforced 'Indian status,'[480] thus positioning itself as the sole legal determinant of Indigenous identity. Indigenous men, their children, and their wives were granted 'Indian status'; Indigenous women who married white men were no longer considered to be Indigenous; thus, Indigenous peoples were culturally divided from one another. This created a legislative and cultural mechanism whereby eventual Indigenous cultural assimilation into whiteness was the desired outcome.[481] Part of this assimilation was the violently and institutionally enforced cisheteropatriarchal gender roles and sexual roles of Western cultural hegemony that were forced upon Indigenous populations. This centuries-long suppression of what would be considered 'non-normative' included expressions of gender and sexuality (by Western hegemonic cultural standards).[482] This has led to a breakdown of cultural knowledge, which is being reclaimed in contemporary efforts to re-introduce culturally grounded terminology, lived experiences, and language back into Indigenous cultures. The contemporary umbrella term Two-Spirit[483] was introduced in the 1990s to capture a reclamation of these histories of Indigenous gender variance and cultural significance.

Black people in Canada have also lived through fraught histories and their ongoing legacies. Prior to Confederation in 1867, New France, Upper Canada, and Nova Scotia were all transatlantic slave trade hubs wherein Black people were sold as chattel.[484] Black women's bodies were considered the property of white slave masters, who could forcibly impregnate Black women's bodies to 'create more slaves'. Black men and women were both utilized for manual labour. The British Empire declared slavery illegal in 1834, thus making it illegal in the pre-Confederation colonies as well.[485] However, Black people were still subjugated. In light of the abolishment of slavery, programs were designed to segregate Black people geographically, educationally, and culturally from white populations. Black bodies were sites of white moral panic in pre- and post-Confederation Canada; they were representative of a 'wild, primitive' cognitive state, aggressive sexuality, and moral inferiority.[486] Anxieties surrounding the maintenance of the 'purity' of the white race were expressed in lynchings, anti-miscegenation laws, eugenics, forced sterilization of Black people to prevent reproduction, and more. As

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[477] Driskill et al., 2011; Simpson, 2017; Maynard, 2017
[478] Maxwell, 2025
[479] Indian Act – Canadian Encyclopedia, 2006
[480] Indian Act – Canadian Encyclopedia, 2006
[481] Driskill et al., 2011
[482] Lugones, 2008
[483] Driskill et al., 2011
[484] Maynard, 2017
[485] Maynard, 2017
[486] Maynard, 2017; Hall, 1997

Snorton discussed in his work, *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity,*[487] Blackness and transness are both processes whereby bodies are considered 'un-gendered' by medical, cultural, social, and racial standards. He says, of transness and Blackness: "… the perception that "race" and "gender" are fixed and knowable terms is the dominant logic of identity … "trans" is more about a movement with no clear origin and no point of arrival, and "blackness" signifies upon an enveloping environment and condition of possibility. Here, trans—in each of its permutations—finds expression and continuous circulation within blackness, and blackness is transected by embodied procedures that fall under the sign of gender".[488] Snorton described how the institutionalized enslavement of Black people destabilized white Western hegemonic sex/gender categories, as Black bodies were sites of othered sexual, gendered, and racialized potential for white Western hegemonic cultural conceptualizations of humanity. Blackness and gender variance were surveilled and policed to reify the biological, social, economic, cultural, religious, and national superiority of white masculine cultural hegemony.[489] Black gender variance and/or gender non-conformity to white standards of sex/gender[490] was routinely punished and met with structural, communal, and interpersonal violence. Transness as gender variance, Snorton argues, emerged from the codification of sex, gender, and race during the transatlantic slave trade period.[491] Blackness and transness are intertwined as intersecting points of sociocultural and political tension to regulate 'unruly' bodies to perfectly meet Western cultural hegemonic frameworks. Black people were also portrayed as sub-human and androgynous, which reinforced stereotypes of Black bodies as 'primitive'. The portrayal of Black men as sexually violent and aggressive – especially toward white women – cast their bodies as sources of violence in potentia; logics which are still employed to justify the over-policing of Black populations in Canada to this day. Black women were similarly portrayed as sexually licentious, but also as masculine compared to white women – and therefore dehumanized and hypersexualized. The sex/gender binary is not only a sexed/gendered project, but a racialized one as well. 'Gender-critical' feminism essentializes 'sex' as a universal experience according to white, Western cultural hegemonic social constructions. The insistence that all bodies conform to this standard perpetuates Western cultures' history of institutionalized racism that has dehumanized Black and Indigenous bodies as 'sub-human' and/or 'non-human'.

A3.4.3: Transfeminism and Transfeminist Theory

Part 1: Transfeminist Theory: Foundations

This part will examine some of the earliest contributions to the discipline of transfeminism and synthesize the main arguments, strengths, and shortcomings.

Emi Koyama's work, *The Transfeminist Manifesto,* was published in the early 2000s. This manifesto was one of the earliest texts to name 'transfeminism'. She characterized transfeminism as "primarily a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be intrinsically linked to the liberation of all women and beyond".[492] Koyama positioned trans oppression as intersecting with sexism and other forms of oppression, such as racism, classism, and queerphobia. This manifesto posited that the sex/gender binary was socially constructed and

[487] Snorton, 2017
[488] Snorton, 2017, p. 2
[489] Cattien, 2023
[490] Snorton, 2017
[491] Snorton, 2017
[492] Koyama, 2000, p. 1

must be critiqued for limiting gender variance. Her manifesto called for self-actualization and exploration of the self beyond rigid sexed/gendered expectations. She also discussed the importance of forming coalitions of power and solidarity with racialized, gender nonconforming, transmasculine, queer, and other groups to realize gender self-determination and bodily self-actualization for all.[493] Koyama theorized about not only gender being socially constructed, but sex as well. She argued that the sex/gender binary framework interfaced with other forms of power relations to enforce systems of oppression.[494] She called for post-operative trans women to stand in solidarity with 'everyone else', critiquing trans women who intentionally distanced themselves from other trans people and/or who embodied sexist stereotypes to improve their chances of 'passing'.

However, Koyama's work is not without some theoretical shortcomings. As Awkward-Rich[495] articulated, her work delineated a transfeminism that focused on male-to-female (MTF) trans people. In her own words, Koyama acknowledged (but did not expand upon) these limitations for transfeminism's inclusion of trans men. Awkward-Rich argued that trans men could also face sexist oppression and coercive socialization in girlhood as children and could be subject to gendered violence even after transition when misgendered and/or mistaken for women. Therefore, trans men should be centered in discussions of transfeminism, as they are "subjects of feminist concern, despite the fact that they are not women".[496] Awkward-Rich suggested that Koyama's model of transfeminism may therefore replicate other models of intersectional feminism but did not deeply engage with trans men's place within transfeminism or the role of masculinity within its framework.

Another important and influential work came from Julia Serano in her 2007 book, *Whipping Girl.*[497] Serano's work discussed how transition impacted the physical body as well as discussing the 'biological sex' paradigm. She argued that the sex/gender binary was too restrictive, and a greater freedom of exploration was necessary to allow one to discover their own 'innate sense of sex'. Serano's work was also notable as it moved beyond focusing on the trans individual and situated transness as an oppressive experience in a framework of cisgender privilege. She described the advantages of cisgender people and the privileges they were afforded. She also described sexism along two axes, "oppositional sexism"[498] and "traditional sexism".[499] She defined these terms as: the belief that men and women are mutually exclusive and categorically different from one another; and the belief that masculinity/maleness is inherently superior to femininity/femaleness, respectively. She also coined the term "transmisogyny"[500] in this work. She defined transmisogyny as the intersection between misogynistic and transphobic violence. This term captured the unique forms of discrimination trans women experience superficially. These definitions of sexism and transmisogyny have since been taken up by many transfeminists.

Serano's work, however, does tend to center her own lived experience as an entryway into her theoretical examinations of trans womanhood and transmisogyny. It attempts to bring the 'Wrong Body Account' into harmony with the 'Beyond the Binary Account' but does so by

[493] Koyama, 2000
[494] Koyama, 2000
[495] Awkward-Rich, 2017
[496] Bettcher, 2025
[497] Serano, 2007
[498] Serano, 2007, p. 13
[499] Serano, 2007, p. 14
[500] Serano, 2007, p. 15

relying heavily on her own personal accounts with gender. Her work also does not discuss gender in relation to race, class, or other intersecting power relations in detail, thus unintentionally recentering whiteness and middle-class cultural hegemony. Additionally, scholars have claimed that the distinction between oppositional sexism and traditional sexism could be considered too negligible to fully distinguish them as separate vertices of sexist oppression.[501] Lastly, there are some concerns about her assertion that while many feminine attributes are socially constructed, that there is some innate and biologically grounded 'sex' that is gendered.

Building off of Serano's work, Black scholars began to articulate further intersecting experiences of anti-Black racism, sexism/misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia. Baily[502] coined the phrase misogynoir to capture the unique form of anti-Black sexism/misogyny Black women experience. This term was then combined with transmisogyny to create transmisogynoir.[503] Transmisogynoir encapsulates the compounding, intertwining, and interdependent intersections of transphobic violence, misogynistic violence, and anti-Black violence that Black trans women experience. When applied critically, transmisogynoir opens theoretical avenues of exploring compounding forms of oppression that de-centers the whiteness found in Serano's original concept of transmisogyny. By articulating these experiences and the co-constituent forces of anti-Black racism, misogyny, and transphobia, transfeminist scholars can examine these power dynamics and theorize on transfeminist responses to these ongoing forms of institutionalized violence.

Part 2: Contemporary Transfeminist Works

Transfeminist works from the 2010s and into the present day have taken up many theoretical engagements. Transfeminist interventions into biopower and necropolitics, colonization, race, feminism, abolitionism, and transnational politics will be explored to operationalize a 'working definition' of transfeminism that will be applied throughout this dissertation.

Jin Haritaworn's, Adi Kuntsman's, and Silvia Posocco's *Queer Necropolitics*[504] interfaces with transfeminist theory to conceptualize trans peoples' bodies in relation to biopolitics and necropolitics. In this compiled work, scholars theorized on the necropolitics of the white settler nation-state, cultural Western hegemony, and the whitewashing of feminist, queer, and trans struggles in determining which bodies are valuable and which ones are relegated to die. Sima Shakhsari's chapter on queer death and the politics of rightful killing discusses how sexual identities were categorized according to US homonationalistic logics, thereby managing life and death itself. Shakhsari discusses how some queer deaths are representable, and some are unspeakable; both are functions of biopolitics and necropolitics, highlighting the killability of "lives that are simultaneously imbued with and stripped of liberal universal rights; lives that are subjected to *the politics of rightful killing*" (emphasis in original text).[505] Che Gossett describes the necropolitics of the ongoing legacy of the HIV/AIDS crisis in the US, the mass detention and deportation of 'illegal immigrants', and the disproportionate rates of domestic Black

[501] Bettcher, 2021
[502] Baily 2018; Baily, 2021
[503] Whipple, 2021
[504] Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco, 2014
[505] Shakhsari, 2014, p. 95

incarceration that characterizes the (necro)politics of the American prison industrial complex.[506] This chapter emphasizes the (literally) live-saving importance of Black radicalism and anti-abolitionism in organizing against the state's sanction on the right to kill, incarcerate, or 'disappear' racialized bodies from view. Aren Z. Aizura's contribution to this work describes the "non-value"[507] of transfeminine life under a capitalist socio-economic model. He structures his argument around the death of Salvador (a.k.a., Sally) Kamatoy, who was found dead behind a mall in Sharjah of the United Arab Emirates in 2007. The coroner "allegedly found no cause of death; but the Philippine Embassy informed Kamatoy's family that her head had been beaten in".[508] Aizura states that what determines a 'valued' and 'valueless' life is constantly shifting within the global market, and that theorizations of necropolitics are needed to account for these changes and to capture when and how the market deems certain lives as redundant. Lastly, Elijah Adiv Edelman's chapter considers how geospatial politics regulate transfeminine bodies by expelling and discarding them from the streets of Washington, D.C.. Edelman discusses how these politics include a 'prostitution free zone', which is designed to gentrify the area. The white-washing, forced displacement, and precarity to trans women sex workers of colour highlights how biopower and necropolitics are utilized to shape the geospatial boundaries of cities and nations. Edelman also introduces the term "homonecronationalism", which "[highlights] how the technology of letting live and letting die functions to serve and promote homonationalist projects in the reproduction of viable queer citizens (e.g. those fulfilling the requirements of homonormative ideological reproductivity) from those otherwise considered included within LGBT rights paradigms".[509]

These authors interrogate how necropolitics shapes queer and trans lives, and determines their (un)viability, (un)grievability, and (un)livability under cultural, economic, social, and political forces. This text contains works that articulate as a politics of resistance to the state's ability to shape the literal lives and deaths of its populace. This transfeminist politic is critical of transmisogyny and violence and, through its critical articulations necropolitics, calls for the dismantling of oppressive power relations and structural forces that grant the state the right to end 'non-normative', 'valueless', and/or 'redundant' lives.

Moving on, Jules Gill-Peterson's works, *Histories of the Transgender Child*[510] and *A Short History of Trans Misogyny*[511] are important interventions into historicizing trans childhood experiences and transmisogyny. In so doing, Gill-Peterson contextualizes both subjects to reveal that childhood transness is not a new phenomenon, and that transmisogyny is neither timeless nor inherent to human social ordering. In *Histories,* Gill-Peterson discusses the premise of "racial plasticity";[512] the theory that human sex is determined by alterable endocrinological morphology. The experiments of eugenic scientists also categorized 'race' as a phenotype. This plasticity, it then stood to reason, may account for sexed and/or gendered expressions that did fit within the sex/gender binary. During the 1900s, the theory of 'bisexuality' – of humans possessing both masculine and feminine traits – was shaped by experiments on intersex children and by the growing sexological body of literature on transsexuals. Gill-Peterson's book explores the histories of 'treating' childhood transness over the decades in the US, by referring to records

[506] Gossett, 2014
[507] Aizura, 2014, p. 132
[508] Aizura, 2014, p. 129
[509] Edelman, 2014, p. 175
[510] Gill-Peterson, 2018
[511] Gill-Peterson, 2024
[512] Gill-Peterson, 2018

of hormone and surgical treatments of intersex children. This plasticity was also racialized; it was theorized as a 'form' of whiteness, in which many eugenicist scientists were attempting to prove that racial difference was biological. According to Gill-Peterson, the medical establishment came to 'promote' white trans children as idealized models of transness. Children who transitioned prior to puberty were thought to be more 'appropriately' transitioned, as they would more quickly 'settle' into their newfound genders and acclimate to their gender roles accordingly. Gill-Peterson was highly critical of this historical paradigm and its legacy on the medical establishment's approach to trans childhood today. She critiqued it for further reinforcing the hegemonic sex/gender binary as natural and for the heavily racialized paradigms that still govern how 'childhood', 'transness', and the human body are medically conceptualized today.

In *A Short History of Trans Misogyny,* Gill-Peterson examined the origins of 'transmisogyny'. While this term is extremely contemporary, the underlying frameworks that shape this concept are, she claims, much older. Gill-Peterson posited that the hatred of these 'feminized' people stemmed from colonial expansionist projects to 'disappear' Indigenous peoples from the land to 'free it up' for Western agrarian practices and resource extraction.[513] She discussed the colonial attacks on 'Two-Spirit' people, or those who (by Western hegemonic cultural standards) were 'biologically male' while occupying social, cultural, and spiritual roles may have 'transgressed' gender roles. These individuals represented a more 'primitive' state of being to colonizers, in which the sexes were not clearly gendered, as well as lacking the Western hegemonic patriarchal gendered structuring of male dominance. This also represented sexual sin and licentiousness to the colonizers, whose cultural taboos dictated drastically different relations between men and women. Thus, Gill-Peterson argued, the roots of transmisogyny could be found in colonizing efforts to rid the land of Indigenous 'gender non-conforming' bodies, especially given that these individuals tended to hold special knowledge, roles, and cultural significance.

Gill-Peterson's works are significant in naming and historicizing trans lived experience and early structural forces that shaped them. Her works reveal that the social construction of gender and race are integrally tied to the justification of gender-based and race-based oppression. Her works explicitly critiqued the medical establishment and the colonial projects of countries such as the US for their institutionalized violence against gendered and/or racialized groups who did not align with Western cultural hegemonic frameworks of the sex/gender binary. In investigating these histories and bringing them into focus, Gill-Peterson's work can be seen as transfeminist in contextualizing the histories of trans childhood in North America and the roots of transmisogyny's impacts on Indigenous cultural norms. Her overt critiques of these historical paradigms to trans childhood and 'racial plasticity' and/or 'transmisogyny' whose legacies continue to this day demonstrates a refusal of reifying these institutions as timeless and unshakable.

Shifting focus once again, Marquis Bey's *Black Trans Feminism*[514] is a seminal work that outlines Black transfeminism as a politics of liberation from gendered and racialized violence. They posit that discussing 'Black', 'trans', and 'feminist' as demographic categories contain limited usefulness in imagining, theorizing, and organizing for liberation from white cisheteronormative hegemonic structural forces. They re-frame these terms as the basis for political and theoretical orientations toward a politics of liberation. Bey examines 'trans' as a departure "toward something else through the vector of gender—or, more precisely, through a

[513] Gill-Peterson, 2024
[514] Bey, 2022

generative warping of gender toward something else".[515] Transness, they argue, can be viewed not just as a paradigmatic shift away from the supposed fixity and inherit gendered nature of the body, but 'trans' can also be cast as movement into the unknown; the undefinable, the indescribable. Blackness, too, is the 'non-normative'; it is a different mode of being. Blackness is "…what subjectivity, what a self-determined self, is par excellence: the ability to be other than what we are".[516] Here, the ability to 'be other than what we are' refers to how Black people are already prescribed by white Western hegemony as sub-human and/or non-human, as inferior. Black lived experience must grapple with this oppressive overlay while also existing in 'unimaginable' ways precluded by white supremacist frameworks. Finally, feminism must be the political and philosophical means by which the struggle toward liberation from normativity – which is inherently oppressive in its insistence on intelligibility to be considered 'human' – is enacted. Black transfeminism is therefore the practice of fugitivity;[517] it is the experience of being barred entry to white, Western hegemonic constructions of 'humanity'. Bey argues that Black transfeminism therefore must work toward the abolition of gender, the state, and the prison industrial complex. By turning resources and attention away from achieving normativity and liberation from the position of the 'sub-human' and/or 'non-human', by refusing to appeal to oppressive forces that deny humanity in the first place, Bey argues for a radical rethinking gender, Blackness, and feminism in achieving a world beyond the oppressive forces that constricts, limits, and ultimately rejects these groups from normativity. This work also calls for the abolishment of carceral systems and logics that hold Black trans people captive and imagines a future beyond what is possible by endlessly appealing to the politics of white Western hegemony and 'normativity'.

The last work I will examine is Shon Faye's *The Transgender Issue: Trans Justice Is Justice for All.*[518] This book offers a materialist and systemic analysis of being trans in a capitalist society – and how the 'transgender issue' provides insight into the failure of broader socio-economic systems that unjustly marginalizes everyone. Faye discusses the medical establishment as a gatekeeper of modern healthcare, and how trans navigations highlight the 'outer boundaries' of this care in terms if availability, autonomy, and access. Faye critiques the medical model of transness that demands the performativity of the 'Wrong Body Account' to access gender affirmative care. Trans challenges with healthcare are the manifestation of a broader medical paradigm that demands the performatively of 'wrongness' per medicalized narratives to be considered worthy of aid and seeking 'cure'. Faye posits that trans healthcare – and all healthcare – must move toward a model of informed consent, which prioritizes the individual's bodily autonomy over medical scrutiny. She also discusses the economic precarities that disproportionately impact trans people – but which also reveals the constant threat of impoverishment, homelessness, and lack of resources that the majority faces under capitalism. Trans people, especially youth, face greater rates of homelessness due to hostility from family members and community members. They also face greater rates of poverty and job discrimination, making financial stability difficult. The long history of trans people in sex work is often due to having few choices but to join the informal economy to survive; however, sex work has long been stigmatized, leading to further risks of criminalization, police brutality, and incarceration. Faye calls for an anti-carceral form of feminism, as many trans women (often

[515] Bey, 2022, p. 44
[516] Bey, 2022, p. 43
[517] Bey, 2022
[518] Faye, 2022

placed in men's prisons) are disproportionately targets of police violence and imprisonment. Faye argues that community-based initiatives would better serve society as a whole and greatly reduce violence and precarious employment for trans people. Faye concludes that the liberation of trans people must necessarily mean the liberation of all people from the oppressive confines of the sex/gender binary, structural violence, and state apparatuses. This work has impacted the literature and has provided a more accessible read on complex issues. Thus, I have included this text as a transfeminist text for its calling attention to the issues trans people face and how current structures will perpetuate this violence. Faye calls for a drastic reimagining of society where trans justice as a liberatory force means justice for everyone.

Part 3: Operationalizing Transfeminist Theory

Various concepts of sex, gender, transness, and transfeminism have been engaged with critically in the above part. One must then ask: what kind of operationalized definition of 'transfeminism' will be utilized throughout this dissertation? The definition below is as follows:

1. 'Transfeminism' will operate from a paradigm of seeking trans justice. 'Trans justice' here means discussing theoretical and practical tactics that are designed to uplift, support, and liberate trans people from cisnormative and cisgenderist oppression. Faye's work[519] is drawn upon, emphasizing a materialist approach to how oppressive practices harm trans people and Canada's politics and media as a whole.
2. 'Transfeminism' explicitly names, critiques, and interrogates transmisogyny, misogynoir, and transmisogynoir.[520] These terms capture the intersecting and co-constituent forces of anti-Black racism, misogyny, and transphobia. Trans women, trans feminine people, effeminate people, trans men, intersex people, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings, and others are often the subject of transmisogynistic violence that works to perpetuate gender and race as fixed categories that both uplifts masculinity as superior, and denigrates femininity. Therefore, the second principle will be to highlight and actively take a stance against these forms of violence in qualitative discussions.
3. 'Transfeminism' is anti-carceral, abolitionist,[521] and critical of the biopolitical/necropolitical power of the state.[522] Transfeminism resists carceral logics that justify and perpetuate the state's power to mobilize against its citizens and wield the power to determine who lives, who dies, and who is 'disappeared' from view (i.e. deportation, displacement, etc.). Transfeminism as a theoretical framework names and interrogates the state's role in maintaining its right to kill[523] trans bodies while simultaneously utilizing trans narratives to promote its own homonecronationalistic aims.
4. 'Transfeminism' is critical of discourses that limit bodily autonomy and enforces adultist expectations of gendered development onto children, and/or limits one's ability to choose. Discourses that present children as 'incapable of consenting' to transition will be approached with a critical lens. That said, it will also be employed carefully with

[519] Koyama, 2000; Faye, 2022
[520] Crenshaw, 1989; Serano, 2007; Lewis and Grzanka, 2016; Collins and Bilge, 2016; Baily, 2018; Whipple, 2021; Gill-Peterson, 2024
[521] Butcher, 2023
[522] Haritaworn, Kuntsman, and Posocco, 2014; Bey, 2022
[523] Shakhsari, 2014; Edelman, 2014

a focus on how these discourses are mobilized to strip children of their rights and access to healthcare.[524]

A3.4.4: Transfeminism Conclusions

Transfeminism is a complex and rich theoretical perspective on feminism that centers transness at its core. Contributions to the literature by first tracing the histories of how transness has been conceptualized over time were examined. This sub-section recounted how early transsexual movements were grounded in the 'Wrong Body Account'. This paradigm was very medicalized and reinforced the 'biological sex' paradigm as materially 'real', stemming from early sexological inquiries into gendered difference. Around the 1980s and 1990s, however, a shift toward the 'Beyond the Binary Account' proliferated throughout academia, activism, and political organizing. According to this paradigm, transsexuals/transgender people were no longer conceptualized as 'trapped in the wrong body' but were oppressed in a gendered way distinct from sexism and were problematically situated in relation to the sex/gender binary. As the umbrella term 'transgender' grew in popularity, however, transsexuals who were post-operative, passing, and binary in their self-identification felt increasingly alienated from (and simultaneously subsumed within) this movement. Seminal works such as Butler's *Gender Trouble* and Stone's *The Empire Strikes Back* were hugely influential texts in the nascent discipline of trans studies. These works have profoundly shaped the course of the discipline ever since and have laid the groundwork for the 'Beyond the Binary Account' to become a dominant theoretical framework for conceptualizing transness.

The next part was dedicated to examining lesbian separatist, TERF, and 'gender-critical' feminist literature. 'Gender-critical' feminism has become a powerful force that has mobilized across many countries. Lesbian separatism was a variation of radical feminism that argued that the sex-based oppression of women extended to lesbianism and called for detachment from relationships with men and patriarchal cultural norms and to focus on loving women as a liberatory force of organizing. Because of this focus on sex and 'female socialization', lesbian separatism was deeply incompatible with trans-affirming feminism and the 'Wrong Body Account', comparing trans women to male-socialized 'deceivers' and 'interlopers'. Seminal works such as Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* expanded upon radical feminist theorizations of sex and gender, describing women as tied to one's chromosomal and socialized realties. However, as noted in the synthesis, these theories could not adequately establish 'sex' as a coherent and rhetorically sound category that definitively precluded trans self-identification. This part concluded by describing how 'gender-critical' feminism perpetuates racist cultural norms and stereotypes, as the category of 'sex' serves to perpetuate white, Western social constructs of sex and gender. Black and Indigenous bodies were (and are) treated as sites of sexed/gendered disorder and genetic inferiority in the ongoing colonial expansionist project to perpetuate the nation-state known as Canada.

Lastly, contemporary transfeminist works were examined to understand the state of the literature and to formulate a 'working' understanding of transfeminist scholarly trajectories. This part first synthesized the works of foundational scholars, such as Koyama and Serano, and their conceptualizations of transfeminism and the mechanisms of transmisogyny as a unique form of violence that trans women face. Other works were then examined, including syntheses of necropolitical, intersectional, anti-carceral, and pro-bodily autonomy transfeminist frameworks.

[524] Gill-Peterson, 2018; Adami, 2025

From these texts, an operationalized definition of transfeminism was conceived to guide qualitative observations, critiques, and discussions throughout the dissertation. This definition of 'transfeminism' is predicated on a foundation of trans justice; being critical of expressions of transmisogyny/misogynoir/transmisogynoir; anti-carceral, abolitionist, and critical of the biopower/necropower of the state; and lastly, being critical of discourses that limit peoples' (especially children's) bodily autonomy and healthcare needs.

A3.5: Backlash Theory, Canadian Populism, and Anti-Trans Politics

The final theoretical framework that will be examined is backlash theory. This section draws heavily from Susan Faldui's 1991 book *Backlash: The undeclared war against American women.*[525] Faludi describes in this work how women's rights have been systematically attacked, eroded, and/or denigrated by various forces from America's right wing evangelical political bloc during the 1980s. She describes the backlash against women's rights as:

> [The backlash] is at once sophisticated and banal, deceptively "progressive" and proudly backward. It deploys both the "new" findings of "scientific research" and the dime-store moralism of yesteryear; it turns into media sound bites both the glib pronouncements of pop-psych trend-watchers and the frenzied rhetoric of New Right preachers. The backlash has succeeded in framing virtually the whole issue of women's rights in its own languages. Just as Reaganism shifted political discourse far to the right and demonized liberalism, so the backlash convinced the public that women's "liberation" was the true contemporary American scourge – the source of an endless laundry list of personal, social, and economic problems.[526]

This quote epitomizes Faludi's central dissertation on how the backlash against women's rights in 1980s America was shaped into a growing movement, at times from disparate groups whose goals and agendas could be at odds with one another. The backlash was a culmination of responses to shifting sociocultural and political norms. While backlashes are often powerful and tactical, they are not, as Faludi emphasizes, homogenously perfected conspiracies. They are the result of socially dominant groups who perceive changes in sociocultural and political norms as threatening to their privilege and standing. As such, these groups utilize the political, sociocultural, and technological resources available to them and employ tactics that, if salient and resonant, can lead to material change.

However, Faludi's description of the American backlash against women's rights in the 1980s and the 2020s anti-trans backlash in Canada differ in significant ways. Faludi describes how American women struggled against conflicting messaging from every facet of society. The whirl of information, data, and news indicated that women had 'made it' vis-à-vis equality frameworks. These statements were punctuated by conflicting messages (often from the same sources) indicating that women were burnt out, unfulfilled, anxious, unwed, and childless. The 'gains' feminism had made were framed as a pyrrhic victory for American women. A key point in Faludi's book was how much of this messaging was directed at women themselves. By 'convincing' women to eschew feminism and return to American traditional familial, marital, and gender roles, anti-feminist actors aimed to 'regain lost ground'.

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[525] Faludi, 1991, p. xviii
[526] Faludi, 1991, p. p. xviii

However, when comparing this sociocultural and political moment to the anti-trans backlash in Canada, there are crucial differences in tone, audience, and goals. The anti-trans backlash's is not, by and large, focused on *addressing* trans people.[527] This backlash differs in that it is not instructive as to how trans people can 'make it' as trans people in Canada. Rather, it is a (cisnormative and cisgenderist) movement mobilizing *against* trans people, often excluding trans voices, with aims such as rollbacks on trans rights. Whereas persuading women to abandon feminism to join the ranks of the religious American right would serve the political, cultural, and ideological goals and agendas of the political blocs at the time, trans people living in Canada are already viewed as detrimental to Canadian culture and politics and are therefore isolated and ostracized near-universally. Trans people are being 'pushed out' with no feasible place in society, so long as they continue to cleave to their trans self-identity. A potential 'out' back into 'normative society' may be presented in the form of eschewing one's transness in favour of embracing a cisheteronormative gender/sexuality schema; but some groups may equally view trans people as 'beyond saving'. This backlash is therefore characterized by discourses that attack trans people's rights, safety, and bodily autonomy – with no recourse for finding a place in Canadian society.[528]

The surge in trans-hostile sentiment has become increasingly polarizing in recent years. In raising awareness for their goals and agendas, anti-trans actors have successfully heightened polarized stances regarding trans rights/trans people/transness in Canada. As mainstream Canadian politics began to turn toward conservativism,[529] various actors have mobilized, creating a heterogenous but concerted effort to normalize anti-trans discourse. The Catholic Church, the American Republican party, Canadian conservatives, religious fundamentalists, alt-right pundits, 'gender-critical' feminists, celebrities, social media influencers, and other groups have worked to inflame sociocultural and political frustrations toward trans people as a source of instability and strife.[530] With populism on the rise[531] and disruptive media (foreign and domestic)[532] impacting Canadian news and politics, this shift is indicative of a period of heightened intensification for anti-trans discourses.

A3.5.1: Backlash Theory, Populism and Canadian Politics

Part 1: Backlash Theory and Canada

This part is dedicated to analyzing the intersections between backlash theory, populism, and Canadian politics. These intertwining concepts will be discussed in the context of the political momentum behind the anti-trans backlash in Canada.

Backlash theory, per Norris and Inglehart,[533] forms due to various social pressures. Modern North American culture has been trending toward liberal progressivist paradigms over the past two decades[534] after earlier periods of social conservatism. North American culture has changed drastically over the past 100-plus years,[535] and the prevailing political norms have shifted along

[527] McIntyre, 1993; Norris and Inglehart, 2019; Bishin et al., 2021; Schäfer, 2022
[528] McIntyre, 1993; Norris and Inglehart, 2019; Bishin et al., 2021; Schäfer, 2022
[529] Montigny, 2025
[530] Butler, 2024
[531] Montigny, 2025; Christ and De Abreu, 2020
[532] Christ and De Abreu, 2020
[533] Norris and Inglehart, 2019
[534] Montigny, 2025
[535] Montigny, 2025

with them. Additionally, there have been international geopolitical shifts due to Brexit, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Israeli aggression toward Palestine, the US becoming increasingly isolationist and hostile in its foreign policy, and the aftereffects of a worldwide pandemic.[536] Coupled with climate change, major population shifts, and disruptive media, it is evident that Canada's sociocultural and political climate has changed drastically over the past 20-plus years in response to these multitudinous political events.[537] Norris and Inglehart described liberal progressivism as a predominant cultural mode. The "demand-side values",[538] as they describe it, are the values that society prioritizes as goals. For example, Canada's immigration policies, liberal democratic governmental structure, mainstream media, and politics were all priorities (and goals) during the 2010s. This becomes a 'silent revolution' as the prevailing sociocultural and political stances in a society shift, invisibilizing this normative framework as the 'default' political position. A critical mass of support for the predominant framework leads to a change in how "supply-side institutions"[539] operate. This positions the resultant "counter-reaction"[540] as a political and sociocultural minority. Per Norris and Inglehart, conservative political blocs and sociocultural cohorts have been in decline recently, especially in North America. Younger generations are more likely to be exposed to other racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, and social groups than before, especially outside of small homogenous towns. They also grew up in an age of information, with access to the Internet with a plethora of resources that exposed them to different ideologies and ideas. As a result, many Millennials and Gen Z cohorts are politically liberal and support the promotion of human rights, environmental responsibility, robust immigration policies, and pluralistic attitudes toward society and culture.

However, as Braunstein[541] argues in his review of Norris and Inglehart's book, this framework of backlash theory, while theoretically sound, is also simplistic. Right-wing groups have been proactive in shoring up support for their causes, utilizing modern technologies at their disposal to form networks, and advertising themselves to interested parties. By utilizing disruptive media and the widespread 'virality' of online content creation – as well as technological advances that make the dissemination of mis/disinformation easier than ever – right-wing groups have effectively formulated reactionary[542] populist tactics that have strongly resonated with young Canadians. This reality disproves the claim that younger generations are more liberal overall. Youth in Canada are utilizing search engines and social media to connect with neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups at alarming rates,[543] especially young white men. Despite the general view that younger generations are more liberal than older ones, the statistics suggest that Canadian reactionary and authoritarian populism is exploding in popularity.[544] The mobilization of right-wing Canadians also contains trans-hostile discourse, language, and discourse, revealing a shift in the political landscape from previous decades. This leads one to consider how populism and populist rhetoric can be employed by conservative groups to gain support for their causes.

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[536] Montigny, 2025
[537] Montigny, 2025
[538] Norris and Inglehart, 2019, p. 34
[539] Norris and Inglehart, 2019, p. 34
[540] Norris and Inglehart, 2019, p. 35
[541] Braunstein, 2022
[542] Ditto et al., 2021
[543] Momani and Deschamps, 2021
[544] Momani and Deschamps, 2021

Part 2: Populism

Populism is a term whose definitional boundaries are often described as amorphous and permeable.[545] Populism has often been described as a 'thin' concept in political studies; a plastic and vague concept whose flexibility and lack of core traits permits one to apply it to a variety of political frameworks and situations. Populism has been applied to socialist and fascist regimes and movements across political history for this reason. While having 'space' to conceptualize and theorize about populism with flexibility may be beneficial, others have criticized academic definitions of populism for its lack of substance and strategy,[546] arguing that its vast breadth deprives it of any meaning. There are, however, a few core concepts contained within the term 'populism' that are generally agreed upon: the exaltation of a virtuous group, typically 'the common people'; the condemnation of a corrupt 'elite'; and calls for unrestrained sovereignty of the people, usually through the 'reclamation' of popular sovereignty.[547] Both the common people and the elites are conceptualized as homogenous. This approach is often discussed in relation to the 'thinness'[548] of populism; as Kriesi asserts, "if the core of populism is very 'thin' and cannot serve as the potential center for something broader, it is still distinct and still holds that it can be combined with other 'host' ideologies that are 'thicker', precisely because of its rudimentary core beliefs".[549] Populism theorized through the lens of this approach highlights how the common people's framing as homogenous necessitates a lack of plurality that marks contemporary Euro-North American populist movements.[550] Likewise, institutions that act as go-betweens for the common people and the elites – such as political parties – are viewed with suspicion. Lastly, unrestrained sovereignty of the common people is often expressed in calls for a 'government of the people', wherein regular democratic checks and balances do not exist, and 'majority rules' functions via hegemonic unity.[551] This approach to populism is effective in its flexibility and its measurability – "it can be measured both at the level of political elites as well as at the level of their popular audiences".[552]

Part 3: Canadian Populist Politics

Canadian populist politics have proliferated in the 2020s during a period of geopolitical and nationalistic precarity. As Montigny determined,[553] politicians like Pierre Poilievre gained appeal through an assertive and 'no-nonsense' approach to addressing the media, the constituents, and other MPs in parliament. His capitalization on the growing dissatisfaction with Trudeau's government – bolstered by social media and mainstream media coverage – captured a critical moment in time. Canadians have been exposed to high levels of disruptive media,[554] both foreign and domestic. Foreign influences such as the growing US right-wing/socially conservative movement under President Donald Trump or the burgeoning right-wing movements in various European countries are permeating into Canadian politics. Canada's presumed

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[545] Laclau, 2005
[546] Laclau, 2005
[547] Laclau, 2005
[548] Kreisi, 2020, p. 1525
[549] Kreisi, 2020, p. 1525
[550] Kreisi, 2020, p. 1525
[551] Kreisi, 2020, p. 1525
[552] Kreisi, 2020, pp. 1526-1527
[553] Montigny, 2025
[554] Montigny, 2025; Christ and De Abreu, 2020

'insulation' against populist rhetoric seems to be eroding.[555] Part of this erosion includes the normalisation of anti-trans discourse. Canada, in a period of economic, sociocultural, and national uncertainty,[556] has turned away from the neoliberal and progressivist focus of the 2010s. Prior to the existential threat of American invasion,[557] however, this was culminating in a growing hostility toward trans rights and 'wokeism' in general. As such, Canadian politics have been shaped in recent years by unprecedented debates about trans rights, both in sheer volume and in the negativity and swift mobilization that characterizes this movement.

Given all this information, backlash theory will be operationalized as follows: backlash theory is a framework that tracks shifts in political priorities, and therefore goals, between sociocultural/political groups. In the case of the anti-trans backlash, various actors – be they individuals, groups, or organizations – are responding to the swell in trans-positive legislation and consciousness-raising that occurred in Canada during the early 2010s. This backlash is characterized by its hostility toward the integration of trans people within Canada's sociocultural and political frameworks. This backlash has been expressed via populist rhetoric, in which the 'virtuous common people' (i.e., cisgender Canadians) are portrayed as being persecuted by 'elites' (i.e. trans people, pro-trans actors, the Trudeau government, medical professionals, teachers, liberals, pro-trans feminists, etc.) and the unrestrained sovereignty of the 'common people' must (re)assert itself by denouncing trans-positive initiatives.

A3.5.2: Backlash Theory Conclusions

This sub-section examined backlash theory, populism, and the current state of Canadian politics. It was prefaced with Faludi's theory on backlash, in which distinctions between the American anti-feminist backlash of the 1980s and the Canadian anti-trans backlash of the 2020s were compared. It was determined that trans people living in Canada are (by and large) not treated as citizens who have 'gone astray' and may be 'led back' to cisheteropatriarchy (with some exceptions); they are generally portrayed as 'outcasts' whose transness is the cause (and/or the exacerbation) of many societal ills. This likely came about as a response to the trans-positive legislative and consciousness-raising campaigns that swept Canada in the early 2010s. A general trend toward conservatism – and a normalization of anti-trans discourse – has shifted the Canadian political landscape.

The next sub-section described backlash theory in more detail, discussing how values become political goals. A 'counterreaction' swells as these values become normalized. Alarmingly, young cohorts of Canadians are engaging with disruptive news and neo-Nazi/white supremacist groups via the Internet and social media, indicating that conservative political groups have effectively mobilized their recruitment strategies. Part of these strategies include normalizing trans-hostile discourse.

Finally, another sub-section described populism in relation to Canadian populist politics. Populism is a 'thin' concept whose general traits are largely agreed to be: the exaltation of a virtuous group, typically 'the common people'; the condemnation of a corrupt 'elite'; and calls for unrestrained sovereignty of the people, usually through the 'reclamation' of popular sovereignty. Canadian politicians such as Pierre Poilievre have capitalized on the use of populist politics to position himself and his party as in opposition to Trudeau's federal government, and as representatives of the 'silent majority'. Canada's domestic political landscape, and the

[555] Montigny, 2025; Christ and De Abreu, 2020
[556] Montigny, 2025; Christ and De Abreu, 2020
[557] Marchi et al., 2025; Simms, 2026

international stage at large, have shaped the circumstances for the proliferation of anti-trans discourse in recent years. Backlash theory was therefore operationalized as a framework to track shifts in political priorities, and therefore goals, between sociocultural/political groups. This dissertation will discuss these theoretical frameworks when applicable to the sociopolitical context of anti-trans discourse within the dataset.

A3.6: Literature Review Conclusion

This 'high theory' literature review has been expansive in its examination, articulation, and exploration of three major theoretical frameworks. These theoretical frameworks will inform the discussion sections and provide context to my analyses when they are applicable.

The first section discussed the intersection of disability studies and trans studies, and how both disciplines would benefit from academic alliances in examining disability and transness beyond strictly medial or social frameworks. Three models of disability were critically examined with consideration for how transness could be integrated into their paradigms. The medical model of disability situates disability within the mind/body and focuses on 'curing' the mind/body of its physical, mental, and developmental 'ailments'. This model of disability invisibilizes larger structural forces of disability and centers on the material ways in which disability impedes one's ability to live a fulfilling and dignified life. The social model focuses on the structural barriers that disables the mind/body via ableist cultural norms and structural barriers to living a fulfilling and dignified life. This model also creates challenges for trans/disabled lived experiences to be fully theorized and understood, as the material realities of experiencing disability within the mind/body were under-discussed. Baril's composite model of disability was therefore selected for examining pathologizing anti-trans discourse throughout this dissertation, as it conceptualized transness and disability via both social and medical frameworks creating a 'third option' for examining the complexities of trans/disabled lived experience.

The next part was a brief history of trans medical care. Krafft-Ebing, Hirschfeld, and Benjamin's works were discussed. The Clarke Institute and the Johns Hopkins Gender Identity Clinic as North American, university-led gender clinics, propelled treatment for transsexuals in the 1960s and 1970s. Over time, gender affirmative care has become more holistic and patient-centered (per the most current version of WPATH's Standards of Care).

The last part of the disability studies/trans studies portion was a list of common contemporary medicalized anti-trans discourses. Anti-trans arguments against puberty blockers and HRT, discussions of ROGD, discussions centered around detransition, and biologically essentializing arguments against trans women participating in sport were discussed.

The next theoretical framework examined was transfeminism. The 'Wrong Body Account' was discussed; per this framework, transness was understood as intrinsic to the body and unable to be changed via therapy; thus, the most ethical form of 'treatment' was gender-affirmative care to align the body and mind. Over time, however, this model lost favour as the 'Beyond the Binary Account' began to take hold in the late 1980s and 1990s. Per this paradigm, transness was understood as a form of gender-based oppression that was distinct from sexism, and which problematically situated trans people in relation to the sex/gender binary. Butler's *Gender Trouble* and Stone's *The Empire Strikes Back* were eminent works that shaped trans studies and early queer theory by positing that biological sex *and* gender roles/gender identity were ascribed and taught, rather than inherent. This paradigm continues to be strongly prevalent in feminist scholarship today.

The next part traced the histories of lesbian separatism, TERFs, and 'gender-critical' feminism. Lesbian separatism posited that oppression based on sexuality was part of the sex-based oppression that all women faced. They therefore advocated for becoming 'woman-identified' and turning their attention away from patriarchal society and relationships with men in favour of building community around liberation from sex-based oppression. Works such as Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* were pre-eminent in shaping radical feminist discourse on transness. Raymond's work argued – as did later radical feminist texts – that womanhood was biologically determined by one's sex and chromosomal makeup, as well as one's socialization as a woman. Therefore, all trans self-identity claims were rejected; in fact, Raymond portrayed trans women as deceivers and interlopers into lesbian separatist radical feminist spaces as 'men in disguise' seeking to rape lesbians. It is from this climate that the term TERF emerged. As TERF began to lose favour, however, 'gender-critical' feminism emerged. It argued that focusing on 'gender' detracted from feminist mobilization centered around sex-based oppression; any 'gendered' oppression was merely a 'side effect' of sex-based violence.

The next part focused on some 'founding texts' of transfeminism. Transfeminism was first named by Koyama, and other scholars have since taken up transfeminism to examine the unique forms of gender-based violence trans women face. Terms such as transmisogyny, misogynoir, and transmisogynoir have captured the intersectional nature of how cisgenderist and cisnormative violence operates. Next, contemporary transfeminist works were explored. Based on these works, a definition of transfeminism was operationalized as: explicitly seeking trans justice; as a framework that names, critiques, and interrogates transmisogynoir; as a framework that is anti-carceral, abolitionist, and critical of the biopolitical/necropolitical power of the state; and finally, as a framework that is critical of discourses that limit the bodily autonomy and self-determination of all people, and especially children. It is this 'working definition' of transfeminism that was deployed throughout the dissertation.

The last theoretical framework examined here was backlash theory. This section drew heavily from Faludi's *Backlash Theory* to compare her work to the anti-trans backlash occurring in Canada. The next part described 'populism' and the operationalized definition for it as a 'thin' concept that exalts the virtuous 'common people', condemns the corrupt and 'elite' class, and calls for the unrestrained sovereignty of the people, usually by means of 'reclamation' of popular sovereignty. Canadian politics, as described in this part, have been trending toward social conservatism in recent years. The precarity of Canada's domestic and international geopolitical situation, the domestic and foreign use of disruptive media, and the virality of social media – including mis/disinformation – has aided a growing conservative backlash against the previous decade's period of liberal progressivism, including support for trans rights. This backlash has been expressed via populist rhetoric, in which the 'virtuous common people' (i.e., cisgender Canadians) are portrayed as being persecuted by 'elites' (i.e. trans people, pro-trans actors, the Trudeau government, medical professionals, teachers, liberals, pro-trans feminists, etc.) and the unrestrained sovereignty of the 'common people' must (re)assert itself be denouncing trans-positive initiatives. Backlash theory was therefore operationalized as a framework that tracks shifts in political priorities, between sociocultural/political groups. It was used to track and discuss Canada's shifting political priorities as a result of backlash against the early 2010s' trans-positive trends. This dissertation deployed these additional theoretical frameworks when applicable to the examination of anti-trans discourse and the results generated from the dataset.

APPENDIX 4: CHAPTER 5 TOPICS AND SUB-TOPICS DISCUSSION LONG-FORM PROSE ANALYSIS

A4.1: Sub-Topics: Long-Form Prose Analysis

This appendix contains the long-form prose analysis for the sub-topics linked to Chapter 5: Topics and Sub-Topics of Discussion. Every topic category was analyzed by the sub-topical breakdown except for topic category 1.8, Social Convention. This topic category contained only 11 coded cases, which was determined to be a non-valid sample size for cross-examination at the sub-topic level. All colour categorization of the data outlined below follows the same convention outlined for the breakdown of data overall, by time period, and by actor as indicated in the body of Chapter 5. The full prose analysis text, including the tables and the qualitative discussions, are provided below.

A4.1.1: Sub-Topics of Topic 1.1 – 'Basic Concepts'

The topic category 'Basic Concepts' focused on broad-based discussions of some of the basic ideas central to transness. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, four sub-topics that defined the topic of Basic Concepts were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the topic of Basic Concepts present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following four sub-topics:

1. Trans People/Transness: Trans people, transness, being trans, etc.
2. Names and Pronouns: Discussions and definitions of names and pronouns, their usage, etc.
3. Passing: Trans people 'passing' as cisgender, etc.
4. Disclosure: Disclosure of one's transness/trans identity, etc.

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Trans People/Transness was expected to be frequently discussed, given that trans identity is typically central to anti-trans discourse (i.e., discussions of 'identity politics').[558]
- Names and Pronouns was also expected to be widely discussed, as this has become a seminal topic of discussion in the 'parental rights' anti-trans discourse in Canada in recent years.[559]
- Passing and Disclosure were both expected to be present, but in low to moderate numbers.
- The first two sub-topics were expected to increase dramatically over time. The latter two sub-topics were also expected to rise, but at a relatively moderate pace.
- Trans People/Transness and Names and Pronouns were expected to be prevalent in high numbers across all actor groupings.
- Passing and Disclosure were expected to be most prevalent among Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media, as the literature suggested that socially conservative/right-wing groups may be preoccupied with these concepts.[560]

[558] Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024; Montigny, 2025
[559] Bellemare, Kolbegger, and Vermes, 2021; Braunstein, 2022; Ganshorn, 2023; Bueckert, 2023; Ashley, 2024
[560] Bettcher, 2007; Bettcher, 2014; Colliver et al., 2021; Butler, 2024

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A4.1.1a – Distribution of Sub-Topics of Topic 1.1 'Basic Concepts'		
Sub-Topics		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.1	**458**	**100%**
1.1.1 Trans People/Transness	450	98%
1.1.2 Names and Pronouns	24	5%
1.1.3 Passing	4	1%
1.1.4 Disclosure	9	2%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Unsurprisingly, Trans People/Transness was the largest sub-topic in this topic category. However, the fact that it was present in 98% of the cases containing the Basic Concepts topic category demonstrates that, rather being a sub-topic, it makes up virtually the entirety of the topic itself. This was far greater than what was anticipated and suggests that much of the discourse pertaining to this topic category was essentially discussing broad issues of transness itself. Equally surprising was the almost total lack of any discussion of Names and Pronouns. A more robust discussion on names and pronouns was expected, based on the strong preoccupation with these topics circulating widely, especially in relation to children and youth and/or 'parental rights' discourses.

Table A4.1.1b – Distribution of Sub-Topics 1.1 'Basic Concepts' by Time Period						
Sub-Topics	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.1	**0**	**0%**	**146**	**100%**	**312**	**100%**
1.1.1 Trans People/Transness	0	0%	142	97%	308	99%
1.1.2 Names and Pronouns	0	0%	13	9%	11	4%
1.1.3 Passing	0	0%	4	3%	0	0%
1.1.4 Disclosure	0	0%	9	6%	0	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

There were no notable variations in the Trans People/Transness sub-topic, indicating stability in its presence over time. This was somewhat surprising, as the literature[561] and qualitative observations would have suggested a relative increase in preoccupations with trans identity. By contrast, the other three sub-topics decreasing slightly over time, contradicting my hypotheses. This finding was surprising; Names and Pronouns in particular was expected to increase as anti-trans discourse turned increasingly toward discussing names and pronouns for trans people in the 2020s. Moreover, both the sub-topics of Passing and Disclosure decreased to 0% in the 2020s – indicating a 'disappearance' of these sub-topics from the dataset.

Table A4.1.1c – Distribution of Sub-Topics 1.1 'Basic Concepts' by Actor

Sub-Topics	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Topic 1.1	**85**	**100%**	**240**	**100%**	**43**	**100%**	**90**	**100%**
1.1.1 Trans People/Transness	84	99%	236	98%	40	93%	90	100%
1.1.2 Names and Pronouns	2	2%	13	5%	1	2%	8	9%
1.1.3 Passing	1	1%	3	1%	0	0%	0	0%
1.1.4 Disclosure	2	2%	6	3%	1	2%	34	38%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

In terms of variation across actors, there were no notable variations compared to the overall results or between groupings – with one exception. Alt-Right New Media had an unexpectedly high relative percentage for the Disclosure sub-topic compared to other actors. Alt-Right New Media actors were highly engaged with discourses pertaining to the disclosure trans identity. It was noted in qualitative discussions that this grouping often portrayed disclosure as imperative for the sake of 'safety' and/or to assuage concerns of trans people 'lying' and/or 'deceiving'[562] others. Given that this sub-topic 'disappeared' from the dataset in the 2020s, the entirety of this discourse was contained in the 2010s, which is also noteworthy; why did this discourse 'vanish' in recent years? Further research is needed to understand this shift in anti-trans discourse.

[561] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

[562] Bettcher, 2007; Bettcher, 2014; Colliver et al., 2021; Butler, 2024

A4.1.2: Sub-Topics of Topic 1.2 – 'Science, Biology and Medicine'

The topic category 'Science, Biology and Medicine' contained sub-topics pertaining to gender affirmative care, healthcare, and biology-related topics. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, seven sub-topics that defined this topic category were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the topic of Science, Biology and Medicine present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following seven sub-topics:

1. Science and Biology: Human biology and anatomy, endocrinology, etc.
2. Medical Intervention: Gender affirmation surgery, hormone replacement therapy, puberty blockers, etc.
3. Gender Dysphoria: Definitions and discussions of gender dysphoria, 'rapid-onset gender dysphoria', treatment of gender dysphoria, etc.
4. Transition: Transitioning, medical transition, social transition, etc.
5. Detransition: Detransitioning, transition regret, etc.
6. Conversion Therapy: Conversion therapy, definitions and/or discussions, etc.
7. Intersex People: Intersex conditions, intersex people, intersex bodies, surgical corrections, consent to medical/surgical/endocrinological intervention, etc.

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Science and Biology, Medical Intervention, Gender Dysphoria, and Transition were expected to be discussed the most. These topics are well-documented in the literature on anti-trans discourse.[563]
- Detransition and Conversion Therapy were expected be moderately present.
- It was anticipated that each sub-topic would increase over time. Detransition was expected to increase dramatically as it became a focal point in the 2020s.
- Politicians were expected to engage with discourses pertaining to Science and Biology and Conversion Therapy, especially in relation to Bills C-16 and C-4.[564]
- It was anticipated that MSM Newspapers would engage with discourses pertaining to Gender Dysphoria, Transition, and Detransition heavily when reporting on medical discourses pertaining to transness.
- It was anticipated that Think Tanks would engage with discourses pertaining to Science and Biology and Transition, discussing human biology and/or discussions of medical transitioning.[565]
- It was anticipated that Alt-Right New Media would engage with discourses pertaining to Medical Intervention and Transition more often than other actors. This grouping was

[563] Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; Scott, 2026

[564] *An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code,* 2017; *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy),* 2021

[565] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024

expected to have strong preoccupations with gender affirmative care as 'dangerous', 'experiential', 'unnecessary', and/or 'medical mutilation'.[566]

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A4.1.2a – Distribution of Sub-Topics for Topic 1.2 'Science, Biology and Medicine'

Sub-Topics		
	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Topic 1.2	**160**	**100%**
1.2.1 Science and Biology	33	21%
1.2.2 Medical Intervention	25	16%
1.2.3 Gender Dysphoria	16	10%
1.2.4 Transition	75	47%
1.2.5 Detransition	8	5%
1.2.6 Conversion Therapy	51	32%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Transition, Conversion Therapy, and Science and Biology were the largest sub-topics that comprised this topic category. Discussions of science and biology-related topics that focused on human anatomy, biology, physiology, and/or reproductive capabilities were common. Transition focused on topics related to discussions surrounding legal, medical, and social aspects of transitioning, as well as discussions that opposed it. Conversion Therapy featured discussions on conversion therapy, and its legal, medical, and moral implications. The low presence of Medical Intervention and Gender Dysphoria was quite surprising. These topics have been mainstays of anti-trans discourse for decades[567] and have shape many arguments against trans healthcare. Lastly, Detransition was somewhat present, as was expected. This topic of discussion is relatively new as a mainstream anti-trans discourse.[568] Lastly, it should be noted that there was a seventh sub-topic included in this topic category: Intersex People. However, no cases were coded with this sub-topic. It was therefore not included in the tables, but it is present in the coding dictionary (see Appendix 1).

[566] Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; Scott, 2026; Chih et al., 2020; Devor et al., 2023; Coleman et al., 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Butler, 2024
[567] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Chih et al., 2020; Devor et al., 2023; Coleman et al., 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Butler, 2024
[568] MacKinnon and Expósito-Campos, 2023; Vandenbussche, 2022; Janssen, 2021; Giedinghagen, 2022; Hildebrand-Chupp, 2020; Banner and Janssen, 2023

Table A4.1.2b – Distribution of Sub-Topics of Topic 1.2 'Science, Biology and Medicine' by Time Period						
Sub-Topics	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.2	**0**	**0%**	**57**	**100%**	**103**	**100%**
1.2.1 Science and Biology	0	0%	24	42%	9	9%
1.2.2 Medical Intervention	0	0%	16	28%	9	9%
1.2.3 Gender Dysphoria	0	0%	14	25%	2	2%
1.2.4 Transition	0	0%	31	54%	44	43%
1.2.5 Detransition	0	0%	0	0%	8	8%
1.2.6 Conversion Therapy	0	0%	8	14%	43	42%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Detransition was absent from the dataset in the 2010s, which largely aligned with the above-stated hypothesis. Its first appearance was in the 2020s, and the relative increase is notable. This indicates that this sub-topic may not have been a central feature of anti-trans discourses until relatively recently. The Conversion Therapy sub-topic demonstrated extraordinary growth from the 2010s to the 2020s. It seems that much of this discourse was driven by the introduction of Bill C-4, a federal bill which has severely restricted legal conversion therapy services in Canada. The bill was granted royal assent in 2021.[569] Interestingly, all other sub-topics decreased over time. This was surprising, as medicalized discourses are often foundational to anti-trans discourse.[570]

[569] *An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code,* 2017; *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy),* 2021

[570] Prosser, 1998; Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005; Chih et al., 2020; Devor et al., 2023; Coleman et al., 2022; Appenroth and Castro Varela, 2022; Forcier, Van Schalkwyk, and Turban, 2020; Butler, 2024; schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

Table A4.1.2c – Distribution of Sub-Topics of Topic 1.2 'Science, Biology and Medicine' by Actor								
Sub-Topics	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Topic 1.2	**44**	**100%**	**77**	**100%**	**20**	**100%**	**19**	**100%**
1.2.1 Science and Biology	10	23%	15	19%	4	20%	4	21%
1.2.2 Medical Intervention	0	0%	24	31%	0	0%	1	5%
1.2.3 Gender Dysphoria	0	0%	15	19%	0	0%	1	5%
1.2.4 Transition	4	9%	52	68%	7	35%	12	63%
1.2.5 Detransition	4	9%	3	4%	1	5%	0	0%
1.2.6 Conversion Therapy	32	73%	8	10%	6	30%	5	26%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had a higher-than-average relative percentage for Conversion Therapy compared to other actors. Unsurprisingly, cases that contained debates pertaining to Bill C-4 meant that this sub-topic was widely discussed.

MSM Newspapers had higher-than-average relative percentages for Medical Intervention, Gender Dysphoria, and Transition compared to other actors. This grouping produced/disseminated many cases reporting on current events pertaining to trans healthcare topics.

Alt-Right New Media had a higher-than-average relative percentages Transition compared to other actors. This grouping discussed transition frequently, often relying on medical information to highlight possible complications, negative outcomes, and/or challenges with medical transition.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, there were three actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Transition), MSM Newspapers (Conversion Therapy), and Think Tanks (Transition). It was surprising that Politicians and Think Tanks had lower numbers for Transition compared to other actors. Lastly, MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Conversion Therapy.

A4.1.3: Sub-Topics of Topic 1.3 – 'Intersectionality – Identities'

The topic category 'Intersectionality – Identities' pertained to codes centered around interest groups like women, children, and families. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of

the material, six sub-topics that defined this topic category were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the topic of Intersectionality – Identities present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following six sub-topics:

1. Women: Discussions of women, women's rights, etc.
2. Men: Discussions of men, topics related to men, etc.
3. Parents: Discussions of parents, childrearing, familial decision making, etc.
4. Teachers: Discussions of teachers, education, curriculums, etc.
5. Children: Discussions of children, topics related to children, etc.
6. Immigrants: Immigrants, acculturation, citizenship, etc.

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Women, Parents, and Children were expected to be the most prevalent sub-topics in this category. Based on the literature,[571] these interested groups were expected to become focal points in anti-trans discourse over time.
- The sub-topics Women, Parents, and Children were all expected to increase over time.
- The sub-topics Men, Teachers, and Immigrants were not expatiated to be prevalent, nor were these results expected to change over time or by actor.
- The sub-topics Women, Parents, and Children were expected to be strongly prevalent across all actors, as these interest groups have become focal points in anti-trans discourse in recent years.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A4.1.3a – Sub-Topics of Topic 1.3 'Intersectionality – Identities'

Sub-Topics		
	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Topic 1.3	**293**	**100%**
1.3.1 Women	57	19%
1.3.2 Men	9	3%
1.3.3 Parents	54	18%
1.3.4 Teachers	10	3%
1.3.5 Children	204	70%
1.3.6 Immigrants	4	1%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

[571] Bower-Brown, 2024; Evans, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

The Children sub-topic was the largest sub-topic within this topic category by a significant margin. This was in line with the above-stated hypothesis. A shift in focus toward child-centric anti-trans discourses[572] has characterized many of the tactics anti-trans actors have employed recently. Conversely, it was surprising to find that Women and Parents were lower than anticipated. Given the proliferation of 'parental rights' and 'women's sex-based rights' discourses, these numbers were unexpected.

Table A4.1.3b – Sub-Topics of Topic 1.3 'Intersectionality – Identities' by Time Period

Sub-Topics	2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Topic 1.3	**0**	**0%**	**71**	**100%**	**222**	**100%**
1.3.1 Women	0	0%	27	38%	30	14%
1.3.2 Men	0	0%	5	7%	4	2%
1.3.3 Parents	0	0%	17	24%	37	17%
1.3.4 Teachers	0	0%	2	3%	8	4%
1.3.5 Children	0	0%	39	55%	165	74%
1.3.6 Immigrants	0	0%	4	6%	0	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The presence of the Children sub-topic increased notably from the 2010s to the 2020s, by nearly 20%. Current anti-trans discourses centered around 'protecting' children from exposure to 'harmful' concepts (i.e., transness) have proliferated widely in recent years. More surprising, however, was the quantitative decrease in presence of the Women and Parents sub-topics. As was previously discussed, shifting discourses promoting 'parental rights' and/or (cisgender) women's 'sex-based rights' would lead one to anticipate a similar growth between the decades; however, this was not the case. It seems that, while discourses *involving* these interest groups may have surged in recent years, cases centering women and parents *as the main topics of discussion* have actually decreased over time.

[572] Bower-Brown, 2024; Evans, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025

Table A4.1.3c – Sub-Topics of Topic 1.3 'Intersectionality – Identities' by Actor								
Sub-Topics	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Topic 1.3	**36**	**100%**	**148**	**100%**	**40**	**100%**	**69**	**100%**
1.3.1 Women	5	14%	30	20%	10	25%	12	17%
1.3.2 Men	0	0%	2	1%	4	10%	3	4%
1.3.3 Parents	9	25%	18	12%	15	38%	12	17%
1.3.4 Teachers	0	0%	7	5%	1	3%	2	3%
1.3.5 Children	31	86%	101	68%	20	50%	52	75%
1.3.6 Immigrants	0	0%	2	1%	2	5%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Both Politicians and Think Tanks contained higher-than-average relative percentages for the Parents sub-topic. Politicians evoked parents and 'parental rights' discourses when discussing topics related to transness, such as Policy 713 and/or Bill 137. Similarly, Think Tanks often discussed the importance of 'school choice' and 'parental rights' to ensure that parents' values were instilled within their children.

Politicians also discussed the Children sub-topic more often than other actors. This sub-topic appeared frequently in relation to discussions pertaining to 'pronoun bills', in discourses wherein 'protection' from 'harm' were evoked, and/or in discourses describing the government's role in securing education and safety for the next generation.

Think Tanks discussed the Men sub-topic more often than other actors. This was largely attributed to Focus on the Family Canada, wherein this think tank disproportionately discussed masculinity and how to act like/become a 'real man'[573] (per white, Western, cisheteropatriarchal cultural standards). Gendered expectations for men were heavily discussed.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, there were two actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: MSM Newspapers (Parents) and Think Tanks (Children). These findings were surprising. It was expected that MSM Newspapers would report more robustly on the growing sociocultural and political discourses pertaining to 'parental rights'. However, it was noted that this grouping tended to focus on *children* when 'parental rights' discussions were the focus of their reports, with less emphasis placed on *parents* as an interest group. Conversely, Think Tanks had lower numbers for the Children sub-topic, which was unexpected. Given their frequent discussions of 'school choice' and 'parental rights', a larger focus on 'protecting children' discourses was anticipated. However, they seemed to prioritize the *parents'* role in 'parental rights' discourse, with less emphasis placed on children.

[573] Snorton, 2017; Butler, 2024; Bey, 2022

A4.1.4: Sub-Topics of Topic 1.4 – 'Intersectionality – Isms'

The topic of 'Intersectionality – Isms' pertained to codes that focused on structural power dynamics. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 13 sub-topics that defined this topic category were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the topic of Intersectionality – Isms present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following 13 sub-topics:

1. Feminism: Women's rights, women's issues, equality, etc.
2. Gender Binary: The gender binary, men and women, complementary but mutually exclusive sexes/genders, etc.
3. Gender Roles: Gendered division of labour, etc.
4. Heterosexuality: Heterosexual attraction, heterosexual intercourse, etc.
5. Masculinity: Maleness, masculinity, masculine attributes, gendered expectations, toughness, rationality, logic, strength, aloofness, etc.
6. Femininity: Femaleness, femininity, feminine attributes, gendered expectations, softness, emotionality, illogic, weakness, nurturing, etc.
7. Race: Discussions and definitions of race, etc.
8. Racism: Discussions and definitions of racism; small-scale (microaggressions, stereotypes, etc.) and/or large-scale (systemic barriers, lack of resources, eugenics, etc.)
9. Immigration: Immigration, citizenship, permanent residency, migrant workers, visas, legal vs. illegal immigration, etc.
10. Ability: Ability, able-bodiedness, etc.
11. Ableism: Ableism, disability, physical/mental illness, neurodiversity, etc.
12. Elitism: Discussions and/or definitions of an 'elite', protections for the elite, etc.
13. Bigotry: Intolerance, fear, hatred, etc.

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Gender Binary and Gender Roles were expected to be the most prevalent sub-topics in this category. The reification of the sex/gender binary and/or gender roles[574] has been a key preoccupation of anti-trans actors' for decades, according to the literature.
- Elitism and Bigotry were anticipated to be present in moderate numbers. Portrayals of trans people/pro-trans actors being 'bigoted' and/or 'elitist' were somewhat prevalent in the pre-reading and pilot testing results.
- Gender Binary and Gender Roles were expected to increase dramatically over time as the anti-trans backlash surged and these sub-topics became widely discussed.
- Gender Binary and Gender Roles were expected be strongly present across all actors, and especially prevalent for the Alt-Right New Media grouping.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

[574] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024; schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

Table A4.1.4a – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.4 'Intersectionality – Isms'		
Sub-Topics		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.4	**157**	**100%**
1.4.1 Feminism	4	3%
1.4.2 Gender Binary	125	80%
1.4.3 Gender Roles	10	6%
1.4.4 Heterosexuality	1	1%
1.4.5 Masculinity	5	3%
1.4.6 Femininity	1	1%
1.4.7 Race	1	1%
1.4.8 Racism	12	8%
1.4.9 Immigration	5	3%
1.4.10 Ability	0	0%
1.4.11 Ableism	4	3%
1.4.12 Elitism	2	1%
1.4.13 Bigotry	15	10%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Per the hypotheses, Gender Binary was the largest sub-topic in this topic category by a significant margin. The anti-trans backlash has been impacted by burgeoning preoccupations with the reification, maintenance, and restabilizing of the sex/gender binary. However, Gender Roles was significantly lower than expected. It was expected that Gender Roles and Gender Binary would be present in similar numbers, as these concepts are often disused in tandem; however, this was not the case. It seems that anti-trans actors generally put less emphasis on traditional gender roles compared to discussing biologically essentializing paradigms.

The Racism and Bigotry sub-topics were present in higher numbers than anticipated. Generally, these topics were discussed when portraying trans people/pro-trans people as 'bigoted' toward 'other beliefs' (i.e., articulating anti-trans discourse). This colonization of progressive/liberal language was a fascinating tactic that positioned anti-transness as an 'open-minded' and 'tolerant' position, and pro-transness as a 'closed-minded' and 'intolerant' position.

Table A4.1.4b – Sub-Topics of Topic 1.4 'Intersectionality – Isms' by Time Period						
Sub-Topics	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.4	**0**	**0%**	**44**	**100%**	**113**	**100%**
1.4.1 Feminism	0	0%	3	7%	1	1%
1.4.2 Gender Binary	0	0%	24	55%	101	89%
1.4.3 Gender Roles	0	0%	10	23%	0	0%
1.4.4 Heterosexuality	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
1.4.5 Masculinity	0	0%	4	9%	1	1%
1.4.6 Femininity	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
1.4.7 Race	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
1.4.8 Racism	0	0%	6	14%	6	5%
1.4.9 Immigration	0	0%	4	9%	1	1%
1.4.10 Ability	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
1.4.11 Ableism	0	0%	3	7%	1	1%
1.4.12 Elitism	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%
1.4.13 Bigotry	0	0%	6	14%	9	8%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The presence of the Gender Binary sub-topic increased over time by 34%. This is a significant finding and demonstrates the degree to which discussions of the sex/gender binary have proliferated in recent years. The maintenance of the sex/gender binary (and its legitimation via scientific information)[575] seems to be a key characteristic of the topics of discussion present in anti-trans discourse, especially in the 2020s. However, Gender Roles decreased over time, 'disappearing' from the dataset in the 2020s. This finding was quite surprising, as it was expected that this topic would often be discussed int tandem with discussions pertaining to the sex/gender binary.[576] Racism also decreased notably over time as well.

[575] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026
[576] Devor and Haefele-Thomas, 2019

Table A4.1.4c – Sub-Topics of Topic 1.4 'Intersectionality – Isms' by Actor								
Sub-Topics	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Topic 1.4	**3**	**100%**	**92**	**100%**	**28**	**100%**	**34**	**100%**
1.4.1 Feminism	0	0%	1	1%	3	11%	0	0%
1.4.2 Gender Binary	1	33%	76	83%	18	64%	30	88%
1.4.3 Gender Roles	0	0%	0	0%	10	36%	0	0%
1.4.4 Heterosexuality	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%
1.4.5 Masculinity	0	0%	2	2%	2	7%	1	3%
1.4.6 Femininity	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%
1.4.7 Race	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
1.4.8 Racism	0	0%	5	5%	2	7%	5	15%
1.4.9 Immigration	0	0%	3	3%	1	4%	1	3%
1.4.10 Ability	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
1.4.11 Ableism	1	33%	3	3%	0	0%	0	0%
1.4.12 Elitism	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%
1.4.13 Bigotry	0	0%	9	10%	4	14%	2	6%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Politicians contained only three coded cases present in this topic category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Politicians grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Think Tanks had higher-than-average relative percentages for Feminism, Gender Roles, Masculinity, and Bigotry. This grouping discussed feminism to highlight its flaws, pitfalls, and/or hypocrisies pertaining to its theorizations on gender and trans people/transness.[577]

[577] Faludi, 1991; Manne, 2017; Butler, 2024

Feminism was also often framed as dangerous, toxic, and/or a divisive force that threatened the stability of the nation and the (nuclear) family unit. Both the Gender Roles and the Masculinity sub-topics were largely driven by Focus on the Family Canada. This think tank was strongly preoccupied with 'traditional gender roles' and/or discussions of acceptable/aspirational forms of masculinity. This grouping also had higher numbers for the Bigotry sub-topic, discussing pro-trans discourse as hateful, harmful, and/or threatening to the stability of the nation and the (nuclear) family unit.

Alt-Right New Media had higher-than-average relative percentages for the Racism and Elitism sub-topics. This grouping discussed racism pro-trans stances as 'intolerant' of 'other cultures'[578] (i.e., disparaging immigrants for articulating anti-trans beliefs). They also portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as infiltrating offices and occupations across many sectors of society to enforce 'gender ideology' onto the general populace. These discussions also contained what appear to be anti-Semitic dog whistles,[579] such as referring to the pro-trans surge of the 2010s as part of a 'globalist' (i.e., Jewish) 'world order' whose goal was to undermine Western cultures.

There were two actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: Think Tanks (Gender Binary) and Alt-Right New Media (Bigotry). These findings were surprising. Think Tanks did not discuss the sex/gender binary as often as anticipated, nor did the Alt-Right New Media grouping portray trans people/pro-trans actors as 'bigoted' as often as anticipated.

A4.1.5: Sub-Topics of Topic 1.5 – 'Common Talking Points'

The topic of 'Common Talking Points' pertained to codes focused on various key talking points, such as policing trans bodies, trans people participating in sport, and trans-hostile stereotypes. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 19 sub-topics that defined this topic category were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the topic of Common Talking Points present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following 19 sub-topics:

1. Policing Trans Bodies: Checking ID, interrogations, body searches, harassment, etc.
2. Trans People/Transness and Bathrooms: Bathrooms, changing rooms, sex-segregated spaces, etc.
3. Trans People/Transness in Sports: Sex-segregated leagues, competitions, governing bodies, hormonal/endocrinological testing, etc.
4. Trans People/Transness and Sexuality: Sexuality, sexual intercourse, sexual attraction, etc.
5. Trans People/Transness and Sexual Health: Reproduction, giving birth, family planning, STI screening, healthcare access, etc.
6. Trans People/Transness and Sex Work: Pornography, prostitution, sex trafficking, etc.
7. Trans People/Transness and Sexual Disorder/Harm: Pedophilia, rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, etc.
8. Schools and Trans People/Transness: Education, curriculums, school-government relationship, parent-teacher relationship, student-teacher relationship, etc.
9. Universities and Trans People/Transness: Education, curriculums, protests, campus, safe spaces, policy, advocacy, etc.

[578] Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022
[579] Bronner, 2019; Lockwood, 2021; Blutinger, 2021; Allington et al., 2023

10. Gay-Straight Alliances (etc.): Safe spaces, school campuses/scholastic settings, etc.
11. LGBTQ+ Events and Venues: Pride events, clubs and bars, festivals, cultural events, etc.
12. Drag and Trans People/Transness: Drag performances, trans people and drag, etc.
13. Trans People/Transness and the Family Unit: Parental involvement, familial conflict, estrangement, abuse, neglect, abandonment, etc.
14. Trans People/Transness and Safety of Others: Safety, protection from harm, addressing concerns, safety measures, etc.
15. Trans People/Transness and Fairness: Fairness, equity, preventing unfairness, barriers, etc.
16. Deception and/or Betrayal: Deceit, exploitation, extortion, blackmailing, betrayal, etc.
17. Propaganda and Indoctrination: Disseminating certain information, pushing particular paradigms/views/opinions, agendas, etc.
18. Censorship: Withholding information, coercion/force, intimidation tactics, deplatforming, etc.
19. Social Media and Mass Communication: TV, newspapers, magazines, Meta, Snapchat, TikTok, calling, texting; discussions of/about social media, information dissemination, misinformation, etc.

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Policing Trans Bodies, Indoctrination, and Censorship were all expected to be the largest sub-topics of this topic category. The literature[580] indicated that anti-trans discourses emphasized policing trans bodies as a 'societal good'. The literature also indicated strong preoccupations with the perceived 'indoctrination' of children into 'gender ideology' and/or with the perceived censorship of anti-trans discourse.
- Bathrooms, Sports, and Sexual Disorder/Harm were also expected to be present in high numbers.[581]
- The sub-topics Policing Trans Bodies, Indoctrination, and Censorship were expected to increase over time as anti-trans discourse began to proliferate in Canadian politics and media.
- The sub-topics Bathrooms, Sports, and Sexual Disorder/Harm were all expected to increase dramatically over time, the use of trans-hostile stereotypes increasing over time.
- The sub-topics Policing Trans Bodies, Bathrooms, Sports, Sexual Disorder/Harm, Indoctrination, and Censorship were all expected to be strongly present across all actors, and especially prevalent among Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

[580] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

[581] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

Table A4.1.5a – Sub-Topics for Topic 5.1 'Common Talking Points'		
Sub-Topics		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.5	**351**	**100%**
1.5.1 Policing Trans Bodies	170	48%
1.5.2 Bathrooms	6	2%
1.5.3 Sports	17	5%
1.5.4 Sexuality	8	2%
1.5.5 Sexual Health	2	1%
1.5.6 Sex Work	2	1%
1.5.7 Sexual Disorder/Harm	31	9%
1.5.8 Schools	68	19%
1.5.9 Universities	20	6%
1.5.10 GSAs	7	2%
1.5.11 LGBTQ+ Venues and Events	8	2%
1.5.12 Drag and Trans People	5	1%
1.5.13 Family Unit	12	3%
1.5.14 Safety of Others	22	6%
1.5.15 Fairness	25	7%
1.5.16 Betrayal	1	0%
1.5.17 Indoctrination	62	18%
1.5.18 Censorship	104	30%
1.5.19 Social Media	12	3%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Policing Trans Bodies, Indoctrination, and Censorship were all highly present sub-topics for this topic category. Anti-trans actors often discussed policing trans bodies socially, politically, and legally as a benefit to society. They also expressed strong opposition to any perceived attempts to indoctrinate and/or censor their beliefs. Additionally, the Schools sub-topic was surprisingly prevalent. It seems that discussions of transness/trans people in schools was a greater focus than anticipated. The Bathrooms, Sports, and Sexual Disorder/Harm sub-topics were all present in much lower numbers than anticipated.

Table A4.1.5b – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.5 'Common Talking Points' by Time Period						
Sub-Topics	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.5	**0**	**0%**	**120**	**100%**	**321**	**100%**
1.5.1 Policing Trans Bodies	0	0%	61	51%	109	34%
1.5.2 Bathrooms	0	0%	4	3%	2	1%
1.5.3 Sports	0	0%	4	3%	13	4%
1.5.4 Sexuality	0	0%	3	3%	5	2%
1.5.5 Sexual Health	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
1.5.6 Sex Work	0	0%	2	2%	0	0%
1.5.7 Sexual Disorder/Harm	0	0%	10	8%	21	7%
1.5.8 Schools	0	0%	17	14%	51	16%
1.5.9 Universities	0	0%	14	12%	6	2%
1.5.10 GSAs	0	0%	7	6%	0	0%
1.5.11 LGBTQ+ Venues and Events	0	0%	2	2%	6	2%
1.5.12 Drag and Trans People	0	0%	0	0%	5	2%
1.5.13 Family Unit	0	0%	1	1%	11	3%
1.5.14 Safety of Others	0	0%	8	7%	14	4%
1.5.15 Fairness	0	0%	11	9%	14	4%
1.5.16 Betrayal	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
1.5.17 Indoctrination	0	0%	12	10%	50	16%
1.5.18 Censorship	0	0%	27	23%	77	24%
1.5.19 Social Media	0	0%	5	4%	7	2%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Generally, most sub-topics demonstrated very little variation between decades. The most notable sub-topics for their *lack* of growth over time were: Bathrooms, Sports, Sexual Disorder/Harm, Schools, Safety of Others, Fairness, Indoctrination, and Censorship. Based on qualitative observations, these sub-topics were expected to become focal points of anti-trans discourse in the 2020s. However, this was not reflected quantitively. Policing Trans Bodies and Universities decreased over time, which directly contradicted my hypothesis. Despite expectations that discussions pertaining to policing trans bodies would increase over time, the opposite was borne out in the data.

Table A4.1.5c – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.5 'Common Talking Points' by Actor								
Sub-Topics	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Topic 1.5	**33**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**	**47**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**
1.5.1 Policing Trans Bodies	17	52%	135	68%	7	15%	11	15%
1.5.2 Bathrooms	2	6%	3	2%	1	2%	0	0%
1.5.3 Sports	0	0%	14	7%	0	0%	3	4%
1.5.4 Sexuality	0	0%	1	1%	1	2%	6	8%
1.5.5 Sexual Health	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
1.5.6 Sex Work	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
1.5.7 Sexual Disorder/Harm	2	6%	17	9%	0	0%	12	17%
1.5.8 Schools	7	21%	32	16%	16	34%	13	18%
1.5.9 Universities	0	0%	11	6%	6	13%	3	4%
1.5.10 GSAs	2	6%	1	1%	4	9%	0	0%
1.5.11 LGBTQ+ Venues and Events	0	0%	5	3%	0	0%	3	4%
1.5.12 Drag and Trans People	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	3	4%
1.5.13 Family Unit	0	0%	5	3%	1	2%	6	8%
1.5.14 Safety of Others	3	9%	8	4%	6	13%	5	7%
1.5.15 Fairness	5	15%	11	6%	4	9%	5	7%
1.5.16 Betrayal	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
1.5.17 Indoctrination	2	6%	16	8%	11	23%	33	46%

1.5.18 Censorship	6	18%	46	23%	22	47%	30	42%
1.5.19 Social Media	0	0%	9	5%	1	2%	2	3%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher-than-average relative percentages for the Policing Trans Bodies, Schools, and Fairness sub-topics. Both Policing Trans Bodies and Schools were often discussed in relation to 'pronoun bills' and 'parental rights' discourses. This grouping also discussed the 'necessity' of policing trans bodies for the safety of (cisgender) women and children, particularly in spaces like public gendered washrooms. The Fairness sub-topic was also prominent in discussions of trans women's access to single-sex spaces, such as public bathrooms or sports leagues.

MSM Newspapers had a higher-than-average relative percentage for the Policing Trans Bodies sub-topic. They discussed policing trans bodies for the 'safety' of society, especially (cisgender) women and children, and/or discussed the surveillance, policing, and/or enforcement of 'correct' gendered expression for trans people.

Think Tanks had higher-than-average relative percentages for Schools, Universities, Safety of Others, Indoctrination, and Censorship. Think Tanks discussed parental rights and 'school choice' extensively and also discussed schools with 'traditional values'. They discussed the university campus as a site of 'cultural warfare', in which trigger warnings stifled academic free speech.[582] They also positioned trans people as 'dangerous' to society, especially (cisgender) women and children. They were preoccupied with the 'indoctrination' of children into 'gender ideology'. They were also preoccupied with the perceived censoring of anti-trans stances from public life as a form of deplatforming 'non-woke' beliefs.

Alt-Right New Media had higher results for the Sexual Disorder/Harm, Indoctrination, and Censorship sub-topics. This grouping was preoccupied with stereotypes of trans people as sexual predators,[583] especially against (cisgender) women and children. Like Think Tanks, they were also preoccupied with the perceived indoctrination of children into 'gender ideology', and/or with the perceived censorship from the 'woke mob' in the expression of anti-trans discourse in public life.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, all actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Indoctrination; Censorship), MSM Newspapers (Indoctrination); Think Tanks (Policing Trans Bodies; Sexual Disorder/Harm), and Alt-Right New Media (Policing Trans Bodies).

A4.1.6: Sub-Topics of Topic 1.6 – 'Politics and Law'

The topic of 'Politics and Law' pertained to codes that focused on discussions of freedom of speech/expression, the government and trans people, and 'parental rights'. This section examined the breakdown of the sub-topics of the topic category Politics and Law. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, four sub-topics that defined this topic category were

[582] Montigny, 2025
[583] Serano, 2007; Howansky et al., 2021; Goktas, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the topic of Politics and Law present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following four sub-topics:

1. Trans People and Law: Legislation, legal precedent, rights, privacy, marriage, divorce, family law, custody, municipal/provincial/federal law, etc.
2. Govt and Politics: All levels of government, discussions of politics, politicians, political proceedings, etc.
3. Freedom of Speech: Legal protections, liberal democracy, expression of views, etc.
4. Parental Rights: Protecting children from harm, instilling values, parental authority, public vs. private, etc.

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Trans People and Law, Govt and Politics, and Parental Rights were all expected to be the largest sub-topics. Rights-based discourses framing trans rights as in contention with other human/civil rights have proliferated in recent years, and so these were expected to be prevalent within the dataset.[584]
- Freedom of Speech would present in high numbers, as this was a noteworthy point of discourse from a qualitative perspective.[585]
- The sub-topics Trans People/Transness and the Law, Govt and Politics, and Parental Rights were all expected to increase over time as rights-based discussions began to proliferate.
- The sub-topics Trans People/Transness and the Law, Govt and Politics, and Parental Rights were all expected to be prevalent across all actors, and especially prevalent for Politicians, Think Tanks, and Alt-Right New Media.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A4.1.6a – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.6 'Politics and Law'

Sub-Topics	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Topic 1.6	**331**	**100%**
1.6.1 Trans People and Law	137	41%
1.6.2 Govt and Politics	249	75%
1.6.3 Freedom of Speech	103	31%
1.6.4 Parental Rights	112	34%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

[584] Murib, 2020; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; Ashley, 2024; Anderson et al, 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

[585] Gidron and Ziblatt, 2019; Montigny, 2025; Murib, 2020; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; Ashley, 2024; Anderson et al, 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

Trans People and Law, Govt and Politics, and Parental Rights were all highly prevalent in the dataset. Discussions pertaining to trans people's relationship to the law were prevalent. Discussions pertaining to the government and politics/politicians and their role in 'stopping' trans rights (or accusing parties of 'forcing through' pro-trans legislation in accordance with 'woke ideology')[586] were also common and often delineated along party lines. There was also a strong focus on 'parental rights', especially among cases centered on 'pronoun bills' such as Policy 713 and Bill 137. Lastly, there was high engagement with Freedom of Speech, as trans rights were often discussed as being in contention with rights such as freedom of speech/expression.

Table A4.1.6b – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.6 'Politics and Law' by Time Period

Sub-Topics	2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Topic 1.6	**0**	**0%**	**100**	**100%**	**231**	**100%**
1.6.1 Trans People and Law	0	0%	71	71%	66	29%
1.6.2 Govt and Politics	0	0%	65	65%	184	80%
1.6.3 Freedom of Speech	0	0%	35	35%	68	29%
1.6.4 Parental Rights	0	0%	7	7%	105	45%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Three salient findings arose from cross-referencing the sub-topics by time period. Firstly, Govt and Politics and Parental Rights both increased dramatically over time. At the federal level, the then-Trudeau government was highly criticized by anti-trans actors[587] for its strong pro-LGBTQ+ stance and track record of passing legislation that enshrined trans rights (such as Bills C-16 and Bill C-4) into law. This criticism seems to have continued into the early 2020s. There was also a sharp proliferation in the presence of the Parental Rights sub-topic over time. Prior to the 2020s, this topic seems to have been little discussed in relation to anti-trans discourse; over time, however, it has become much more prevalent.

Unexpectedly, however, it was discovered that Trans People and Law decreased dramatically in the 2020s from the 2010s. It appears that this sub-topic (which pertained to rights, legal precedent, and family law) was applicable generally to high-profile cases, such as the Yaniv cases, and/or the *A.B. v C.D. [2019]* case.[588] The latter case detailed a father attempting to block his ex-wife's support of their child in receiving hormone replacement therapy. The Yaniv cases[589] detailed a white trans woman taking various South Asian immigrant women and their waxing and beauty businesses to court over their refusal to service her as a

[586] George, 2019; Montigny, 2025
[587] Gidron and Ziblatt, 2019; Norris, 2020; Montigny, 2025
[588] A.B. v. C.D. and E.F., 2019 BCSC 254, 2019
[589] Yaniv v. Various Waxing Salons, 2019 BCHRT 222, 2019; X v. Hot Mess Salon (No. 2), 2020 BCHRT 42, 2020; Simpson v. Rebel News Network Ltd., 2022 BCSC 1160, 2022; Simpson v. Canada Galaxy Pageants, 2025 (Ontario Human Rights Tribunal), 2025

pre/non-operative trans woman. Both cases took place in – and/or received the most media attention – in the later 2010s. In the 2020s, it seems that this sub-topic was less prevalent by comparison.

Table A4.1.6c – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.6 'Politics and Law' by Actor

Sub-Topics	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Topic 1.6	**86**	**100%**	**137**	**100%**	**48**	**100%**	**60**	**100%**
1.6.1 Trans People and Law	74	86%	42	31%	7	15%	14	23%
1.6.2 Govt and Politics	76	88%	93	68%	33	69%	47	78%
1.6.3 Freedom of Speech	24	28%	23	17%	30	63%	26	43%
1.6.4 Parental Rights	16	19%	55	40%	17	35%	24	40%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher-than-average relative percentages for Trans People and Law and Govt and Politics compared to other actors. This was to be expected, as discussing the law, the government, and politics/politicians extensively is fundamental to how politicians and legal systems operate. Anti-trans discourses often ranged from critiquing pro-trans decisions by federal and provincial governments, to positioning trans rights as 'governmental overreach' and/or contentious with other human/civil rights under Canadian law.

Think Tanks had a higher-than-average relative percentage for the Freedom of Speech sub-topic. This was unsurprising, as the Think Tanks extensively produced/disseminated discourses that supported freedom of speech/expression – which was positioned as 'under threat' by trans rights. Freedom of speech was discussed both from a legal standpoint, as well as a more colloquial use of the term regarding perceived social sanctions resulting from articulating anti-trans beliefs in public.

Alt-Right New Media had a higher-than-average relative percentage for Freedom of Speech compared to other actors. This grouping also extensively produced/disseminated discourses that supported freedom of speech/expression – which was positioned as 'under threat' by trans rights. Freedom of speech was discussed both from a legal standpoint, as well as a more colloquial use of the term regarding perceived social sanctions resulting from articulating anti-trans beliefs in public.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, all actors with lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Parental Rights), MSM Newspapers (Trans People and Law; Freedom of Speech), Think Tanks (Trans People and Law), and Alt-Right New Media (Trans People and

Law). It was somewhat surprising that Politicians had lower numbers for Parental Rights, as these topics were heavily discussed in provincial legislatures. However, it seems this topic was not a central focal point of the cases. This also seems to be the case for MSM Newspapers, Think Tanks, and Alt-Right New Media. Rights-based discourses were prevalent did not appear to be a central topic of discussion for this grouping.

A4.1.7: Sub-Topics of Topic 1.7 – 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'

The topic of 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' pertained to codes that focused on discussions of religion, patriotism, and/or Western culture and values. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, seven sub-topics that defined this topic category were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the topic of Culture, Ideology and Religion present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following seven sub-topics:

1. Capitalism: Discussions and/or definitions of capitalism, support for capitalism, etc.
2. Communism/Socialism: Discussions and/or definitions of communism/socialism, rejection of/fear of/hatred for communism/socialism, etc.
3. Religion: Religious traditions, tenets of faith, interfaith relations, orthodoxy/orthopraxy, religious freedoms, etc.
4. Patriotism: Patriotism, pride in/love for one's country, protecting one's country, etc.
5. Western Culture/Values: The West, Euro-North American cultural norms and values, etc.
6. Canadian Culture/Values: Canada, the nation, Canadian cultural norms and values, etc.
7. Traditional Culture/Values: Traditionalist cultural norms and values, etc.

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Religion, Western Culture/Values, and Traditional Culture/Values were all expected to be the most prevalent sub-topics.
- Canadian Culture/Values was also expected to be present in high numbers, especially when discussing Canadian-specific events, laws, and movements in relation to transness/trans people/trans rights.
- The sub-topics Religion, Western Culture/Values, and Traditional Culture/Values were all expected to increase over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Canadian Culture/Values, Western Culture/Values, and Traditional Culture/Values.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Western Culture/Values and Traditional Culture/Values.
- Religion, Western Culture/Values, and Traditional Culture/Values were expected to have higher relative percentages among Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A4.1.7a – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.7 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'		
Sub-Topics		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.7	**74**	**100%**
1.7.1 Capitalism	2	3%
1.7.2 Communism/Socialism	1	1%
1.7.3 Religion	27	36%
1.7.4 Patriotism	2	3%
1.7.5 Western Culture/Values	5	7%
1.7.6 Canadian Culture/Values	42	57%
1.7.7 Traditional Culture/Values	12	16%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Religion was one of the largest sub-topics for this topic category. However, it was second to Canadian Culture/Values, which was unexpected. It seems that discussions of Canadian-specific culture, values, and social norms dominated anti-trans discourses in this topic category, rather than a broader appeal to Western and/or 'traditional' cultural values. By contrast, Traditional Values/Culture was somewhat present, but in lower numbers than expected. Finally, Western Culture/Values was present in significantly lower numbers than anticipated. Anti-trans discourses often framed pro-trans laws and sociopolitical changes as precarious for Canada's future[590] and the continued preservation of the nation.

[590] Montigny, 2025

Table A4.1.7b – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.7 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' by Time Period						
Sub-Topics	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Topic 1.7	**0**	**0%**	**39**	**100%**	**35**	**100%**
1.7.1 Capitalism	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%
1.7.2 Communism/Socialism	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%
1.7.3 Religion	0	0%	15	38%	12	34%
1.7.4 Patriotism	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%
1.7.5 Western Culture/Values	0	0%	2	5%	3	9%
1.7.6 Canadian Culture/Values	0	0%	23	59%	19	54%
1.7.7 Traditional Culture/Values	0	0%	10	26%	2	6%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Interestingly, the majority of sub-topics from this topic category remained stable over time. This includes the Religion and Western Culture/Values sub-topics, which were anticipated to increase over time. In fact, Traditional Culture/Values decreased over time rather than increasing.

Table A4.1.7c – Sub-Topics for Topic 1.7 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' by Actor								
Sub-Topics	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Topic 1.7	11	100%	29	100%	28	100%	6	100%
1.7.1 Capitalism	0	0%	1	3%	1	4%	0	0%
1.7.2 Communism/Socialism	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%
1.7.3 Religion	3	27%	4	14%	13	46%	6	100%
1.7.4 Patriotism	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	1	17%
1.7.5 Western Culture/Values	0	0%	4	14%	0	0%	1	17%
1.7.6 Canadian Culture/Values	9	82%	21	72%	9	32%	0	0%
1.7.7 Traditional Culture/Values	0	0%	3	10%	9	32%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Alt-Right New Media contained only six coded cases present in this topic category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Alt-Right New Media grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Politicians had a higher-than-average relative percentage for Canadian Culture/Values, which was unexpected. However, when qualitatively examining the cases, this appeal to 'Canadian culture/values' seems to highlight a tactic of positioning transness as 'anti-Canadian'. This grouping discussed trans rights as oppositional to Canadian 'values', positioning trans rights as 'divisive' and/or 'dogmatic'.

MSM Newspapers had higher-than-average relative percentages for Western Culture/Values and Canadian Culture/Values. While the Western culture sub-topic was expected, the enormity of the Canadian Culture/Values sub-topic was surprising. Western cultural hegemony and 'Canadian values' were often contrasted against pro-trans discourse, which was positioned as 'destroying cultural cohesion', 'stifling freedom of speech/expression', and/or 'undermining democratic rights'.

Think Tanks contained higher-than-average relative percentages for Religion and Traditional Culture/Values. This was to be expected, as the Think Tanks grouping disproportionately contained religious (Christian) discussions compared to other actors. Religious discourses rejected trans self-identity claims based on interpretations of Christian

doctrine. They also discussed maintaining ‘traditional values’, centering the (nuclear) family unit as the foundation upon which ‘culture’ is built.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, all three examined actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Religion; Western Culture/Values; Traditional Culture/Values), MSM Newspapers (Religion), and Think Tanks (Canadian Culture/Values; Western Culture Values). Politicians did not prioritize religious, Western, and/or ‘traditional’ topics of discussion as much as other actors. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Religion. Think Tanks had lower numbers for Canadian Culture/Values and Western Culture/Values, which was quite surprising. Despite expectations that these institutions would strongly advocate for pro-Western and pro-Canadian ‘values’, these topics were not discussed as frequently as anticipated.

APPENDIX 5: CHAPTER 6 EXPLICIT ARGUMENTS AND EXPLICIT SUB-ARGUMENTS DISCUSSION LONG-FORM PROSE ANALYSIS

A5.1: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Arguments Categories

This appendix contains the long-form prose analysis for the sub-arguments linked to Chapter 6: Explicit Arguments and Explicit Sub-Arguments. All colour categorization of the data outlined below follows the same convention outlined for the breakdown of data overall, by time period, and by actor as indicated in the body of Chapter 6. Every argument category was analyzed by the sub-argument breakdown. The full text, including the tables and the qualitative analyses, are provided. They will be discussed in order below.

A5.1.1: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument Category 2.1 – 'Legality, Rights and Govt'

The argument category 'Legality, Rights and Govt' pertained to codes centered around legal/legislative/political anti-trans discourses. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, six sub-arguments of categories that defined the Legality, Rights and Govt category were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Legality, Rights and Govt present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following six sub-arguments:

1. Freedom of Speech: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors are in favour of freedom of speech?
2. Silencing: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are in opposition to freedom of speech?
3. Rights: Do they explicitly argue that trans rights violate and/or otherwise come into conflict with other legal rights?
4. Anti Govt: Do they explicitly argue that the government is forcing transness and/or trans people upon them?
5. Pro Govt: Do they explicitly argue that the government is stopping/attempting to stop the forcing of transness and/or trans people upon them?
6. Parental Rights: Do they explicitly argue that 'parental rights' are necessary, important, and/or should be protected by law?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Parental Rights were all expected to be the largest sub-arguments. These sub-arguments have proliferated as areas of preoccupation in recent years as rights-based arguments in general have become prevalent.[591]
- Rights and Anti-Govt were expected to feature somewhat prominently.
- Pro-Govt was expected to be the smallest sub-argument.
- It was anticipated that Freedom of Speech, Silencing, Rights, and Parental Rights would all increase in presence over time.[592]
- Politicians were expected to have higher numbers for Freedom of Speech, Silencing, Rights, and Parental Rights.

[591] Spade, 2015; Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024; George, 2019

[592] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026; Anderston et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher numbers for Freedom of Speech and Parental Rights.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher numbers for Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Parental Rights.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher numbers for Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Parental Rights.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.1a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.1 'Legality, Rights and Govt'		
Sub-Arguments		
	Raw #	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.1	**318**	**100%**
2.1.1 Freedom of Speech	203	64%
2.1.2 Silencing	172	54%
2.1.3 Rights	74	23%
2.1.4 Anti Govt	30	9%
2.1.5 Pro Govt	9	3%
2.1.6 Parental Rights	161	51%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

As per the hypotheses, Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Parental Rights were heavily featured in the dataset. These arguments portrayed anti-trans actors as working to maintain freedom of speech/expression. They also portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as working to stifle/silence/curtail the right to freedom of speech/expression. 'Parental rights' were also portrayed as important and/or necessary to protect parental choice without governmental overreach. Anti-Govt and Pro-Govt were lower than anticipated. Arguments that were skeptical/critical of institutions such as the government (especially Trudeau's federal government) and/or displayed support for the government (such as New Brunswick and Saskatchewan's provincial governments) were expected to be more frequent.

Table A5.1.1b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.1 'Legality, Rights and Govt' by Time Period						
Sub-Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.1	**0**	**0%**	**108**	**100%**	**210**	**100%**
2.1.1 Freedom of Speech	0	0%	66	61%	137	65%
2.1.2 Silencing	0	0%	62	57%	110	52%
2.1.3 Rights	0	0%	59	55%	15	7%
2.1.4 Anti Govt	0	0%	8	7%	22	10%
2.1.5 Pro Govt	0	0%	1	1%	8	4%
2.1.6 Parental Rights	0	0%	16	15%	145	69%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Parental Rights was the only explicit sub-argument that increased, demonstrating a growth of over 50%. This confirms qualitative observations that noted a sharp proliferation in arguments pertaining to 'parental rights' as necessary and important. It was surprising to discover that Freedom of Speech and Silencing were stable over time, which did not align with the above-stated hypotheses. Lastly, it was quite surprising to discover that Rights decreased dramatically over time. This sub-argument's focus is that trans rights violate and/or otherwise come into conflict with other legal rights. Despite qualitative observations indicating that this theme would have proliferated over time, instead it seems that cases containing this argument were simply impactful/more memorable, as this was not supported quantitively in the dataset.

Table A5.1.1c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.1 'Legality, Rights and Govt' by Actor								
Sub-Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.1	**78**	**100%**	**118**	**100%**	**59**	**100%**	**62**	**100%**
2.1.1 Freedom of Speech	66	85%	50	42%	49	83%	38	61%
2.1.2 Silencing	49	63%	43	36%	49	83%	31	50%
2.1.3 Rights	36	46%	22	19%	13	22%	3	5%
2.1.4 Anti Govt	7	9%	11	9%	6	10%	6	10%
2.1.5 Pro Govt	1	1%	3	3%	3	5%	2	3%
2.1.6 Parental Rights	28	36%	74	63%	19	32%	40	65%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Rights compared to other actors. As per the above-stated hypotheses, Politicians portrayed anti-trans actors as supportive of freedom of speech/expression, portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as working to silence freedom of speech/expression, and/or portrayed trans rights as conflicting with other human/civil rights.

MSM Newspapers had higher numbers for Parental Rights. This grouping reported prolifically on 'parental rights', arguing that they were necessary and important.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Freedom of Speech and Silencing. They, like Politicians, portrayed anti-trans actors as supportive of freedom of speech/expression and/or portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as working to silence freedom of speech/expression.

Alt-Right New Media contained higher numbers for Parental Rights. This grouping featured discourses pertaining to 'parental rights', arguing explicitly that they were necessary and important to ensure parental values were instilled within their children.

All actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Parental Rights), MSM Newspapers (Freedom of Speech; Silencing), Think Tanks (Parental Rights), and Alt-Right New media (Rights). Both Politicians and Think Tanks had lower numbers for Parental Rights, which was surprising in both instances. Given how often these groupings were anticipated to argue for legislative and/or rights-based curtailments of trans rights, this finding was surprising. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Freedom of Speech and Silencing, seemingly not employing these arguments as often as other actors. Finally, Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Rights, which was also surprising. This grouping was expected to extensively argue that trans rights conflicted with other human/civil rights more often than other actors; however, this was not the case.

A5.1.2: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.2 – 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality'

The argument category 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality' pertained to codes centered around LGBTQ+ events/venues, sexuality, and/or sexual disorder/harm. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, seven sub-arguments that defined the LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality category were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag Sexuality, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following seven sub-arguments:

1. Venues: Do they explicitly argue that LGBTQ+ events and venues should be banned/shut down and/or are unnecessary/unneeded?
2. Sexual Harm: Do they explicitly present information on transness and/or trans people and their relationship to sexual disorders/dysfunction/harm/etc.?
3. Sex Work: Do they explicitly present information on the relationship between transness/trans people and sex work?
4. Hypersexual: Do they explicitly portray transness and/or trans people as hypersexual(ized)?
5. Bathroom Danger: Do they explicitly argue that trans people seeking access to gender affirming washroom facilities are dangerous, suspicious, nefarious, etc.?
6. Porn: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are attempting to or want to expose people (especially children) to pornography?

7. Make Porn: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are attempting to or want to create, distribute, and/or consume pornography (especially child pornography)?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Bathroom Danger were all expected to be the largest sub-arguments. These arguments are well-established in the literature and stereotype transness as inherently sexually aggressive.[593]
- Sex Work, Porn, and Make Porn were all expected to appear in moderate numbers.
- Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, Bathroom Danger, and Porn were all expected to increase the most dramatically over time as the anti-trans backlash surged.
- Politicians were expected to have higher numbers for Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Bathroom Danger.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher numbers for Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Bathroom Danger.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher numbers for Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Bathroom Danger.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher numbers for Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, Bathroom Danger, Porn, and Make Porn.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.2a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.2 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality'

Sub- Arguments		
	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.2	**113**	**100%**
2.2.1 Venues	4	4%
2.2.2 Sexual Harm	61	54%
2.2.3 Sex Work	5	4%
2.2.4 Hypersexual	47	42%
2.2.5 Bathroom Danger	40	35%
2.2.6 Porn	14	12%
2.2.7 Make Porn	1	1%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

As per the above-stated hypotheses, it was discovered that Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Bathroom Danger were the largest sub-arguments in this category. These anti-trans discourses are already well-established[594] and portray transness as inherently (hyper)sexual and/or sexually aggressive and dangerous. The extreme absence of Sex Work, Porn, and Make Porn was

[593] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Bower-Brown, 2024; Evans, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025

[594] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Howansky et al., 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; Goktas, 2023; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

somewhat surprising, however. Arguments highlighting trans peoples' relationship to sex work and/or pornography were surprisingly limited.[595]

Table A5.1.2b - Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.2 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.2	**0**	**0%**	**46**	**100%**	**67**	**100%**
2.2.1 Venues	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%
2.2.2 Sexual Harm	0	0%	15	33%	46	69%
2.2.3 Sex Work	0	0%	3	7%	2	3%
2.2.4 Hypersexual	0	0%	13	28%	34	51%
2.2.5 Bathroom Danger	0	0%	19	41%	21	31%
2.2.6 Porn	0	0%	2	4%	12	18%
2.2.7 Make Porn	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

It was discovered that Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Porn all increased dramatically over time. Trans people/transness was argued to be sexually 'harmful' due to being 'explicit' or 'obscene' in nature. The (hyper)sexuality of transness was argued to be 'inappropriate', especially in public and/or homosocial spaces. Trans people were also portrayed as desiring to expose people (especially children and youth) to pornography. Surprisingly, it was also discovered that Bathroom Danger actually decreased with time. Despite many memorable cases containing arguments that portrayed trans access to public washrooms as 'dangerous', this argument became less frequent over time.

[595] Earles, 2019; Hotine, 2021; Howansky et al., 2021; Bassi and LaFleur, 2022; Borba, 2022; Folk, 2022; Gwenffrewi, 2022; Uspenskiy, 2022; Worthen, 2022; Goktas, 2023; House, 2023; Platero, 2023; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Tudisco, 2023; Turner, 2023; Atwood et al., 2024; Beck et at., 2024; Evans, 2024; Miller, 2024; Thurlow, 2024; Butler, 2024; Anzani et al., 2024

Table A5.1.2c - Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.2 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.2	**11**	**100%**	**57**	**100%**	**10**	**100%**	**35**	**100%**
2.2.1 Venues	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	11%
2.2.2 Sexual Harm	3	27%	29	51%	6	60%	23	66%
2.2.3 Sex Work	0	0%	3	5%	0	0%	2	6%
2.2.4 Hypersexual	2	18%	23	40%	2	20%	20	57%
2.2.5 Bathroom Danger	10	91%	20	35%	4	40%	6	17%
2.2.6 Porn	1	9%	4	7%	2	20%	7	20%
2.2.7 Make Porn	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Think Tanks contained only 10 coded cases present in this argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Think Tanks grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Politicians had higher numbers for Bathroom Danger, as I had hypothesized. When discussing legislation, this grouping positioned (trans) women as causing 'distressing' and/or 'dangerous' environments for (cisgender) women in homosocial spaces such as public washrooms. Arguments portrayed (trans) women as taking advantage of this access to sexually assault/harm (cisgender) women.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Venues, Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Porn compared to other actors. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with connections between transness and sexuality overall. They explicitly argued that 'public displays' of transness were 'inappropriate', sexually 'harmful', and/or 'dangerous', especially to (cisgender) women and children. They also explicitly argued that trans people sought to expose others (especially children and youth) to pornography.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, all three examined actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Sexual Harm; Hypersexual), MSM Newspapers (Porn), and Alt-Right New Media (Bathroom Danger). Politicians seemed to rely on arguments portrayed trans people/transness as sexually harmful less often than other actors. MSM Newspapers engaged less often with arguments portraying trans people as seeking to expose others to pornography than other actors. Most surprising of all was that Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Bathroom Danger. Despite this grouping being strongly preoccupied with transness as inherently (hyper)sexual and/or sexually 'dangerous', they engaged with this argument less frequently than other actors.

A5.1.3: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.3 – 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity'

The argument category 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity' examined arguments pertaining to the sex/gender binary, gender roles, and heteronormativity. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, eight sub-arguments that defined Gender Roles and Heteronormativity were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Gender Roles and Heteronormativity present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following eight sub-arguments:

1. Gender Binary: Do they explicitly argue that the gender binary is 'natural', 'normal', 'real', 'biological', and/or otherwise objectively true?
2. Cis As Normal: Do they explicitly argue for the reification, naturalization, and/or normalization of cisnormativity as 'natural' and 'normal'?
3. Straight As Normal: Do they explicitly argue for the reification of heterosexuality as 'natural' and 'normal'?
4. Straight Threat: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are threatening to heterosexuality?
5. Traditional Threat: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are threatening to traditional gender roles?
6. Emasculating: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are emasculating?
7. Cis Queer: Do they explicitly portray transness and/or trans people negatively compared to cisgender queer people?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, Straight As Normal, and Gender Role Threat were all expected to be the largest sub-arguments. Based on the literature,[596] arguments highlighting the supposed 'inherent differences' between 'the sexes' and/or the reification of heterosexuality were expected to be common arguments throughout the dataset.
- Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, Straight As Normal, and Gender Role Threat were all expected to increase dramatically over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary and Cis As Normal.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Straight As Normal.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, Straight Threat, and Gender Role Threat.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, Straight As Normal, and Gender Role Threat.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

[596] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

Table A5.1.3a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.3 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.3	**235**	**100%**
2.3.1 Gender Binary	219	93%
2.3.2 Cis as Normal	217	92%
2.3.3 Straight as Normal	54	23%
2.3.4 Straight Threat	9	4%
2.3.5 Gender Role Threat	6	3%
2.3.6 Emasculating	0	0%
2.3.7 Cis Queer	24	10%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

The Gender Binary and Cis As Normal sub-arguments were nearly universally prevalent within this argument category. Arguments that reified of the sex/gender binary and positioned it as 'normal/natural' pervaded much of the dataset. Straight As Normal was also somewhat prevalent. These arguments positioned heteronormative relationships/sexual relations as 'normal' and all other forms of sexuality as 'abnormal'. It was also noted that Cis Queer was surprisingly high; homonormative and homonationalistic[597] discourses positively compared cisgender queer people to trans people. Lastly, it was surprising to discover that Gender Role Threat was almost entirely absent from the dataset; arguments portraying transness as threatening to traditional gender roles were surprisingly rare.

Table A5.1.3b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.3 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.3	**0**	**0%**	**114**	**100%**	**121**	**100%**
2.3.1 Gender Binary	0	0%	103	90%	116	96%
2.3.2 Cis as Normal	0	0%	101	89%	116	96%
2.3.3 Straight as Normal	0	0%	22	19%	32	26%
2.3.4 Straight Threat	0	0%	5	4%	4	3%
2.3.5 Gender Role Threat	0	0%	5	4%	1	1%
2.3.6 Emasculating	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
2.3.7 Cis Queer	0	0%	6	5%	18	15%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

[597] Puar, 2007; Puar, 2017

Both Straight As Normal and Cis Queer increased somewhat over time. It seems that arguments pertaining to heteronormative and/or cis queer (homonormative/homonationalistic)[598] expressions of sexuality became more common in the 2020s, especially when compared positively to transness. Unexpectedly, Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Gender Role Threat were all relatively stable over time. Based on qualitative observations, this relative stability was surprising, as many cases in the 2020s contained memorable arguments pertaining to these talking points.

Table A5.1.3c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.3 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity' by Actor

Sub- Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.3	**19**	**100%**	**131**	**100%**	**44**	**100%**	**41**	**100%**
2.3.1 Gender Binary	17	89%	121	92%	44	100%	37	90%
2.3.2 Cis as Normal	17	89%	120	92%	44	100%	36	88%
2.3.3 Straight as Normal	6	32%	28	21%	11	25%	9	22%
2.3.4 Straight Threat	1	5%	6	5%	1	2%	1	2%
2.3.5 Gender Role Threat	0	0%	4	3%	0	0%	2	5%
2.3.6 Emasculating	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
2.3.7 Cis Queer	1	5%	19	15%	4	9%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Politicians contained only 19 coded cases present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Politicians grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

MSM Newspapers had higher numbers for Cis Queer, which was unexpected. This grouping seems that have made numerous favourable comparisons between cisgender queer people and trans people more often than other actors.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Gender Binary and Cis As Normal, as was hypothesized. In fact, both sub-arguments were present in 100% of Think Tank cases that contained codes from this argument category. This suggests that, when discussed, the Think Tanks were highly preoccupied with arguing for the sex/gender binary as 'biologically real'.

[598] Puar, 2007; Puar, 2017

Alt-Right New Media contained lower numbers for Cis Queer compared to other actors; in fact, they did not engage this explicit argument at all. It seems that this grouping did not argue for cisgender queer people positively in relation to trans people.

A5.1.4: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.4 – 'Medical Intervention'

The argument category 'Medical Intervention' examined codes pertaining to medical arguments centred around medical transition, hormone therapy, and/or conversion therapy. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, six sub-arguments that defined Medical Intervention were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Medical Intervention present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following six sub-arguments:

1. HRT, Etc.: Do they explicitly provide information on puberty blockers, hormone replacement therapy and/or gender affirmation surgery to support their claims?
2. Transition: Do they explicitly present information that suggests transitioning (i.e. medical intervention) has a negative impact on the quality of life of trans people?
3. Detransition: Do they explicitly discuss detransition?
4. Addiction: Do they explicitly discuss hormone replacement therapy as being addictive, dangerous, experimental, and/or unsafe, etc.?
5. Gender Dysphoria: Do they explicitly provide information that is meant to dismiss, deny, minimize, or otherwise call into question the legitimacy of gender dysphoria claims?
6. Conversion Therapy: Do they explicitly discuss conversion therapy as something useful, needed, or helpful in 'overcoming' transness?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- HRTs, Etc., Transition, Detransition, and Gender Dysphoria were all expected to be the largest sub-arguments. Based on the literature review,[599] pathologizing discourses that questioned the legitimacy of gender affirmative care, medical transition, and/or gender dysphoria claims were expected to be prevalent.
- HRT, Etc., Transition, and Detransition were all expected to increase over time.
- Addiction, Gender Dysphoria, and Conversion Therapy were also increase over time, albeit not as dramatically.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Transition and Detransition.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for HRT, Etc. and Gender Dysphoria.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Transition and Gender Dysphoria.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for HRT, Etc., Transition, Detransition, and Gender Dysphoria.

[599] Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025; Edell, 2026; Scott, 2026

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.4a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.4 'Medical Intervention'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.4	**154**	**100%**
2.4.1 HRT, Etc.	133	86%
2.4.2 Transition	73	47%
2.4.3 Detransition	36	23%
2.4.4 Addiction	15	10%
2.4.5 Gender Dysphoria	38	25%
2.4.6 Conversion Therapy	10	6%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

It was discovered that HRT, Etc., Transition, and Gender Dysphoria were all highly prevalent in the dataset. These arguments portrayed hormone therapy as 'medically invasive', 'dangerous', 'understudied', 'experimental', and/or leading to health complications later in life that were irreversible. Medical transition was often similarly portrayed as 'unnecessary', 'dangerous', and/or as 'mutilation', especially in relation to procedures that impacted future potential fertility. Gender dysphoria claims were rejected and/or their legitimacy was often questioned. By contrast, the low the numbers for Detransition was surprising. While this argument proliferated sharply in recent years, its relative newness as an anti-trans argument may explain this lower relative percentage.

Table A5.1.4b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.4 'Medical Intervention' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.4	**0**	**0%**	**52**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
2.4.1 HRT, Etc.	0	0%	30	58%	101	100%
2.4.2 Transition	0	0%	19	37%	54	53%
2.4.3 Detransition	0	0%	3	6%	33	33%
2.4.4 Addiction	0	0%	1	2%	14	14%
2.4.5 Gender Dysphoria	0	0%	8	15%	30	30%
2.4.6 Conversion Therapy	0	0%	5	10%	5	5%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

These findings were significant, as all but one of the sub-arguments in this category increased dramatically over time. HRT, Etc. increased to 100% in the 2020s, an almost 40% jump from the 2010s. Hormone therapy became a prevalent topic of discussion, and arguments portraying it as 'dangerous' and/or 'medically unnecessary' proliferated at surprising rates.

Detransition and Transition likewise increased dramatically, with arguments highlighting potential health risks and complications associated with transition, as well as regret rates and detransitioning as an outcome of pursuing gender affirmative care. There were slight increases in portraying HRT as 'addictive', despite the current lack of evidence to support this claim.[600] Gender Dysphoria also increased somewhat over time, demonstrating an increase in the rejection of gender dysphoria claims. Only Conversion Therapy decreased slightly over time, likely due in part to discourses related to Bill C-4 waning in sociocultural significance as a focal point of discourse after the bill gained royal assent in 2021.[601]

Table A5.1.4c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.4 'Medical Intervention' by Actor

Sub- Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.4	**18**	**100%**	**88**	**100%**	**17**	**100%**	**30**	**100%**
2.4.1 HRT, Etc.	13	72%	79	90%	13	76%	28	93%
2.4.2 Transition	10	56%	30	34%	11	65%	22	73%
2.4.3 Detransition	10	56%	16	18%	5	29%	5	17%
2.4.4 Addiction	1	6%	8	9%	1	6%	5	17%
2.4.5 Gender Dysphoria	2	11%	19	22%	6	35%	11	37%
2.4.6 Conversion Therapy	0	0%	6	7%	0	0%	4	13%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Transition and Detransition, which matched the above-stated hypotheses. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with potential complications, regret rates, and/or long-term health concerns associated with medical transition. They also argued that detransition was a serious concern when discussing gender affirmative care. These arguments shaped many discussions pertaining to anti-trans legislation and/or debates.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Transition and Gender Dysphoria. This grouping argued that medical transitioning was not a desirable health outcome, describing complications and/or invasive surgical procedures as reasons to prevent access to these services. They also called into question the legitimacy, intensity, and/or validity of gender dysphoria claims, especially among children and youth.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for HRT, Etc., Transition, Gender Dysphoria, and Conversion Therapy. Like the Think Tanks grouping, Alt-Right New Media engaged in discourses that portrayed HRT and transitioning in a negative light, highlighting potential complications and invasive surgical procedures. They also called into question the legitimacy, intensity, and/or validity of gender dysphoria, especially among children and youth. Lastly, they

[600] Bewley and Bewley, 1992; Bluming and Tavris, 2009; Rissman and Lynch, 2023
[601] *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy),* 2021

engaged in discourses pertaining to conversion therapy for those who were distress by their sexuality/gender identities, and the importance of keeping the practice 'safe and legal'.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, all actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (HRT, Etc.; Gender Dysphoria), MSM Newspapers (Transition; Detransition), Think Tanks (HRT, Etc.; Addiction; Conversion Therapy), and Alt-Right New Media (Detransition). Politicians had lower numbers for HRT, Etc. and Gender Dysphoria. This grouping did not discuss hormone therapy and/or question gender dysphoria claims as often as other actors. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Transition and Detransition. They did not argue against medical transition and/or argue about detransition/regret rates as often as other actors. Think Tanks had lower numbers for HRT, Etc., Addiction, and Conversion Therapy. The lattermost sub-argument was somewhat surprising, given this grouping's general focus on legislation/policy. It was expected that they would be at least comparable in expressing arguments justifying conversion therapy as other actors, but this was not the case. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Detransition, which was quite surprising. This grouping did not, as was expected, prolifically argue about detransition more often than other actors.

A5.1.5: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.5 – 'Women and Children'

The argument category 'Women and Children' examined codes tracking discussions pertaining to interest groups such as women, children, and families. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, six sub-arguments that defined Women and Children were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Women and Children present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following six sub-arguments:

1. Anti Woman: Do they explicitly argue pro-trans actors are misogynistic, 'woman-hating', etc.?
2. Pro Woman: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors are fighting against misogyny?
3. Hurt Children: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want to expose children to harm?
4. Protect Children: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors want to protect children from harm?
5. Hurt Families: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want to expose the family unit to harm?
6. Protect Families: Do they explicitly argue that anti-trans actors want to protect the family unit from harm?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- All sub-arguments were expected to be highly prevalent.
- All sub-arguments were expected to increase over time; most notably, Hurt Children, Protect Children, Hurt Families, and Protect Families.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Hurt Children, Protect Children, Hurt Families, and Protect Families.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Anti-Woman, Pro-Woman, Hurt Children, and Hurt Families.

- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Hurt Children, Protect Children, Hurt Families, and Protect Families.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Hurt Children, Protect Children, Hurt Families, and Protect Families.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.5a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.5 'Women and Children'

Sub- Arguments	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.5	**172**	**100%**
2.5.1 Anti-Woman	48	28%
2.5.2 Pro-Woman	29	17%
2.5.3 Hurt Children	88	51%
2.5.4 Protect Children	66	38%
2.5.5 Hurt Families	46	27%
2.5.6 Protect Families	45	26%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

As was hypothesized, almost all the sub-arguments were highly prevalent in the dataset. These arguments portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as 'harmful' towards (cisgender) women, children, and families. By contrast, arguments portrayed anti-trans actors as champions of children's wellbeing, parental authority, and/or the preservation of the (nuclear) family unit. Interestingly, Pro-Woman was lower than anticipated. Qualitatively speaking, it seemed as though more emphasis would be placed on 'women's sex-based rights' arguments that what was actually quantitatively present.

Table A5.1.5b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.5 'Women and Children' by Time Period

Sub- Arguments	2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.5	**0**	**0%**	**62**	**100%**	**110**	**100%**
2.5.1 Anti-Woman	0	0%	25	40%	23	21%
2.5.2 Pro-Woman	0	0%	6	10%	23	21%
2.5.3 Hurt Children	0	0%	23	37%	65	59%
2.5.4 Protect Children	0	0%	12	19%	54	49%
2.5.5 Hurt Families	0	0%	9	15%	37	34%
2.5.6 Protect Families	0	0%	8	13%	37	34%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

This table contained two major interesting findings. Firstly, almost every sub-argument from this category increased over time. This supported the above-stated hypotheses that anti-trans actors have positioned themselves as champions for the rights and wellbeing of these interest groups, and/or have increasingly portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as acting against these interests. The second notable finding was that Anti-Woman decreased over time; given how memorable cases were which discussed 'women's sex-based rights' in relation to anti-trans discourse, this finding was surprising.

Table A5.1.5c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.5 'Women and Children' by Actor

Sub- Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.5	**25**	**100%**	**74**	**100%**	**31**	**100%**	**42**	**100%**
2.5.1 Anti-Woman	7	28%	25	34%	9	29%	7	17%
2.5.2 Pro-Woman	2	8%	11	15%	5	16%	11	26%
2.5.3 Hurt Children	16	64%	31	42%	12	39%	29	69%
2.5.4 Protect Children	8	32%	28	38%	11	35%	19	45%
2.5.5 Hurt Families	9	36%	9	12%	9	29%	19	45%
2.5.6 Protect Families	2	8%	21	28%	9	29%	13	31%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Hurt Children and Hurt Families. Politicians portrayed pro-trans discourse as 'harmful' to children and families. This was especially salient from the provincial New Brunswick and Saskatchewan transcripts pertaining to the debates for Policy 713 and Bill 137, respectively.

MSM Newspapers had higher numbers for Anti-Woman. It seems that this grouping highlighted arguments framing pro-trans discourses as actively detrimental to the rights and wellbeing of (cisgender) women.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for almost every sub-argument. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with arguing that trans people/transness/trans rights threatened families and children, and/or that anti-trans actors were fighting for the best interests of families and children. They also argued that they were supportive of 'women's sex-based rights'.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, all actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Pro-Woman; Protect Families) MSM Newspapers (Hurt Families), Think Tanks (Hurt Children), and Alt-Right New Media (Anti-Woman). It was surprising that Politicians had lower numbers for Pro-Woman and Protect Families, as these were (qualitatively memorable) common discussion points when justifying anti-trans legislation. MSM Newspapers having lower numbers for Hurt Families was surprising, as this seemed to be a common (qualitatively memorable) talking point. The same could be said for Think Tanks having lower

numbers for Hurt Children, as this appeared to be a salient (qualitatively memorable) talking point. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Anti-Woman, which was not entirely surprising considering that, qualitatively, (cisgender) women were not discussed frequently by this grouping in general, and thus they had relatively lower percentages for arguments pertaining to (cisgender) women overall.

A5.1.6: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.6 – 'Racism and Immigration'

The argument category 'Racism and Immigration' examined codes pertaining to racist and/or intolerance arguments. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, four sub-arguments that defined Racism and Immigration were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Racism and Immigration present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following four sub-arguments:

1. Racist: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as racist?
2. Anti Racist: Do they explicitly portray anti-trans actors as supporting 'other/all' races and/or being anti-racist?
3. Intolerant: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as denying immigrants of their right to engage with/practice their cultural and religious beliefs?
4. Tolerant: Do they explicitly portray anti-trans actors as protecting immigrants and supporting their right to engage with/practice their cultural and religious beliefs?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- All sub-arguments were expected to be present in small numbers, as the literature did not indicate a robust prevalence of explicit arguments pertaining to these topics.[602]
- Racist and Intolerant were expected to be the largest sub-arguments.
- Racist and Intolerant were expected to increase over time as anti-trans discourses shifted to portray pro-trans actors as 'bigoted' and 'hateful'.
- Anti-Racist and Tolerant were expected to remain stable over time.
- All actors were expected to discuss Racist and Intolerant in small numbers.[603] It was not anticipated that these explicit arguments would be heavily utilized.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

[602] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

[603] Momani and Deschamps, 2021; McKelvey et al., 2022; Montigny, 2025

Table A5.1.6a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.6 'Racism and Immigration'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.6	**40**	**100%**
2.6.1 Racist	39	98%
2.6.2 Anti-Racist	6	15%
2.6.3 Intolerant	29	73%
2.6.4 Tolerant	5	13%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Of the cases that comprised this argument category, Racist and Intolerant were highly prevalent. Anti-Racist and Intolerant were only somewhat prevalent. Cases tended to emphasize portraying trans people/pro-trans actors as racist/intolerant of 'other cultures'. These discourses also tended to contain presuppositions regarding in-groups (i.e., white Canadian citizens) and out-groups (i.e., non-white, non-citizen immigrants/newcomers).[604]

Table A5.1.6b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.6 'Racism and Immigration' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.6	**0**	**0%**	**20**	**100%**	**20**	**100%**
2.6.1 Racist	0	0%	16	80%	19	95%
2.6.2 Anti-Racist	0	0%	2	10%	4	20%
2.6.3 Intolerant	0	0%	14	70%	15	75%
2.6.4 Tolerant	0	0%	2	10%	3	15%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Both the Racist and Anti-Racist sub-arguments increased slightly over time. Qualitative observations revealed increasingly frequent portrayals of anti-trans discourse as 'multicultural' on the basis that transphobic discourse is a part of 'other' cultures, and therefore must be respected. Contrasting portrayals positioned pro-trans discourse as 'dogmatic' and 'forcing beliefs onto newcomers/immigrants'.

[604] Aizura, 2014; Snorton, 2017; Bey, 2022; Butler, 2024; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Momani and Deschamps, 2021; McKelvey et al., 2022; Montigny, 2025

Table A5.1.6c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.6 'Racism and Immigration' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.6	**3**	**100%**	**15**	**100%**	**10**	**100%**	**12**	**100%**
2.6.1 Racist	2	67%	13	87%	8	80%	12	100%
2.6.2 Anti-Racist	2	67%	1	7%	1	10%	2	17%
2.6.3 Intolerant	2	67%	9	60%	8	80%	10	83%
2.6.4 Tolerant	2	67%	0	0%	1	10%	2	17%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Politicians contained only 3 coded cases present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Politicians grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Alt-Right New Media had higher relative percentages for Racist and Intolerant. This grouping frequently argued that pro-trans discourse was 'anti-multicultural', and that trans people/pro-trans actors were 'bigoted' and 'hateful' toward 'other cultures'.

MSM Newspapers had lower numbers every sub-argument in this category, which was notable. This grouping did not engage with any of these arguments as often as other actors. Qualitatively, this grouping did not often discuss race, racism, and/or (in)tolerance relating to anti-trans discourse very frequently.

Think Tanks had lower numbers for Racist and Intolerant. They tended to engage with arguments portraying trans people/pro-trans actors as 'racist/intolerant' less often than other actors.

A5.1.7: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.7 – 'Ability and Ableism'

The argument category 'Ability and Ableism' examined sub-arguments that discussed 'social contagion' and/or 'transness as mental illness' discourses. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, three sub-arguments that defined Ability and Ableism were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Ability and Ableism present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following three sub-arguments:

1. Mentally Ill: Do they explicitly portray transness and/or trans people as having a disability/mental illness/disorder/etc.?

2. Social Contagion: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as attempting to spread transness like a sickness, 'social contagion', etc.?
3. Exploitative: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as taking advantage of mentally ill, developmentally delayed, disabled, etc. people?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- All sub-arguments were expected to be present in small numbers.
- Mentally Ill and Social Contagion were expected to have the highest relative percentages.
- Mentally Ill and Social Contagion were expected to increase notably over time.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to discuss Mentally Ill and Social Contagion more often than other actors.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.7a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.7 'Ability and Ableism'

Sub- Arguments	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.7	**51**	**100%**
2.7.1 Mentally Ill	42	82%
2.7.2 Social Contagion	21	41%
2.7.3 Exploitative	2	4%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Mentally Ill and Social Contagion were the most prevalent sub-arguments in this category. These discourses portrayed transness as a mental illness unto itself, and/or as a symptom of other mental illnesses. They also portrayed transness as a 'social contagion' that could be spread via 'exposure', especially through social media. Children and youth were portrayed as the most 'susceptible' to the 'spread' of transness.

Table A5.1.7b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.7 'Ability and Ableism' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.7	**0**	**0%**	**21**	**100%**	**30**	**100%**
2.7.1 Mentally Ill	0	0%	12	57%	30	100%
2.7.2 Social Contagion	0	0%	6	29%	15	50%
2.7.3 Exploitative	0	0%	2	10%	0	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Mentally Ill and Social Contagion both increased dramatically over time. Arguments portraying transness as a mental illness and/or as a 'social contagion' became more widespread during the 2020s. Transness was linked with mental distress and/or trauma. It was also portrayed as a problematic 'trend' and/or means of children and youth to connect to community. Exploitative decreased over time, disappearing entirely from the dataset in the 2020s. Arguments that trans people 'took advantage' of mentally ill/developmentally delayed/disabled people to 'convince them they were trans' seemed to 'vanish' by the 2020s.

Table A5.1.7c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.7 'Ability and Ableism' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.7	**1**	**100%**	**31**	**100%**	**7**	**100%**	**12**	**100%**
2.7.1 Mentally Ill	1	100%	27	87%	6	86%	8	67%
2.7.2 Social Contagion	0	0%	9	29%	4	57%	8	67%
2.7.3 Exploitative	0	0%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Politicians contained only one coded case present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Politicians grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media both had higher numbers for Social Contagion compared to other actors. Both groupings argued that transness was a 'socially communicable disease'. They also discussed the importance of preventing its 'spread' to children and youth and discussed ways to 'cure' and/or 'reverse' trans 'symptoms'.

MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Social Contagion. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Mentally Ill, which contradicted the above-stated hypotheses. This grouping did not argue that transness was a mental illness/symptom of a mental illness as often as other actors, which was somewhat surprising.

A5.1.8: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.8 – 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship'

The argument category 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship' examined codes pertaining to implicit arguments of 'indoctrination', 'propaganda', and/or 'fighting back' against pro-trans discourse. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 12 sub-arguments that defined Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following 12 sub-arguments:

1. Elites: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors belong to or are part of a group of 'elites'?
2. Bad Faith: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are bad faith actors?
3. Special Treatment: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want to be treated as a special interest group?
4. Censoring: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors censor anti-trans opinions/viewpoints?
5. Fight Back: Do they explicitly argue for rallying/protesting/fighting back against the censorship of anti-trans views?
6. Liars: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as being deceptive, manipulative, liars, blackmailers, etc.?
7. Propagandists: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are spreading propaganda/indoctrinating others?
8. Too Much: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors want 'too much', 'take things too far', etc.?
9. Hateful: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are bigoted/hateful/etc.?
10. Wokeism: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people are part of/emblematic of 'political correctness'/'wokeism'/'woke hysteria'/etc.?
11. SM Recruit: Do they explicitly argue that social media/mass communication is a means for pro-trans actors to 'recruit' others?
12. Speaking Truth: Do they explicitly argue for utilizing social media/mass communication as a means of combatting transness and 'spreading the truth' etc.?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Censoring, Fight Back, Propagandists, and Wokeism were all expected be the largest sub-arguments.
- Censoring, Fight Back, Propagandists, and Wokeism were all expected to increase dramatically over time.

- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Bad Faith, Special Treatment, Censoring, and Propagandists.
- MSM Newspapers and Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Special Treatment, Censoring, Propagandists, and Wokeism.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Censoring, Fight Back, Liars, Propagandists, and Wokeism.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.8a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.8 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship'

Sub- Arguments	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.8	**129**	**100%**
2.8.1 Elites	1	1%
2.8.2 Bad Faith	9	7%
2.8.3 Special Treatment	12	9%
2.8.4 Censoring	51	40%
2.8.5 Fight Back	35	27%
2.8.6 Liars	10	8%
2.8.7 Propagandists	53	41%
2.8.8 Too Much	5	4%
2.8.9 Hateful	9	7%
2.8.10 Wokeism	36	28%
2.8.11 SM Recruit	1	1%
2.8.12 Speaking Truth	2	2%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Censoring, Fight Back, Propagandists, and Wokeism were the largest sub-arguments for this category. These arguments portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as censoring 'opposing viewpoints' and/or as 'propagandists' attempting to indoctrinate others, especially children. Arguments also portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as spreading 'woke ideology', which was portrayed as detrimental to society. They also made calls to action, to 'fight back' against the 'tyranny' of 'trans/woke ideology'. Bad Faith, Special Treatment, Liars, and Hateful were largely absent from the dataset. These arguments portrayed trans people as 'hateful' and/or 'liars', as acting in bad faith, and/or as seeking 'special treatment' (i.e., legal privileges, sociocultural benefits, etc.) at the expense of most Canadians; however, they did not appear frequently.

Table A5.1.8b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.8 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.8	**0**	**0%**	**50**	**100%**	**79**	**100%**
2.8.1 Elites	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
2.8.2 Bad Faith	0	0%	5	10%	4	5%
2.8.3 Special Treatment	0	0%	7	14%	5	6%
2.8.4 Censoring	0	0%	21	42%	30	38%
2.8.5 Fight Back	0	0%	1	2%	34	43%
2.8.6 Liars	0	0%	2	4%	8	10%
2.8.7 Propagandists	0	0%	10	20%	43	54%
2.8.8 Too Much	0	0%	1	2%	4	5%
2.8.9 Hateful	0	0%	1	2%	8	10%
2.8.10 Wokeism	0	0%	8	16%	28	35%
2.8.11 SM Recruit	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
2.8.12 Speaking Truth	0	0%	2	4%	0	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Fight Back, Liars, Propagandists, Hateful, and Wokeism all increased over time. These arguments generally portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as malicious and/or oppressive toward the 'silent majority' (i.e., cisgender Canadians). They also called for action and mobilization against 'trans/woke ideology', which was argued to be a negative influence on Canadian society. Interestingly, Censoring remained stable over time, which was unexpected. Arguments portraying trans people/pro-trans actors as working to censor 'opposing viewpoints' was expected to increase with time. Lastly, it was discovered that Bad Faith and Special Treatment decreased over time. It seems that, in the 2020s, arguments portraying pro-trans actors/trans people as acting in bad faith and/or seeking special treatment were not utilized as frequently as in the 2010s.

Table A5.1.8c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.8 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.8	**4**	**100%**	**60**	**100%**	**22**	**100%**	**43**	**100%**
2.8.1 Elites	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
2.8.2 Bad Faith	1	25%	3	5%	4	18%	1	2%
2.8.3 Special Treatment	3	75%	2	3%	6	27%	1	2%
2.8.4 Censoring	1	25%	23	38%	15	68%	12	28%
2.8.5 Fight Back	0	0%	10	17%	2	9%	23	53%
2.8.6 Liars	0	0%	4	7%	2	9%	4	9%
2.8.7 Propagandists	0	0%	25	42%	7	32%	21	49%
2.8.8 Too Much	0	0%	2	3%	2	9%	1	2%
2.8.9 Hateful	0	0%	3	5%	2	9%	4	9%
2.8.10 Wokeism	1	25%	17	28%	8	36%	10	23%
2.8.11 SM Recruit	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
2.8.12 Speaking Truth	0	0%	1	2%	1	5%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Politicians contained only 4 coded cases present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Politicians grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Bad Faith, Special Treatment, Censoring, and Wokeism. This grouping generally portrayed pro-trans actors/trans people as censoring 'opposing' views, seeking 'special treatment', and/or operating in bad faith when engaging with anti-trans discourse. They also portrayed 'wokeism' as a dangerous and/or absurd movement that was detrimental to Canada's societal wellbeing.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Fight Back, which was to be expected. This grouping was especially vocal in their calls to action and urging their audience to 'fight back'

against the ‘tyrannical’ and/or ‘dogmatic’ pro-trans discourse present in Canadian culture and society.

All examined actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: MSM Newspapers (Special Treatment; Fight Back), Think Tanks (Fight Back; Propagandists), and Alt-Right New Media (Special Treatment; Censoring). MSM Newspapers and Think Tanks had surprisingly few cases containing arguments to ‘fight back’ against the ‘tyranny’ of pro-trans discourse. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Special Treatment and Censoring, which was surprising. This grouping was expected to have strong preoccupations with trans people/pro-trans actors receiving special treatment and/or censoring ‘opposing viewpoints’. While cases containing these arguments were memorable, they were not quantitatively frequent.

A5.1.9: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.9 – ‘Common Talking Points’

The argument category ‘Common Talking Points’ examined miscellaneous arguments that occurred in the dataset. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, three sub-arguments that defined Common Talking Points were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following three sub-arguments:

1. Policing Bodies: Do they explicitly argue for the policing of trans bodies?
2. Not At School: Do they explicitly argue that transness and/or trans people should not be discussed in scholastic settings?
3. Ruin Sports: Do they explicitly argue that trans people in sports will ruin competitions, render results meaningless, have unfair advantages, make people uncomfortable, etc.?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Ruin Sports was expected to be the largest sub-argument in this argument category.
- All sub-arguments were expected to increase over time as anti-trans actors began to engage with these explicit argumentations more frequently in the 2020s.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Policing Bodies.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Policing Bodies and Ruin Sports.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Not At School and Ruin Sports.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Policing Bodies and Ruin Sports.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.9a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.9 'Common Talking Points'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.9	**31**	**100%**
2.9.1 Policing Bodies	3	10%
2.9.2 Not At School	3	10%
2.9.3 Ruin Sports	25	81%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Ruin Sports was the largest sub-argument for this category. These arguments portrayed trans athletes participating in sport as 'unfair', 'dangerous', 'against biology/common sense', 'sexist', and/or 'meaningless' for ruining competitions. By contrast, Policing Bodies and Not At School were present in lower numbers than anticipated. Few cases contained explicit arguments calling for trans bodies to be policed and/or opposing teaching about transness in schools.

Table A5.1.9b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.9 'Common Talking Points' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.9	**0**	**0%**	**10**	**100%**	**21**	**100%**
2.9.1 Policing Bodies	0	0%	3	30%	0	0%
2.9.2 Not At School	0	0%	2	20%	1	5%
2.9.3 Ruin Sports	0	0%	5	50%	20	95%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Only Ruin Sports increased over time. This explicit argument became the most widely disseminated/produced of sub-argument from this argument category by the 2020s. By contrast, Policing Bodies and Not At School decreased dramatically over time. This was a surprising finding, as, qualitatively speaking, these arguments were memorable (and thus presumed to be quantitatively frequent).

Table A5.1.9c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.9 'Common Talking Points' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.9	**3**	**100%**	**21**	**100%**	**3**	**100%**	**4**	**100%**
2.9.1 Policing Bodies	1	33%	2	10%	0	0%	0	0%
2.9.2 Not At School	0	0%	1	5%	2	67%	0	0%
2.9.3 Ruin Sports	2	67%	18	86%	1	33%	4	100%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Policing Bodies. This grouping portrayed the political, governmental, and/or sociocultural management of trans bodies as 'necessary' to the continued stability of the nation.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Not At School. This grouping was especially preoccupied with 'school choice' and the right to decide what curricula children were taught, including the omission of certain topics such as transness.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Ruin Sports; every case from this grouping coded for this argument category contained this sub-argument. This suggests that this grouping was especially preoccupied with trans athletes participating in sport as 'dangerous', 'meaningless', and/or 'unfair' to (cisgender) women athletes.

In addition to these notably higher numbers, three actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Not At School; Ruin Sports), Think Tanks (Policing Trans Bodies; Ruin Sports) and Alt-Right New Media (Policing Trans Bodies; Not At School). Politicians had lower numbers for Not At School and Ruin Sports.

A5.1.10: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.10 – 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'

The argument category 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' examined codes that captured implicit arguments pertaining to 'traditional values', capitalism, and/or Christianity. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, nine sub-arguments that defined Culture, Ideology and Religion were identified. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Culture, Ideology and Religion present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following nine sub-arguments:

1. Traditional Values: Do they explicitly argue that pro-trans actors are threatening traditional values?
2. Threat To Society: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as an existential threat to Canadian/Western culture/society?

3. Un Canadian: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as articulating 'non-Canadian/un-Canadian values'?
4. Culture Wars: Do they explicitly discuss/cite 'culture wars' when talking about trans rights/issues?
5. Capitalism: Do they explicitly portray pro-trans actors as a threat to capitalism?
6. Commies: Do they explicitly 'accuse' pro-trans actors of being communists/socialists and/or articulating communist/socialist rhetoric?
7. Anti Religion: Do they explicitly claim that pro-trans actors are anti-religion?
8. Pro Religion: Do they explicitly claim anti-trans actors are pro-religion?
9. Christian Values: Do they explicitly claim that anti-trans actors are Christian, hold 'Christian values', etc.?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Traditional Values, Culture Wars, Anti-Religion, Pro-Religion, and Christian Values were all expected to be highly prevalent.
- Traditional Values, Culture Wars, Anti-Religion, Pro-Religion, and Christian Values were all expected to increase over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Traditional Values and Threat to Society.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Traditional Values, Threat to Society, and Culture Wars.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Traditional Values, Anti-Religion, and Christian Values.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Traditional Values, Threat to Society, Culture Wars, Anti-Religion, and Christian Values.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.1.10a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.10 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.10	**122**	**100%**
2.10.1 Traditional Values	9	7%
2.10.2 Threat to Society	6	5%
2.10.3 Un-Canadian	5	4%
2.10.4 Culture Wars	6	5%
2.10.5 Capitalism	3	2%
2.10.6 Commies	8	7%
2.10.7 Anti-Religion	45	37%
2.10.8 Pro-Religion	64	52%
2.10.9 Christian Values	33	27%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Anti-Religion, Pro-Religion, and Christian Values were the largest sub-arguments for this argument category. These arguments portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as working against religious freedoms and protections. They also argued that anti-trans actors were working to preserve religious freedoms, and/or that anti-trans actors supported ‘Christian values’, which are supposedly antithetical to transness. Surprisingly, Traditional Values and Culture Wars were largely absent from the dataset.

Table A5.1.10b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.10 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.10	**0**	**0%**	**50**	**100%**	**72**	**100%**
2.10.1 Traditional Values	0	0%	5	10%	4	6%
2.10.2 Threat to Society	0	0%	2	4%	4	6%
2.10.3 Un-Canadian	0	0%	0	0%	5	7%
2.10.4 Culture Wars	0	0%	2	4%	4	6%
2.10.5 Capitalism	0	0%	0	0%	3	4%
2.10.6 Commies	0	0%	4	8%	4	6%
2.10.7 Anti-Religion	0	0%	11	22%	34	47%
2.10.8 Pro-Religion	0	0%	22	44%	42	58%
2.10.9 Christian Values	0	0%	15	30%	18	25%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Anti-Religion and Pro-Religion both increased over time. Interestingly, anti-trans actors portrayed pro-trans actors as 'anti-religion' and/or working against religious freedoms in Canada. Anti-trans actors were portrayed as championing religious freedoms, working in the interests of religious expression in Canada that were 'threatened' by trans people/transness/trans rights. Interestingly, Traditional Values, Culture Wars, and Christian Values all remained stable over time, which contradicted the above-stated hypotheses.

Table A5.1.10c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of 2.10 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Explicit Argument 2.10	**27**	**100%**	**36**	**100%**	**35**	**100%**	**24**	**100%**
2.10.1 Traditional Values	1	4%	3	8%	4	11%	1	4%
2.10.2 Threat to Society	2	7%	1	3%	2	6%	1	4%
2.10.3 Un-Canadian	0	0%	0	0%	3	9%	2	8%
2.10.4 Culture Wars	1	4%	5	14%	0	0%	0	0%
2.10.5 Capitalism	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%	1	4%
2.10.6 Commies	0	0%	3	8%	2	6%	3	13%
2.10.7 Anti-Religion	11	41%	11	31%	11	31%	12	50%
2.10.8 Pro-Religion	15	56%	14	39%	19	54%	16	67%
2.10.9 Christian Values	5	19%	8	22%	11	31%	9	38%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

MSM Newspapers had higher numbers for Culture Wars. This grouping argued that pro-trans discourse was divisive and polarizing to politics in Canada.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Commies, Anti-Religion, Pro-Religion, and Christian Values. This grouping portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as supporting communist/socialist rhetoric and/or as working to curtail religious freedoms in Canada. They also argued that anti-trans actors supported religious freedoms and/or promoted 'Christian values'.

Politicians had lower numbers for Christian Values. This grouping relied upon religious/Christian arguments less often than other actors. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Pro-Religion. This grouping relied less often on arguments that portrayed anti-trans actors as champions of religious freedoms compared to other actors.

A5.2: Sub-Arguments of 'Arguments About Other Topics'

This section is dedicated to examining the breakdown of other explicit arguments that were tracked in the dataset. These were arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro- or anti-trans arguments but were not pro- and/or anti-trans arguments themselves. Originally, these were coded as simply 'pro-trans other arguments' or 'anti-trans other arguments'. Given the number of 'other arguments' present, a second coding process was conducted to break out the specific 'other arguments' to track them. One code for anti-trans or pro-trans adjacent arguments each could be assigned to each case, allowing for one case to have a maximum of one anti-trans 'explicit other arguments' code, and one pro-trans 'explicit other arguments' code. These overall findings were then cross-referenced by time period and by actor. 'Pro-trans other arguments' were defined in a very straightforward way, i.e. – any additional arguments that explicitly supported trans people, trans rights, and/or transness. What additional argumentations were present? How did they compare across different decades? How did they compare between discursive types of actor? This section will answer these questions.

A5.2.1: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments

This section will examine the breakdown of the anti-trans conjunction sub-arguments of the category Arguments About Other Topics. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 14 explicit 'other anti-trans conjunction arguments' were categorized. As such, when a case was identified as having the category of Arguments About Other Topics, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following 14 sub-arguments:

1. Human Rights: Do they explicitly argue against human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Legislation: Do they explicitly argue against a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Freedom of Speech: Do they explicitly argue to protect freedom of speech from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
4. Religion: Do they explicitly argue that religion/freedom of religion must be protected from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
5. Sexualization: Do they explicitly argue that sexualization/aspects of sexualization of the human body are negative/bad/evil/etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
6. Conversion Therapy: Do they explicitly argue in favour of conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Medical Treatment: Do they explicitly argue against medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Indoctrination: Do they explicitly argue against indoctrination/aspects of indoctrination (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Wokeism: Do they explicitly argue against 'wokeism'/aspects of 'wokeism' (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Social Media: Do they explicitly argue against social media/aspects of social media (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

11. Universities: Do they explicitly argue that universities/aspects of universities that are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Schools: Do they explicitly argue against schools/aspects of schools that are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Sports: Do they explicitly argue that sports/aspects of sports schools that are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
14. Military: Do they explicitly argue that military/aspects of the military that are 'soft', 'woke', failing, unprepared for war, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Discussions of Human Rights, Wokeism, and Freedom of Speech were all expected to be the most prevalent sub-arguments.
- It was anticipated that Human Rights, Wokeism, and Freedom of Speech would all increase over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Human Rights and Freedom of Speech.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Human Rights, Wokeism, and Freedom of Speech.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Human Rights and Wokeism.

What discoveries were made? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.2.1a - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 2.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments		
Sub-Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Other Arguments 2.11	**315**	**100%**
Human Rights	56	18%
Legislation	20	6%
Freedom of Speech	16	5%
Religion	5	2%
Sexualization	14	4%
Conversion Therapy	13	4%
Medical Treatment	7	2%
Indoctrination	7	2%
Wokeism	44	14%
Social Media	3	1%
Universities	2	1%
Schools	17	5%
Sports	8	3%
Military	1	0%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Human Rights and Wokeism were the largest sub-arguments in this argument category. Interestingly, Freedom of Speech was largely absent from the dataset.

Table A5.2.1b - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 2.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' by Time Period, In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Other Arguments 2.11	**0**	**0%**	**84**	**100%**	**231**	**100%**
Human Rights	0	0%	11	13%	45	19%
Legislation	0	0%	12	14%	8	3%
Freedom of Speech	0	0%	5	6%	11	5%
Religion	0	0%	0	0%	5	2%
Sexualization	0	0%	3	4%	11	5%
Conversion Therapy	0	0%	3	4%	10	4%
Medical Treatment	0	0%	4	5%	3	1%
Indoctrination	0	0%	0	0%	7	3%
Wokeism	0	0%	6	7%	38	16%
Social Media	0	0%	0	0%	3	1%
Universities	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
Schools	0	0%	2	2%	15	6%
Sports	0	0%	0	0%	8	3%
Military	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Wokeism increased notably over time, doubling from the 2010s to the 2020s. This matched qualitative observations of this concept gaining traction in the early 2020s and becoming a prevalent talking point. A similar increase was noted for the presence of Human Rights. This sub-category was generally discussed in relation to the erosion of human/civil rights. There was a slight increase in the presence of the Schools sub-argument as well. Educational systems, school curricula, teaching standards, and the politicization of class content were all discussed. Interestingly, Freedom of Speech and Sexualization did not increase over time. Legislation decreased dramatically over time; it seems that adjacent discussions of legislation that did not pertain directly to anti-trans bills became less prevalent over time in cases containing anti-trans discourse.

Table A5.2.1c - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 2.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' by Actor, In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments								
Sub- Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Other Arguments 2.11	**30**	**100%**	**209**	**100%**	**5**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**
Human Rights	8	27%	39	19%	0	0%	9	13%
Legislation	10	33%	8	4%	0	0%	2	3%
Freedom of Speech	0	0%	10	5%	2	40%	4	6%
Religion	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	4	6%
Sexualization	0	0%	7	3%	0	0%	7	10%
Conversion Therapy	5	17%	4	2%	1	20%	3	4%
Medical Treatment	0	0%	7	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Indoctrination	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	6	8%
Wokeism	0	0%	17	8%	1	20%	26	37%
Social Media	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Universities	0	0%	1	0%	1	20%	0	0%
Schools	0	0%	14	7%	0	0%	3	4%
Sports	0	0%	6	3%	0	0%	2	3%
Military	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Think Tanks contained only 5 coded cases present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Think Tanks grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Politicians had higher numbers for Legislation, Human Rights, and Conversion Therapy. These talking points were commonly argued in relation to legislative decisions like the passing of Bill C-16 and Bill C-4.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Wokeism, Sexualization, and Indoctrination. This grouping discussed these topics at length, often criticizing 'woke'

concepts/groups/organizations, condemning the perceived sexualization of the human body, and/or speaking out against perceived threats of indoctrination.

Politicians and MSM Newspapers both had lower relative percentages for Wokeism; these groupings did not discuss this general concept as frequently as other actors.

A5.2.2: Sub-Arguments of Explicit Argument 2.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments

This section will examine the breakdown of the pro-trans adjacent sub-arguments of the category Arguments About Other Topics. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 13 explicit 'other pro-trans conjunction arguments' were categorized. As such, when a case was identified as having the category of Arguments About Other Topics, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following 13 sub-arguments:

1. Pro Human Rights: Do they explicitly argue in favour of human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Pro Legislation: Do they explicitly argue for a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Pro Freedom of Speech: Do they explicitly argue for freedom of speech, especially in relation to/balanced with other human rights?
4. Pro Prisons: Do they explicitly argue in favour of prisons/aspects of prisons?
5. Pro Conversion Therapy: Do they explicitly argue against conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
6. Pro Medical Treatment: Do they explicitly argue in favour of medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Pro Cis Women: Do they explicitly argue in favour of helping/protecting/advocating for cisgender women (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Pro Family Unit: Do they explicitly argue in favour of helping/protecting/advocating for the family unit (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Pro Gender Theory: Do they explicitly argue topics using theory related to gender, such as feminist theory (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Pro Universities: Do they explicitly argue in favour of universities/aspects of universities as places of learning, higher education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
11. Pro Schools: Do they explicitly argue in favour of schools/aspects of schools as places of learning, education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Pro Sports: Do they explicitly argue in favour of sports/aspects of sports as fair/must be made fair, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Pro Military: Do they explicitly argue in favour of the military/aspects of the military as progressive, innovative, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- (Pro) Human Rights was expected to be the most prevalent sub-category.
- It was anticipated that (Pro) Human Rights would increase over time.

- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for (Pro) Human Rights and (Pro) Family Unit.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for (Pro) Human Rights.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were not expected to have high relative percentages for any pro-trans adjacent arguments, as these groupings were the most openly trans-hostile in their articulations of anti-trans discourse.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A5.2.2a - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 2.11 'Arguments About Other Topics', In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments

Sub- Arguments	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Other Arguments 2.11	**315**	**100%**
Pro Human Rights	51	16%
Pro Legislation	4	1%
Pro Freedom of Speech	5	2%
Pro Prisons	1	0%
Pro Conversion Therapy	2	1%
Pro Medical Treatment	11	3%
Pro Cis Women	4	1%
Pro Family Unit	8	3%
Pro Gender Theory	4	1%
Pro Universities	1	0%
Pro Schools	7	2%
Pro Sports	3	1%
Pro Military	1	0%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

(Pro) Human Rights was the most prevalent sub-category. It appears that explicit arguments in favour of human rights were the most common type to be present in conjunction with pro-trans arguments. This was understandable, as, when trans rights are curtailed, it generates discussions about the protections of other human/civil rights as well[605]. All other topics were largely absent from the dataset.

[605] Ashley, 2018; Ashley, 2024 Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al., 2025; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

Table A5.2.2b - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 2.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' by Time Period, In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Other Arguments 2.11	**0**	**0%**	**84**	**100%**	**231**	**100%**
Pro Human Rights	0	0%	11	13%	40	17%
Pro Legislation	0	0%	2	2%	2	1%
Pro Freedom of Speech	0	0%	3	4%	2	1%
Pro Prisons	0	0%	7	8%	4	2%
Pro Conversion Therapy	0	0%	2	2%	2	1%
Pro Medical Treatment	0	0%	1	1%	7	3%
Pro Cis Women	0	0%	1	1%	3	1%
Pro Family Unit	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Pro Gender Theory	0	0%	3	4%	4	2%
Pro Universities	0	0%	2	2%	1	0%
Pro Schools	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Pro Sports	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Military	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Unlike the above-stated hypotheses, most of these sub-arguments remained stable over time. The only exception was (Pro) Prisons, which decreased slightly over time. These discourses tended to advocate for carceral systems and prisons. It appears that arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro-trans arguments remained relatively stable over time, including (Pro) Human Rights, which was surprising.

Table A5.2.2c - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 2.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' by Actor, In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments								
Sub-Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Other Arguments 2.11	**30**	**100%**	**209**	**100%**	**5**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**
Pro Human Rights	6	20%	43	21%	0	0%	2	3%
Pro Legislation	1	3%	2	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Pro Freedom of Speech	0	0%	5	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Prisons	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Conversion Therapy	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Medical Treatment	0	0%	11	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Cis Women	0	0%	4	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Family Unit	0	0%	8	4%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Gender Theory	0	0%	4	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Universities	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Schools	0	0%	7	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Sports	0	0%	3	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Military	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Think Tanks contained only five coded cases present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Think Tanks grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Politicians and MSM Newspapers both had higher relative percentages for (Pro) Human Rights. Politicians discussed preserving human/civil rights generally in conjunction with pro-

trans arguments. They argued that curtailing trans rights could lead to other human/civil rights claw backs for marginalized groups. MSM Newspapers often reported on/published articles on human rights in conjunction with pro-trans arguments, arguing that their maintenance and protection were important for the preservation of freedom of choice and democracy.

Alt-Right New Media had a lower relative percentage for (Pro) Human Rights, compared to other actors. This grouping did not engage with pro-trans arguments frequently. Thus, their relative absence of arguing for human rights in conjunction with pro-trans arguments was scarce, which was to be expected.

A5.3: Comparisons to the US

This section is dedicated to examining the breakdown of the data regarding comparisons made between Canada and the US. This category was examined by the breakdown of the overall data, as well as cross-referenced it by time period and by actor. How prevalent were Canada-US comparisons across different decades? How prevalent were Canada-US comparisons across different actors? This section will answer these questions.

A5.3.1: Absolute and Relative Frequency 'Comparisons to the US'

This section will examine the breakdown of the Canada-US comparisons. This category was designed to capture comparisons made between Canada and the US regarding the current anti-trans backlash. As such, when identifying a case as having this category present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following category:

1. Comparisons to the US: An examination of Canada being compared to the US, where a similar anti-trans backlash is occurring.[606] How is Canada being compared to the US regarding transness, trans people, and trans rights?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Comparisons to the US was expected to be somewhat prevalent, based on the pre-reading and pilot testing results.
- Comparisons to the US was expected to increase dramatically over time.
- Politicians and MSM Newspapers were expected to have moderate numbers for Comparisons to the US.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to have high relative percentages for Comparisons to the US.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

[606] Carlson, 2018; Christ and De Abreu, 2020; Greaves, 2020; Butler, 2024; Montigny, 2025

Table A5.3.1a – Distribution of 'Comparisons to the US' Present in Cases		
	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**500**	**100%**
6.1 Comparisons to the US	57	7%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Unlike the above-stated hypothesis, it was surprising to discover that Comparisons to the US were largely absent from the dataset.

Table A5.3.1b – Distribution of 'Comparisons to the US' by Time Period						
	2000-2009		2010-2019		2020-2023	
	Raw #	%	Raw #	%	Raw #	%
Total Cases	**0**	**0%**	**165**	**100%**	**335**	**100 %**
6.1 Comparisons to the US	0	0%	21	13%	36	11%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Unlike the above-stated hypothesis, Comparisons to the US remained stable over time. It appears that while many cases were quite memorable in the comparisons that they drew, these were not reflected in the quantitative totality of the cases.

Table A5.3.1c – Distribution of 'Comparisons to the US' by Actor								
Varia	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**87**	**100%**	**241**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**101**	**100%**
6.1 Comparisons to the US	3	3%	40	9%	2	2%	12	6%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Unlike the above-stated hypotheses, none of the actor groupings contained notably higher or lower relative percentages for this category. There is nothing notable to report here.

APPENDIX 6: CHAPTER 7 IMPLICIT ARGUMENTS AND IMPLICIT SUB-ARGUMENTS DISCUSSION LONG-FORM PROSE ANALYSIS

A6.1: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Arguments

This appendix contains the long-form prose analysis for the sub-arguments linked to Chapter 7: Implicit Arguments and Implicit Sub-Arguments. All colour categorization of the data outline below follows the same convention outlined for the breakdown of data overall, by time period, and by actor as indicated in the body of Chapter 7. The full text, including the tables and the qualitative analyses, are provided below.

A6.1.1: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.1 – 'Legality, Rights and Govt'

The argument category 'Legality, Rights and Govt' examined codes centered around legal/legislative/political anti-trans discourses. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, six sub-arguments that defined Legality, Rights and Govt were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Legality, Rights and Govt present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following six sub-arguments:

1. Freedom of Speech: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors are in favour of freedom of speech?
2. Silencing: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are in opposition to freedom of speech?
3. Rights: Does the discourse suggest that trans rights violate and/or otherwise come into conflict with other legal rights?
4. Anti Govt: Does the discourse suggest the government is forcing transness and/or trans people upon them?
5. Pro Govt: Does the discourse suggest the government is stopping/attempting to stop the forcing of transness and/or trans people upon them?
6. Parental Rights: Does the discourse suggest that 'parental rights' are necessary, important, and/or should be protected by law?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Anti-Govt were expected to be the largest sub-arguments.
- Freedom of Speech, Silencing, Rights, Anti-Govt, and Parental Rights were all expected to increase over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Anti-Govt.
- MSM Newspapers and Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Freedom of Speech and Anti-Govt.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Freedom of Speech, Silencing, and Anti-Govt.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.1a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.1 'Legality, Rights and Govt'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.1	**212**	**100%**
3.1.1 Freedom of Speech	50	24%
3.1.2 Silencing	106	50%
3.1.3 Rights	61	29%
3.1.4 Anti Govt	121	57%
3.1.5 Pro Govt	30	14%
3.1.6 Parental Rights	39	18%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Silencing and Anti-Govt were extremely prevalent in the dataset. Freedom of Speech, however, was not as prevalent as expected – although it was still present in a quarter of cases from this argument category. Compared to the explicit sub-arguments, it seems that 'freedom of speech/expression' arguments were generally explicitly stated more often than they were implicitly portrayed in the discourse. The Rights sub-argument was present as similar rates for explicit and implicit argumentations, emphasizing contentions between trans rights and other human/civil rights. Silencing was also similarly present at similar rates both explicitly and implicitly. Interestingly, Anti-Govt was significantly higher for implicit than explicit argumentations. Subtler forms of argumentation that portrayed the government as 'forcing' transness upon people were quantitively more frequent than making similar argument overtly. Lastly, Parental Rights was significantly lower than had anticipated, given the exponential increase of this line of argumentation in recent years. However, it is much more prevalent as an explicit form of argumentation than an implicit one.

Table A6.1.1b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.1 'Legality, Rights and Govt' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.1	**0**	**0%**	**93**	**100%**	**119**	**100%**
3.1.1 Freedom of Speech	0	0%	19	20%	31	26%
3.1.2 Silencing	0	0%	60	65%	46	39%
3.1.3 Rights	0	0%	33	35%	28	24%
3.1.4 Anti Govt	0	0%	41	44%	80	67%
3.1.5 Pro Govt	0	0%	10	11%	20	17%
3.1.6 Parental Rights	0	0%	10	11%	29	24%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Anti-Govt increased dramatically over time. It did not increase at similar rates explicitly, indicating that arguments portraying the government as 'forcing' transness upon the general populace proliferated in subtler/more dissembling language more often than in explicit argumentations. It was also noted that Parental Rights increased somewhat over time, albeit not nearly at the same rates found in the corresponding explicit sub-arguments. By contrast, both Silencing and Rights decreased dramatically over time. Where Silencing remained stable explicitly over time, Rights also decreased explicitly over time, at an even more extreme 'drop'. This finding was quite unexpected, as memorable cases would have indicated an increase in both explicit and implicit argumentations positioning trans rights as contentious with other human/civil rights, and/or that anti-trans views were being deliberately silenced.

Table A6.1.1c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.1 'Legality, Rights and Govt' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.1	**60**	**100%**	**68**	**100%**	**44**	**100%**	**40**	**100%**
3.1.1 Freedom of Speech	17	28%	9	13%	12	27%	12	30%
3.1.2 Silencing	31	52%	37	54%	24	55%	14	35%
3.1.3 Rights	28	47%	16	24%	12	27%	5	13%
3.1.4 Anti Govt	38	63%	28	41%	32	73%	23	58%
3.1.5 Pro Govt	5	8%	12	18%	8	18%	5	13%
3.1.6 Parental Rights	11	18%	10	15%	13	30%	5	13%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Rights and Anti-Govt. Based on qualitative observations, Politicians engaged with implicit discourses that portrayed trans rights as infringing upon other human/civil rights. They also critiqued the (federal) government for its pro-trans legislation and political stances. It seems that, implicitly, there was a greater criticism of the Trudeau government for its pro-LGBTQ+ stance compared to explicitly made arguments.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Anti-Govt and Parental Rights. This grouping engaged with implicit arguments that critiqued the (federal) government for its pro-trans legislation and political stances. They also implicitly argued in favour of 'parental rights' and the 'necessity' of informing parents of children's decisions to self-identify as trans in scholastic settings. In terms of explicit sub-arguments, this grouping had higher numbers for Freedom of Speech and Silencing. It was interesting to see the contrast for this grouping, in which they overtly discussed freedom of speech/expression and pro-trans actors silencing discussions on freedom of speech/expression, compared with their subtler criticisms of the Trudeau government and/or their implicit support for 'parental rights'.

Three types of actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Pro-Govt), MSM Newspapers (Freedom of Speech; Anti-Govt), and Alt-Right New Media (Silencing; Rights). Politicians had lower numbers for Pro-Govt compared to other actors. In terms of implicit arguments, this grouping engaged with portrayals positive portrayals of the government 'protecting' the populace from transness less so than other actors. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Freedom of Speech and Anti-Govt. They also had lower numbers for their explicit Freedom of Speech and Silencing sub-arguments. It seems that MSM Newspapers did not make 'freedom of speech/expression' arguments as often as other actors, both explicitly and implicitly. They were also less likely to subtly critique the Trudeau government for its pro-LGBTQ+ stance

compared to other actors. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Freedom of Speech and Silencing. This was surprising, as this grouping was expected to engage with these lines of argumentation more often than other actors.

A6.1.2: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.2 – 'LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality'

The argument category 'LGBTQ+ Events, Venues, Drag, Sexuality; examined arguments pertaining to LGBTQ+ events/venues, sexuality, and/or sexual disorder/harm. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, seven sub-arguments that defined LGBTQ+ Venues, Drag, Sexuality were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of LGBTQ+ Events, Venues, Drag Sexuality, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following seven sub-arguments:

1. Venues: Does the discourse imply that LGBTQ+ events and venues should be banned/shut down and/or are unnecessary/unneeded?
2. Sexual Harm: Does the discourse suggest that information on transness and/or trans people and their relationship to sexual disorders/dysfunction/harm/etc. is provided?
3. Sex Work: Does the discourse suggest the relationship between transness and/or trans people and sex work is harmful?
4. Hypersexual: Does the discourse portray transness and/or trans people as hypersexual(ized)?
5. Bathroom Danger: Does the discourse portray trans people seeking access to gender affirming washroom facilities as dangerous, suspicious, nefarious, etc.?
6. Porn: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as attempting to or wanting to expose people (especially children) to pornography?
7. Make Porn: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as attempting to or wanting to create, distribute, and/or consume pornography (especially child pornography)?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Sexual Harm and Hypersexual were expected to be the largest sub-arguments.
- Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Bathroom Danger were all expected to increase dramatically over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Venues and Bathroom Danger.
- MSM Newspapers were expected have higher relative percentages for Sexual Harm and Hypersexual.
- Think Tanks were expected have higher relative percentages for Sexual Harm and Hypersexual.
- Alt-Right New Media was expected to have higher relative percentages for Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, Bathroom Danger, and Porn.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.2a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.2 'LGBTQ+ Events, Venues, Drag, Sexuality'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.2	**165**	**100%**
3.2.1 Venues	6	4%
3.2.2 Sexual Harm	110	67%
3.2.3 Sex Work	8	5%
3.2.4 Hypersexual	134	81%
3.2.5 Bathroom Danger	32	19%
3.2.6 Porn	46	28%
3.2.7 Make Porn	5	3%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Per the above-stated hypotheses, Sexual Harm and Hypersexual were the largest sub-arguments from this argument category. Implicit arguments that portrayed trans people/transness as inherently sexual/sexually 'dangerous' were frequent. Arguments conflating transness with sexual disorder/dysfunction was a common throughline in the dataset. Porn was also present in surprisingly high numbers, especially compared to the low explicit argument numbers. It was surprising to discover that Bathroom Danger was unexpectedly absent from the dataset. These numbers were comparable with the explicit argument category results as well, demonstrating both a lower implicit and explicit presence for this sub-argument than anticipated.

Table A6.1.2b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.2 'LGBTQ+ Events, Venues, Drag, Sexuality' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.2	**0**	**0%**	**71**	**100%**	**94**	**100%**
3.2.1 Venues	0	0%	2	3%	4	4%
3.2.2 Sexual Harm	0	0%	32	45%	78	83%
3.2.3 Sex Work	0	0%	4	6%	4	4%
3.2.4 Hypersexual	0	0%	53	75%	81	86%
3.2.5 Bathroom Danger	0	0%	17	24%	15	16%
3.2.6 Porn	0	0%	8	11%	38	40%
3.2.7 Make Porn	0	0%	2	3%	3	3%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

It was discovered that Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Porn all increased notably over time. Implicit arguments that portrayed trans people/transness as (hyper)sexual and/or sexually 'dangerous', as well as arguments portrayed trans people as exposing others to pornography, all increased over time. All three of these sub-arguments also increased explicitly over time as well, indicating both overt and subtler argumentations of these concepts.

Interestingly, Bathroom Danger actually decreased over time, contradicting the above-stated hypotheses. This was also consistent with the corresponding explicit sub-argument as well. Despite this line of argumentation being well-established in the literature,[607] its utilization in anti-trans discourse in Canadian news and politics has become quantitatively less prevalent over time.

[607] Murib, 2020; Kulakowski, 2024; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Edell, 2026; LGBT Map, 2026

Table A6.1.2c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.2 'LGBTQ+ Events, Venues, Drag, Sexuality' by Actor								
Sub-Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases	**21**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**	**27**	**100%**	**46**	**100%**
3.2.1 Venues	2	10%	3	4%	0	0%	1	2%
3.2.2 Sexual Harm	8	38%	50	70%	15	56%	37	80%
3.2.3 Sex Work	0	0%	3	4%	2	7%	3	7%
3.2.4 Hypersexual	17	81%	53	75%	22	81%	42	91%
3.2.5 Bathroom Danger	11	52%	14	20%	1	4%	6	13%
3.2.6 Porn	0	0%	13	18%	8	30%	25	54%
3.2.7 Make Porn	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%	2	4%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Politicians contained only 21 coded cases and Think Tanks only 27 coded cases present in this sub-argument category. These were determined to be non-valid sample sizes (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Politicians and Think Tank groupings were therefore not included in the comparative analysis.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Sexual Harm, Hypersexual, and Porn, which was to be expected. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with transness as (hyper)sexual, sexually 'pornographic', and/or sexually 'dangerous'. They also had higher numbers for all these categories in the corresponding explicit sub-arguments, as well as for Venues. This indicated a strong engagement with both explicit and implicit lines of argumentation portraying transness as sexually disordered/dysfunctional.

MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Hypersexual and Porn. It seems that this grouping did not engage with these implicit forms of argumentation as frequently as other actors. This was also the case for the explicit Porn sub-argument, indicating lower engagement rates for both overt and subtle forms of argumentation pertaining to these concepts.

A6.1.3: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.3 – 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity'

The argument category 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity' examined arguments pertaining to the sex/gender binary, gender roles, and heteronormativity. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, seven sub-arguments that defined Gender Roles and

Heteronormativity were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Gender Roles and Heteronormativity present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following seven sub-arguments:

1. Gender Binary: Does the discourse suggest that the gender binary is 'natural', 'normal', 'real', 'biological', and/or otherwise objectively true?
2. Cis As Normal: Does the discourse suggest that the reification, naturalization, and/or normalization of cisnormativity is 'natural' and 'normal'?
3. Straight As Normal: Does the discourse suggest that the reification of heterosexuality is 'natural' and 'normal'?
4. Straight Threat: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are threatening to heterosexuality?
5. Traditional Threat: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as threatening to traditional gender roles?
6. Emasculating: Does the discourse portray transness and/or trans people as emasculating?
7. Cis Queer: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors negatively compared to cisgender queer people?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Gender Role Threat were expected to be the largest sub-arguments.
- Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Gender Role Threat were all expected to increase dramatically over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary and Cis As Normal.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Straight As Normal.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Straight As Normal.
- Alt-Right New Media was expected to have higher relative percentages for Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, Straight As Normal, and Gender Role Threat.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.3a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.3 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity'		
Sub-Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.3	**326**	**100%**
3.3.1 Gender Binary	259	79%
3.3.2 Cis as Normal	260	80%
3.3.3 Straight as Normal	82	25%
3.3.4 Straight Threat	86	26%
3.3.5 Gender Role Threat	212	65%
3.3.6 Emasculating	5	2%
3.3.7 Cis Queer	21	6%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

It was discovered that Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Gender Role Threat were the largest sub-arguments for this category. As stated above, a strong prevalence of implicit arguments that reified the sex/gender binary, cisnormativity, and/or portrayals transness/trans people as threatening to traditional gender roles were identified throughout the dataset. Compared to the explicit sub-arguments, it seems that Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Straight As Normal were also highly prevalent. Straight As Normal and Straight Threat were also somewhat prevalent implicitly. These implicit arguments portrayed transness as destabilizing to heterosexuality and/or portrayed heterosexuality as ‘normal’, and other forms of sexuality as ‘abnormal’. The explicit Straight As Normal sub-argument was present in comparable numbers, but the explicit Straight Threat sub-argument was noticeably less prevalent than its implicit counterpart. It seems that arguments portraying transness as ‘threatening’ to heterosexuality was generally expressed in subtler forms of articulation.

Table A6.1.3b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.3 'Gender Roles and Heteronormativity' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.3	**0**	**0%**	**140**	**100%**	**186**	**100%**
3.3.1 Gender Binary	0	0%	100	71%	159	85%
3.3.2 Cis as Normal	0	0%	101	72%	159	85%
3.3.3 Straight as Normal	0	0%	28	20%	54	29%
3.3.4 Straight Threat	0	0%	35	25%	51	27%
3.3.5 Gender Role Threat	0	0%	68	49%	144	77%
3.3.6 Emasculating	0	0%	2	1%	3	2%
3.3.7 Cis Queer	0	0%	7	5%	14	8%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The Gender Binary, Cis As Normal, and Gender Role Threat sub-arguments all increased over time, as was hypothesized. Strong preoccupations with the reification of the sex/gender binary, cisnormative conceptualizations of sex/gender, and/or portrayals of transness/trans as 'threatening' to the stability of traditional gender roles all increased. Straight As Normal and Cis Queer both increased with time in the corresponding explicit sub-arguments. While the explicit focus seemed to pertain to matters of sexuality – heteronormative relations between binary genders and/or positive comparisons of cisgender queer people to trans people – the implicit argumentations, by contrast, engaged more heavily with cisnormative frameworks of sex and gender.

Table A6.1.3c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.2 'LGBTQ+ Events, Venues, Drag, Sexuality' by Actor								
Sub-Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.2	**48**	**100%**	**166**	**100%**	**54**	**100%**	**58**	**100%**
3.3.1 Gender Binary	45	94%	134	81%	32	59%	48	83%
3.3.2 Cis as Normal	45	94%	135	81%	32	59%	48	83%
3.3.3 Straight as Normal	13	27%	40	24%	12	22%	17	29%
3.3.4 Straight Threat	7	15%	46	28%	15	28%	18	31%
3.3.5 Gender Role Threat	8	17%	127	77%	33	61%	44	76%
3.3.6 Emasculating	0	0%	3	2%	2	4%	0	0%
3.3.7 Cis Queer	2	4%	15	9%	1	2%	3	5%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Gender Binary and Cis As Normal. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with reifying the sex/gender binary as ‘normal’ and ‘natural’. They frequently made scientific, biological, and/or ‘common sense’ appeals to justify their claims. The sample size for cases containing these codes from Politicians was too small to compare to the explicit sub-arguments.

MSM Newspapers had higher numbers for Gender Role Threat, which was somewhat surprising. This group was preoccupied with anti-trans discourses centered around the ‘confusion’ transness introduced to gender roles, and thus threatening their sociopolitical, cultural, and ideological stability. In terms of comparison to explicit arguments, this grouping had higher numbers for Cis Queer compared to other actors. It seems that more homonormative/homonationalistic discourses were overtly argued, whereas support for traditional gender roles was implicitly argued more often than other actors.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Gender Role Threat. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with transness as ‘destabilizing’ to traditional gender roles. This grouping had no higher numbers for any corresponding explicit sub-arguments, indicating that while this grouping was average for overt arguments, they implicitly argued in support of traditional gender roles and cisheteronormative sociocultural frameworks for sex, gender, and sexuality at high rates compared to other actors.

Politicians had lower numbers for Straight Threat and Gender Role Threat. This grouping relied less on discourses portraying transness as a destabilizing force to heterosexuality and/or gender roles than other actors. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Gender Binary and Cis As Normal. This grouping did not have any lower numbers for the corresponding explicit sub-arguments. It seems this grouping did not engage with these forms of argumentation as often as other actors.

A6.1.4: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.4 – 'Medical Intervention'

The argument category 'Medical Intervention' examined codes pertaining to medical arguments centred around medical transition, hormone therapy, and/or conversion therapy. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, six sub-arguments that defined Medical Intervention were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Medical Intervention present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following six sub-arguments:

1. HRT, Etc.: Does the discourse suggest anti-trans actors provide information on puberty blockers, hormone replacement therapy and/or gender affirmation surgery?
2. Transition: Does the discourse present information that suggests transitioning (i.e. medical intervention) has a negative impact on the quality of life of trans people?
3. Detransition: Does the discourse suggest arguments pertaining to detransition?
4. Addiction: Does the discourse suggest that hormone replacement therapy is addictive, dangerous, experimental, and/or unsafe, etc.?
5. Gender Dysphoria: Does the discourse suggest information that is meant to dismiss, deny, minimize, or otherwise call into question the legitimacy of gender dysphoria claims?
6. Conversion Therapy: Does the discourse suggest that conversion therapy is useful, needed, or helpful in 'overcoming' transness?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- HRT, Etc., Transition, Detransition, and Gender Dysphoria were expected to be the largest sub-arguments.
- HRT, Etc., Transition, Detransition, and Gender Dysphoria were all expected to increase over time.
- All actors were expected to discuss HRT, Etc. Transition, and Gender Dysphoria at high rates.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.4a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.4 'Medical Intervention'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.4	**103**	**100%**
3.4.1 HRT, Etc.	51	50%
3.4.2 Transition	51	50%
3.4.3 Detransition	20	19%
3.4.4 Addiction	12	12%
3.4.5 Gender Dysphoria	27	26%
3.4.6 Conversion Therapy	14	14%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

HRT, Etc., Transition, and Gender Dysphoria were all highly prevalent sub-arguments within this category. These arguments highlighted complications and negative outcomes associated with gender affirmative care, hormone therapy and puberty blockers, and/or questioned the validity of gender dysphoria claims. These implicit arguments mirrored the results from the explicit sub-arguments, indicating that medicalized anti-trans arguments are highly prevalent in both overt and subtler forms.

Addiction and Conversion Therapy were also somewhat prevalent. While the Addiction sub-argument was present at similar rates to its explicit counterpart, the Conversion Therapy sub-argument was present at double the rate of its explicit counterpart.

Finally, it was discovered that Detransition was present in lower numbers that expected. This implicit finding was comparable to the explicit sub-argument's relative results, demonstrating a lower-than-expected presence for this argument. Perhaps the relative newness of this talking point led to this outcome, since detransition discussions were relatively rare in the dataset prior to 2019.

Table A6.1.4b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.4 'Medical Intervention' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.4	**0**	**0%**	**44**	**100%**	**59**	**100%**
3.4.1 HRT, Etc.	0	0%	21	48%	30	51%
3.4.2 Transition	0	0%	16	36%	35	59%
3.4.3 Detransition	0	0%	5	11%	15	25%
3.4.4 Addiction	0	0%	3	7%	9	15%
3.4.5 Gender Dysphoria	0	0%	9	20%	18	31%
3.4.6 Conversion Therapy	0	0%	5	11%	9	15%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Transition, Detransition, Addiction, and Gender Dysphoria all increased notably over time. These implicit argumentations portrayed medical transition as medically unnecessary and/or prone to complications; detransition as an 'inevitable outcome' of transitioning; hormone therapy as dangerous/'addictive'; and/or questioned the legitimacy of gender dysphoria claims. Most of these implicit findings were mirrored in the rapid increase for their explicit sub-argument counterparts. Interestingly, Conversion Therapy remained stable implicitly while it decreased over time explicitly. HRT, Etc. also remained stable over time implicitly where it increased over time explicitly. This may demonstrate that medical anti-trans discourses have 'hardened' over time.

Table A6.1.4c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.4 'Medical Intervention' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.4	**12**	**100%**	**58**	**100%**	**14**	**100%**	**19**	**100%**
3.4.1 HRT, Etc.	6	50%	30	52%	6	43%	9	47%
3.4.2 Transition	4	33%	28	48%	6	43%	13	68%
3.4.3 Detransition	4	33%	6	10%	8	57%	2	11%
3.4.4 Addiction	2	17%	6	10%	1	7%	3	16%
3.4.5 Gender Dysphoria	3	25%	14	24%	4	29%	6	32%
3.4.6 Conversion Therapy	4	33%	5	9%	1	7%	4	21%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Detransition and Conversion Therapy. They were strongly preoccupied with detransition regret rates, as well as keeping conversion therapy services 'safe and 'legal' to 'treat' non-cisgender identities. They also explicitly discussed Transition and Detransition more often than other actors, indicating both overt and subtle forms of argumentation that pathologized transness.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Detransition. They were preoccupied with detransition regret rates, especially for children and youth. By contrast, they had average numbers for Detransition explicitly, indicating a subtler focus on implicit argumentation compared to other actors. They also had higher numbers for the explicit Transition and Gender Dysphoria sub-arguments, while those numbers were average for implicit argumentations. This may indicate a 'hardened' stance on these subjects.

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Transition and Conversion Therapy. This grouping was preoccupied with transition as irreversible and/or medically 'unnecessary', as well as keeping conversion therapy services 'safe and legal' to 'treat' non-cisgender identities. They also had high numbers for these corresponding explicit sub-arguments, in addition to higher numbers for HRT, Etc. and Gender Dysphoria. This indicated both overt and subtle forms of argumentation were employed.

Politicians utilized implicit arguments portraying transition as invasive/medically unnecessary less so than other actors. Interestingly, they had higher explicit rates for this sub-argument compared to other actors, which may indicate a 'hardened' stance in articulating opposition to medical transition. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Conversion Therapy. They had average numbers for the corresponding explicit sub-argument.

A6.1.5: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.5 – 'Women and Children'

The argument category 'Women and Children' examined codes tracking discussions pertaining to interest groups such as women, children, and families. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, six sub-arguments that defined Women and Children were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Women and Children present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following six sub-arguments:

1. Anti Woman: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as misogynistic, 'woman-hating', etc.?
2. Pro Woman: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors are fighting against misogyny?
3. Hurt Children: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to expose children to harm?
4. Protect Children: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors want to protect children from harm?
5. Hurt Families: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to expose the family unit to harm?
6. Protect Families: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors want to protect the family unit from harm?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- All sub-arguments were expected to be highly prevalent.
- Hurt Children, Protect Children, Hurt Families, and Protect Families were all expected to increase dramatically over time.
- Anti-Woman and Pro-Woman were also expected to increase over time, albeit less dramatically.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Anti-Woman, Protect Children, and Protect Families.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Anti-Woman, Hurt Children, and Hurt Families.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Anti-Woman, Hurt Children, and Hurt Families.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Anti-Woman, Hurt Children, and Hurt Families.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.5a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.5 'Women and Children'

Sub- Arguments	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.5	**308**	**100%**
3.5.1 Anti-Woman	58	19%
3.5.2 Pro-Woman	38	12%
3.5.3 Hurt Children	158	51%
3.5.4 Protect Children	145	47%
3.5.5 Hurt Families	120	39%
3.5.6 Protect Families	135	44%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Hurt Children, Protect Children, Hurt Families, and Protect Families were all highly prevalent. These implicit arguments corresponded with the above-stated hypotheses. Anti-trans actors were implicitly portrayed as 'protectors/advocates' for children and families against 'harmful' and/or 'destabilizing' forces, such as pro-trans legislation and/or trans advocacy work. Conversely, trans people/pro-trans actors were implicitly portrayed as enforcing sociocultural attitudes and laws that were 'harmful' to children and families. These findings corresponded with the explicit sub-arguments, indicating both overt and subtle forms of argumentation were frequently employed. By contrast, Anti-Woman and Pro-Woman were surprisingly absent from the dataset, given the qualitative observations of a surge in 'protect women' discourses in recent years. However, unlike the sub-arguments focused on children and families, the implicit sub-arguments for Anti Woman and Pro Woman were both lower than their explicit counterparts. The explicit 'protect women' arguments (see Appendix 5) seem to have been utilized more frequently than implicit ones.

Table A6.1.5b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.5 'Women and Children' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.5	**0**	**0%**	**88**	**100%**	**220**	**100%**
3.5.1 Anti-Woman	0	0%	31	35%	27	12%
3.5.2 Pro-Woman	0	0%	21	24%	17	8%
3.5.3 Hurt Children	0	0%	40	45%	118	54%
3.5.4 Protect Children	0	0%	22	25%	123	56%
3.5.5 Hurt Families	0	0%	24	27%	96	44%
3.5.6 Protect Families	0	0%	18	20%	117	53%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Protect Children, Hurt Families, and Protect Families all increased over time. These findings matched the above-stated hypotheses. A growing trend of portraying anti-trans actors as heroic in their efforts to 'save' children and families from the 'harms' of trans rights proliferated. This was reflected in the corresponding explicit sub-arguments, indicating an increase for both explicit and implicit argumentations of pro-trans actors 'harming' children and families, and/or anti-trans actors 'protecting' children and families. Interestingly, Hurt Children remained largely stable over time, which was unexpected. The corresponding explicit sub-argument did increase dramatically over time, indicting perhaps a 'hardening' of this discourse. The literature also indicated a re-invigoration of 'save the children' discourses in recent years.[608] It was also discovered that the Anti-Woman and Pro-Woman sub-arguments both decreased dramatically over time. Despite the qualitative shift observed in articulating support for 'women's sex-based rights' discourses, the quantitative results did not reflect this shift. While the corresponding explicit Anti Woman sub-argument also decreased over time, the Pro Woman explicit sub-argument increased. This may indicate a 'hardening' of this line of argumentation, in which anti-trans actors were portrayed as operating in the best interests of (cisgender) women.

[608] Bower-Brown, 2025; Evans, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Ugo Laquièze, 2025

Table A6.1.5c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.5 'Women and Children' by Actor								
Sub-Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.5	**52**	**100%**	**136**	**100%**	**47**	**100%**	**73**	**100%**
3.5.1 Anti-Woman	14	27%	26	19%	10	21%	8	11%
3.5.2 Pro-Woman	10	19%	20	15%	5	11%	3	4%
3.5.3 Hurt Children	23	44%	56	41%	28	60%	51	70%
3.5.4 Protect Children	31	60%	66	49%	17	36%	31	42%
3.5.5 Hurt Families	8	15%	44	32%	25	53%	43	59%
3.5.6 Protect Families	27	52%	63	46%	16	34%	29	40%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Anti-Woman, Protect Children, and Protect Families. This grouping engaged with implicit arguments that portrayed anti-trans actors as working in the best interests of children and families. They also implicitly positioned pro-trans actors as 'harming' women's rights by advocating for trans rights. Interestingly, they had higher explicit results for Hurt Children and Hurt Families compared to other actors, indicating differing approaches as to their overt and covert forms of argumentation. They also had higher implicit numbers for Anti-Woman; the explicit corresponding sub-argument was average.

Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media both had higher numbers for Hurt Children and Hurt Families, implicitly arguing that trans people/pro-trans actors were 'harming' children and families via their advocacy and support for 'woke/gender ideology'. While Think Tanks had lower-than-average and average numbers for these corresponding explicit sub-arguments respectively, Alt-Right New Media had correspondingly higher-than-average numbers for the explicit results as well. While the former grouping was generally more subtle in its argumentation of these talking points, the latter employed both overt and subtle forms of argumentation.

All types of actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Hurt Children; Hurt Families), MSM Newspapers (Hurt Children), Think Tanks (Protect Children; Protect Families), and Alt-Right New Media (Pro-Woman). Politicians had lower numbers for the implicit Hurt Children and Hurt Families sub-arguments compared to other actors, but these

numbers were higher than other actors for their explicit counterparts. This indicated a fascinating contrast between explicit and implicit forms of argumentation. Politicians overtly discussed transness as 'harmful' to children and families; they also implicitly they portrayed anti-trans actors as 'protectors' of children and families. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers Hurt Children, which was surprising. Think Tanks had lower numbers for Protect Children and Protect Families. They did not emphasize anti-trans actors as 'protectors' of children and families as much as other actors. Both corresponding explicit sub-arguments were average. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Pro-Woman. They had higher-than-average numbers for the corresponding explicit sub-argument, indicating perhaps a 'hardening' of this argument.

A6.1.6: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.6 – 'Racism and Immigration'

The argument category 'Racism and Immigration' examined codes pertaining to racist and/or intolerance arguments. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, four sub-arguments that defined Racism and Immigration were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Racism and Immigration present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following four sub-arguments:

1. Racist: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as racist?
2. Anti Racist: Does the discourse portray anti-trans actors as supporting other races/being anti-racist?
3. Intolerant: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to expose immigrants/newcomers to harmful/racist rhetoric?
4. Tolerant: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors want to protect immigrants/newcomers from harmful/racist rhetoric?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Racist and Intolerant were expected be the largest sub-arguments.
- Racist and Intolerant were expected to increase slightly over time.
- Politicians, MSM Newspapers, and Think Tanks were expected to have average relative percentages for all subcategories.
- Alt-Right New Media was expected discuss Racist and Intolerant at higher relative percentages and portray pro-trans actors negatively.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.6a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.6 'Racism and Immigration'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.6	**81**	**100%**
3.6.1 Racist	62	77%
3.6.2 Anti-Racist	25	31%
3.6.3 Intolerant	58	72%
3.6.4 Tolerant	26	32%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Racist and Intolerant were highly prevalent sub-arguments, given the overall small size of the argument category. Implicit arguments that portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as 'racist/intolerant' towards 'other cultures' were common. This corresponded with the explicit sub-argument findings, which were also present in relatively high numbers.

Anti-Racist and Intolerant were present in moderate numbers; it was suspected that discourses portraying anti-trans actors as 'tolerant' of 'other cultures' would be less prevalent. Interestingly, both implicit sub-arguments were double the corresponding explicit relative percentages.

Table A6.1.6b – Distribution of Subcategories of Category 3.6 'Racism and Immigration' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.6	**0**	**0%**	**30**	**100%**	**51**	**100%**
3.6.1 Racist	0	0%	27	90%	35	69%
3.6.2 Anti-Racist	0	0%	7	23%	18	35%
3.6.3 Intolerant	0	0%	26	87%	32	63%
3.6.4 Tolerant	0	0%	7	23%	19	37%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

The Anti-Racist and Tolerant sub-arguments increased over time. It seems that anti-trans actors were portrayed in a more positive light in the early 2020s. The Anti Racist explicit sub-argument also increased over time, while the explicit Tolerant sub-argument remained stable over time. By contrast, the Racist and Intolerant sub-arguments decreased over time, which was surprising. While the explicit Tolerant sub-argument remained stable over time, the explicit Racist sub-argument increased over time. This may indicate a 'hardening' of arguments

portraying pro-trans actors/trans people as ‘racist’ toward ‘other cultures’ for articulating anti-trans beliefs.

Table A6.1.6c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.6 'Racism and Immigration' by Actor

Sub-Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.6	**11**	**100%**	**32**	**100%**	**19**	**100%**	**19**	**100%**
3.6.1 Racist	8	73%	24	75%	16	84%	14	74%
3.6.2 Anti-Racist	5	45%	10	31%	5	26%	5	26%
3.6.3 Intolerant	8	73%	23	72%	15	79%	12	63%
3.6.4 Tolerant	5	45%	11	34%	5	26%	5	26%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers Anti-Racist and Tolerant, as was hypothesized above. This grouping emphasized anti-trans actors and/or anti-trans discourse as ‘accepting’ and embracing ‘multiculturalism’. There were too few coded explicit cases to make comparisons to the explicit sub-arguments for Politicians.

Think Tanks had a higher numbers for Racist. This grouping portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as racist toward ‘other cultures’ for expressing ‘different opinions’ (i.e., anti-trans discourses) more often than other actors. The corresponding explicit sub-argument was lower-than-average, indicating perhaps a ‘softer’ form of argumentation pertaining to this concept.

Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Intolerant, which contradicted the above-stated hypothesis. This grouping did not engage with discourses portraying trans people/pro-trans actors as intolerant of ‘other cultures’ as much as other actors. This directly contrasted with the explicit Intolerant sub-argument, which was higher compared to other actors. It seems this grouping may have taken a ‘hardened’ stance in portraying trans people/pro-trans actors as ‘closed-minded’ to ‘other cultures’.

A6.1.7: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.7 – ‘Ability and Ableism’

The argument category ‘Ability and Ableism’ examined codes for sub-arguments that discussed ‘social contagion’ and/or ‘transness as mental illness’ discourses. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, three sub-arguments that defined Ability and Ableism were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Ability and Ableism present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following three sub-arguments:

1. Mentally Ill: Does the discourse portray transness and/or trans people as having a disability/mental illness/disorder/etc.?
2. Social Contagion: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are attempting to spread transness like a sickness, etc.?
3. Exploitative: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as taking advantage of mentally ill, developmentally delayed, disabled, etc. people?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- All sub-arguments were expected to be present in small numbers.
- Mentally Ill and Social Contagion were expected to have the highest numbers, relatively speaking.
- Mentally Ill and Social Contagion were expected to increase over time.
- Politicians, MSM Newspapers, and Think Tanks were all expected to have average relative percentages for all sub-arguments.
- Alt-Right New Media was expected to discuss Mentally Ill and Social Contagion at higher relative percentages compared to other actors.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.7a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.7 'Ability and Ableism'

Sub- Arguments	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.7	**47**	**100%**
3.7.1 Mentally Ill	37	79%
3.7.2 Social Contagion	19	40%
3.7.3 Exploitative	3	6%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

The Mentally Ill and Social Contagion sub-arguments were especially prevalent within this category. Implicit arguments were utilized to portray transness as a mental illness/a symptom of mental illness. Transness was also portrayed as a 'social contagion', which could be 'spread' via 'exposure'. The explicit sub-arguments were also prevalent, indicating both explicit and implicit articulations of these arguments.

Table A6.1.7b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.7 'Ability and Ableism' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.7	**0**	**0%**	**26**	**100%**	**21**	**100%**
3.7.1 Mentally Ill	0	0%	20	77%	17	81%
3.7.2 Social Contagion	0	0%	4	15%	15	71%
3.7.3 Exploitative	0	0%	2	8%	1	5%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Mentally Ill and Social Contagion both increased over time, the latter increasing quite dramatically. Discourses portraying transness as a mental illness/a symptom of mental illness and/or discourses pertaining to transness as a 'social contagion' became more prevalent over time. These also correspond to the explicit sub-arguments Mentally Ill and Social Contagion, which increased over time. By contrast, the Exploitative implicit sub-argument remained stable over time, while the corresponding explicit sub-argument decreased over time.

Table A6.1.7c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.7 'Ability and Ableism' by Actor								
Sub-Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.7	**10**	**100%**	**21**	**100%**	**9**	**100%**	**7**	**100%**
3.7.1 Mentally Ill	9	90%	15	71%	7	78%	6	86%
3.7.2 Social Contagion	1	10%	8	38%	4	44%	6	86%
3.7.3 Exploitative	0	0%	2	10%	1	11%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Mentally Ill. This grouping implicitly portrayed trans people/transness as a sickness and/or mental condition, especially in the context of legislating on trans healthcare. There were too few cases from the explicit sub-arguments to make a direct comparison for Politicians. Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Mentally Ill and Social Contagion, as was to be expected. This grouping was strongly preoccupied with transness as a mental illness/symptom of a mental illness, and/or with transness as a 'socially communicable disease'. This grouping also had higher numbers for the explicit Social Contagion sub-argument, indicating both overt and subtle forms of argumentation at play. By contrast, the explicit

Mentally Ill sub-argument decreased with time. Politicians had lower numbers Social Contagion. Compared to other actors, they engaged less with discourses that portrayed transness as a 'socially communicable disease'.

A6.1.8: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.8 – 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship'

The argument category 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship' examined codes pertaining to implicit arguments of 'indoctrination', 'propaganda', and/or 'fighting back' against pro-trans discourse. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 12 sub-arguments that defined Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following 12 sub-arguments:

1. Elites: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as belonging to or part of a group of 'elites'?
2. Bad Faith: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are bad faith actors?
3. Special Treatment: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors want to be treated as a special interest group?
4. Censors: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as censoring anti-trans opinions/viewpoints?
5. Fight Back: Does the discourse suggest rallying/protesting/fighting back against the censorship of anti-trans views?
6. Liars: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as being deceptive, manipulative, liars, blackmailers, etc.?
7. Propagandists: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as spreading propaganda/indoctrinating others?
8. Too Much: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as wanting 'too much', 'taking things too far', etc.?
9. Hateful: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as being bigoted/hateful/etc.?
10. Wokeism: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as being part of/emblematic of 'political correctness'/'wokeism'/'woke hysteria'/etc.?
11. SM Recruit: Does the discourse portray social media/mass communication as a means for trans people to 'recruit' others?
12. Speaking Truth: Does the discourse suggest that social media/mass communication is a means of combatting transness and 'spreading the truth' etc.?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Liars, Propagandists, Fight Back, and Censors were expected to be the largest sub-arguments from this argument category.
- Liars, Propagandists, Fight Back, and Censors were all expected to increase over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher numbers for Special Treatment, Liars, and Propagandists.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher numbers for Liars, Propagandists, and Censors.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher numbers for Special Treatment, Liars, Propagandists, Wokeism, and Censors.

- Alt-Right New Media was expected to have higher numbers for Special Treatment, Liars, Propagandists, Wokeism, and Censors.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.8a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.8 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.8	**306**	**100%**
3.8.1 Elites	17	6%
3.8.2 Bad Faith	46	15%
3.8.3 Special Treatment	86	28%
3.8.4 Censors	178	58%
3.8.5 Fight Back	162	53%
3.8.6 Liars	122	40%
3.8.7 Propagandists	239	78%
3.8.8 Too Much	31	10%
3.8.9 Hateful	74	24%
3.8.10 Wokeism	107	35%
3.8.11 SM Recruit	2	1%
3.8.12 Speaking Truth	7	2%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Propagandists, Censors, Fight Back, and Liars were the largest sub-arguments within this category. These implicit arguments portrayed trans people/pro-trans actors as oppressive. These arguments also implicitly made calls to action to 'fight back' against pro-trans 'ideology'. All of the corresponding explicit sub-arguments except for Liars were also present in high numbers, indicating both overt and subtle forms of argumentation in articulating these talking points.

It was surprising to discover that Wokeism, Special Treatment, and Hateful were present in only about a third of cases coded with this argument category. These results mirrored their explicit counterparts.

Finally, the absence of Too Much was somewhat surprising, as accusations of taking trans rights/pro-trans discourse 'too far' was present in the literature.[609] This low presence was also reflected in the corresponding explicit sub-argument.

[609] Serano, 2007; Bettcher, 2007; Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024

Table A6.1.8b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.8 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.8	**0**	**0%**	**114**	**100%**	**192**	**100%**
3.8.1 Elites	0	0%	1	1%	16	8%
3.8.2 Bad Faith	0	0%	33	29%	13	7%
3.8.3 Special Treatment	0	0%	52	46%	34	18%
3.8.4 Censors	0	0%	63	55%	115	60%
3.8.5 Fight Back	0	0%	41	36%	121	63%
3.8.6 Liars	0	0%	46	40%	76	40%
3.8.7 Propagandists	0	0%	73	64%	166	86%
3.8.8 Too Much	0	0%	21	18%	10	5%
3.8.9 Hateful	0	0%	26	23%	63	33%
3.8.10 Wokeism	0	0%	30	26%	77	40%
3.8.11 SM Recruit	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%
3.8.12 Speaking Truth	0	0%	6	5%	1	1%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Propagandists, Hateful, Fight Back, Wokeism, and Elites all increased over time. These results indicated that trans people/pro-trans actors were generally portrayed as oppressive and that these portrayals increased over time. Moreover, calls to action also increased over time. The corresponding explicit sub-arguments also increased, demonstrating both overt and subtle forms of argumentation being utilized to argue against trans people/pro-trans actors and pro-trans discourse. The only exception to this mirroring of implicit and explicit sub-arguments was Elites, which remained stable over time. Bad Faith, Special Treatment, and Too Much all decreased over time, which was unexpected. The Special Treatment and Bath Faith explicit sub-arguments also decreased over time, which was also surprising. It appears that these arguments have become less prevalent both overtly and covertly in the 2020s. The Too Much explicit sub-argument remained stable over time, while implicit argumentations decreased.

Table A6.1.8c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.8 'Deceit, Indoctrination, Censorship' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.8	**30**	**100%**	**130**	**100%**	**60**	**100%**	**86**	**100%**
3.8.1 Elites	0	0%	3	2%	1	2%	13	15%
3.8.2 Bad Faith	4	13%	20	15%	20	33%	2	2%
3.8.3 Special Treatment	10	33%	36	28%	25	42%	15	17%
3.8.4 Censors	13	43%	64	49%	40	67%	61	71%
3.8.5 Fight Back	7	23%	69	53%	31	52%	55	64%
3.8.6 Liars	14	47%	55	42%	25	42%	28	33%
3.8.7 Propagandists	15	50%	100	77%	45	75%	79	92%
3.8.8 Too Much	6	20%	18	14%	5	8%	2	2%
3.8.9 Hateful	4	13%	36	28%	18	30%	31	36%
3.8.10 Wokeism	10	33%	41	32%	20	33%	36	42%
3.8.11 SM Recruit	0	0%	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%
3.8.12 Speaking Truth	0	0%	5	4%	2	3%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Too Much. This group emphasized implicit arguments that portrayed pro-trans actors/trans people as taking their activism/goals/agendas for trans rights 'too far', which played into respectability politics[610] of marginalized groups seeking sociopolitical and/or legal change. The numbers for the corresponding explicit sub-arguments were too small to compare, so no comparison was provided here.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Bad Faith, Special Treatment, and Censors. This grouping implicitly argued that trans people/pro-trans actors acted in bad faith; were seeking 'special treatment'; and/or were censoring 'opposing' viewpoints on transness/trans rights. These sub-arguments corresponded with their explicit counterparts, indicating both overt and subtle forms of argumentation at play.

[610] Serano, 2007; Bettcher, 2007; Carlson, 2017; Falkof, 2018; Hier, 2019; Slothouber, 2020; Mestre and Mestre, 2022; James, 2022; Esparza, 2019; Buntain, et al., 2022; Moran and Prochaska, 2022; Stryker and Blackston, 2023; Butler, 2024; Montigny, 2025; Anderson et al., 2025; Colliver et al., 2021; Vipond and Dietzel, 2026

Alt-Right New Media had higher numbers for Elites, Propagandists, Hateful, Fight Back, Wokeism, and Censors. This grouping implicitly argued that trans people/pro-trans actors were oppressive, hateful, and/or belonged to groups of cultural 'elites'. They also implicitly argued for calls to 'fight back' against pro-trans discourse. Only the explicit sub-argument for Fight Back was similarly higher-than-average. With the exception of the explicit sub-argument for Censors, which was lower-than-average, all other explicit sub-arguments were average. The majority of these arguments were subtly portrayed at higher rates compared to other actors. The Censors contrast was interesting, as it demonstrated a 'softer' form of argumentation.

Three types of actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Propagandists; Hateful; Fight Back; Censors), MSM newspapers (Censors), and Alt-Right New Media (Bad Faith; Special Treatment; Liars; Too Much). Politicians had lower numbers for Propagandists, Hateful, Fight Back, and Censors. Compared to other actors, Politicians did not prioritise these implicit argument. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Censors. They did not prioritize this implicit argument as much as other actors. The explicit sub-argument was average by contrast. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Bad Faith, Special Treatment, Liars, and Too Much. They did not prioritize these implicit arguments as much as other actors. The Special treatment explicit sub-argument was also lower-than-average, which was surprising. The other three other corresponding explicit sub-arguments were present in average numbers.

A6.1.9: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.9 – 'Common Talking Points'

The argument category 'Common Talking Points' examined miscellaneous arguments that frequently appeared in the dataset. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, three sub-arguments that defined Common Talking Points were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Common Talking Points present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following three sub-arguments:

1. Policing Bodies: Does the discourse suggest that policing trans bodies is necessary/important/etc.?
2. Not At School: Does the discourse suggest that transness and/or trans people should not be discussed in scholastic settings?
3. Ruin Sports: Does the discourse suggest that trans people in sports will ruin competitions, render results meaningless, have unfair advantages, make people uncomfortable, etc.?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Policing Bodies and Ruin Sports were expected to be the largest percentage frequencies for this argument category.
- All sub-arguments were expected to increase somewhat over time, especially Policing Bodies and Ruin Sports.
- Politicians and MSM Newspapers were expected to discuss Policing Bodies at higher relative percentages.
- Both Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to discuss Not At School at relatively higher rates than other actors.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.9a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.9 'Common Talking Points'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.9	**58**	**100%**
3.9.1 Policing Bodies	37	64%
3.9.2 Not At School	6	10%
3.9.3 Ruin Sports	11	19%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Policing Bodies was the largest sub-argument within this category by a notable margin. This preoccupation with policing trans bodies was expected, based on the number of qualitatively memorable cases. Unlike the corresponding explicit sub-argument, which was surprisingly absent, it seems that subtler forms of articulation were frequent. Not At School and Ruin Sports were surprisingly absent from the dataset. While the explicit sub-argument for Not At School was likewise much lower than anticipated, the sub-argument Ruin Sports was highly prevalent. It seems that articulations of how sports are 'ruined' by the presence of trans athletes may have 'hardened' in its articulation over time.

Table A6.1.9b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.9 'Common Talking Points' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.9	**0**	**0%**	**39**	**100%**	**19**	**100%**
3.9.1 Policing Bodies	0	0%	34	87%	3	16%
3.9.2 Not At School	0	0%	3	8%	3	16%
3.9.3 Ruin Sports	0	0%	4	10%	7	37%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Not At School and Ruin Sports both increased dramatically over time. The corresponding explicit sub-argument for Ruin Sports also increased over time, but the Not At School sub-argument decreased. The former sub-argument employed both explicit and implicit articulations that increased over time, whereas the latter increased subtly but not at similar rates overtly. Unexpectedly, Policing Bodies decreased dramatically over time. This also corresponded to the explicit sub-argument, which decreased dramatically over time as well.

Table A6.1.9c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.9 'Common Talking Points' by Actor								
Sub-Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.9	**13**	**100%**	**33**	**100%**	**6**	**100%**	**6**	**100%**
3.9.1 Policing Bodies	13	100%	22	67%	2	33%	0	0%
3.9.2 Not At School	0	0%	2	6%	2	33%	2	33%
3.9.3 Ruin Sports	1	8%	9	27%	1	17%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Policing Bodies. They also had high numbers for the corresponding explicit sub-argument. Politicians appeared to be strongly preoccupied with implicit (and explicit) discourses that promoted the policing and management of trans bodies, notably via legislation.

MSM Newspapers had higher numbers for Ruin Sports. This grouping engaged with implicit argumentations that trans athletes 'ruined' sports, made athletics 'unsafe' for (cisgender) athletes, and/or would render results meaningless due to their 'natural/biological advantages'.[611] The corresponding explicit sub-argument was not notable, indicating this line of argumentation may be 'softer' in its expression.

Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media both had higher numbers for Not At School. These groupings strongly preoccupied with 'school choice' and parents having options to instill 'traditional values' into their children. This also corresponded with the Think Tanks' explicit sub-argument, but the Alt-Right New Media explicit sub-argument was 0%, indicating an entirely covert form of expression in the dataset.

Three types of actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Not At School; Ruin Sports), Think Tanks (Policing Bodies), and Alt-Right New Media (Policing Bodies; Ruin Sports). Politicians had lower numbers for Not At School and Ruin Sports. This was mirrored in the absence of these explicit sub-arguments as well. Think Tanks had lower numbers for Policing Bodies, which was unexpected. This was mirrored in the absence of these explicit sub-arguments as well. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Policing Bodies and Ruin Sports, which was quite surprising. While the corresponding explicit sub-argument for Policing Bodies was likewise much lower than anticipated, the explicit Ruin Sports sub-

[611] schilt and westbrook, 2015; Murib, 2020; Montiel-McCann, 2023; Bower-Brown, 2024; Desjardins and Hepburn, 2024; Evans, 2024; Jakubowska, 2024; Kulakowski, 2024; Cazarin et al., 2025; Ekström, 2025; Osworth and Edlin, 2025; Rand, 2025; Edell, 2026; McLoughlin, 2026; Scott, 2026

argument was extremely prevalent. This indicated that the latter sub-argument was almost exclusively articulated overtly, with little to no subtle argumentations in the dataset.

A6.1.10: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.10 – 'Culture, Ideology and Religion 3.10'

The argument category 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' examined codes that captured implicit arguments pertaining to 'traditional values', capitalism, and/or Christianity. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, nine sub-arguments that defined Culture, Ideology and Religion were included. As such, when identifying a case as having the category of Culture, Ideology and Religion present, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following nine sub-arguments:

1. Traditional Values: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are threatening traditional values?
2. Threat to Society: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as an existential threat to Canadian/Western culture/society?
3. Un Canadian: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as articulating 'non-Canadian/un-Canadian values'?
4. Culture Wars: Does the discourse suggest that discussions of 'culture wars' are present when discussing about trans rights/issues?
5. Capitalism: Does the discourse portray pro-trans actors as a threat to capitalism?
6. Commies: Does the discourse 'accuse' pro-trans actors of being communists/socialists and/or articulating communist/socialist rhetoric?
7. Anti Religion: Does the discourse suggest that pro-trans actors are anti-religion?
8. Pro Religion: Does the discourse suggest anti-trans actors are pro-religion?
9. Christian Values: Does the discourse suggest that anti-trans actors are Christian, hold 'Christian values', etc.?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Traditional Values, Anti-Religion, and Pro-Religion were expected to be the largest relative percentages in this argument category.
- Traditional Values, Anti-Religion, and Pro-Religion were all expected to increase slightly over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Traditional Values, Culture Wars, Pro-Religion, and Anti-Religion.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Traditional Values and Culture Wars.
- Think Tanks were expected to have higher relative percentages for Traditional Values, Anti-Religion, and Pro-Religion.
- Alt-Right New Media were expected to have higher relative percentages for Culture Wars.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.1.10a – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.10 'Culture, Ideology and Religion'		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.10	**208**	**100%**
3.10.1 Traditional Values	40	19%
3.10.2 Threat to Society	31	15%
3.10.3 Un-Canadian	42	20%
3.10.4 Culture Wars	29	14%
3.10.5 Capitalism	4	2%
3.10.6 Commies	3	1%
3.10.7 Anti-Religion	40	19%
3.10.8 Pro-Religion	45	22%
3.10.9 Christian Values	32	15%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Un-Canadian and Pro-Religion were the largest sub-arguments for this category. Implicit arguments portraying pro-trans discourse as 'Un-Canadian', and/or implicit arguments that anti-trans actors as supporting freedom of religion were prevalent. Pro-Religion was present at even higher numbers explicitly, which was largely attributed to the Think Tank grouping and its disproportionate number of religious-centric arguments. By contrast, the Un-Canadian explicit sub-argument was present at lower numbers than the implicit sub-argument, suggesting that subtler forms of expression for this line of argumentation were more prevalent than overt ones. Traditional Values, Culture Wars, Threat to Society, Anti-Religion, and Christian Values were present, but at lower numbers than expected. These arguments generally implicitly framed pro-trans discourse and/or pro-trans actors/trans people as detrimental to the stability of Canada as a nation and to Canadian culture and politics. They also portrayed pro-trans discourse as oppositional to religious freedoms and/or to Christian beliefs and values. The corresponding explicit sub-arguments were also lower by comparison, indicating a 'softer' form of argumentation of these concepts in the dataset.

Table A6.1.10b – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.10 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.10	**0**	**0%**	**76**	**100%**	**132**	**100 %**
3.10.1 Traditional Values	0	0%	18	24%	22	17%
3.10.2 Threat to Society	0	0%	14	18%	17	13%
3.10.3 Un-Canadian	0	0%	18	24%	24	18%
3.10.4 Culture Wars	0	0%	8	11%	21	16%
3.10.5 Capitalism	0	0%	0	0%	4	3%
3.10.6 Commies	0	0%	0	0%	3	2%
3.10.7 Anti-Religion	0	0%	14	18%	26	20%
3.10.8 Pro-Religion	0	0%	18	24%	27	20%
3.10.9 Christian Values	0	0%	13	17%	19	14%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Traditional Values and Un-Canadian decreased over time, contradicting the above-stated hypotheses. The corresponding explicit sub-arguments remained stable over time. All other implicit sub-arguments remained stable over time, including Anti-Religion and Pro-Religion. The corresponding explicit sub-arguments both increased over time, indicating perhaps a 'hardening' of these stances in their overt articulations.

Table A6.1.10c – Distribution of Sub-Arguments of Category 3.10 'Culture, Ideology and Religion' by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.10	**36**	**100%**	**74**	**100%**	**46**	**100%**	**52**	**100%**
3.10.1 Traditional Values	1	3%	14	19%	18	39%	7	13%
3.10.2 Threat to Society	7	19%	9	12%	7	15%	8	15%
3.10.3 Un-Canadian	8	22%	7	9%	15	33%	12	23%
3.10.4 Culture Wars	3	8%	8	11%	13	28%	5	10%
3.10.5 Capitalism	0	0%	1	1%	2	4%	1	2%
3.10.6 Commies	0	0%	1	1%	1	2%	1	2%
3.10.7 Anti-Religion	12	33%	10	14%	11	24%	7	13%
3.10.8 Pro-Religion	17	47%	10	14%	12	26%	6	12%
3.10.9 Christian Values	4	11%	12	16%	7	15%	9	17%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Politicians had higher numbers for Anti-Religion and Pro-Religion, as was hypothesized. This grouping tended to implicitly argue that trans people/pro-trans actors advocated for legislative changes that would limit freedom of religion. They portrayed anti-trans actors as working to preserve the rights and freedoms of all Canadians, including freedom of religion. Unlike the corresponding explicit sub-arguments, which were both average, Politicians subtly argued these religious talking points at greater rates than other actors.

Think Tanks had higher numbers for Traditional Values, Culture Wars, Un-Canadian, and Anti-Religion. This grouping prioritized implicit arguments that valued ‘traditionalism’, that portrayed trans rights as contributing to the ‘culture wars’, that portrayed trans rights as ‘un-Canadian’, and/or that portrayed trans rights as infringing upon religious freedom/religious expression. All the corresponding explicit sub-arguments were average for this grouping, indicating a ‘softer’ approach to arguing these concepts.

Three types of actors had lower-than-average relative percentages: Politicians (Traditional Values; Culture Wars), MSM Newspapers (Un-Canadian; Pro-Religion) and Alt-Right New Media (Pro-Religion). Politicians had lower numbers for Traditional Values and Culture Wars. The corresponding explicit sub-arguments were present in average numbers. MSM Newspapers had lower numbers for Un-Canadian and Pro-Religion. While the corresponding explicit sub-argument Un-Canadian was average, the Pro-Religion argument was likewise lower than other actors. Alt-Right New Media had lower numbers for Pro-Religion. Explicitly, the corresponding sub-argument was actually higher than average, perhaps indicating a 'hardened' form of argumentation for this talking point.

A6.2: Other Implicit Arguments

This section is dedicated to examining the breakdown of other implicit arguments that were tracked in the dataset. These were arguments that appeared in conjunction with pro- or anti-trans arguments but were not pro- and/or anti-trans arguments themselves. Originally, these were coded as simply 'pro-trans other arguments' or 'anti-trans other arguments'. Given the number of 'other arguments' present, a second coding process was conducted to break out the specific 'other arguments' to track them. One code for anti-trans or pro-trans adjacent arguments each could be assigned to each case, allowing for one case to have a maximum of one anti-trans 'implicit other arguments' code, and one pro-trans 'implicit other arguments' code. These overall findings were then cross-referenced by time period and by actor. 'Pro-trans other arguments' were defined in a very straightforward way, i.e. – any additional arguments that implicitly supported trans people, trans rights, and/or transness. The same operationalizations of implicit arguments that were discussed in Chapter 7 were applied here. What additional argumentations were present? How did they compare across different decades? How did they compare between discursive types of actor? This section will answer these questions.

A6.2.1: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments

This section will examine the breakdown of the anti-trans conjunction sub-arguments of the category Arguments About Other Topics. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 14 explicit 'other arguments' were categorized. As such, when a case was identified as having the category of Arguments About Other Topics, the coding dictionary provided a code for the presence of the following 14 sub-arguments:

1. Human Rights 2: Does the discourse imply arguments against some aspect of human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Legislation 2: Does the discourse imply arguments against a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Freedom of Speech 2: Does the discourse imply arguments about seeking protection for freedom of speech from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
4. Religion 2: Does the discourse imply that religion/freedom of religion must be protected from perceived infringements/erosion/etc.?
5. Sexualization 2: Does the discourse imply that sexualization/aspects of sexualization of the human body are negative/bad/evil/etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

6. Conversion Therapy 2: Does the discourse imply support for conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Medical Treatment 2: Does the discourse imply arguments against medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Indoctrination 2: Does the discourse imply taking a stance against indoctrination/aspects of indoctrination (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Wokeism 2: Does the discourse imply opposition to 'wokeism'/aspects of 'wokeism' (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Social Media 2: Does the discourse imply that social media/aspects of social media are unfavourable/harmful/etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
11. Universities 2: Does the discourse imply that universities/aspects of universities are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Schools 2: Does the discourse imply that schools/aspects of schools are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Sports 2: Does the discourse imply that sports/aspects of sports are corrupt, unfair, pushing political agendas, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
14. Military 2: Does the discourse imply that the military/aspects of the military are 'soft', 'woke', failing, unprepared for war, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- Human Rights, Legislation, Freedom of Speech, and Wokeism were all expected to be the most prevalent sub-categories.
- Human Rights, Legislation, Freedom of Speech, and Wokeism were all expected to increase over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for Legislation and Freedom of Speech.
- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher relative percentages for Freedom of Speech, Human Rights, and Wokeism.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to contain higher relative percentages for Legislation, Freedom of Speech, and Wokeism.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.2.1a - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 3.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments		
Sub- Arguments	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.11	**315**	**100%**
Human Rights 2	10	3%
Legislation 2	7	2%
Freedom of Speech 2	4	1%
Religion 2	0	0%
Sexualization 2	2	1%
Conversion Therapy 2	2	1%
Medical Treatment 2	4	1%
Indoctrination 2	0	0%
Wokeism 2	6	2%
Social Media 2	0	0%
Universities 2	1	0%
Schools 2	3	1%
Sports 2	1	0%
Military 2	0	0%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Unlike the above-stated hypotheses, Human Rights, Legislation, Freedom of Speech, and Wokeism were all largely absent from the dataset. The corresponding explicit sub-arguments had higher numbers for Human Rights and Wokeism, indicating a more overt form of argumentation. The Legislation and Freedom of Speech explicit sub-arguments were similarly absent.

Table A6.2.1b - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 3.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments, by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.11	**0**	**0%**	**84**	**100%**	**231**	**100%**
Human Rights 2	0	0%	7	8%	3	1%
Legislation 2	0	0%	5	6%	2	1%
Freedom of Speech 2	0	0%	2	2%	2	1%
Religion 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Sexualization 2	0	0%	2	2%	0	0%
Conversion Therapy 2	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
Medical Treatment 2	0	0%	4	5%	0	0%
Indoctrination 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Wokeism 2	0	0%	4	5%	2	1%
Social Media 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Universities 2	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Schools 2	0	0%	0	0%	3	1%
Sports 2	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Military 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

Human Rights, Legislation, Medical Treatment, and Wokeism all decreased over time. The corresponding explicit Legislation sub-argument also decreased over time. By contrast, the explicit Human Rights sub-argument increased, perhaps indicating a 'hardened' stance on arguments against human rights. Wokeism also increased explicitly. The Medical Treatment explicit sub-argument remained stable.

Table A6.2.1c - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 3.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' In Conjunction with Anti-Trans Arguments, by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	Politicians		MSM Newspaper		Think Tanks		Alt-Right New Media	
	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases	Cases present	% Cases
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.11	30	100%	209	100%	5	100%	71	100%
Human Rights 2	0	0%	5	2%	5	100%	0	0%
Legislation 2	0	0%	3	1%	2	40%	2	3%
Freedom of Speech 2	0	0%	1	0%	3	60%	0	0%
Religion 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Sexualization 2	0	0%	0	0%	2	40%	0	0%
Conversion Therapy 2	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	1	1%
Medical Treatment 2	0	0%	0	0%	4	80%	0	0%
Indoctrination 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Wokeism 2	0	0%	1	0%	3	60%	2	3%
Social Media 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Universities 2	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%
Schools 2	0	0%	0	0%	3	60%	0	0%
Sports 2	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%
Military 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Think Tanks contained only five coded cases present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Think Tank grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis. No notable variations were found when cross-referencing the results by actor.

A6.2.2: Sub-Arguments of Implicit Argument 3.11 – 'Arguments About Other Topics' – In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments

This section will examine the breakdown of the pro-trans conjunction sub-arguments of the category Arguments About Other Topics. Based on the pre-reading and pilot coding of the material, 13 implicit 'other pro-trans conjunction arguments' were categorized. As such, when a case was identified as having the category of Arguments About Other Topics, the coding dictionary required a code for the presence of the following 13 sub-arguments:

1. Pro Human Rights 2: Does the discourse imply support for human/civil rights? Such as their expansion, enshrinement, etc.
2. Pro Legislation 2: Does the discourse imply support for a piece of legislation/aspects of legislation?
3. Pro Freedom of Speech 2: Does the discourse imply support for freedom of speech, especially in relation to/balanced with other human rights?
4. Pro Prisons 2: Does the discourse imply support for prisons/aspects of prisons?
5. Pro Conversion Therapy 2: Does the discourse imply opposition to conversion therapy/aspects of conversion therapy (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
6. Pro Medical Treatment 2: Does the discourse imply support for medical treatment/aspects of medical treatment like sterilization, contraceptives, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
7. Pro Cis Women 2: Does the discourse imply support for helping/protecting/advocating for cisgender women (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
8. Pro Family Unit 2: Does the discourse imply support for helping/protecting/advocating for the family unit (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
9. Pro Gender Theory 2: Does the discourse imply that the use of theory related to gender, such as feminist theory is useful (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
10. Pro Universities 2: Does the discourse imply that universities/aspects of universities are places of learning, higher education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
11. Pro Schools 2: Does the discourse imply that schools/aspects of schools are places of learning, education, critical thinking, safety, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
12. Pro Sports 2: Does the discourse imply that sports/aspects of sports are fair/must be fair, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?
13. Pro Military 2: Does the discourse imply that the military/aspects of the military are progressive, innovative, etc. (for reasons not related to anti-trans discourse)?

The hypotheses were as follows:

- (Pro) Human Rights, (Pro) Legislation, and (Pro) Freedom of Speech were expected to be the most prevalent sub-categories.
- (Pro) Human Rights, (Pro) Legislation, and (Pro) Freedom of Speech were all expected to increase over time.
- Politicians were expected to have higher relative percentages for (Pro) Legislation and (Pro) Freedom of Speech.

- MSM Newspapers were expected to have higher numbers for (Pro) Freedom of Speech and (Pro) Human Rights.
- Think Tanks and Alt-Right New Media were expected to have average numbers for these arguments, as these groupings expected to not engage with pro-trans discourse as often as the other types of actors.

What data emerged? The results are found in the following tables:

Table A6.2.2a - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 3.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments

Sub- Arguments	Raw #	%
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.11	**315**	**100%**
Pro Human Rights 2	14	4%
Pro Legislation 2	2	1%
Pro Freedom of Speech 2	3	1%
Pro Prisons 2	0	0%
Pro Conversion Therapy 2	0	0%
Pro Medical Treatment 2	7	2%
Pro Cis Women 2	1	0%
Pro Family Unit 2	4	1%
Pro Gender Theory 2	0	0%
Pro Universities 2	0	0%
Pro Schools 2	3	1%
Pro Sports 2	1	0%
Pro Military 2	1	0%

*Green = interesting due to prominence; Red = interesting due to absence; Yellow = interesting for other reasons; White = expected findings, uncoloured.

Unlike the hypotheses, none of the sub-arguments contained prevalent numbers. In fact, (Pro) Human Rights, (Pro) Legislation, and (Pro) Freedom of Speech were all largely absent from the dataset. By contrast, the explicit Pro Human rights argument was more prevalent than expected, indicating an overt focus in discussing the preservation of human rights.

Table A6.2.2b – Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 3.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments, by Time Period						
Sub- Arguments	**2000-2009**		**2010-2019**		**2020-2023**	
	Raw #	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**	**Raw #**	**%**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.11	**0**	**0%**	**84**	**100%**	**231**	**100 %**
Pro Human Rights 2	0	0%	10	12%	4	2%
Pro Legislation 2	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%
Pro Freedom of Speech 2	0	0%	2	2%	1	0%
Pro Prisons 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Conversion Therapy 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Medical Treatment 2	0	0%	5	6%	2	1%
Pro Cis Women 2	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Pro Family Unit 2	0	0%	0	0%	4	2%
Pro Gender Theory 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Universities 2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Schools 2	0	0%	1	1%	2	1%
Pro Sports 2	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Pro Military 2	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%

*Blue = stable and expected findings; Yellow = stable and interesting findings; Green = significant increase; Red = significant decrease.

None of the sub-arguments increased over time, contradicting the above-stated hypotheses. (Pro) Human Rights and (Pro) Medical Treatment both decreased over time. Both corresponding explicit sub-arguments were stable over time.

Table A6.2.2c - Distribution of Subtopics of Topic 3.11 'Arguments About Other Topics' In Conjunction with Pro-Trans Arguments, by Actor								
Sub- Arguments	**Politicians**		**MSM Newspaper**		**Think Tanks**		**Alt-Right New Media**	
	Cases present	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**	**Cases present**	**% Cases**
Total Cases with Implicit Argument 3.11	**30**	**100%**	**209**	**100%**	**5**	**100%**	**71**	**100%**
Pro Human Rights 2	0	0%	43	21%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Legislation 2	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Freedom of Speech 2	0	0%	5	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Prisons 2	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Conversion Therapy 2	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Medical Treatment 2	0	0%	11	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Cis Women 2	0	0%	4	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Family Unit 2	0	0%	8	4%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Gender Theory 2	0	0%	4	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Universities 2	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Schools 2	0	0%	7	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Sports 2	0	0%	3	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Pro Military 2	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%

*Blue = minimal (expected) variation; Yellow = minimal (interesting) variation; Green = significantly higher than average; Red = Significantly lower than average.

Several interesting discoveries emerged when cross-referencing these sub-topics by actor. However, it was discovered that Think Tanks contained only five coded cases present in this sub-argument category. This was determined to be a non-valid sample size (less than 10% of the category total), which would inaccurately skew the results. The Think Tank grouping was therefore not included in the comparative analysis. There were no notable variations between actors. Nothing of note to report here.