

“We Don’t Own Kids”: On the “Inconvenience” of Transgender in Childhood

Lisa Farley and RM Kennedy

Lisa Farley is a professor in the Faculty of Education at York University, Toronto, Canada. She is the author of *Childhood Beyond Pathology: A Psychoanalytic Study of Development and Diagnosis* (SUNY Press, 2018) and numerous articles that examine the relationship between psychoanalysis and childhood studies. Email: lfarley@edu.yorku.ca

RM Kennedy is a trans scholar and activist and a professor at Centennial College (on leave). His published papers examine theories of gender embodiment, social violence, and political reparations. He is currently executive to the president of OPSEU SEFPO, the largest public sector union in Ontario, Canada. Email: rmkennedy@opseu.org

This paper examines arguments that defend anti-transgender policies and legislation aiming to censor discussions about gender identity and restrict access to affirming interventions in three Canadian provinces. Building on psychoanalysis and queer theory, we suggest that such policies and legislation are symptomatic of an increasingly precarious and volatile social and political world in which transgender existence is a target of projected anxiety and aggression. We further demonstrate how anti-trans legislation fuels and feeds on moral panics that erect binaries and foreclose the conditions needed to bring complex emotions into language, where conflicts of gender and childhood can be used to inform thought and reflection. Inconvenience is offered as a surprising resource to rethink cross-generational bonds that can welcome and work through dynamics of anxiety and aggression that emerge from not already knowing the meaning or future of gender and childhood.

Key words: transgender childhood, childism, psychoanalysis, anti-trans legislation, moral panic

Children have long been positioned at the centre of public debates, where their best interests are cited but children themselves are often silenced. Such debates very often ignite around the content of school curricula, particularly when topics of sex and gender are at stake (Bialystok et al., 2020; Gilbert, 2014; Jervis, 2021). However, heated debates about what children can and should know about bodies, relationships, gender, and sexuality are about much more than the manifest content of arguments about the meaning and appropriateness of these ideas. As Lauren Bialystok et al. (2020) suggest, sex education debates are “a microcosm of the ‘culture wars’ in which conservatives and liberals have been engulfed since at least the 1980s” and that clash over such hot-button topics as religion, 2SLGBTQI+ rights, and abortion, to name a few (p. 334). While purportedly in the “best interests” of children, then, debates about gender and sexuality are also plugged into political arguments over human rights, self-sovereignty, the purpose of public education, and the meaning of a good life.

Just as children have long been made to stand in for such arguments, parents, too, are interpellated

into contexts of debate, often cast as a “monolithic, benevolent group” who hold rightful authority about the education and future of their children (Bialystok et al., 2020, p. 337). While children do benefit from the investments of adults, including adults who are their parents, there is a distinction to be made between parental concern—which children may experience as love and care—and the discourse of parental rights. As Corinne L. Mason and Leah Hamilton (2023) clarify, the discourse of parental rights is not about the commitments of caring adults but a politically driven ideology that has a history of affiliation with conservative groups. Notably, they trace how parental rights discourse was used as a political tool driving actions against civil, feminist, and gay rights movements of the 1970s in the name of protecting children.

Today, the parental rights movement has ties to the religious right and white nationalists—groups such as Moms For Liberty, Proud Boys, and Action4Canada—and has been involved in the 1MillionMarch4Children in Canada, a nation-wide demonstration purporting to protect free speech and children from what is called “gender ideology” (Mason & Hamilton, 2023). However, critics raise concerns about the boundaries between free speech and hate speech and show how the former can be used to incite hatred against identifiable groups whose freedoms—such as freedom from racial and gender discrimination—are also protected under the law (Haque, 2016; Walker, 2018). Hate speech masquerading as free speech produces threats of real violence. A recent report from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service warns that extremist groups “could ‘inspire and encourage’ serious violence against the 2SLGBTQI+ community” (Tunney, 2024, para. 1).

In this paper, we draw from psychoanalysis to examine arguments that have been used to defend anti-transgender policies and legislation in three Canadian provinces. Specifically, we suggest that anti-trans policies and legislation are a symptom—or what Judith Butler (2024) calls a “catchall phantasm”—that collects anxieties and aggressions borne of an increasingly volatile and precarious social and political world (p. 6). While there are many legitimate reasons to fear for the world—whether because of climate disaster, systemic racism, ongoing colonial violence, and vast economic inequities—Butler (2024) argues that the phantasm of gender has been weaponized by the contemporary right as a “destructive force” with a view to reinstalling traditional ideas about childhood, family, and nation (p. 7). With Butler, we further suggest how anti-trans legislation fuels and feeds on moral panics that erect binaries and foreclose the conditions needed to bring complex emotions into language, where conflicts of gender and childhood can be used to inform thought and reflection.

A second aspect of our argument builds on queer theory to consider alternate forms of child relationality that are unbound from anxious state formations about origins and outsiders and that may support working through “feelings of coming undone in the undoing of cisgender” (Farley & Kennedy, 2020, p. 167). Coming undone here refers to feelings of unthinkable anxiety that can emerge when fantasied certitudes of gender are disrupted and congeal into polarizing arguments and moral panics that are projected onto children. Turning to Lauren Berlant (2022), we put forward *inconvenience* as a surprising resource and psychical position from which to think through the conflicts and discomforts that attend everyday life or, as they write, “the pressure of what to do with coexistence” (p. 18). Against this backdrop, we offer some inconvenient advice that is inspired by a chant—“We don’t own kids!”—voiced by children and adults protesting an anti-trans rally in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Our advice puts forward a set of self-reflective practices that can support concerned adults—including parents, teachers, healthcare workers, and policymakers—to temper the affective extremes driving anti-trans legislation and invite a working through of feelings of anxiety and aggression that accompany the frictions of coming together across differences.

The hidden curriculum of anti-gender policies: On nationalism and “trans childism”

In August 2023, the Saskatchewan government introduced a parental inclusion and consent policy requiring students under the age of 16 to obtain parental consent to be addressed by their chosen names and/or gender pronouns in school. In response, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission expressed concern that the policy violates students’ rights. When a Regina judge ruled to pause the policy until a further court ruling, Premier Scott Moe invoked the notwithstanding clause, a provision in the Canadian constitution that allows government to implement legislation irrespective of its violation of certain Charter rights (Brosseau & Roy, 2018). In October 2023, Bill 137, The Education (Parents’ Bill of Rights) Amendment Act, came into effect (Saskatchewan Government, 2023). Moe couched the legislation in terms of his obligation to parents and cited the support of his electorate, saying: “Our government is extremely dismayed by the judicial overreach of the court blocking implementation of

the Parental Inclusion and Consent Policy—a policy which has the strong support of a majority of Saskatchewan residents, in particular, Saskatchewan parents” (Warick, 2023, para. 3). Moe added, “The default position should never be to keep a child’s information from their parents” (para. 4).

Saskatchewan’s gender legislation followed on the heels of a similar turn in New Brunswick when, in 2023, Premier Blaine Higgs revised the 2020 sexual orientation and gender identity policy in the province. Under the revised policy, children and youth under 16 would no longer be allowed to use identify-affirming pronouns and names at school without obtaining parental consent. In 2024, a more drastic set of policies cropped up in Alberta when Premier Danielle Smith introduced laws spanning health care, athletics, and education. Under Alberta’s Health Statutes Amendment Act, trans and nonbinary children and youth under the age of 16 are not able to access puberty blockers, and health professionals are prohibited from “performing sex reassignment surgeries on minors” (Government of Alberta, 2024a, para. 4). Moreover, Alberta’s Fairness and Safety in Sports Act bars trans girls and women from amateur sports teams. In the context of education, children and youth under 16 are required to secure parental consent to use their chosen pronouns and names. While consent is not required for youth aged 16 and 17, schools must notify parents of any changes (Government of Alberta, 2024b, paras. 5–6; see also French, 2024).

In all three provinces, legal challenges were launched by advocacy and human rights organizations; however, in New Brunswick, the newly elected Liberal government rendered the challenge moot when they reversed the policy revisions in that province (Poitras, 2025). Under the revised policy, parental involvement is nonetheless encouraged when a child or young person feels it is safe (Poitras, 2024). Meanwhile, in Alberta, a judge issued a temporary injunction against the law banning youth under 16 from accessing gender-affirming care (Farrell, 2025; Grant, 2025). Still, laws governing the treatment of gender in sports and in the classroom came into effect September 1, 2025 (Grant, 2025), contributing to a political climate that has deepened a widening chasm between the provincial government and Alberta teachers, who walked off the job in legal strike action on October 6, 2025 (Wilson, 2025). Alberta students were not far behind when they organized a widespread walkout in early October to register their solidarity with striking teachers (Ali, 2025). In this context of public protest, a memo was leaked in September 2025 indicating Premier Smith’s intention to invoke the notwithstanding clause that would permit her government to implement laws despite their infringement of human rights, a strategy echoing Moe’s tactic in Saskatchewan (Johnson & Farrell, 2025).

Notwithstanding Smith’s and Moe’s invocation of the clause, we note a curious omission on the part of political leaders: namely, their silence about existing standards of care and scientific research on transgender health. These omissions are important to note because, without citation, provincial legislation risks conveying the misinformation that trans health care is not already governed by guidelines that operate within limits. For instance, the eighth version of the Standards of Care for the Health of Transgender and Gender Diverse People (SOC-8) recognizes the importance of parental and/or guardian support in pubescent children’s decisions to use puberty blockers and teens’ access to hormone therapies (Coleman et al., 2022). The SOC-8 also makes explicit any risks associated with affirming therapies—risks that arguably come with all medical interventions—and emphasizes the importance of taking a case-by-case approach (i.e., considering mental health conditions, maturity, and other developmental factors) to determine an individual course of treatment. The SOC-8 therefore prioritizes “an individualized approach to clinical care” and foregrounds context as “both ethical and necessary” in decision making, which is strikingly unlike the universal bans of government legislation (Coleman et al., 2022, p. 545).

In light of the SOC-8 guidelines, research also indicates that hormone therapies are helpful, indeed lifesaving (Mason & Hamilton, 2023). For instance, Jack Turban (2020) and his team found that trans adults who wanted hormone

therapies in adolescence but did not receive them experience higher rates of lifetime suicidal ideation than trans adolescents who *do* receive hormone therapies. Another study found that hormone therapies reduce anxiety and depression and improve overall feelings of well-being (Achille et al., 2020), particularly when commenced between the ages of 14 and 17 years (Campbell et al., 2023). Against this backdrop, anti-trans legislation is both ahistorical and anti-evidence and risks generating collective fears that deny trans and nonbinary children and youth access to gender-affirming therapies that are also life affirming. Indeed, as Kinnon MacKinnon and Pablo Expósito-Campos (2024) remind us, it is an overstep to legislate medical treatments that properly belong to medical experts, their patients, and patients' kin, including parents and guardians. It is also presumptive and inaccurate to suggest that transition necessarily equates to the same outcome for all, since children and youth themselves imagine a range of pathways to a viable gender existence, including both nonsurgical and surgical interventions (Roden et al., 2024). Indeed, Alberta's legal ban on sex reassignment surgery, which is already not recommended for minors under existing standards of care, highlights the slippery contours of a transphobic political agenda using tools of fear and moral panic.

In the cases of Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, and Alberta, proponents and supporters of anti-trans legislation, many of whom cite their authority as parents, have argued that the role of public schooling is not to engage in lessons about gender and sexuality that conflict with Charter-protected religious and cultural traditions. While both Premier Moe and Premier Smith have claimed their policies are supported by most parents, in Saskatchewan, the Canadian Press secured access to only 18 letters of concern, which may or may not have been penned by residents of the province (Simes, 2023). In New Brunswick, a news investigation found that approximately 35 letters were sent to education minister Bill Hogan and Premier Higgs, despite their claim to have received "hundreds of complaints" (Ibrahim, 2024, para. 14). Changes in that province have also been linked to Action4Canada, a nationalist lobby group that argues for "traditional values" and against so-called gender ideologies (Mason & Hamilton, 2023). In light of these affiliations, it is important to reiterate the distinction between concerned parents and the parental rights movement, since, as noted above, the latter is linked to organized far-right conservative networks that openly denounce the existence of 2SLGBTQI+ people. In this sense, legislation and policy mobilized in the name of parental rights fuel a "conservative populist agenda" and operate as a veneer for transphobia (Bialystok et al., 2020, p. 330).

Media representations of the Saskatchewan gender debates had the additional effect of pitting minority groups against each other. For instance, an article in the *National Post* reported a divide at an Ottawa protest between "old stock white Canadians" and "people of colour and devout Muslims" (Subramanya, 2023, para. 3), where the former were described as supporting gender-affirming policy and the latter as protesting against gender ideology. The upshot of this construction is a false dichotomy between racial and religious diversity and trans-affirming adult/child relationships. This same dichotomy also elides the fact that anti-trans views are closely aligned with the racism of white nationalist groups, amounting to what Bialystok et al. (2020) call an "awkward alliance" between social conservatives and "pre-dominantly Muslim and immigrant groups who are otherwise subject to xenophobic rhetoric from the right" (p. 335). Notably, however, Muslim students and allies in Saskatchewan participated in counter protests, identifying their queerness and support of affirming school policies, and in so doing challenged the binary pitting religious minority rights against gender minority rights (Basu, 2023).

In all these ways, anti-trans policies are not about "protecting children"—despite claims that they are—and instead animate larger issues relating to citizenship, or what it means to belong and *who* can belong under the rubric of the nation (Butler, 2024). Indeed, as a question of belonging, gender debates turn on a binary between origins and outsiders that is, as Julia Kristeva (1992) explains, rooted in a logic of hatred. Kristeva puts it starkly: "the cult of origins is a hate reaction" (p. 2), and specifically, "*hatred of others* who do not share my origins" (p. 2, italics).

in original). The hate reaction of origins discourse produces a threatening “other” that at the same time defends against the violence on which nations are built and that sustains national borders. As Kristeva elaborates, “the cult of origins” signals “a defensive hatred” that splits off and keeps out all that is imagined to be “strange” or “foreign” to the ideal of a perfectly organized self and society (pp. 2–3). Thinking about gender, Butler (2024) links nationalism and anti-trans discourse. As Butler elaborates, “the weaponization” of gender emboldens “sexual and gender minorities as dangers to society”—indeed, “a threat to the nation”—that exploits fears about the future and, for some, invokes a nostalgic longing to “return to a patriarchal dream-order” (pp. 7–8). Gender, in this context, “becomes an overdetermined site where the fear of destruction gathers” (p. 10) and galvanizes nationalist fantasies that “only a strong state can restore” (p. 7).

Elizabeth Young-Bruehl (2012) adds that *children* often occupy the place of the threatening other. She gives us the term *childism* to denote an adult-centric system that constructs children as extensions of adult subjectivity rather than as subjects in their own right. In childism, children can be made into little heroes sent to reverse adult histories of regret, just as they can also be made to stand in for undesirable and fearful aspects of the adult self, often to the detriment of children’s flourishing. As Young-Bruehl suggests, childism operates on mechanisms of splitting and projection that are uncannily similar to the divisive mechanisms undergirding nationalism. In Young-Bruehl’s words:

People project onto children different aspects of themselves that they cannot tolerate or need to get rid of, and these aspects can be classified generally as burdensomeness or badness, wildness, or rebelliousness. Each of these is an aspect of immaturity, or what is not yet, of future development. So it is, basically, their own immaturity and not-yet condition that adults project onto children, whom they then hate and fear for their immaturity and for what they might become when they mature. (p. 41)

Trans and nonbinary children are especially subject to childism because they may be thought to destabilize fantasies of cisheteronormative futures and stand as uncanny reminders of adults’ own unknowingness, called above their “not-yet condition” (see also Berlant, 2022; Puar, 2017; Wiggins, 2022).

Ironically, however, the hatred and fear driving childism may be expressed as adult “concern” and framed in the “best interests” of children themselves. In relation to this last point, Tobias Wiggins (2022) offers the term *trans childism* to show how even the most impassioned concerns about children can be driven by unconscious forces of aggression that may not necessarily appear as overt transphobia (p. 191). In trans childism, adults may “profess a deep care and attentiveness to the child’s wellbeing” even as “proprietary interventions strip away agency and are explained as being in the child’s best interests” (p. 193). While such concerns may be consciously experienced by the adults articulating them *as* concern, childism is never far away. After all, citing Wiggins, “children are already easefully infantilized, and are therefore the perfect scapegoat for adults’ own immaturity or belatedness” (p. 193). Even when articulated as concern, then, trans childism bolsters a position of adult certainty that is not necessarily about—and may even oppose—care for children. As a catch basin for projected affects, we further suggest that trans childism fuels conservative rally cries to preserve normative, national, and so-called natural values, while aiming to destroy the existence of those who disrupt these fantasied formations. Here, trans childism is a political strategy to, in Butler’s (2024) words, “recruit more of the public into a right-wing political formation based on righteous hatred and ‘concern for the children’” (p. 96).

Elsewhere, we have shown how psychical processes of splitting and projection can lead to moral panics that foreclose the capacity to think through the nuances of gender, childhood, and the meaning of care (Farley & Kennedy, 2020). Such panics tend to work on fears of indoctrination and contagion that paint an overly literal portrait of how gender comes to be embodied and, in the case of curriculum bans, how learning happens: “as if to

be exposed to a word or a thought is to be penetrated against one's will" (Butler, 2024, p. 98). Despite claims that gender-affirming policy and curriculum are indoctrination, Butler (2024) reads anti-trans legislation as itself an attack on freedom and, in her words, as "authoritarian at its core" (p. 7). In preventing children's use of pronouns and in censoring discussions about gender diversity, anti-trans legislation aims to disappear the very thought of transgender existence: that is, "to make those thoughts unsayable, unreadable, unthinkable" (p. 99). However, as Butler also reminds us, censorship cannot do away with desire and in fact stokes it, while at the same time stifling the symbolic register of language needed to make sense of emotional intensities in a shared realm of discourse, often with the effect of deepening polarizations.

For the remainder of our paper, we consider alternate framings of relationality that are loosened from attachments rooted in nationalist and childist discourses and that can instead open discursive spaces in which to symbolize the meaning of being together otherwise. In this effort, we situate our thinking alongside trans and queer theorists whose work has mobilized metaphors of belonging that disrupt assumptions of cisheteronormative reproduction and the imagined unity of homonationalism (Bradway & Freeman, 2022; Freeman, 2007; Muñoz, 2009; Puar, 2007; Smith & Keating, 2017; Rubin, 1994/2011). With these ideas in mind, we offer Berlant's (2022) notion of inconvenience to reframe cross-generational bonds in terms of the "familiar friction of being in relation" that disrupts fantasies of certainty and continuity underlying normative developmental and legal frameworks sanctioning certain forms of being and belonging over others (p. 2). While recognizing the importance of rights to authorize gender expression and identity, we are wary of lending an overly powerful hand to state-sanctioned forms of recognition that have had devastating impacts on marginalized communities, including Indigenous peoples, Black peoples, other people of colour, and trans and gender-nonconforming people (Coulthard, 2014). As we will suggest, queer kinship and inconvenient love bring into focus the more elusive ties that bind us ethically across differences precisely because such differences cannot be rendered in terms that sit easily within normative frameworks.

Queer kinship and inconvenient love

In their 2022 edited collection, Tyler Bradway and Elizabeth Freeman examine the inextricable relationship between theories of kinship and queer theories. As they write, "queer theory has always been a theory of kinship" that names "ephemeral encounters" and affective structures of belonging that disrupt fixed models of relationality grounded in heteronormative terms of biology and reproduction (pp. 1–2). By contrast, queer kinships spill into "a radical and open-ended field of relational experimentation" that departs from "heteronormative organizations of intimacy, care, desire, and even reproduction" (p. 2). In upholding assumptions of heteronormativity, queer theorists therefore show how the seemingly "natural" structure of the nuclear family is linked to larger political projects of "patriarchy, white supremacy, and Western imperialism" (Bradway & Freeman, p. 1; see also Edelman, 2004). Indeed, dominant configurations of kinship are coloured white, cisgender, heterosexual, and middle class, which reflect and reproduce colonial markers of progress privileging sexual and social reproduction (Hurley, 2022), as well as capital acquisition and property (Walcott, 2021). Julian Gill-Peterson, Rebekah Sheldon, and Kathryn Bond Stockton (2016) write that modern childhood itself is enmeshed in these relations, making childhood "the exclusive property of (propertied) whiteness, with tragic effects" for children not imagined inside its borders (p. 496).

Precisely because of these linkages among kinship, property, and state power, theorists have also been careful to note how queer kinships can also become implicated in the dominant forms they set out to critique and from which they have been historically expelled (Dahl, 2018). For example, the fought-for right to same-sex marriage is tucked inside legal frameworks that undergird rather than disrupt normative state structures. In response, a good number of theorists have mobilized ever more "diffuse and poststructural grammars" including "*relationality, belonging,*

intimacy, and *solidarity*” that seek to retain the disruptive potency of queer kinships (Bradway & Freeman, 2022, p. 2, italics in original). Still, as Bradway and Freeman (2022) argue, queer kinship may nonetheless provide a “narrative frame” for thinking about forms of relating and styles of coming together “beyond heteronormative organizations of intimacy, care, desire, and even reproduction” (p. 2). Queer kinships are thus creative and critical when they generate affective structures and practices that refuse, resist, and refract from normative and nationalist forms of belonging (p. 2).

The invocation of parental rights in the Saskatchewan gender wars dramatized the persistence of the state-sanctioned kinship models that presume cisheteronormative futures for children who are presumed to belong to cisheteronormative families. (While attempting to bar gender-affirming care, including hormone therapies, no province puts age-related sanctions on children and youth’s access to birth control.) We are in no way arguing that children be read as individual agents operating without the influences of kinship, including kin who are parents. However, we *are* noticing how the discourse of parental rights supposes a normative kinship model that repeats a childist trope of the Western imagination that constructs children as necessarily deficient, particularly when those children are minoritized, queer, nonbinary, and/or trans. Indeed, this same trope of deficiency not only disregards the complex realities children live and the intersectional social positions they embody but also upholds engrained notions of civilization and progress used to position racially minoritized communities on lower rungs of colonially produced notions of human development (Rollo, 2018).

Theorists of childhood studies draw on queer, antiracist, and decolonial theories to expand on these critiques. From these studies emerge subject positions that point to new forms of relation across gender and sexual difference. For instance, Hannah Dyer, Julia Sinclair-Palm, and Miranda Yeo (2020) examine children’s drawings of their LGBTQ+ parents to offer a “tense grammar of family” (p. 532) that brings to the foreground “the affective and psychical contours” of queer relationships exceeding nuclear structures (p. 539). They show us that, for children, queerness is a lived, ordinary, and embodied set of relationships routed through a fulsome amalgam of desire, pride, and hope that refuses the rhetoric of homophobia and transphobia. In documenting children’s representations of their queer and trans parents, Dyer et al. expose a mistaken assumption of parental rights discourse that overlooks the sexual and gender diversity of parents themselves (see also Bialystok et al., 2020; Gilbert, 2022). Indeed, as Lee Airtton, Scout Gray, Jake Pyne, Mik Turje, and Tracy Whitmore (2023) also remind us, supporting trans youth and parenting are not mutually exclusive positions. In relation to this last claim, Pyne (2016) offers yet another labile reading by exploring how affirming parents of queer and trans children enact models of care grounded in relational knowing, building new grammars, holding uncertainty, and relinquishing ownership. In this sense, Pyne, too, shows us how parents work against dominant assumptions that construct parenting as a job aiming to reproduce in children the normative relations they inherit.

Natasha Hurley (2022) goes one step further to suggest the value of exploring “what exists adjacent” to parenting itself in her discussion of *childless* people in literary representations about and for children (p. 251). For Hurley, childless figures offer “models for developing relationships with children” that open “a productive site of minor kinmaking” in which children may be read “as detached from the family form, and where solidarities might be established in the wake of failed kinship norms” (p. 252). Hurley further speculates about “a nonparental duty of care” that invites an attentiveness to children’s fantasies and desires that may or may not reflect those of parents or teachers who occupy the legal position of *in loco parentis* in their absence (p. 251). By contrast, Hurley offers the construct of “*ex loco parentis*” to reframe the meaning of responsibility irrespective of systems ordered by state-bound models of heteronormative reproduction that can entrap children’s futures in the name of protection (p. 251).

From this triad of perspectives—children of queer and trans parents, affirming parents, and childless adults—queer kinships contour, relinquish, and detach from normative relations and in these ways can be read as *inconvenient* to them, a claim that is the subject of Berlant's (2022) posthumously published book *On the Inconvenience of Other People*. In this work, Berlant argued that coexistence is inevitably inconvenient. In their words, "we cannot be in any relation without being inconvenient to each other" because encounters with others disrupt the fantasied continuity of self and society (p. 7). Inconvenience therefore indexes the friction of encountering ideas and others—including internally affective prompts—that agitate borders of self and society otherwise rooted in notions of unity, orderliness, and mastery (p. 3). Such encounters undo extant understandings and attachments and instead face us with the disquieting feeling of not being in charge as the ground of coming together.

Berlant's (2022) work offers a narrative frame for thinking about "the pressure of what to do with coexistence" (p. 18) in the context of debates over gender in childhood via two intensities carrying deeply divergent intentions and effects. On the one hand, the disruptive power of inconvenience can provoke ego defenses—including the hateful logics undergirding racism, misogyny, and transphobia—that produce conditions of danger for those who are their target. This "strong version of inconvenience" operates by projection to make "other people" the cause of unwanted feelings of disturbance that, in turn, justify assimilative practices and reversals of affect aiming to do away with difference (p. 4). As Berlant explained, strong feelings of inconvenience represent "the material effects of inequality's persistent force" and often demand "forced adaptation to something socially privileged or structurally pervasive" (pp. 3–4). In its strong form, inconvenience also upholds "hierarchies of difference" that aim toward "the maintenance of one or many supremacist status quos" by defending "sensations of threat" claimed by the "structurally dominant"—such as claims about supposed threats experienced by police to justify their racist brutalities (pp. 4–5). In the context of gender debates, we can see how trans and nonbinary children and youth may be constructed as majorly inconvenient to the reproduction of cisgender futures and how that inconvenience can be used to justify policies and practices aiming to deny and disappear trans existence.

While at its maximum intensity inconvenience can lead to defended responses, in its minimal form, inconvenience "is mostly an experience of everyday aversion, adjustment, minor resistance, and exhaustion" (Berlant, 2022, p. 6). In this minor sense, Berlant proposed an internally generated drive—what they called an "inconvenience drive"—that describes a dynamic force and desire to take in objects whose existence disrupts one's own (p. 18). Of course, Berlant acknowledged that minor intensities of inconvenience can harden into major forms that reinstall "the casual reproduction of hatreds" (p. 6). Still, at its minimum, inconvenience holds potential. As Berlant explained, minor inconveniences plunge us into "the familiar friction of being in relation" as the moving ground on which to "shift a little while processing the world" (p. 2). Inconvenience, here, refers to an ordinarily burdensome quality of attachment that "draws you out into the world" and manifests as "a drive to keep taking in and living with objects" that productively bother and de-centre the boundaries of the self (p. 6).

Unlike projection, which is a defensive process of externalizing one's own anxieties onto others, inconvenience in its minor form involves sitting with disquieting feelings borne of the disruption of normalized structures and ideas and being changed through that experience. As Berlant (2022) proposed, inconvenience in its minor form invites an "adjustment" in what we already think we know about the self and others (p. 6). It is worth mentioning by way of example Airton's (2018) campaign "I'll use your pronoun. No big deal" that mobilizes a minor intensity of inconvenience to lay bare how changes in language—using another person's name and pronouns—require only a slight adjustment while at the same time having massive impacts for trans and nonbinary people, including children and youth, who are making the request. Minor inconveniences therefore offer a narrative frame for thinking about what it means to respond to others who disrupt entrenched categories by working through—rather than defending against—the affective contours and frictions of coexistence.

Parental rights and child protection discourses have not typically been framed in terms of inconvenience but rather “pure” feelings of love and concern. However, from a psychoanalytic point of view, we also know that love is tinged with opposing feelings of aggression, particularly when children seemingly refuse the “care” on offer, or if their own desires unsettle the desires of adults (Farley & Kennedy, 2020; Matthews, 2007; Taubman, 2006; Wiggins, 2022; Winnicott, 1947). Love is therefore touched by ambivalence—by what is inconvenient—and is not, in this sense, entirely positive. As Berlant (2022) suggested,

When I say “I love you,” it means that I want to be near the feeling of ambivalence our relation induces and hope that what’s negative, aggressive, or just hard about it doesn’t defeat what’s great about it really—or my fantasies of it anyway. (p. 27)

Ambivalence is not itself the problem but the denial of it in fantasies of perfect love that are actually a projection of an idealized self. By contrast, love that can acknowledge and endure inconvenience can also become open to the uncertainties of being in relation. This kind of love, as bell hooks (2003) wrote, “can bridge the sense of otherness” (p. 162) that inheres relationality. Returning to Berlant, this kind of love might be framed as *inconvenient* love because it replaces fantasies of control and ownership with an openness to be affected by all that disrupts one’s own desires in caring for others (see also Levinas, 1985; Todd, 2003). Inconvenient love may even be an antidote to childism insofar as it creates a symbolic bridge on which adults and children can choose complexity and, in so doing, “meet at the threshold between our desire for stability of knowledge and the ever-present enigmas posed by our condition as sexed beings” (Gozlan, 2018, p. 12).

This is not to say that adults must tolerate all and that children do not need limits. It is to say that loving children—and acting in their best interests—requires adults to ask what kind of limits can meaningfully enable growth rather than serve their own desires and even oppress. While certain adults may feel justified in airing their perspectives about the risks of giving trans children too much freedom, we suggest that these articulations should themselves be subject to limits. As Jill Gentile (2016) proposes in her psychoanalytic study of free speech, “all paths to freedom require limits” because others are also there and because we have a responsibility to protect the freedoms of those who are marginalized under logics of hatred (p. 119). The question is not, therefore, whether limits are needed, but how to identify and challenge limits that “erode the grounds of the freedom” they also seek to provide (p. 119). Thinking with Deborah Britzman (2006), limits that manifest as an overly strong stance of certainty—such as “premature explanations” and “wishes to enlighten”—can erode a child’s emerging sense of self and set into motion inhibitions and compliance to secure the other’s love (p. 128). The limits that concern us are those that produce an impossible and inexorable situation: having to choose between the self and the other’s love to the point that it becomes more convenient to give up on the former in a bid to prevent the loss of the latter, and that, in Britzman’s words, “can only sustain something oppressive about love, a dependency that has no tomorrow” (p. 128).

At stake here is a question about what kind of response can open toward the future and the uncertainties it brings. With Gentile and Britzman, we underscore the symbolic potential of language as offering one such possibility. The reason for this has to do with the way language provides containment for raw feelings that might otherwise congeal into certainties and defend against a child’s “unpredictable singularity” (Britzman, 2006, p. 131). Symbolic forms of speech may take multiple and diverse shape in cultural narratives and classroom conversations that give expression to conflicts emerging from efforts to process unfolding experiences inside and around us. Unlike the censorship and prohibition of anti-trans policies, language can offer a conduit to represent and work through feelings of ambivalence and anxiety borne of the inconvenient fact that nothing in life can be “resolved once and for all” and, while this can be uncomfortable, it also means “life can be different” (Berlant, 2022, p. 3). In the absence of symbolic processes, adults and children may knowingly or unknowingly repeat entrenched positions rooted in their own personal stories and larger colonial narratives that frame childhood as property to “progress” into

normative futures. Symbolization is therefore not solely psychological but also political in that, through language, we can give expression to the inconvenient aspects of coexistence and interrupt seemingly timeless constructions of childhood and nation that were only ever meant to privilege a select few. It is to this point—on the political significance of symbolization—that we turn to conclude with some inconvenient advice for rethinking gender in childhood.

“We don’t own kids:” Some inconvenient advice

Despite the propensity of adults to want to protect children, scholars of education and critical childhood studies have long pointed to the ways children are already immersed in the social and political realm (Silin, 1995). These scholars remind us that children and young people are regularly active participants in efforts to challenge and transform unequal power relations (Raby & Sheppard, 2021; Taft & O’Kane, 2023), even as adults—including progressive teachers—may evade such efforts based on assumptions of childhood innocence (Daniel & Escayg, 2019; Sonu, 2020). Scholars of policy studies and queer theory have further shown how adult anxieties about childhood innocence can drive conservative political agendas aiming to inflect curriculum and pedagogy with homophobic ideology and defended perspectives (Bialystok et al., 2020; Gilbert, 2014; Silin, 1995). More recently, trans and trans-allied scholars have shown how anti-trans policy and legislation overlooks evidence-based research documenting the vital role of gender-affirming care in supporting the well-being of children and adolescents and, ultimately, saving trans lives (Achille et al., 2020; Airton, 2019; Mason & Hamilton, 2024). Together, these scholars highlight the value of shifts in language, options, and approaches that support trans, nonbinary, and gender-independent children and youth (Airton, 2019; Pyne, 2014; Travers, 2018) while also acknowledging that trans existence itself is not new (Gill-Peterson, 2018). However, even when policy is supportive of trans youth, scholars also remind us that inequities remain insofar as access to affirming care is shaped by differences across provincial and national borders as well as intersections of race and class that disproportionately limit access for children and youth of colour who are working class and/or living in poverty (Pyne, 2014; Travers, 2018).

Our paper can be read as one attempt to theorize the affective dynamics underlying policy and legislation that deepen such inequities by limiting life-affirming supports, resources, and interventions for trans and nonbinary children and youth. Our hope is to offer a language for concerned parents and adults who encounter parental rights discourse to think twice about calls to protect children and instead to dwell with the inconvenience of not presuming to already know what gender means. At this threshold, we hope that children and adults may come together to represent conflicts of gender—conflicts affecting both cisgender and transgender kids—that reside at the busy intersection of psychic life, the body, and social discourse, where never shall the three entirely align. Acknowledging that children are immersed in the social and political world does not mean abandoning them to navigate the complexities of gender existence on their own. Quite the contrary, it suggests the need for new forms of relation and responsibility that are loosened from colonial fantasies tying gender to biological origin and childhood to proprietary forms of belonging.

Throughout, we have explored precisely such forms of child relationality and pointed to the overreach of provincial legislation seeking to silence trans-affirming policy and practices. We have also pointed to the risk of such overreach in limiting discussions that might otherwise support the working through of projected defences against a child’s singularity in gender, which may include both trans and cisgender ways of living. There is something dangerously *convenient* about gender policy and legislation that aim to stall discussion about the necessary frictions of coexistence. This last remark returns us to the symbolic potential of language and the repressive dangers of censorship. When “access to shared symbolic discourse is blocked,” Gentile (2016) cautions, “the symbol will be construed in either/or terms, as brute fact,” and so lose the supple qualities of language, needed to give expression

to complexity over fantasied certainties (p. 122). Silencing discussion about gender splits meaning into binaries that are, in turn, constructed as immovable. Psychoanalytically, the antidote to splitting and projection is to integrate the ambivalent aspects of coexistence, including love and hate for all we cannot control about being with others. In acknowledging both terms, we are not advocating for the idea of unbridled free speech. Rather, with Gentile, we are calling for “speech community” that is oriented by analytic processes through which to symbolize the conflicts—the inconveniences—of coexistence, which we elaborate below in the form of some inconvenient advice (p. 121). For us, such processes offer a way to transform unthought anxieties driving moral panics into a generative space of meaning making: what Gentile calls “an embodied relational and discursive space in which persuasive but not coercive or brute force dynamics may prevail” (p. 123).

On this last point, we are inspired by a chant articulated by children and adults at a counter protest in Regina—“We don’t own kids!”—as context for offering five points of inconvenient advice. Our advice is intended for caring adults—parents, teachers, healthcare workers, and policymakers—who are seeking a self-reflective narrative framework through which to conceptualize and respond to children’s gender diversity beyond moral panics emerging from conservative politics.

1. Loosen hold of others and objects. Care for others can sometimes take a firm and overly protective hold that at the same time refuses formations of existence that go against expected outcomes and projected fantasies. A loosened hold does not mean refusing care altogether but rather invites one to take in plurality too often eroded by certitudes that bind too tightly to what we expect or wish to find.
2. Historicize childhood. Concerns about the best interests of children are rooted in historically produced ideas about childhood. While acknowledging that children are indeed vulnerable, the construct of childhood is strongly linked to an ideal of innocence that protects the fantasy of white, cisgender, privileged children while excluding marginalized children from this category. Historicizing childhood means asking questions about how child protection discourse implies the protection of normative childhoods.
3. Historicize anxiety. Anxiety often fuels worry about the future, especially when children are the concern. But anxiety may also archive unfinished feelings belonging to one’s own childhood—feelings that are themselves shaped by difficult social histories and normative discourses. Locating anxiety in history gives a name to the situations and conditions in which anxiety is produced and lingers rather than fuelling projections onto children’s experiences that overdetermine their imagination of a future.
4. Symbolize being bothered. Conflicts, frictions, and ambiguities are part and parcel of psychical and social life and can disturb fantasies of certainty, self-mastery, and control. When we can represent inconvenience as a condition of coexistence rather than a deficiency to correct in others, then we may use this knowledge, returning to Berlant (2022), to “shift a little while processing the world” (p. 2).
5. Welcome ambivalence. Ambivalence means sitting with the conflicts of emotional life. When we are able to sit with the impurity of our own feelings, we are better positioned to give time and space for others to represent their experiences and desires, without the rush to affective certitudes about ruined futures. Especially in times of uncertainty, ambivalence can be difficult emotional labour because it inconveniences the idea that adults’ feelings equate to knowing best. But ambivalence may also help us come together across differences because it can interrupt projections that foreclose the future, “as if tomorrow has already passed” (Britzman, 2006, p. 116).

All five reflective practices, we suggest, may support children’s and adults’ creation of a society in which inconvenient feelings and defended responses can give way to self-reflection and symbolic dialogue about what’s “hard” about

the work of care (Berlant, 2022, p. 27). Precisely because we do not own kids, we may be even more responsible to greet the newness of a child's singularity without already knowing what that should mean. Unknowing is not the end of the story but a new beginning.

References

- Achille, C., Taggart, T., Eaton, N. R., Osipoff, J., Tafuri, K., Lane, A., & Wilson, T. A. (2020). Longitudinal impact of gender-affirming endocrine intervention on the mental health and well-being of transgender youths: Preliminary results. *International Journal of Pediatric Endocrinology*, 8, 1–5. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s13633-020-00078-2>
- Airton, L. (2018). I'll use your pronoun. No big deal. <https://www.nbdcampaign.ca/>
- Airton, L. (2019). *Gender: Your guide: A gender friendly primer on what to know, what to say, and what to do in the new gender culture*. Adams Media.
- Airton, L., Gray, S., Pyne, J., Turje, M., & Whitmore, T. (2023, September 21). Support for trans and parent-child relationships are not mutually exclusive. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-support-for-trans-kids-and-parent-child-relationships-are-not-mutually/>
- Ali, R. (2025, October 4). Calgary students stage widespread school walkout to protest Alberta's transgender laws. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/students-walkout-transgender-laws-1.7651279>
- Basu, B. (2023, October 5). "They don't represent me": LGBTQ Muslims, allies, speak out after "parental rights" protest. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/lgbtq-muslims-speak-out-1.6985792>
- Berlant, L. (2022). *On the inconvenience of other people*. Duke University Press.
- Bialystok, L., Wright, J., Berzins, T., Guy, C., & Osborne, E. (2020). The appropriation of sex education by conservative populism. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 50(4), 330–351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2020.1809967>
- Bradway, T., & Freeman, E. (Eds.) (2022). *Queer kinship: Race, sex, belonging, form*. Duke University Press.
- Britzman, D. (2006). Little Hans, Fritz, & Ludo: On the curious history of gender in the psychoanalytic archive. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 7(2), 113–140. https://doi.org/10.2513/s15240657sgs0702_1
- Brosseau, L., & Roy, M-A. (2018). The notwithstanding clause of the Charter. *Library of Parliament*. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.858868/publication.html>
- Butler, J. (2024). *Who's afraid of gender?* Knopf.
- Campbell, T., Mann, S., Nguyen D. H. & Rodgers, Y. v. d. M. (2023). Hormone therapy, suicidal risk, and transgender youth in United States. *American Economic Association (AEA) Papers and Proceedings*, 113, 551–555. <https://doi.org/10.1257/pandp.20231057>
- Coleman, E., et al. (2022). Standards of care for the health of transgender and gender diverse people. Version 8. *International Journal of Transgender Health*, 23, S1–S258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26895269.2022.2100644>
- Coulthard, G. (2014). *Red skins, white masks: Rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Dahl, U. (2018). (The promise of) monstrous kinship? Queer reproduction and the somatechnics of sexual and racial difference. *Somatechnics*, 8(2), 195–211. <https://doi.org/10.3366/soma.2018.0250>
- Daniel, B-J., & Escayg, K-A. (2019). "But I don't believe it's about race": Challenging fallacies of race and racism amongst early childhood educators in Ontario. *Journal of Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, and Leadership in Education*, 4(2), 14–28. <https://doi.org/10.32873/uno.dc.ctlle.04.02.1076>
- Dyer, H., Sinclair-Palm, J., & Yeo, M. (2020). Drawing queer and trans kinship with children: Affect, cohabitation, and reciprocal care. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 42(4), 257–276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714413.2020.1724764>
- Edelman, L. (2004). *No future: Queer theory and the death drive*. Duke University Press.
- Farley, L., & Kennedy, RM. (2020). Transgender embodiment as an invitation to thought: A psychoanalytic critique of "rapid onset gender dysphoria." *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 21(3), 155–172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15240657.2020.1798184>
- Farrell, J. (2025, August 8). Alberta government appeals injunction of transgender health-care law. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/>

calgary/government-of-alberta-egale-canada-1.7604783

- Freeman, E. (2007). Queer belongings: Kinship theory and queer theory. In G. E. Haggerty & M. McGarry (Eds.), *A companion to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer studies* (pp. 295–314). Blackwell.
- French, J. (2024, February 1). Alberta Premier says legislation on gender policies for children, youth, coming this fall. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/danielle-smith-1.7101595>
- Gentile, J. (2016). *Feminine law: Freud, free speech, and the voice of desire*. Routledge.
- Gilbert, J. (2014). *Sexuality in school: The limits of sex education*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Gilbert, J. (2022, June 21). “Parental rights” lobby puts queer and trans kids at risk. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/parental-rights-lobby-puts-trans-and-queer-kids-at-risk-184804>
- Gill-Peterson, J. (2018). *Histories of the transgender child*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Gill-Peterson, J., Sheldon, R., & Stockton, K. B. (2016). Introduction: What is the now, even of then? *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 22(4), 495–503. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-3603078>
- Government of Alberta. (2024a). Advancing policies to support the health care system. <https://www.alberta.ca/advancing-policies-to-support-the-health-care-system>
- Government of Alberta. (2024b). Supporting Alberta students and families. <https://www.alberta.ca/supporting-alberta-students-and-families>
- Gozlan, O. (2018). Introduction. In O. Gozlan (Ed.), *Current critical debates in the field of transsexual studies: In transition* (pp. 1–12). Routledge.
- Grant, M. (2025, September 3). Advocacy groups launch legal challenge to Alberta’s new school pronoun law. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-government-egale-skipping-stone-legal-challenge-school-pronouns-1.7624418>
- Haque, E. (2016). The singular freedom of academic freedom. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 29(1), 112–125. <https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12120>
- hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. Routledge.
- Hurley, N. (2022). Kidless lit: Childlessness and minor kinship forms. In T. Bradway & E. Freeman (Eds.), *Queer kinship: Race, sex, belonging, form* (pp. 248–268). Duke University Press.
- Ibrahim, H. (2024, July 23). Influx of anti-drag ‘grooming’ emails preceded N.B.’s pronoun policy review, documents reveal. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/new-brunswick-policy-713-gender-identity-parental-consent-1.7266006>
- Jervis, L. (2021). *The impossibility of sex education: A psychosocial study of parent involvement in policy controversies* [PhD dissertation, York University]. YorkSpace. <https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/items/8ab670ab-acf6-45be-a0da-dd1c1edc7cdc>
- Johnson, L., & Farrell, J. (2025, September 18). Alberta looks to use notwithstanding clause on its 3 transgender laws: Memo. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/alberta-transgender-legislation-1.7637890>
- Kristeva, J. (1992). *Nations without nationalism*. Columbia University Press.
- Levinas, E. (1985). *Ethics and infinity* (R. A. Cohen, Trans.). Duquesne University Press.
- MacKinnon, K. R., & Expósito-Campos, P. (2024, February 13). The real threat to gender-diverse children is the politicization of care issues like puberty blockers and detransition. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/the-real-threat-to-gender-diverse-children-is-the-politicization-of-care-issues-like-puberty-blockers-and-detransition-223170>
- Mason, C. L., & Hamilton, L. (2023, September 20). How “parental rights” gave rise to the 1 Million March 4 Children. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/how-the-parental-rights-movement-gave-rise-to-the-1-million-march-4-children-213842>

- Mason, C. L., & Hamilton, L. (2024, February 2). Alberta's new policies are not only anti-trans, they are anti-evidence. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/albertas-new-policies-are-not-only-anti-trans-they-are-anti-evidence-222579>
- Matthews, S. (2007). Some notes on hate in teaching. *Psychoanalysis, Culture, & Society*, 12(2), 185–192. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.pcs.2100125e>
- Muñoz, J. E. (2009). *Cruising utopia: The there and then of queer futurity*. NYU Press.
- Poitras, J. (2024, December 19). Holt Liberals remove parental consent requirement from Policy 713. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/holt-government-new-policy-713-1.7415289>
- Poitras, J. (2025, January 29). Civil liberties group ends N.B. lawsuit over gender identity policy. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/ccla-lawsuit-ends-1.7444825>
- Puar, J. K. (2017). *Terrorist assemblages: Homonationalism in queer times*. Duke University Press.
- Pyne, J. (2014). Gender independent kids: A paradigm shift in approaches to gender non-conforming children. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 23(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cjhs.23.1.C01>
- Pyne, J. (2016). “Parenting is not a job ... It’s a relationship”: Recognition and relational knowledge among parents of gender non-conforming children. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 27(1), 21–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10428232.2016.1108139>
- Raby, R., & Sheppard, L. C. (2021). Constructs of childhood, generation, and heroism in editorials on young people’s climate change activism: Their mobilisation and effects. *Children & Society*, 35(3), 380–394. <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12447>
- Roden, R.-C., Billman, M., Francesco, A., Mullin, R., Tassi, C., Wozolek, B., Heppard, B., Essayli, J., & Stuckey-Peyrot, H. (2024). Treatment goals of adolescent and young adults for gender dysphoria. *Pediatrics*, 153(1). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2023-062202>
- Rollo, T. (2018). Feral children: Settler colonialism, progress, and the figure of the child. *Settler Colonial Studies*, 8(1), 60–79. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2016.1199826>
- Rubin, G. (2011). Sexual traffic: Interview with Gayle Rubin by Judith Butler. In *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin reader* (pp. 267–309). Duke University Press. (Original work published 1994)
- Saskatchewan Government. (2023). Bill 137. The education parents bill of rights amendment act. <https://www.canlii.org/en/sk/laws/astat/ss-2023-c-46/latest/ss-2023-c-46.html>
- Silin, J. (1995). *Sex, death, and the education of children: Our passion for ignorance in the age of AIDS*. Teachers College Press.
- Simes, J. (2023, December 18). “Pushed down our throats”: Letters detail school pronouns concerns in Saskatchewan. *The Toronto Star*. https://www.thestar.com/politics/pushed-down-our-throats-letters-detail-school-pronoun-concerns-in-saskatchewan/article_ee6d2d55-1f43-56be-818a-d94ec7e14808.html
- Smith, M., & Keating, C. (2017). Homonationalism and the comparative politics of LGBTQ rights. In M. Brettschneider, S. Burgess, & C. Keating (Eds.), *LGBTQ politics: A critical reader* (pp. 458–476). NYU Press.
- Sonu, D. (2020). Playing slavery in first grade: When “developmental appropriateness” goes awry in the progressive classroom. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 22(2), 106–112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2020.1741369>
- Subramanya, R. (2023, June 12). The progressive left discards Muslims as un-Canadian. *National Post*. <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/the-progressive-left-discards-muslims-as-un-canadian>
- Taft, J. K., & O’Kane, C. (2023). Questioning children’s activism: What is new or old in theory and practice? *Children & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12742>
- Taubman, P. M. (2006). I love them to death. In G. M. Boldt & P. M. Salvio (Eds.), *Love’s return: Psychoanalytic essays on childhood, teaching, and learning* (pp. 19–32). Routledge.
- Todd, S. (2003). *Learning from the other: Levinas, psychoanalysis, and ethical possibilities in education*. SUNY Press.

- Travers, A. (2018). *The trans generation: How trans kids (and their parents) are creating a gender revolution*. NYU Press.
- Tunney, C. (2024, February 15). CSIS warns that the “anti-gender movement” poses a threat of extreme violence. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/csis-lgbtq-warning-violence-1.7114801>
- Turban, J. L., King, D., Carswell, J. M., & Keuroghlian, A. S. (2020). Pubertal suppression for transgender youth and risk of suicidal ideation. *Pediatrics*, *145*(2), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-1725>
- Walcott, R. (2021). *On property*. Biblioasis.
- Walker, J. (2018). Hate speech and freedom of expression: Legal boundaries in Canada. *Library of Parliament*. https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/201825E
- Warick, J. (2023, September 28). Sask. premier to use notwithstanding clause to veto judge ruling on school pronoun policy. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/judge-grants-injunction-school-pronoun-policy-1.6981406>
- Wiggins, T. (2022). Listening for trans childism in discursive concern. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, *75*(1), 191–197. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00797308.2021.1975461>
- Wilson, J. (2025, September 28). Protesters call for changes to Alberta Education. *CTV News*: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/calgary/article/protestors-call-for-changes-to-alberta-education/>
- Winnicott, D. W. (1947). Hate in the countertransference. In L. Caldwell & H. T. Robinson (Eds.), *The collected works of D. W. Winnicott* (vol. 3, pp. 59–68). Oxford University Press.
- Young-Bruehl, E. (2012). *Childism*. Yale University Press.