

SSHRC Explore Final Report

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Project Title: Queer Parenting in the Time of Parental Rights

1.1 Project Summary

This project aimed to fill a gap in the literature on the "parental rights" movement in Canada by capturing the experience of queer families navigating 'parental rights' in Calgary to better understand the impact of anti-2SLGBTQIA+ policies and sentiments in Alberta. By conducting serial focus groups over the course of a year, this project tracked the impact of new legislation as it rolled-out in Alberta in order to examine immediate and longer-term effects

1.2 Student involvement

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1.3 Dissemination and Knowledge Mobilization

We have presented our findings to the LGBTQ+ Caucus of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, at MRU's Inclusion Week, and at the Mobilizing Queer Joy Against 2SLGBTQIA+ Hate at MacEwan University. We will also be presenting our findings at the annual Sociology Association Conference in June 2026 (if accepted). We submitted an article for peer review to the Bulletin of Transgender Health and we are preparing a peer-reviewed article for LGBTQ+ Family: An Interdisciplinary Journal. We have also written a bi-monthly Substack newsletter to share initial findings in an accessible format. This Substack has 52 subscribers and some of our articles have reached over 80 unique views. We have also published multiple articles in public scholarship venues like The Conversation, The Tyee, and engaged in media interviews on multiple occasions.

1.4 Project Outcomes and Impacts

Our preliminary findings suggest that queer families have experienced negative impacts of the "parental rights" movement and associated anti-2SLGBTQIA+ legislation in Alberta. According to the parents and caregivers of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth who participated in our study, the impacts of anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hostilities alongside Bills 26, 27, and 29 and the public education "book ban" have negatively impacted the mental health and wellbeing of youth. The socio-political context of Alberta has created tensions in parent-kid relationships because of the removal of "parental choice" by the government which is eroding a key protective factor associated with alleviating minority stress. This pilot study helped us obtain a SSHRC IDG grant which will expand our research in a few key ways: we will 1) conduct focus groups in Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary, 2) survey parents and caregivers of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth across Alberta, and 3) interview parents and caregivers of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to capture the stories of rural and remote families. Focusing on new laws in the areas of education, healthcare, and sport in Alberta, including the potential use of the notwithstanding clause, and changes to the socio-cultural climate more generally, this

project will fill a major gap in the literature on the contemporary rise of anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hostilities. Our peer-reviewed publications, public presentations, and data from the pilot and the IDG study will aid policymakers, legal interveners, social services providers, and the general public to better understand the effects new and unstudied anti-2SLGBTQIA+ legislation in Alberta.