

**Exceptionally Queer, Uniquely Benevolent, and Other
2SLGBTQ+ Canadian Myths: Analyzing
Homonationalist Discourses in Canadian Politics**

**by
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Abstract

On May 17, 2021, International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated: “Canada continues to be a global leader in defending LGBTQ2 rights internationally”. How is this possible when just four years prior, he was apologizing for the LGBT Purge? Drawing on Lisa Duggan’s (2003) “homonormativity” and Jasbir Puar’s (2007) “homonationalism,” this paper investigates the mythologization of Canadian exceptionalism and benevolence in official statements. I code statements from the past five years to reveal when and how the Canadian government mentions 2SLGBTQ+ people, issues, and rights in post-Purge Canada. By deploying critical discourse analysis, I demonstrate that in these neoliberal narratives of Canadian identities and values, inclusion is Canadian, and homophobia is foreign. So, Canada uses homonationalist rhetoric to signal its exceptionalism internationally despite its homophobic history. Lastly, I turn towards Foucault’s “counter-memory” as a way to resist homonationalist retellings of Canada’s past and present.

Keywords: homonationalism; LGBT Purge; critical discourse analysis; counter-memory; Canadian national mythology

I dedicate this project to my younger self and all queer and Black youth trying to make sense of this world.

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List of Acronyms

2SLGBTQ+	Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other non-cisgender or heterosexual identities
GoC	Government of Canada
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Introduction

In this paper, I draw on Lisa Duggan's (2002) "homonormativity" and Jasbir Puar's (2007) "homonationalism" to identify homonationalist rhetoric in official statements made by the Government of Canada (GoC). I use the analytical tool of homonationalism to understand how the Canadian government talks about 2SLGBTQ+ (two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other non-cisgender or heterosexual identities) communities and who that rhetoric benefits. Specifically, homonationalism assists in developing a critical understanding of how the Canadian state has been including 2SLGBTQ+ individuals in national mythology. Homonationalism highlights potential motives for 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion, unspoken conditions of this inclusion, and its shortcomings. In other words, this tool reveals the *political* motives for 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion.

I use qualitative coding methods to analyze most of the official GoC statements listed by the LGBTQ2 Secretariat in the news section of their website (see Appendix 1). Their comprehensive list of official statements from the past five years provides essential insight into federal rhetoric about 2SLGBTQ+ issues. I combine In Vivo and theoretical coding to establish and synthesize trends in these statements. The patterns that emerge from these coding cycles become the starting point for critical discourse analysis.

My ultimate finding is that the Canadian government utilizes homonationalist rhetoric to demonstrate its exceptionalism on the international stage. This practice is the Canadian state "virtue signalling" internationally. This is problematic because 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion and rights should be articulated in a way that prioritizes 2SLGBTQ+ liberation. Homonationalist rhetoric emphasizes Canadian benevolence and is insincere as it only exists to improve Canada's image internationally. Additionally, it can silence 2SLGBTQ+ activists who criticize the Canadian government and become a replacement for tangible progress. The GoC perpetuates virtuous narratives about Canada's national identity as an inclusive, diverse, and altruistic global leader in 2SLGBTQ+ rights. As such, homonationalist discourse is not about 2SLGBTQ+ communities and issues; instead, it is about creating and perpetuating specific positive

ideas about Canadian national identity that serve the state's imperialist goals. Moreover, it can be used to justify theft and occupation on Turtle Island¹ and internationally.

This paper is divided into five parts. This first part provides information about 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion and rights on the land colonially known as Canada to give context to this paper. It also details the history of homonationalism and how it applies in the Canadian context. The second outlines my theoretical framework. This section dives into how I build liberatory anti-homonationalist theory. I employ homonationalism, as conceptualized by Puar, as an analytical tool and use it to make sense of what is happening in the official statements. Those findings, in turn, inform theory that explains Canadian homonationalisms and imagines a path for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals and communities to thrive in so-called Canada. The third section outlines my methodology, including why and how I select the official statements and how I use In Vivo and theoretical coding to identify if there is a pattern of Canada presenting itself as a "leader" in 2SLGBTQ+ rights and inclusion and if so, provide insight into why this pattern exists. The fourth is a comprehensive review of my findings. I use the results to theorize about a future for 2SLGBTQ+ liberation in Canada. Also, I draw on Foucault's "counter-memory" as a way to resist homonationalist retellings of Canada's past and present. The fifth and final section summarizes my conclusion that the Canadian state uses the existence of policies and laws that 2SLGBTQ+ activists have fought against the state to receive to improve its image on the global stage.

2SLGBTQ+ Inclusion and Rights in So-Called Canada

On May 17, 2021, International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (IDAHOTB), Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made the following statement: "Canada continues to be a global leader in defending LGBTQ2 rights internationally" (Prime Minister of Canada, 2021). How is this possible when he apologized for the LGBT Purge² four years prior? Michelle Douglas had an essential role in ending the LGBT

¹ Turtle Island is an Indigenous term that refers to the land now colonially known as Canada and the United States. Specifically, it is attributed "to the origin stories of eastern nations like the Anishnaabe, Haudenosaunee and Ojibwe" (Maynard, 2019, p. 146). The use of the term highlights the relationship that Indigenous nations have with the land and how they pre-date the settler states that currently occupy them.

² The LGBT Purge in Canada was a security campaign in the Canadian civil service that lasted from the 1950s to the early 1990s. 2SLGBTQ+ identities were deemed as a "character

Purge in the Canadian military and public service. Douglas was discharged from the Canadian Armed Forces in 1989 because she was a lesbian. She filed a suit in 1990, and then in 1992, the Supreme Court of Canada found that her dismissal violated Section 15 (equality rights) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010, p. 412). Since the Purge, there have been increasing efforts from the Canadian government to state how inclusive and accepting of 2SLGBTQ+ people it is to perpetuate a narrative of Canadian exceptionalism and solidify its image as a progressive country.

The beginning of 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion in so-called Canada is often traced back to 1969. That year, same-sex sexual activities between consenting adults over 21 were decriminalized (Government of Canada, 2022). Less than a decade later, in 1977, “the Canadian Immigration Act was also amended, lifting a ban prohibiting gay men from immigrating” (Rau, 2021). Even more formal inclusion happened in the late 1990s when “the *Canadian Human Rights Act* was amended to specifically include sexual orientation as one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination” (Government of Canada, 2022). Only a year prior to that, “in *Egan v. Canada* [...], the Supreme Court of Canada held that although ‘sexual orientation’ is not listed as a ground for discrimination in section 15(1) of the Charter, it constitutes an equivalent ground on which claims of discrimination may be based.” This is in line with the Supreme Court decision made in *Douglas v. Canada* a few years prior (Government of Canada, 2022). In 2005, same-sex marriage became legal across Canada (Eichler, 2021). This made Canada the fourth country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage after the Netherlands (2001), Belgium (2003) and Spain (2005) (Hogg, 2006, p. 712).

Furthermore, the Government of Ontario retroactively recognized two marriages that had taken place in 2001. On this technicality, the first government-legitimized same-sex marriage did occur in Canada (*Equal Marriage for Same-Sex Couples*, 2004). This history does seem to legitimize the claim that Canada is a global leader in legislation that does not criminalize 2SLGBTQ+ individuals.

weakness’ which supposedly left gay men and lesbians open to black mail by Soviet agents” (Kinsman, 1995, p. 134). As a result, there was a campaign to identify and persecute 2SLGBTQ+ individuals in the public service including the foreign service, the military and the RCMP. Victims suspected or confirmed to queer were surveilled, interrogated, and abused. Many were blackmailed and fired.

In contrast, due to the criminalization of same-sex acts and 2SLGBTQ+ people in Canada, there is also a history of a fraught relationship between the police and the 2SLGBTQ+ community. This history is partly why police presence is still controversial at Pride events across the country today. In 1981, almost 300 men were arrested in Toronto during *Operation Soap*³. This led to a 3000-person protest the following day. This event is regarded as Canada's Stonewall (Rau, 2021). Stigma against gay men continued during the HIV/AIDS epidemic and impacted their eligibility to donate blood. Since the ban was instituted in the mid-1980s, Canadian Blood Services have changed the eligibility requirements for the blood donor system (Rau, 2021). On September 11, 2022, the Canadian Blood Services removed its questions about men who have sex with men (MSM) to instead ask everyone about sexual behaviour. All donors are now asked if they have had sex with new and/or multiple partners within the past three months. If they have had anal sex with any of those partners, they are ineligible to donate. While this change has been championed as lifting the homophobic blood ban in Canada, it still disproportionately affects gay men.

Homonationalism

Homonationalism is an analytical tool that allows us to theorize about the “historical shift marked by the entrance of (some) homosexual bodies as worthy of protection by nation-states” (Puar, 2013, p. 337). Specifically, it allows for the contextualization of the shift from US nationalism based on rejecting homosexuality to US nationalism aligning with it. Where there was previously only a national form of heteronormativity, a national form of homonormativity joins it. “Homonormativity” is a term coined by Duggan (2002) referring to same-sex couples that are precisely like straight couples except for their sexual orientation (Smith, 2020, p. 66). This is a form of normative homosexuality that does not challenge existing structures; it simply fits within them. Duggan (2002) identifies that, in some cases, homonormativity celebrates and reinforces “neoliberal values of responsabilization and privatization” (Smith, 2020, p. 66).

³ Operation Soap was a series of police raids against four gay bathhouses in Toronto. At the time, it was “the biggest mass arrest in Canada since the 1970 October Crisis” (“Bawdy House Law”, n.d.). Despite the backlash, Canadian police continued to use sex work legislation to threaten, harass, and criminalize those engaging or found in places where people were suspected of engaging in gay sex. This is especially true for “non-monogamous quasi-public” gay sex (“Bawdy House Law”, n.d.). The most recent instances of this happened in the early 2000s.

Tangibly, homonormativity looks like “representations of middle-class respectability” (Lenon, 2011, p. 357). This is important because it enables “lesbians and gay men to enter the national body—in legal, social and cultural arenas—not through stereotypes of degeneracy and criminality but as re/productive, contributing citizens” (Lenon, 2011, p. 357). Thus, when Puar builds on Duggan’s notion of homonormativity to combine it with nationalism, she is doing so in the context of the War on Terror. In her book *Terrorist Assemblages* (2017), Puar states that homophobic-racist images of terrorists have proliferated since 9/11 (p. 37). They are part of a “normative script” that invokes “the terrorist as a queer, nonnational, perversely racialized other” (Puar, 2017, p. 37). However, she draws on Foucault’s work on sexuality to argue that other sexualities “that mimic, parallel, contradict, or resist” normative heterosexuality are also proliferating (Puar, 2017, p. 39). This complicates the idea that there is a dichotomy between the nation and homosexuality. In this context, Orientalist depictions of terrorists are a “discursive tactic that disaggregates U.S. national gays and queers from racial and sexual others, foregrounding a collusion between homosexuality and American nationalism that is generated both by national rhetorics of patriotic inclusion and by gay and queer subjects themselves: homonationalism” (Puar, 2017, p. 39).

In light of this, homonationalism emphasizes the importance of socio-historical context to understand what is essentially a drastic shift for most states. Puar (2017) notes that the US government’s recognition and inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals do not equally apply to everyone in the community (p. 1-2). Puar (2017) claims that this recognition and inclusion “is contingent upon the segregation and disqualification of racial and sexual others from the national imaginary” (p. 2). While both Duggan’s and Puar’s work emerged from the American context, scholars have already connected that homonationalisms exist in Canada (Gentile & Kinsman, 2015; Lenon & Dryden, 2015; Smith, 2020). In *Rethinking Homonationalism* (2013), Puar writes that homonationalism is a “constitutive and fundamental reorientation of the relationship between the state, capitalism, and sexuality” (p. 337). It is “an ongoing process” (Puar, 2013, p. 337). She links it to settler colonialism by identifying the protection of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals as a vessel through which settler-colonial violence can be articulated (Puar, 2013, p. 338). Similar processes have happened historically with women and children. “How well do you treat your homosexuals?” is now just as important of a question as “how well do you treat your women?” to determine “a nation’s

capacity for sovereignty” (Puar, 2011, p. 139). On top of this, Puar writes, “Euro-American constructs of identity... privilege identity politics, ‘coming out,’ public visibility, and legislative measures as the dominant barometers of social progress” (2013, p. 338).

A similar process has happened in Canada, as evidenced by the Purge. The LGBT Purge was made possible “through the notion of character weakness and, more concretely, through the attempts to shift alleged and suspected homosexuals into a confirmed category. Once placed in this category, individuals could be purged, demoted, and denied security clearances” (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010, p. 431). As mentioned previously, Douglas’ Supreme Court win marked the official end of this era. With time, not only do the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) no longer officially harass and fire 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, but they do actively recruit them, as evidenced by the Pride promotional videos they post on social media and their presence at Pride events across the country. In light of this, Gentile and Kinsman (2016) ask: “How has it been possible for some queers who were constructed in the historical past as threats to Canadian national security to become (in part) defenders of an Orientalist, racialized, and pro-capitalist national security in the historical present?” (p. 134). Homonationalism is key to making sense of this shift. Changing governmental discourses about national identity and security allows for certain queer subjects, normative homosexual subjects, to be distanced from narratives of national threats and instead be associated with belonging to the nation.

Smith (2020) writes:

The racialization of the mainstream movement in the United States and elsewhere is particularly important; through the lens of homonationalism, the mainstream movement is seen as White-dominated and exclusionary, marginalizing the experiences of people of color, migrants, trans people, and the economically disadvantaged (p. 67).

Homonationalism contextualizes how the state prioritizes mainstream understandings of 2SLGBTQ+ activism that focus on legal equality. This prioritization functions to the detriment of marginalized communities within the state who are excluded from this discourse and contributes to legitimizing specific imperial and oppressive actions worldwide. In the United States, homonationalist discourses have been used to legitimize the War on Terror as the United States positioned itself as a tolerant nation in contrast to Muslim countries (Puar, 2007).

Suzanne Lenon (2005) touches on racialization in mainstream 2SLGBTQ+ politics and activism. She writes, “Alongside our celebrations of victory, then, it is important to unearth the limitations, exclusions, and sometimes contradictory implications of what has been won” (p. 406). In the legal submissions from same-sex marriage cases she analyzed, she found that sexual difference was the only difference acknowledged (Lenon, 2005, p. 413). Activists in favour of same-sex marriage at the time would “employ analogies to historical racial discrimination in the United States” (Lenon, 2005, p. 416). This practice strengthened “the idea that gay/lesbian equals white” (Lenon, 2005, p. 417). Furthermore, drawing on historical racism “obscures the fact that racial discrimination remains very much a part of contemporary citizenship, including citizenship within Canada” (Lenon, 2005, p. 419).

It is essential to avoid looking at homonationalism as a singular thing. It manifests differently in different contexts. I am specifically looking at the federal government. Nevertheless, it can be argued that homonationalist rhetoric looks different in various regions of the country.

Theoretical Framework: Building Liberatory Anti-Homonationalist Theory

This project takes a recursive approach inspired by grounded theory. The data collected and the analytic of homonationalism — and the theory that has emerged from it — mutually influence each other. This conversation becomes the basis for my theory. I set aside “theoretical ideas in order to let the substantive theory emerge” (Urquhart, 2012, p. 7). I pay attention to what the data shows without forcing it to fit within existing theories. Using two coding cycles combined with critical discourse analysis, I build a theory based on the language used in official statements made by the Canadian federal government on 2SLGBTQ+ issues (Saldaña, 2016, p. 55). Thus, my theoretical contributions are “grounded” in the data, rooted in the language used in the statements. I take a critical approach to understanding how the Canadian government utilizes homonationalist rhetoric, even though the Canadian state still perpetuates homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. For example, section 159⁴ of the Criminal Code has not been repealed even though it is unconstitutional (Government of Canada, 2021). Through the analytic concept of homonationalism, I interrogate the underlying function of inviting 2SLGBTQ+ individuals into the Canadian settler-colonial project.

While Canadian homonationalist rhetorics say “inclusion,” I focus on who may be excluded. Who does the nation claim and not claim, and why? On top of being critical, this research is anti-oppressive and guided by a political purpose (Potts & Brown, 2005, p. 255). I do not seek ways for the government to adopt inclusive language that is not homonationalist. Instead, I strive beyond inclusion in existing systems and advocate for actual transformation. I aim to “construct emancipatory, liberatory knowledge that can be acted on, by, and in the interests of the marginalized and oppressed” (Potts & Brown, 2005, pp. 261-262).

The Canadian government “is deeply involved in exporting its homosexual rights agenda elsewhere, and even within its borders, its homosexual rights agenda differentiates across race, sexual practices, and place of ‘origin.’” (Walcott, 2015, p. viii).

⁴ Section 159 of the Criminal Code, “prohibits engaging in anal intercourse, except by a husband and a wife or two persons who are both 18 years or older, provided that the act is consensual and takes place in private, which means not in a public place and not in the presence of others.” (Government of Canada, 2021).

In federal statements, Canada often positions itself as a leader in 2SLGBTQ+ rights on the global stage. While the government proposes legislation sometimes, it coexists with legal homophobia (Smith, 2020). I strive to generate theory that provides more language and evidence to call out this practice.

Mapping homonationalism onto the Canadian context needs to consider specificities about Canada geographically, temporally, culturally etc. 2SLGBTQ+ activists have fought and continue to fight for rights recognition in Canada. When the state uses the existence of those hard-earned rights to boast about itself and obscure the need for more systemic and substantive change, it is the most marginalized who continue to pay the price.

Critical discourse analysis is central to this project because, at first glance, homonationalism does not necessarily seem bad. These statements tend to celebrate the presence of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals within the nation. However, they often obscure the need for further change, and they do not challenge the existence of oppressive systems, only the idea that 2SLGBTQ+ folks should be their victims. This paper aims to bear witness to the communities and folks who are not only excluded in some ways from these discourses but also victims of them. The Canadian settler-colonial project has always been built on the backs of specific marginalized communities; now, it is using 2SLGBTQ+ folks. We need to question these homonationalist discourses and reject them.

Methodology: Putting Homonationalism to Work

This project focuses on current homonationalist discourses. The primary research materials for this project are 29 official statements made by the Canadian federal government about 2SLGBTQ+ issues from 2018 to 2022 (see Appendix 1). This represents most of the statements listed by the LGBTQ2 Secretariat in the LGBTQ2 News section of their website. The LGBTQ2 Secretariat provides a comprehensive list of news releases, statements, reports and publications related to 2SLGBTQ+ issues across all federal departments. I focus on federal departments because provinces and municipalities also have their own identities. Official statements at the federal level are an excellent vessel to understand the story that Canada is telling about itself. They come directly from the national government, providing information on how the Canadian government wants to be perceived. Analyzing how the federal government talks about 2SLGBTQ+ individuals and communities allows me to conclude who is included and not. Who belongs in post-Purge Canada? It is also important to note that the Trudeau government published all the statements analyzed in this project because of the time frame. In a future study, it may be interesting to broaden the time frame to consider the shift over time in Canadian homonationalist discourses or maybe even identify when these discourses were born. It would also allow for comparison between different governments.

This project predominantly uses In Vivo coding because it draws on the participants' language for codes and is a foundation method for grounded theory (Saldaña, 2016, p. 97). In Vivo coding highlights the vocabulary Canada uses to talk about itself. Saldaña (2016) mentions that In Vivo coding can be helpful for marginalized communities, subcultures, and youth (p. 95). While using it for governmental discourse may feel counter-intuitive, it can uncover patterns. Identifying the vocabulary used helps us draw conclusions about Canada's place for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals within the nation. Using In Vivo Coding as a first-cycle coding technique allows me to discover codes that I condense during the second coding cycle. Saldaña (2016) warns that overdependence on In Vivo Coding "can limit your ability to transcend to more conceptual and theoretical levels of analysis and insight" (p. 110). So, I have decided to use more than one coding technique.

After In Vivo coding, I use theoretical coding. This enables me to integrate all the codes into a “core category” of the research (Saldaña, 2016, p. 250). These core categories guide my theoretical explanation of Canadian homonationalist discourses. This project uses critical discourse analysis to demonstrate how homonationalist rhetoric reproduces power and inequality (Peräkylä, 2008).

This project identifies if there is a pattern of Canada presenting itself as a “leader” in 2SLGBTQ+ rights and inclusion. It develops theory about the particularities of Canadian homonationalist rhetoric. What is the vocabulary of contemporary Canadian homonationalism? I focus on links between 2SLGBTQ+ individuals and issues and “Canada.”

Research Findings and Theoretical Contributions: (Homo)nation-building

In this section, I separate the In Vivo codes into three thematic categories: “What/who is Canada?”, “What does Canada do?” and “What does Canada stand for?”. The first dives into the personification of Canada and the ways that Canadian national identity is created and reinforced in the statements. The second highlights the actions the GoC claims to be taking. This is important to Canada’s national identity because these actions are the foundation of Canadian benevolence and exceptionalism claims. The third demonstrates what values and beliefs are deemed to be Canadian.

Overall, these three broad categories summarize the story Canada is telling about itself through an ongoing nation-building process that includes official statements about 2SLGBTQ+ issues.

What/who is Canada? Home for Some

When the legislation to criminalize conversation therapy received Royal Assent, Minister Lametti and Minister Ien issued a joint statement that they concluded by stating, “With this new legislation, the Government is standing with LGBTQ2 communities and reaffirming its commitment to ensuring Canada is a place where everyone is free to be their true and authentic selves” (Department of Justice Canada, 2021).

Despite the personification of Canada prevalent in almost all the statements, there are also direct references to the people who make up the nation. In the spirit of inclusion, it is only natural that 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians are referenced as integral parts of the nation. An example of this is when Randy Boissonnault, special advisor to the Prime Minister on LGBTQ2 issues, a position that no longer seems to exist, made the following statement on Trans Day of Remembrance in 2018:

We must recognize that in the face of this oppression, transgender people contribute the best of themselves to our nation every single day. They are valued employees, irreplaceable friends, loving children, cherished siblings, partners, and parents. They are intrinsically valuable and we must repeat this message in the face of hatred (Privy Council Office, April 2018).

The language of “contribution” and “value” is disturbing to use in the face of hatred, as though these are the reasons that trans people deserve not to be murdered in so-called Canada because they “contribute.” This language reveals a disconcerting truth about national belonging in so-called Canada; it comes with a price.

Canada is home. Throughout the statements, Canada is repeatedly referred to as “home” in contrast to other countries. Canada affirms that it is responsible for fighting for 2SLGBTQ+ rights and inclusion in Canada and abroad. These statements tell us much about the space Canada sees itself taking up worldwide. There are countless mentions of the “global,” the “international,” and the “world.”

Furthermore, these spaces are contrasted with the repeated usage of “home” to refer to Canada. At times, the Government mentions working collaboratively with other states, and in other instances, they highlight how they stand apart from other nations. An example is the numerous statements referring to Canada as a “global leader.”

What does Canada do? Purported Leadership

Canada commits, or does it? “The Government of Canada is committed,” and wants everyone to know (Canadian Heritage, May 2020; Privy Council Office, 2019). The concept of commitment came up repeatedly. In *The Statement by The Prime Minister on World AIDS Day*, the phrase is followed by mentions of initiatives like the Fifth Replenishment Conference of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria and the Pan-Canadian STBBI (sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections) Framework for Action. However, it is far more common for that commitment to be vague. For instance, in *Anniversary of the apology to LGBTQ2 Canadians*, there are references to the “work.” Randy Boissonnault, the special advisor to the Prime Minister on LGBTQ2 issues, stated:

We are committed to engaging with and listening to vulnerable individuals. At home and abroad. That commitment is demonstrated by our work to redress past injustices, such as the shameful ‘LGBT Purge.’ Work is now underway to implement the reconciliation and memorialization measures following the settlement of the class action (Privy Council Office, November 28, 2018).

Official statements may not be the place for detailed policy proposals; however, systematically shying away from specific measures, laws, and policies in favour of using the word “work” is a questionable practice.

A reoccurring theme in these statements is continuation. Canada is not simply a leader today; it “continues to be” one. There is a strong emphasis on continuing work with no clear indication of when that work began. It implies that the GoC will continue to fight for 2SLGBTQ+ rights as it has always done. What makes Canada a “global leader” regarding 2SLGBTQ+ rights? It is unclear.

Nevertheless, it is directly mentioned as a “global leader” in three different statements and implied in many others. This is three out of the seven occurrences of the word “leader” in these statements. Another includes a reference to world leaders; the other three are references to community leaders who have been and continue to be foundational to 2SLGBTQ+ organizing. It is worth noting that those three mentions come from two statements by Marci Ien, currently serving as the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth of Canada. It is crucial to consider that some differences may exist depending on the writer/speaker. Despite the continued personification of Canada in official statements, Canada is not a person, and the GoC does not speak with a singular voice. Individual people also shape politics. However, it is beyond this project’s scope to analyze these statements based on who wrote or said them. It would undoubtedly reveal intriguing trends as well.

In a less pessimistic view, the reoccurring theme of continuation is good because it implies that there is still work to do. It acknowledges that there is still room for progress. This perspective is supported in two instances where continuation is paired with the word commitment or in the context of “we must continue.” However, these are three examples out of the twenty instances of the word continue.

To continue, Canada promotes. The word promotion has multiple denotations, including encouraging people to support something or buy something. This makes the ample usage of the verb promote particularly interesting in these statements. According to them, the GoC is promoting human rights and 2SLGBTQ+ rights. However, the mention of “LGBTQ2 trade” and the connection between 2SLGBTQ+ rights and free

trade agreements is worth noting. In *Anniversary of the Apology to LGBTQ2 Canadians*, Boissonnault states:

We are extending our reach beyond our borders, actively promoting LGBTQ2 trade and promoting human rights through Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy. We are providing greater assistance and funding to refugees and to vulnerable individuals in regions of conflict. We are speaking up for human rights as co-chair of the Equal Rights Coalition (Privy Council Office, November 28, 2018).

What is LGBTQ2 trade? The Canadian Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce may provide some clues. According to them, despite barriers, "LGBT+ business is big business," generating "over \$22 billion in economic activity" (Canadian Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, 2022). The non-profit, funded by the GoC, has programs where they "use [their] LGBT+ expertise and research to facilitate a stronger, more inclusive Canadian economy for all" (Canadian Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, 2022).

Furthermore, how has an apology to 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians for the LGBT Purge turned into Canada promoting human rights globally? Using the topic of the apology for the Purge to say that Canada is co-chair of the Equal Rights Coalition is a prominent example of how homonationalist rhetoric is used to curate a specific image of Canada as a global leader. The transition from apology to the reassertion of Canadian exceptionalism is seamless. This is in contrast to the *Statement by the Minister of National Defence on the LGBT Purge Fund Report*, where there is genuine accountability taken, and the statement focuses on the changes made within the Canadian Armed Forces to prevent these atrocities from ever happening again.

In a 2020 statement on International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia from Global Affairs Canada, the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, and the Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of International Development said:

Canada also seeks inclusive and gender-responsive provisions in its free trade agreements so that they benefit all Canadians, including LGBTQ2 people. For the first time in a trade agreement, the labour chapter of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement includes a provision clarifying that the enforceable obligation related to discrimination in the workplace includes discrimination on the basis of gender, gender identity and sexual orientation (Global Affairs Canada, 2020).

This is a clear example of homonormativity celebrating and reinforcing “neoliberal values of responsabilization and privatization” (Smith, 2020, p. 66).

Canada leads. At least, it claims to. This is illustrated by the statements repeatedly referring to Canada as a “global leader.” In the *Statement by the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on LGBTQ2 issues on Trans Day of Remembrance*, Randy Boissonnault said, “We have defended and assisted members of marginalized communities globally” (Privy Council Office, November 20, 2018). This claim is not substantiated with any tangible examples, in contrast to Boissonnault mentioning “non-binary protection in the Criminal Code and the Canadian Human Rights Act” as concrete measures taken by the Canadian government for 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians (Privy Council Office, November 20, 2018). Only one statement refers to 2SLGBTQ+ refugees.

What does Canada stand for? Escaping Responsibility

The GoC articulates what it stands for by explicitly articulating what it stands against – violence, discrimination, and stigma. At different points, violence against 2SLGBTQ+ people is said to be “historic,” “ongoing,” or “systemic.” This is important because the first step to addressing a problem is acknowledging a problem. However, the root of “stigma, violence, and discrimination” is not acknowledged. Often, these things are spoken about passively and implied to exist, perhaps ahistorically.

I found that the Canadian government does not shy away from speaking about the oppression of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals in Canada. Words like “discrimination,” “violence,” and “stigma” came up repeatedly. However, this does not mean that the government is taking responsibility for this oppression, especially not in the present tense. The statements explicitly related to the Purge are fascinating because they include direct acknowledgment of homophobic state violence from the Canadian government in a way that is not present in the other statements.

In the wake of the Purge, in so-called Canada, where heterosexist and cissexist state violence still exists, this is a concerning finding. How does the government work on policy and legislation that combat these things if it is unwilling to take responsibility for the violence it directly contributes to or enables? For example, in *Celebrating Five Years of Legal Protections for Gender Identity and Gender Expression*, Minister Ien declares:

“This anniversary reminds us that for generations, trans and gender-diverse people in Canada have faced discrimination, violence, and harassment. This has prevented many from participating fully in, and contributing equally to, communities across the country” (Women and Gender Equality Canada, June 2022).

A text query for “discrimination,” including stemmed words, finds the word in 18 statements. For stigma, it is seven statements, and for violence, it is 15. The *Statement by Minister Chagger on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia* is an example where specific instances of governmental action are mentioned:

The Government of Canada is committed to better serving LGBTQ2 people and organizations in Canada. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued an apology to LGBTQ2 people for historical injustices. There is now legislation protecting people against discrimination based on gender identity and expression. We introduced a historic \$20-million LGBTQ2 Community Capacity Fund for organizations in Canada, and most recently, Bill C-8, legislation to ban the harmful practice of conversion therapy (Canadian Heritage, May 2020).

However, this approach is rare in the statements analyzed. In addition, Canadian social historian Steven Maynard (2017) theorizes that the apology for the Purge is a purge itself: “Just as the Canadian state once believed it was necessary to purge the government of queer people, it is now necessary for the government to purge, by apologizing for, the historical record of its past practices.” By distancing itself from its homophobic past, the Canadian nation-state can consolidate its homonational present and future.

An In Vivo code that stood out was “no place in Canada.” For example, in *Statement by Minister Marci Ien to Mark the Start of Canada’s Pride Season*, Ien asserts: “Later today, we will raise the Progress Pride Flag on Parliament Hill as a reminder that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression has no place in our country” (Women and Gender Equality Canada, May 2022). In addition to mentions of a self-imposed mission to eradicate homophobia and transphobia “around the world,” one of the biggest focuses is on positioning homophobia and transphobia as being foreign. The GoC only acknowledges its role in the oppression of 2SLGBTQ+ communities in specific contexts, such as the Purge and the MSM blood ban. Otherwise, the statements are very vague about the provenance of

discrimination. In these neoliberal narratives of Canadian identities and values, inclusion is Canadian, and homophobia is foreign.

Another instance of “no place in Canada” that I wanted to flag is: “Transphobia, trans misogyny, and all other forms of violence, including racism against Black, Indigenous, and racialized Trans people, have no place in Canada” (Canadian Heritage, November 2020). In a different statement, Minister Ilen also highlights the history of Trans Day of Remembrance and mentions racism and how it intersects with transphobia. It is interesting to see when intersectionality is or is not addressed. These two statements are part of 7 statements that mention racism, six of which are made by Marci Ilen and Bardish Chagger, two racialized women. Only two statements mention disability. Given their respective positions as Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth and Minister of Diversity, Inclusion, and Youth, Ilen and Chagger have issued most of the statements analyzed in this project. However, it will be interesting to see how this care for intersectional perspectives evolves as different people take on this role. Unlike Lenon’s (2005) findings, I find that race and other forms of difference beyond sexual difference were acknowledged in the statements. This is done in a particular way and is likely influenced by the entrance of the concept of intersectionality into the mainstream. For instance, Corinne Mason (2019) writes: “the deployment of the language of intersectionality by generalists without the conjoining theoretical and political commitments to transformative anti-racist feminism means the deep and profound possibilities of intersectionality as a theory can be easily flattened into a buzzword for development” (p. 213). In her analysis, she finds that intersectionality “works to reinvent and make relevant Canadian aid” (Mason, 2019, p. 211). Despite mentioning other axes of oppression on top of homophobia and transphobia, the statements do not meaningfully engage with intersectionality as a concept.

One of the ways that these statements cement the idea that homophobia is foreign is by condemning it in other countries. Condemnation is a reoccurring theme that is echoed in 5 statements. Canada not only aims to be inclusive, but it also “condemns violence and discrimination against any persons based on gender, gender identity or sexual orientation wherever they occur” (Global Affairs Canada, 2019). This is specifically in response to Brunei’s “imposition of severe punishments under its new Sharia penal code” (Global Affairs Canada, 2019).

Canada stands for rights. The words “right” and “rights” appear 66 times in the statements. This reflects that 2SLGBTQ+ activists and organizations globally have favoured human rights framings for decades. According to Julie Mertus (2007), “invoking human rights talk can be an effective way of claiming the moral high ground and of asserting affinity with others throughout the world who seek to condemn human wrongs and promote human dignity” (p. 1037). However, it is important to note that “the benefits that come from rights talk in no way threaten the hegemony of state organization or force the state to change its fundamental disciplinary apparatus of citizenship.” (Walcott, 2015, p. ix). Also, Miriam Smith (2020) demonstrates that in Canada, “both homonationalism and legally encoded homophobia can coexist” (p. 67). So, these statements deploying a rights framework, specifically human rights, can be harmful.

Canada stands in solidarity. Canada standing for or against anything is an instance of the personification of Canada. For example, “Canada stands with members of the LGBTQ2 communities, at home and abroad, to reaffirm their fundamental right to be treated equally, and with dignity and respect” (Global Affairs Canada, 2020). In some ways, this personification helps convey the idea that the Canadian government will implement and support policies and laws that support 2SLGBTQ+ communities. On the other hand, discursively, this does not allow space to acknowledge that the Canadian state has been and, in some ways, continues to be violent against 2SLGBTQ+ communities. 2SLGBTQ+ organizing in so-called Canada generally is against the state or to pressure the state to change discriminatory laws, policies, and practices. For example, Minister Chagger referenced the We Demand protest as “the first Canadian LGBTQ2 rights protests in 1971” (Canadian Heritage, June 2020). The We Demand protest was a rally organized in Ottawa where gay activists presented ten demands to the Canadian Parliament. The brief reads “that prejudice against homosexual people pervades society is, in no small way, attributable to practices of the Federal government.” (DiNovo & Waite, 1971). This fact is so important. Since the Purge, the Canadian government has used 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion rhetoric to perpetuate ideas of Canadian exceptionalism across the globe. Focusing so much on Canada’s solidarity with 2SLGBTQ+ communities obscures the homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia still perpetrated by the state. So much of 2SLGBTQ+ activism is about fighting against discrimination from the Canadian state.

What now? Pushing against the Pushback

Anecdotally, much of the pushback I have gotten from people who have heard about my research topic is rooted in the fact that, compared to most other countries in the world, Canada is not that bad of a place for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals to live. In light of this, my view has been seen as too pessimistic. Why be critical of a country that is not the most oppressive to 2SLGBTQ+ individuals and communities? I argue that this thinking is part of the problem. This comparison to less “progressive” countries is precisely what the Canadian government is doing to position itself as a global leader and evade criticism.

I believe that this is an instance where the bar is too low, and it gets in the way of progress. Stating that the living conditions and rights of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals in other countries are often worse than they are in Canada is a perspective that does not allow for the imagination of futures where 2SLGBTQ+ liberation happens. Instead, it makes it more difficult to criticize and hold the Canadian government accountable because it could be worse. Rather, I suggest operating under the premise that things need to be better. This may alter what policies are advocated for. This is relevant to scholars and activists as looking beyond the limiting perspective of 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion allows for imagining 2SLGBTQ+ flourishing.

bell hooks’ (1991) “Theory as Liberatory Practice” inspires me. She defines many ways that theory may be used. Notable, “theory as intervention” (hooks, 1991, p. 1). She puts this as a way “to look at the world differently, [...] to challenge the status quo” (hooks, 1991, p. 1). hooks (1991) is mindful to specify that “theory is not inherently healing, liberatory, or revolutionary” (p. 2). I am as mindful of using it to that end.

The language of inclusion used by the state does not promote liberation for all because incorporation into problematic structures cannot liberate. The emphasis on 2SLGBTQ+ trade is an example of this. Capitalism is no less harmful in a world where queer people can also be capitalists. Homonationalist language includes 2SLGBTQ+ individuals within the Canadian settler-colonial project and invites them to contribute to its expansion. This is something that 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, scholars, and activists need to consider and resist. Homonationalist discourses only challenge specific forms of oppression while remaining silent or encouraging other oppressive structures. For

instance, they are rarely intersectional; they focus on 2SLGBTQ+ oppression without considering how it connects to other forms of oppression. It is essential to generate theory based on insights into 2SLGBTQ+ activism and organizing that aims to be liberatory for the entire community.

Nation-states rely on discourse in order to solidify their existence. Official statements can inform the public but are also essential to nation-building. So, they tell us more about what Canada wants its identity to be than about 2SLGBTQ+ policy. Canada is home, Canada is a global leader, Canada is diverse, Canada is inclusive, and Canada is a place where everyone is free. Canada is an exceptional and benevolent nation. 2SLGBTQ+ people and communities are not at the center of these statements; Canada's national identity is.

When writing about the role of theory, Dietrich Rueschemeyer (2009) highlights that "theoretical ideas shape the questions we ask" (p. 4). We should be asking what changed. We should be asking what the motive behind these statements is. We should be asking for more.

Homonationalism is the combination of homonormativity and nationalism. However, it is less "homo" than "nationalism." This analysis has demonstrated that the nation comes first, and 2SLGBTQ+ communities are included in this nation. Benedict Anderson (2006) defines the nation as "an imagined political community" (p. 6). He argues that most, if not all, communities are imagined. Canada, like most communities, is imagined and imagined to be homogenous. The personification of Canada contributes to the notion that "Canada" has one unified position on 2SLGBTQ+ rights. So, "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail [...], the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship" (Anderson, 2006, p. 7). In some ways, nationalism in and of itself erases or at least obscures inequalities within what is imagined to be the nation. Is Canada including 2SLGBTQ+ people in the nation or in the national imaginary? Those are two faces of the same coin.

Homonationalist rhetoric contributes to the narrative of Canadian benevolence and exceptionalism. The official statements analyzed in this paper are simply a few stories that contribute to that larger narrative. This is important because narrative shapes how issues and historical events are viewed, understood, and remembered. These

official statements represent the GoC taking control of the narrative about the Purge and 2SLGBTQ+ rights in Canada. The narrative that the GoC is pushing through these statements is that we are currently in a post-Purge era. So much so that Canada is now qualified to combat homophobia internationally.

The Purge officially ended in 1992. Less than three decades later, the GoC spreads homonationalist narratives that few question. Homonationalist rhetoric not only obscures Canada's heterosexist past and present, but it also contributes to the editing of the Canadian collective memory on 2SLGBTQ+ issues. Canadian memory and identity are being rewritten through the lens of homonationalism, placing 2SLBTQ+ inclusion at the centre of national memory and imagination. In their book *Warrior Nation: Rebranding Canada in an age of anxiety*, Ian McKay and Jamie Swift (2012) explore how Canada is becoming a militarized nation and the federal government's campaign to redefine the nation. Constructing Canadian war myths and reimagining Canada's military history shifts public opinion. My argument is similar. Through official statements, the Canadian government is building homonationalist myths. The GoC is retelling the story of 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion in Canada in a way that is shifting public memory of Canada's heterosexist past and present. McKay and Swift (2012) write: "Memory itself is a contested terrain" (p. 2). By highlighting only certain aspects of 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion in Canada, the GoC may be banking on the fact that as time goes on, many will forget. I choose to remember Canada's heterosexist past and present.

Similarly to McKay and Smith (2012), Molden (2016) highlights the discrepancies between dominant narratives of war (the First World War for McKay and Smith and the Cold War for Molden) and the memories of those who had lived through them (p. 126). Molden (2016) draws on ideas from Gramsci to assert that "hegemony is the ability of a dominant group or class to impose their interpretations of reality—or the interpretations that support their interests—as the only thinkable way to view the world" (p. 126). Molden also draws on Foucault's counter-memory – "a concept (for re-thinking time) and agent of political subjectification that refuses the nationalist-normativity of remembrance" (Tello, 2022, p. 390). This connects power and memory. Counter-memory is used by marginalized communities or the vanquished to resist dominant narratives. State narratives are generally successful because the state has so much power and control. So, it can generate official histories "and maintain the unity and continuity of a political body by imposing an interpretation on a shared past and, at the same time, by silencing

alternative interpretations of historical experiences” (Medina, 2011, p. 14). For instance, there is a conflict between what official and counter-memory consider important in Canadian 2SLGBTQ+ history. Notably the central role that the Canadian state has played in 2SLGBTQ+ oppression. The official history reinforced by official statements glosses over this reality, allowing for a seamless transition from an apology for the Purge to the assertion that Canada is a global leader in 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion.

History and time, more broadly, are contested sites politically. Elizabeth Freeman (2005) argues that temporal mechanisms are used by the state and the market to “produce biopolitical status relations” (p. 57). For instance, “some groups have their needs and freedoms deferred or snatched away [...]. Some events count as historically significant, some don’t” (Freeman, 2005, p. 57). According to Medina (2011), counter-memories and counter-histories “undermine the unity and continuity that official histories produce” (p. 14). Learning about queer history on the land colonially known as Canada from queer people and 2SLGBTQ+ archives (such as the ArQuives) is a way to resist homonationalist retellings through counter-memory. However, it is also essential to consider archival erasure and marginalization. The ArQuives was “initially an archive of white gay liberation founded in 1973,” and today, it is one of the most extensive independent 2SLGBTQ+ archives worldwide (The ArQuives, 2022). This highlights the plurality of counter-memories.

Engaging with archives and the importance of history when it comes to queer theorizing addresses what Heather Love (2007) refers to as “a central paradox of any transformative criticism” (p.1). According to her, that paradox is “that its dreams for the future are founded on a history of suffering, stigma, and violence” (Love, 2007, p. 1). The version of queer history put forward by the GoC through their statements is one of linear progress culminating in triumphant success for the 2SLGBTQ+ community. This success manifests itself through formal rights and inclusion. This vision encourages queer and trans individuals to leave the past behind to access their place in modernity fully. I argue that we are connected to the past in ways that make it impossible to drop. In fact, “turning away from past degradation to a present or future affirmation means ignoring the past as past; it also makes it harder to see the persistence of the past in the present” (Love, 2007, p. 19). Queer politics in Canada must still contend with the legacy of the Purge to paint a more accurate picture of how much (and simultaneously how little) things have changed. The GoC is painting a Pride narrative that sweeps its shameful

implication in violence against 2SLGBTQ+ individuals under the rug. However, the truth is far more complex than a past/shame, present/pride dichotomy.

Conclusion

The fact that the Canadian government is willing to make several public statements about 2SLGBTQ+ issues is positive. It demonstrates that homophobia and transphobia are recognized as problems by the federal government. Lydia Miljan (2022) writes, “a statement by a political leader, a law, or the media’s coverage of a situation, event or policy demand all serve to affirm the relevance of a problem and the values and conflicts associated with it” (p. 7). This is not a black-or-white issue. The statements should not be categorized as either good or bad. Instead, I conclude that they bring forward that the Canadian state’s relationship with its citizens is more complex than what meets the eye. Sometimes, the statements explicitly mention some policies or laws in place to help or protect 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians. The motivation behind them being mentioned does not change the fact that they exist and that many people have benefitted from them. However, this does not stop the state from using those policies and laws to boost its image.

My analysis demonstrates that the Canadian government utilizes homonationalist rhetoric specific to the image it is trying to curate about “Canada.” A critical look at the statements’ language highlights that they do much more than convey information or spotlight important 2SLGBTQ+ dates. A decade after her initial intervention, Puar (2017) writes:

The terrain of homonationalism has always been contradictory and in-flux, and never focalizing on whether a nation has or does not have rights protections for LGBTQ populations. Rather, it is about use of such rights within modes of global governmentality as a marker of civilized status, and as a frame for understanding why and how “homophobia” and its liberal counterpart, tolerance, are used to laud populations with certain attributes at some moments and then vilify other (racialized) populations for these same attributes (p. 224).

The Canadian state is using the fact that it has certain 2SLGBTQ+ legal protections to position “Canada” as a global leader. This is a project that prioritizes nation-building over queer and trans liberation. Canada is favourable to 2SLGBTQ+ rights if they are aligned with the settler-colonial project and neoliberalism. Homonationalist rhetoric plays a key role in the relatively recent queer editing of

Canadian mythologies of benevolence and exceptionalism. The GoC does not deny its history; it tells it in a way that favours forgetting certain parts.

In the context of the United States, Puar (2017) demonstrates that queer and queer theory is used for the “reproduction of political population racism” (p. 227). The analysis of the statements in this project does not allow me to come to the same conclusion in the Canadian context because so few directly refer to other nations or touch on race. However, similarly to Puar (2017), I conclude that “we must contend with the successes of queer, which includes its disciplining and deployment in the service of very problematic ends” (p. 227). These statements are a continuation of the celebration of empire. The Canadian government is simply inviting 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians to participate in that celebration by making statements that cement Canada’s national identity as an exceptional and benevolent state, obscuring the realities of occupation on Turtle Island.

These statements are part of the ongoing PR project that is national identity. They are all about 2SLGBTQ+ issues, but when you analyze them, you realize that the GoC is telling a story about so-called Canada and is using the topic of 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion to do so. Progress and liberation do not exist in vague commitments and comparisons. Queer theorizing and activism in so-called Canada must contend with this reality, refuse to contribute, and actively reject it. The legislation protecting 2SLGBTQ+ rights in Canada does not exist because the state is benevolent. It exists because activists fought the government for it.

The “successes of queer” are mostly successes against the state. Throughout this paper, I have demonstrated that the state is co-opting the language of 2SLGBTQ+ activism for its benefit. This is the purpose of homonationalist rhetoric, and it needs to be called out. It downplays the role the state has played and continues to play in the marginalization of 2SLGBTQ+ people within its borders. Despite the claims in these statements that make it seem as though 2SLGBTQ+ activism can be aligned with the values of the state, including neoliberal ideals, this is false. Systems of oppression are connected. True 2SLGBTQ+ liberation is fundamentally unaligned with settler colonialism and neoliberalism.

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Appendix

Statement list: What story is the Canadian government telling about itself?

Year	Statement Title	Department
2018	Statement by the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on LGBTQ2 issues	Privy Council Office
2018	Statement by Equal Rights Coalition regarding the Supreme Court of India decision on consensual same-sex relations between adults in India	Global Affairs Canada
2018	Statement by the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on LGBTQ2 issues on Trans Day of Remembrance	Privy Council Office
2018	Anniversary of the apology to LGBTQ2 Canadians	Privy Council Office
2018	Statement from Dr. Charu Kaushic on World AIDS Day 2018	Canadian Institutes of Health Research
2018	Statement by the Prime Minister on World AIDS Day	Prime Minister of Canada
2019	Statement by Equal Rights Coalition on the situation in Chechnya	Global Affairs Canada
2019	Canada appalled by Brunei's imposition of severe punishments under its Sharia penal code	Global Affairs Canada
2019	Statement on International Pink Day	Privy Council Office
2019	Statement by Equal Rights Coalition on the situation in Brunei	Global Affairs Canada
2019	Statement from the Minister of Health on further reducing barriers for blood donation by men who have sex with men	Health Canada
2019	International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia	Public Health Agency of Canada
2019	Welcoming 2019 Pride Season celebrations and culture	Privy Council Office
2020	ERC statement on COVID-19 and the human rights of LGBTI persons	Global Affairs Canada
2020	Statement on International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia	Global Affairs Canada
2020	Statement by the Prime Minister on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia	Prime Minister of Canada
2020	Statement by Minister Chagger on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia	Canadian Heritage
2020	Statement by Minister Bardish Chagger on Pride Season in Canada	Canadian Heritage
2020	Statement by Minister Chagger on Transgender Day of Remembrance	Canadian Heritage
2021	Statement by Minister Chagger on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia and the LGBT Purge Report	Canadian Heritage

2021	Statement by Minister Chagger on International Transgender Day of Visibility	Canadian Heritage
2021	Statement by Minister Marci Ien on Transgender Day of Remembrance	Women and Gender Equality Canada
2021	Joint Statement by Minister Lametti and Minister Ien on legislation to criminalize conversion therapy receiving Royal Assent	Department of Justice
2021	Health Canada receives submission from Canadian Blood Services to move to sexual behaviour-based screening criteria for all blood and plasma donors, including men who have sex with men	Health Canada
2022	Statement by Minister Ien on the International Transgender Day of Visibility	Women and Gender Equality Canada
2022	Health Canada authorizes Canadian Blood Services' submission to eliminate donor deferral period for men who have sex with men	Health Canada
2022	Statement by Minister Ien on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia	Women and Gender Equality Canada
2022	Statement by Minister Marci Ien to Mark the Start of Canada's Pride Season	Women and Gender Equality Canada
2022	Celebrating Five Years of Legal Protections for Gender Identity and Gender Expression	Women and Gender Equality Canada