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Mapping the Online Ecosystem of Misogyny, Targeted Hate and Violent Extremism in Canada

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Research Report

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Research Report

Mapping the Online Ecosystem of Misogyny, Targeted Hate and Violent Extremism in Canada

Content Warning

This report contains descriptions and examples of misogynistic and gender-based abuse, including sexist and derogatory language, sexualized and appearance-based harassment, threats, and technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Some examples may be distressing or offensive. Reader discretion is advised.

To protect individuals who have experienced harassment or abuse, victims and other non-public figures referenced in the case studies have been anonymized.

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Executive Summary

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This ISD report examines how misogyny manifests across Canada's online ecosystem and intersects with technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), targeted hate and violence (TH&V) and violent extremism (VE), drawn from research conducted between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. The findings show that misogyny extends beyond fringe or explicitly extremist communities, reaching large audiences and intersecting with broader forms of hate and exclusion.

TFGBV-linked actors who did not reach ISD's threshold for targeted hate or violent extremism accounted for 96 percent of engagement across the actor categories examined. Many high-reach accounts interspersed misogynistic content with posts about gaming, culture, media and politics, exposing broader audiences to misogynistic narratives and potentially contributing to their normalization. Meanwhile, violent extremist actors generated less engagement but more often embedded misogyny within supremacist narratives related to race, immigration and anti-government hostility.

Reach and content volume did not necessarily correspond, according to our findings. One high-reach TFGBV actor produced 3.5 percent of posts in its category but accounted for approximately 58 percent of engagement within that category. Across platforms, X hosted nearly 90 percent of TFGBV posts but approximately 35 percent of engagement in its category, while YouTube hosted fewer than 3 percent of messages but generated more than half of engagement.

Misogyny also served as a shared lens across otherwise distinct ideological communities. Anti-LGBTQ+ animosity was the most prominent narrative identified, while misogynistic content also intersected with antisemitism, racism, white supremacy and conspiratorial thinking. TFGBV frequently manifested as networked harassment targeting highly visible women, including journalists and public officials, with harms ranging from gendered abuse and intimidation to doxxing and manipulated imagery. Together, these findings demonstrate how misogyny can both reinforce broader hateful and extremist narratives and create tangible barriers to women's participation in public and civic life.

Finding 1

Online actors linked to TFGBV, without a nexus to targeted hate or violent extremism, drive disproportionate levels of engagement, contributing to the normalization of misogyny among larger audiences.

Posts by TFGBV-linked actors who were not coded as reaching the threshold for targeted hate or violent extremism accounted for 96 percent of the engagement across these actor categories. Many of the highest-reach accounts did not focus primarily on misogynistic material but instead interspersed it with broader content related to gaming, culture, media and politics. This can expose audiences to misogynistic narratives and harms even if they are not actively seeking them out, potentially contributing to the mainstreaming and normalization. On the other hand, while violent extremists generated substantially less engagement, they were more likely to blend misogyny into overtly supremacist content related to race, immigration and anti-government hostility, among other issues.

Finding 2

The actors producing the most misogynistic content were not necessarily those who reached the largest audiences.

For example, accounts operated by one high-reach TFGBV actor produced only 3.5 percent of posts in that actor category while accounting for approximately 58 percent of its engagement. Meanwhile, a fringe media outlet produced almost one-third of posts but accounted for only around 4 percent of engagement. Similar differences were observed across platforms. X hosted nearly 90 percent of posts by TFGBV actors but approximately 35 percent of the engagement, while YouTube account accounted for under 3 percent of messages but more than half of the engagement. These findings illustrate the importance of considering reach and audience engagement alongside the actual volume of content produced when assessing the influence of misogynistic actors.

Finding 3

Misogyny cuts across otherwise ideologically distinct online communities and often overlaps with broader hateful and extremist narratives.

Semantic clustering revealed that anti-LGBTQ+ animosity was the most prominent narrative among Canadian actors examined, while generalized misogyny, appearance-based and sexually charged attacks, and the policing of women's sexuality were also prevalent. Across the data, these gender-driven narratives frequently intersected with antisemitism, racism, white supremacy and conspiratorial thinking, showcasing how misogyny can become integrated within ideological frameworks that are not exclusively or even primarily focused on gender. Major public events, such as the Tumbler Ridge school shooting, also acted as flashpoints, with diverse actors drawing on different gender-based grievances to reinforce similar exclusionary conclusions.

Finding 4

TFGBV in Canada often manifested as networked harassment targeting highly visible women, with potential implications for their participation in public life.

Gendered slurs, body- and slut-shaming, intimidation and instances of intimate image abuse were often used to target women in Canada, including journalists and public officials. In numerous cases, misogynistic online actors would spotlight potential targets to hostile audiences, resulting in further abuse through replies and comments. In more severe cases, this included attempts to dox targets or subject them to AI-generated or otherwise manipulated imagery depicting them in abusive and degrading ways. Beyond the immediate harm to individual victims, these patterns of sustained and persistent harassment can create a chilling effect, discouraging women from speaking openly, engaging in civic discourse or taking on highly visible public-facing roles.

The relationship between misogyny and extremist violence is deeply rooted and complex. Misogyny can function as an ideological worldview in its own right, act as a warning sign for harmful behavior, contribute to attitudes that increase the risk of violence, or serve as a core driver underpinning broader hate-based and extremist belief systems. This report, part of Project Catalyst, examines these dynamics across online ecosystems in Canada, focusing on how misogynistic narratives and TFGBV are expressed by different types of actors, and the varied ways that gendered hostility can feed into or overlap with targeted hate, extremism and different forms of violence.

This research is grounded in ISD's practical toolkit for addressing the intersection of misogyny, targeted hate and violent extremism. The toolkit's taxonomy provides an approach to understanding misogyny as a potential form of extremism in itself, a fundamental component of other extremist ideologies, a risk factor for violence, or a warning sign for violent behavior more broadly. It also informs how this report frames the relationship between TFGBV, targeted hate and violent extremism, including articulating how these categories often overlap. Consistent with this framework, as well as analyzing the harmful impacts of these dynamics on women and girls, the report also captures anti-LGBTQ+ animosity (which can also be understood as a form of targeted hate in and of itself) when it serves to entrench traditional gender hierarchies or to punish those who are perceived to be challenging them.

To analyze these dynamics, ISD expert analysts developed seed lists of actors spanning misogynistic and TFGBV-related communities, targeted hate actors, and violent extremists in Canada. Actors were classified according to the nature and intent of their activity and the definitions established in the toolkit. However, these categories are intended to help organize the analysis, and they should not be treated as discrete ecosystems. Importantly, a key purpose of this research is to examine how misogynistic narratives and tactics cut across these actor groups.

The report integrates quantitative analysis of publicly available online content from across a range of social media platforms and online communities with qualitative case studies. This mixed-methods approach helps to understand how misogyny and its relationship to extremism manifest in Canada, while also illuminating the narratives, tactics and ideological linkages that shape these dynamics. In total, ISD collected 2.9 million posts published across 11 social media platforms and forums between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. These posts came from 108 accounts coded for relevance to misogyny in Canada—plus relevant communities and forums—and generated a total of 138,904,429 engagements (combined likes, comments and shares).

This report uses the Project Catalyst definitions for Tech-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), Targeted Hate & Violence (TH&V) and Violent Extremism (VE), which differ from ISD's definitions.

Anti-feminism · The countermovement opposing emancipatory or feminist ideals that uses misogynist strategies and tactics. Anti-feminists oppose gender equality efforts and the democratic negotiation of gender relations.

Dehumanization · The denial of the full humanity of others. This is often achieved by comparisons to vermin, animals, property or the suggestion that targets are subhuman. Dehumanization justifies the mistreatment of dehumanized groups and can be implicated in mass atrocity as well as targeted violence against these groups.

Feminism · ISD draws upon bell hooks' definition of feminism, which establishes it as a "movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression."

Hate Speech · ISD classifies hate speech as any activity or content that seeks to dehumanize, demonize, harass, threaten or incite violence against an individual or community on the basis of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, sex, disability, migrant status or religion.

Intimate Image Abuse · Use of images to coerce, threaten, harass, objectify or abuse. Deepfakes and non-consensual intimate imagery (NCII) created using AI tools are forms of image-based abuse.

Male Supremacy · A "hateful ideology rooted in the belief of the innate superiority of cisgender men and their right to subjugate women [and trans and gender-diverse people]." It is linked to hegemonic masculinity, which structures patriarchy and describes the "legitimation of unequal gender relations."

Manosphere · The 'manosphere' is an umbrella term that refers to a number of interconnected misogynistic communities. It encompasses multiple types and severities of misogyny—from broader male supremacist discourse to men's rights activism (MRA) and 'involuntary celibates' (incels).

Misogyny · ISD draws upon the definition of Kate Manne, who argues misogyny operates to uphold a patriarchal social order, policing gender norms to ensure that women and marginalized gender identities conform. Misogyny works to justify violence when there is deviation from these norms. Misogyny includes what might be considered a type of deeply held prejudice toward women and marginalized gender identities.

Online Harassment · Defined by Humane Intelligence as: "an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of behaviors via technology intended to silence or intimidate a target. It often includes repeated hostile messages, direct threats of violence, and offensive or abusive comments (including expression of sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia or ableist prejudices). It may include coordinated pile-on attacks or sustained harassment campaigns by formal groups or informal groups intended to overwhelm the target."

Patriarchy · Patriarchy refers to a social system in which men hold primary power and authority in various aspects of life, including family, politics, economics and culture. It is characterized by male dominance in decision-making, legal structures and social norms, often reinforced by traditions, religious interpretations and societal expectations.

Targeted Hate and Violence (TH&V) · Following the Project Catalyst definition, targeted hate and violence is any activity that dehumanizes other people by seeking to elevate the position of members in one group while diminishing that of non-members based on a particular protected characteristic of those people; advocates for or uses violence to realize that dehumanization; and tolerates, supports, actively calls for, or directly uses violence against civilians or critical civilian infrastructure.

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) · Any act that is carried out via information and communication technologies or other digital tools, which results in (or is likely to result in) physical, sexual, psychological, social, political, or economic harm, or other infringements of rights and freedoms.

Violent Extremism · Activity that promotes ideological, political or religious aims while advocating for or using violence to achieve those aims, and that tolerates, supports, actively calls for, or directly uses violence against civilians or critical civilian infrastructure. This definition of violent extremism is layered against ISD's social identity-based definition of extremism, which is understood as the advocacy of political and social change in line with a system of belief that claims the superiority and dominance of one identity-based 'in-group' over an 'out-group.' Extremism advances a dehumanizing 'othering' mindset incompatible with pluralism and universal human rights. It can be pursued through violent or non-violent means.

The following analysis is rooted in Project Catalyst's harms taxonomy, which examines the intersections between TFGBV, targeted hate and violent extremism. The taxonomy provides a framework for understanding when forms of TFGBV may also constitute targeted hate or violent extremism and identifies the thresholds and indicators that distinguish and connect these forms of harm. Further, in line with the taxonomy, this research also considers the nature of the harm being perpetrated, the actor's intent and the intended target when determining where conduct falls across each of these categories.

Seed list development and inclusion criteria

ISD developed bespoke seed lists of online actors and communities relevant to misogyny in Canada. For the purposes of this research and to root a cross-platform perspective into our methodological approach, an 'actor' is defined as an individual, organization, group or online community that could maintain one or more accounts across different platforms. The seed lists were designed to capture a cross-section of actors associated with TFGBV, TH&V, and violent extremism, allowing the analysis to examine how misogyny operates across different online ecosystems and ideological spaces.

Accounts were assessed through a three-step inclusion process encompassing geographic relevance, engagement with misogynistic harms or narratives, and their relationship to targeted hate or violent extremism. First, an account had to demonstrate a meaningful connection to Canada. This could include explicitly identifying itself or its membership as being based in the country, expressing affiliation with a locally active group or movement, or maintaining a consistent focus on domestic issues.

Accounts could also qualify if they posted about country-specific issues on at least three occasions during the six months before the seed lists were developed. Actors based outside Canada were therefore included if they devoted significant attention to domestic issues or had a demonstrable connection to local movements. Whenever possible throughout the analysis, locally relevant activity was distinguished from broader international discourse, reflecting the increasingly transnational character of online misogynistic communities.

Accounts that met the geographic threshold were then assessed for their relevance to misogyny. In line with the harms taxonomy developed for Project Catalyst, this included both identifiable forms of TFGBV and narratives that promote patriarchal dominance and gender inequality. An account was eligible for inclusion if analysts identified at least three relevant examples of gender-based harms or misogynistic narratives within the six-month period preceding the creation of the seed list. Accounts were also included if recent research from reputable governmental, academic, civil society or media sources documented their role in promoting such harms or narratives. The analysis also captured hostility toward LGBTQ+ people in circumstances where it was used to enforce gender hierarchies or devalue people on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation, consistent with the framework established in the harms taxonomy.

Finally, analysts assessed whether each misogynistic actor also met the threshold for targeted hate and violence or violent extremism. These determinations drew on the nature and intent of the actor, using the definitions established in the Project Catalyst harms taxonomy. Accounts meeting the relevant thresholds were coded as TH&V or violent extremism (VE), while recognizing that violent extremists were likely to have also engaged in targeted hate and violence. Accounts that met the broader

misogyny criteria but did not reach either threshold were categorized as TFGBV actors. Analysts also conducted intercoder reliability checks to ensure that these classifications were analytically sound. Importantly, these categories should not be understood as entirely discrete ecosystems, since the research itself examines how misogynistic narratives and harms cross ideological and organizational boundaries.

TABLE 1

Total number of actors per actor category (Canada)

Total number of actors	**37**
TFGBV actors	**16**
TH&V actors	**4**
VE actors	**17**

TABLE 2

Total number of accounts per actor category (Canada)

Total number of actors	**108**
TFGBV accounts	**62**
TH&V accounts	**6**
VE accounts	**40**

TABLE 3

Total number of accounts found across platforms (Canada)

Platform	Accounts
X	**30**
Facebook	**13**
Instagram	**12**
YouTube	**11**
Reddit	**4**
TikTok	**12**
Twitch	**5**
Rumble	**14**
Discord	**7**
Telegram	**0**
Total	**108**

Data collection

Data collection covered the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, with collection methods varying according to platform architecture and data accessibility. X and Facebook data were collected using Brandwatch, while Instagram and TikTok data were gathered through Bright Data. YouTube data was obtained through the YouTube Data API, and Open Measures was used to collect relevant material from Rumble, Telegram and 4chan, although no relevant material was found on Telegram. In addition to content produced directly by accounts in the seed list, comments and replies were collected where technically available, allowing the research to examine how audiences interacted with content published by classified actors.

ISD also collected material independently from the actor seed list from four 4chan boards: /pol/, /sp/, /bant/, and /int/. These boards were chosen because their national flag feature allows anonymous users to indicate an association with a particular country when posting. Accordingly, ISD analyzed material from users who self-identified as Canadian, while acknowledging that these signals may not always accurately depict a user's real geolocation

or identity (for example, due to the use of VPNs). This allowed the analysis to capture misogynistic discussions emerging in a highly active but relatively anonymous online environment where stable actor identities are difficult to establish. Reddit, Discord and Twitch data could not be collected through automated means and were therefore examined through qualitative digital ethnography.

Collected data was consolidated into AllAtOnce, ISD's proprietary data platform, where the analysis was carried out. Bringing content from every platform into a single environment allowed analysts to apply a consistent set of filters, search terms and large language model (LLM) classifiers across the whole dataset. This enabled analysts to examine volumes, networks of accounts and recurring narratives, patterns and themes across all platforms at once rather than source by source. Importantly, this research is primarily actor-based and focused on publicly accessible spaces. It is therefore better suited to examining observable narratives, networks and harassment than harms that frequently occur in private or more ephemeral online venues. As discussed later in the report, this limitation is particularly relevant to forms of TFGBV such as intimate image abuse, impersonation or sexual extortion, which are often less visible in publicly accessible data and therefore harder to capture systematically.

Classifier development

To analyze misogynistic speech at scale, ISD developed a bespoke LLM-based classifier. Before model development, data from different platforms was standardized into a common structure. Randomized and filtered samples were then provided to analysts for manual assessment of whether they contained misogynistic content.

Nearly 1,200 posts were manually coded from the dataset. Two analysts coded the samples independently, after which disagreements were reviewed and resolved, with definitions being clarified as necessary. The result was a human-labeled dataset that ISD used to develop and test a classifier built using Anthropic's Claude Sonnet 5 model. The classifier's outputs were compared against the human-labeled data and refined iteratively until its performance was considered sufficiently reliable to apply to previously unlabeled data in the broader dataset.

Performance was assessed using an F1 score—a measurement calculated from two metrics:

Precision	Metric 1	**Recall**	Metric 2
The proportion of posts labeled as misogynistic by the model that were misogynistic		The proportion of misogynistic posts that the model correctly identified	

TABLE 4

Classifier performance

F1 score	Precision	Recall	Labeled rows
0.804	**0.860**	**0.755**	**1,183**

Mixed methods analytical approach

ISD combined quantitative analysis with digital ethnography to examine both the scale of misogynistic activity and the context in which it appeared. Examples of how quantitative analysis was used include identifying changes in the volume of misogynistic content over time, assessing differences in activity and engagement across actor categories, and identifying significant events associated with spikes in discussion. Using the Claude Sonnet 5

model, analysts applied semantic clustering (an approach described in further detail in the Key Narratives sections below) to group large numbers of posts according to their linguistic similarity, allowing them to identify recurring narratives and areas for closer qualitative investigation. This was supplemented by other natural language processing techniques where applicable.

These quantitative approaches were paired with qualitative analysis of individual actors, communities and conversations. Digital ethnography was particularly important on platforms where systematic collection was not possible due to data access limitations but was also used throughout the research to understand how narratives functioned in their respective contexts. It was also used to identify and evaluate image-based material, which could not be systematically analyzed through quantitative methods (which focus on text-based outputs). Examples of how qualitative analysis was used include examining how misogynistic ideas were expressed by different actor types, how audiences responded to them, and how gendered hostility intersected with wider ideological grievances. Case studies were then used to explore particularly relevant actors, harms and narrative flashpoints in greater depth.

Key Actors in Canada's Online Misogyny Ecosystem

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This section focuses on the activity of actors classified as being relevant to TFGBV, targeted hate and violence, or violent extremism in ISD's Canadian dataset. However, it should be noted that this actor-based analysis excludes data collected from 4chan, where the platform's anonymous and ephemeral user base precluded the ability to classify individual posters into one of these categories. Additionally, this section only examines original posts and excludes shares, reposts and quotes of other users' content. These caveats are important, as the data outlined below should be understood as a measure of original content produced by identifiable, classified actors on platforms observed in this study, rather than a full picture of all misogynistic activity across the broader online ecosystem in Canada.

FIGURE 1

Volume over time of total posts per actor category

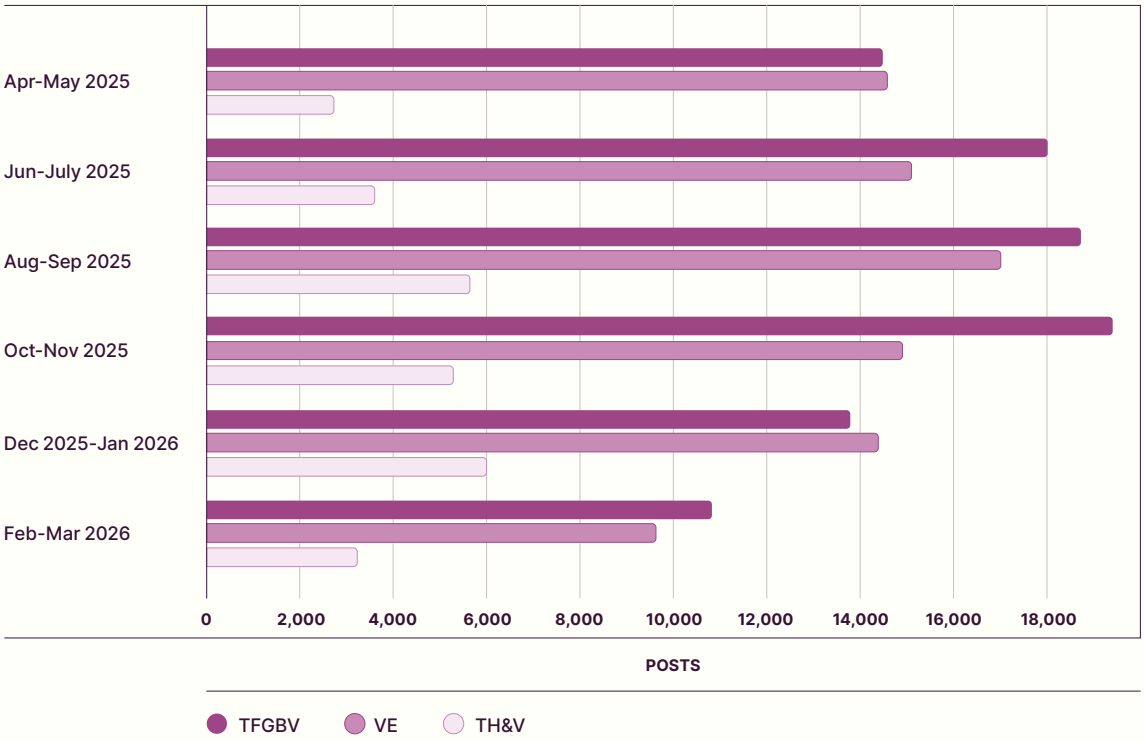
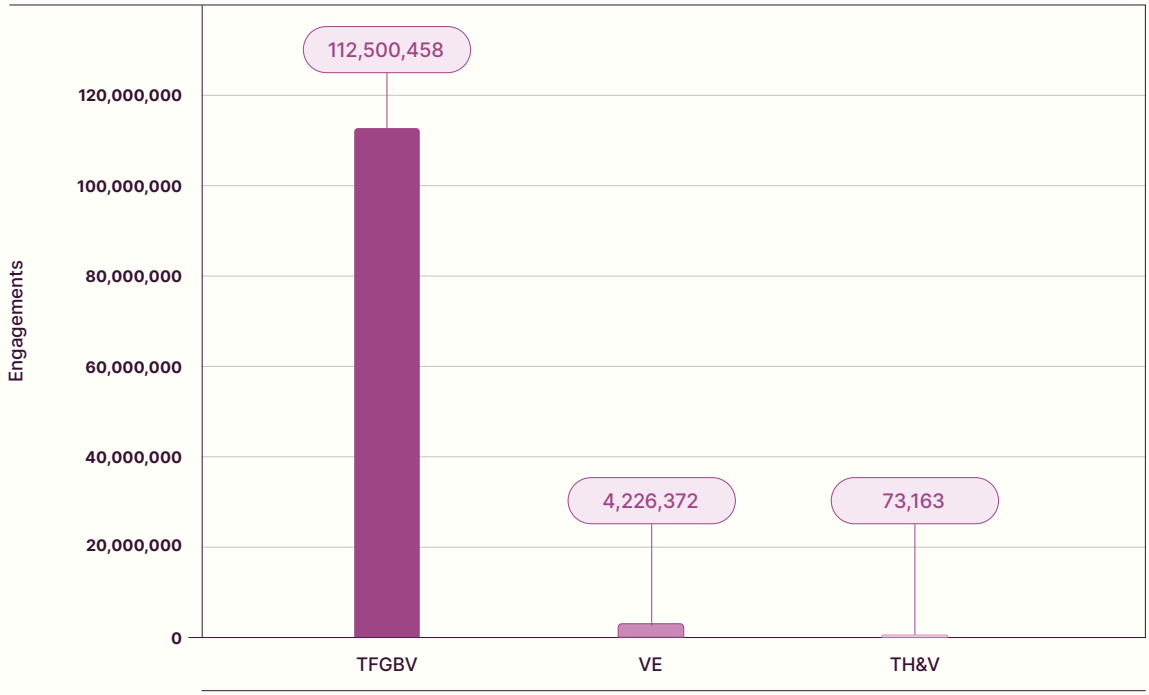


FIGURE 2

Total engagement per actor category



The actors contained within ISD's Canadian seed list include a broad cross-section of online users and accounts that are relevant to misogyny. Specifically, TFGBV-related actors encompassed manosphere-related or adjacent actors, such as male lifestyle gurus and proponents of the Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW) movement, as well as gaming influencers, streaming personalities, political activists and media brands whose content often incorporated misogynistic themes. On the other hand, actors related to targeted hate and violence were often focused on stoking racial, religious or anti-immigrant sentiment, while violent extremists largely included white supremacists, accelerationists and violent anti-government entities. While these categories have been used to organize the analysis, they should be understood as falling along a continuum rather than being mutually exclusive.

Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, TFGBV actors (a term used as shorthand throughout this report to refer to misogynistic actors who did not meet the threshold to qualify as a targeted hate-related or violent extremist actor) generated 98,533 posts, representing 46 percent of all posts in this actor-level analysis. These actors were closely followed by violent extremists, who produced 88,098 posts (41 percent), with targeted hate and violence-related entities generating a relatively small share of the overall content at 27,620 posts (13 percent). Meanwhile, engagement levels (combined likes, comments and shares) differed considerably across actor categories, with TFGBV actors yielding over 110 million engagements (96 percent of all engagement across the three categories). Violent extremists generated over 3.98 million engagements, while targeted hate actors yielded over 72,000. This imbalance implies substantial differences in the level of responsiveness by audiences to actors across the three categories.

Notably, the analysis revealed that the volume of content produced by any given account is not necessarily proportional to its degree of reach. For example, accounts associated with Influencer C—a popular gaming streamer who has repeatedly commented on Canadian issues and has a large following in the country—accounted for only 3.5 percent of posts in the TFGBV category but drove approximately 58 percent of its engagement. Conversely, a fringe Canadian media outlet that regularly promotes anti-LGBTQ+ narratives accounted for nearly one-third of posts within the TFGBV actor category, but only around 4 percent of engagement.

An especially significant finding pertaining to Canadian TFGBV actors is that many of the accounts with the highest reach did not exclusively focus on misogynistic material. Instead, many of them interspersed misogynistic content with material related to gaming, lifestyle, culture, politics, media and other seemingly unrelated topics. In such cases, misogynistic narratives often blended seamlessly into a broader stream of content, meaning viewers may encounter them without expressly seeking to engage with harmful gender-related material. This can lead to the mainstreaming of misogyny and its normalization across a broad audience, a dynamic that distinguishes TFGBV actors from more overtly hateful or extremist ones who also advocate for violence.

The analysis of the Canadian online ecosystem also revealed important differences in how platforms feature misogynistic actors and narratives. Notably, nearly 90 percent of posts by TFGBV actors were made on X, but accounted for only around 35 percent of engagement within this category. Meanwhile, TFGBV accounts on YouTube produced less than 3 percent of the identified messages while generating more than half of the overall level of engagement. Instagram also saw a relatively large share of engagement compared to the limited volume of content collected from the platform. This illustrates a key finding related to online platforms, which is that they play

different roles within the ecosystem—while X hosts a high volume of posts and discussion by misogynistic actors, video-based and influencer-oriented platforms generate a disproportionate amount of reach.

While violent extremists produced slightly less content compared to TFGBV actors, their content was much more overtly ideological and generated substantially less engagement. Although prominent actors in this category typically focused on racial issues, immigration, nationalism, anti-government hostility, and other ideologically and politically oriented topics, misogyny still featured regularly in their discussions. Such actors often used sexually charged insults, attacks on women's appearance, strict interpretations of gender roles, anti-LGBTQ+ animosity and targeted harassment of female opponents to serve broader ideological agendas. Also of note, a relatively small number of violent extremists drove a large share of engagement. For example, accounts associated with a prolific Canadian neo-Nazi accounted for over half of the overall engagement among violent extremist actors, while those belonging to a leader of Second Sons Canada—a Canadian white supremacist group—accounted for another quarter. On the other hand, actors associated with targeted hate and violence produced a relatively low amount of content and engagement across the three categories. Much of the material generated by these accounts was related to anti-migrant discussion and the dehumanization of minorities, although they frequently employed sexist insults and body-shaming to harass their enemies.

Collectively, these findings show that misogyny can serve a variety of purposes across the Canadian online ecosystem. TFGBV actors who generate high engagement levels contribute to its normalization for broad audiences, while targeted hate and violent extremist actors spread misogynistic content as part of a larger hate-based or extremist worldview. This shows the importance of understanding platform dynamics across both mainstream-facing environments that foster the spread and normalization of misogyny across broad constituencies and more niche communities that blend misogyny with more severe forms of hate and extremism.

CASE STUDY (TFGBV ACTOR): INFLUENCER A

A prominent Canadian influencer—who has nearly 150,000 combined followers across X, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Rumble and Twitch and is hereafter referred to as 'Influencer A'—illustrates how misogynistic narratives and harms can be mainstreamed by individuals who are not necessarily producing targeted hate or promoting violent extremism. In the data collected, Influencer A presents himself as an up-and-coming Canadian influencer and podcaster, repeatedly highlighting his age, audience growth and access to more prominent personalities. At the same time, his content shows clear influence from established manosphere figures such as Sneako, Myron Gaines and Andrew Tate, among others. He regularly promotes content from some of these figures, seeks interviews and collaborations with them, and adopts a similar vocabulary that often verges on misogyny, emphasizing values like 'strong masculinity,' an opposition to feminism and male social dominance. This makes him a suitable subject of focus for this study because even though Influencer A is not a central ideologue, he functions as a youthful intermediary who can repackage harmful narratives for a younger and potentially more mainstream audience.

Notably, Influencer A's content includes numerous examples of potential TFGBV harms. He repeatedly targets individuals with direct abuse that is gendered and sexualized, describing them using terms such as 'whore', 'bitch', 'bimbo' and 'feminist cancer cell.' He has also promoted broader exclusionary narratives about women, with one X post advocating for the removal of women from politics receiving over 3,300 engagements

(combined reactions, comments and shares). Additionally, he has amplified content arguing that women should not be allowed to vote, as well as a message from a prominent manosphere figure claiming that society needs men who are willing to tell women to "get back in the kitchen." In one post, Influencer A echoed a common misogynistic refrain, decrying the alleged "entitlement" and "arrogance" of women and telling them to "go make a sandwich." Such posts show how Influencer A—despite not functioning as an overt hate-based or violent extremist personality—often frames women as politically unfit, subordinate to men and suitable targets of hostility and vitriol.

Also of significance, Influencer A repeatedly engages in anti-LGBTQ+ forms of hostility. He regularly uses the word 'gay' in a derogatory manner and frames transgender individuals as being mentally ill or delusional. In February 2026, Influencer A made a post on X indicating that transgender people needed mental health support rather than "endless affirmation" of their "delusions," generating over 2,700 engagements. He also regularly discusses his transgender former classmate, framing his interactions with this individual as part of a personal persecution narrative. For example, Influencer A indicated that the classmate tried to form a "hate group against him," which nearly caused him to be banned from prom, with one such post generating over 11,000 engagements, including pile-ons in the comments section. Such posts that repeatedly single out marginalized individuals—in this case, a former classmate—can inspire large audiences to engage in dogpiling and harassment, particularly in cases where the victim could be identified.

Influencer A also illustrates how misogyny can intersect with other harmful worldviews, including antisemitism. He has promoted claims that feminism was created by Jews and has asked whether Jewish people "invented transgenderism." He has also integrated homophobic and antisemitic abuse with language demonizing both identities. This blending of misogyny and antisemitic conspiratorial thinking reflects a wider online ecosystem where different grievances and ideologies can reinforce one another.

Influencer A is a significant example of a Canadian TFGBV-related actor because his content does not always appear overtly extremist. He frequently intersperses his material with general commentary about Canadian politics, motivational content, self-promotion, podcast clips and youth-facing influencer culture. This combination shows how misogyny can be mainstreamed by blurring harmful ideas with content that otherwise appears humorous, friendly, engaging and socially acceptable rather than ideological. Furthermore, his frequent amplification of manosphere influencers shows how young influencers can package overt male supremacist content for a wider Canadian audience. Accordingly, the harm does not lie simply in individual abusive or hateful posts, but in how Influencer A's persona serves to mainstream misogyny by normalizing rigid gender hierarchies. Based on the posts reviewed across this dataset, Influencer A exemplifies how a rising influencer who is not commonly associated with extremism can still lend credibility to an ecosystem that lowers the threshold for TFGBV-related harm and makes misogynistic narratives more palatable.

CASE STUDY (VIOLENT EXTREMIST ACTOR): EXTREMIST A

A prominent Canadian white supremacist—hereafter referred to as 'Extremist A'—represents a case study of how misogyny is embedded in and can help sustain a violent extremist worldview. For the purposes of this report, Extremist A has been categorized as a violent extremist because the two networks he is affiliated with, Second Sons Canada and Diagolon, advocate for the expulsion of non-white populations from Canada, including by force if necessary, as well as the execution of Canadian politicians. While his content does not primarily focus on gender and instead prioritizes

discussions of immigration, racial hierarchy and the claim that Canada is being replaced by non-white 'invaders,' misogyny and anti-LGBTQ+ hostility are frequently woven into these themes to give them increased urgency and force. Across numerous posts, women are depicted as vulnerable dependents of white supremacists, non-white populations as sexual threats, LGBTQ+ people as symbols of societal decline, and political opponents as 'feminine' and weak.

Extremist A's social media accounts repeatedly showcase several forms of TFGBV harm. Notably, he frequently attempts to humiliate specific women online, directing gendered slurs at them. In March 2026, he asked a female journalist if she had "always been a racist bitch," generating nearly 200 engagements. In December 2025, he targeted another woman, describing her commentary as "cunty" and insinuating that she must smell bad because of her race. In September 2025, he targeted a woman by fat-shaming her, asking his audience to speculate on how large she might become, referring to her potential future appearance as her "final form"[1] would be. Such comments targeting specific women implicitly encourage his extremist followership to engage in dogpiling, which is frequently evidenced in comments left on his posts, or on posts directed toward his targets.

Other posts by Extremist A are oriented around male dominance and the humiliation of women, even if they do not include specific slurs. For example, after saying that a woman had complied with one of his demands, he described her as a "good girl," effectively infantilizing the target and portraying the exchange as evidence of his dominance. In another post, he asked his followers how "stupid" a specific woman was and instructed them to leave comments. Such posts illustrate how Extremist A turns the humiliation of individual women into participatory harassment, encouraging his audience to take part in abusing his targets.

Anti-LGBTQ+ hate is an even more consistent theme across his messaging, and, by early 2026, had become increasingly intertwined with narratives about the dangers such populations post to public safety. In February, Extremist A stated that "transgenders" had killed more people in Canada than "AR-15s," receiving over 350 engagements. In November 2025, he expressed support for the idea of burning "tranny" books, and then later described a specific individual who discussed trans issues as being a "pervert" who was imposing "trans stuff" on the broader Canadian population. These messages show how Extremist A moves beyond general animosity toward LGBTQ+ people, framing them as dangerous actors whose persecution would protect the broader Canadian population.

Perhaps the clearest intersection between gender and white supremacy across Extremist A's posts is his repeated use of women's safety to justify racial segregation. In December 2025, Extremist A stated that "daughters, sisters, and wives" would be at risk if ethnic minorities were given power, and then used that to call for "remigration"—a euphemism describing the forced expulsion of all non-white populations. In other cases, Extremist A has intertwined overt racism with calls for violence, asking in one post when it was time to start doing "the wife burning thing" in reference to South Asian women. Such posts highlight Extremist A's selective use of misogyny—in some cases, he uses gendered abuse as a tool for harassment, while in others he presents his white supremacist worldview as necessary to protect women from various threats, requiring the dominance and intervention of men like himself.

Extremist A also fuses misogyny and anti-LGBTQ+ hostility with antisemitic rhetoric, mirroring a similar dynamic shown by certain Canadian manosphere actors like Influencer A. In one message, Extremist A argued that a gay Jewish woman could not possibly be conservative, while in another he blamed transgender healthcare on "gay Jewish" physicians. He has also used sexually charged references to Jewish men to portray them as submissive

1 "Final form" is a term originating in gaming and popular culture that refers to a character's ultimate or most developed form. Here, the term is used to speculate about the woman's future body size.

or corrupted. Across these posts, antisemitism, misogyny and LGBTQ+ hostility appear to act as mutually reinforcing themes within a broader white supremacist worldview, rather than acting as discrete prejudices.

Extremist A's significance lies in how he incorporates misogyny into a broader violent extremist worldview centered on white supremacy, illustrating how misogyny can become a reinforcing feature of an ideology that may appear only loosely connected to it on the surface. Across posts, misogyny comes through not only in his narratives about women and LGBTQ+ people, but also through direct forms of TFGBV, including gendered slurs, humiliation, paternalism and efforts to inspire followers to target specific individuals. Accordingly, Extremist A's misogyny plays both an ideological and practical role—it provides structure to his worldview while also offering methods for intimidating and attacking his ideological enemies. This illustrates how misogyny can function not simply as a distant prejudice that some violent extremists hold, but as a concrete tool through which they operationalize their beliefs and punish their enemies.

Misogynistic Hate Speech and Key Narratives in Canada

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FIGURE 3

Misogynistic posts over time on X, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and Rumble

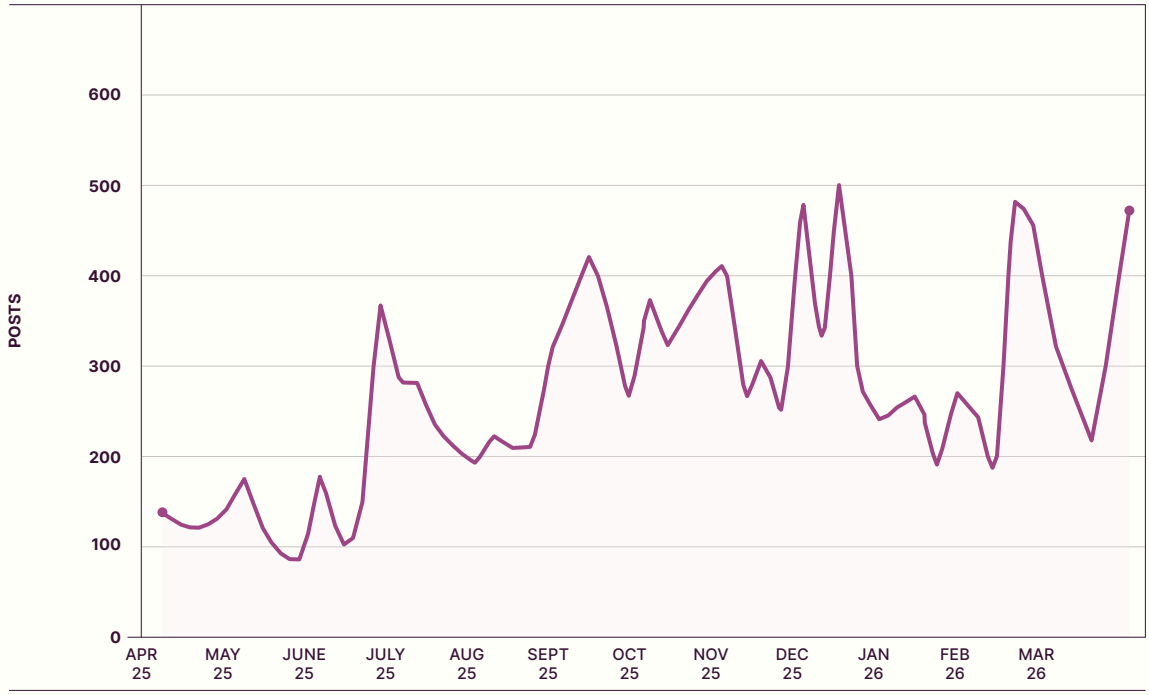


FIGURE 4

Percentage of posts per narrative category

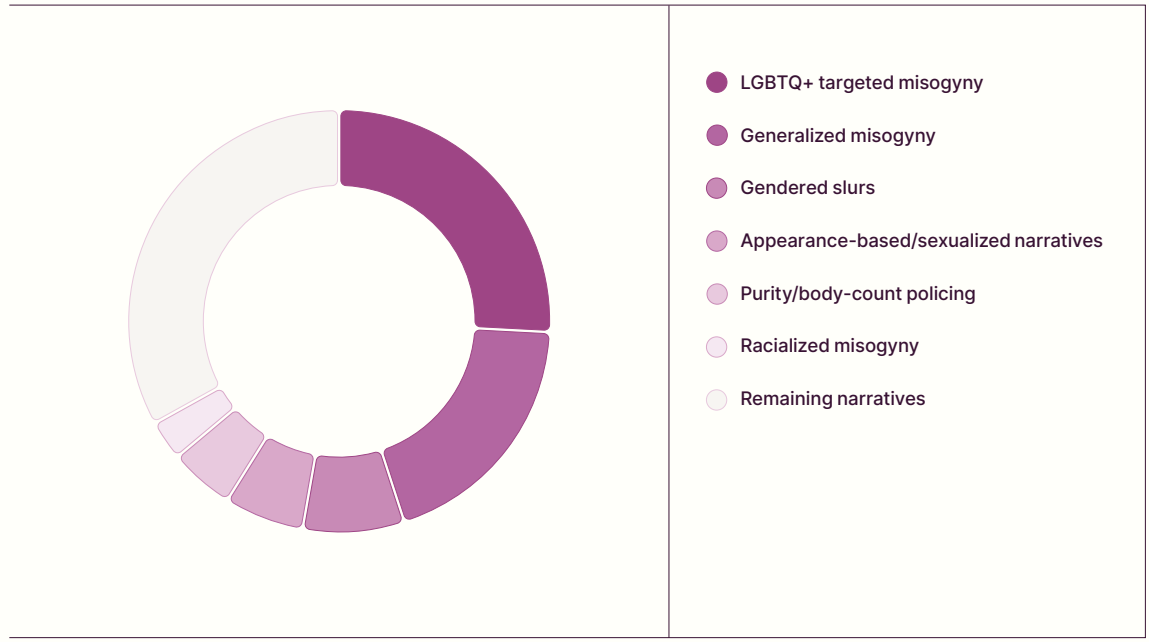
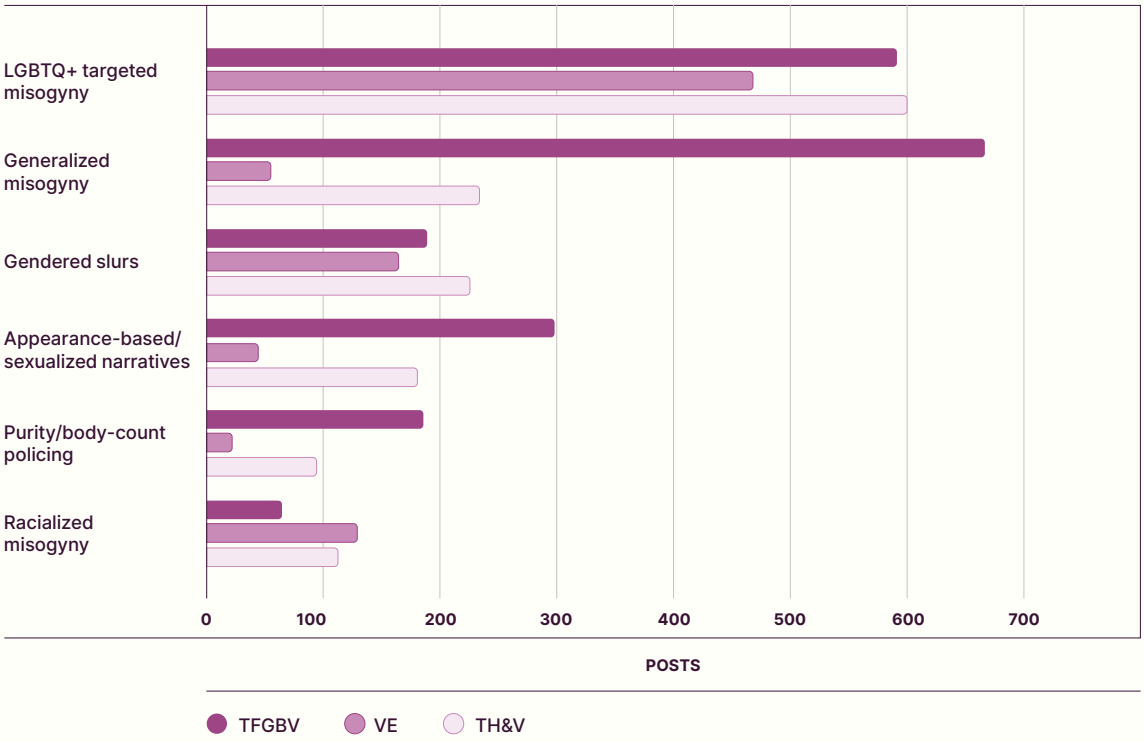


FIGURE 5

Narratives per actor category



To identify the prominent misogynistic narratives across the Canadian dataset, ISD applied a semantic mapping methodology using an AI-assisted approach to assigning narrative categories to all 14,175 posts that were classified as misogynistic. To do this, ISD analysts used a prompt that gave sample narrative categories along with definitions and then asked the tool to use these categories to assign a narrative category to each post, with new narrative categories created if needed. ISD analysts then verified outputs by manually scanning 20 posts in each narrative category to ensure the categories assigned were accurate.

While this methodology led to the discovery of 23 topics that were especially prevalent in the data, this section focuses on the six most prevalent misogynistic narratives, which together accounted for approximately 67 percent of posts classified as misogynistic using our bespoke speech classifier:

Anti-LGBTQ+ hostility	**3,626 posts (26 percent)**
Generalized misogyny	**2,729 posts (19 percent)**
Gendered slurs	-
Appearance-based and sexualized narratives	-
Policing of women's sexual experiences	-
Racialized misogyny	-

Notably, the frequency of these narratives (in terms of the volume of posts they accounted for) did not always directly correlate with the level

of engagement they drove. For example, generalized misogyny received the highest level of reach, with more than 569,000 engagements, while appearance-based and sexualized narratives yielded nearly 382,000 interactions despite accounting for only 6 percent of posts. Racialized misogyny drove similarly disproportionate engagement levels, comprising only 3 percent of posts while generating nearly 187,000 engagements. This implies that the narratives that occurred most frequently across the online ecosystem examined in this study did not necessarily yield the greatest audience response.

The distribution of these narratives across actor categories also varied substantially. Some narratives were more likely to have been driven by TFGBV actors, while others were more frequent among targeted hate actors and violent extremists. At the same time, a considerable amount of misogynistic content was produced by users outside ISD's seed list who were nevertheless captured because they posted in the comment sections of posts made by actors in our seed list on Facebook. This audience activity is noteworthy because, while these users were not at the center of these ecosystems, their activity in the comments section demonstrates how spaces created by prominent actors can enable audiences to interact with and intensify misogynistic themes.

Anti-LGBTQ+ hostility

The most common misogynistic narrative identified by ISD in the Canadian dataset was hostility toward LGBTQ+ people. Anti-trans rhetoric was an especially prominent sub-topic within this broader theme, with transgender people and drag performers often being labeled 'groomers' or accused of threatening children. Discussions of transgender individuals (especially trans women) in sports, prisons and bathrooms were also commonplace, with their presence in these spaces framed as a form of male intrusion. Additionally, trans people were repeatedly portrayed as disproportionately violent compared to other identity groups, with such rhetoric increasing sharply after the February 2026 shooting in Tumbler Ridge (outlined in further detail in the case study below).

While users outside ISD's seed list (who left comments on posts made by seed list actors) produced the largest amount of this content, anti-LGBTQ+ narratives were widespread across all three actor categories. The prevalence of these narratives highlights the ways in which anti-LGBTQ+ narratives and misogynistic themes can overlap across otherwise disparate ideological communities, particularly around opposition to people perceived as challenging traditional gender roles or identities.

Generalized misogyny

The second most prominent theme consisted of generalized misogyny. Such posts used dehumanizing language and tropes to target women in general, rather than necessarily targeting specific individuals. In particular, women were often labeled irrational, illogical, hysterical and emotional, while discussions about dating and relationships framed them as manipulative, ungrateful or motivated by financial gain. Other posts observed within this topic explicitly promoted patriarchal themes, calling for women to be subjugated in the household, or framing them as property of men. TFGBV-related actors produced the largest share of generalized misogynistic content across actor categories, with these narratives often appearing in conversations about relationship advice and other politically neutral content.

Gendered slurs

A total of 1,123 posts in the dataset consisted primarily of misogynistic slurs and insults directed at specific individuals as well as women writ large. In particular, female politicians and journalists were common subjects of

misogynistic vitriol, as showcased in case studies featured later in this report. Sexualized insults pertaining to sex workers were especially frequent, alongside criticisms of women's appearance or age, which were often used to mock them or attack their intelligence. Such posts show how misogynistic content can contribute to the silencing of women and constrain their participation in public life, with gendered slurs frequently observed across all three actor categories.

Appearance-based and sexualized narratives

Appearance-based and sexualized narratives—which largely reduced women's worth to physical attractiveness and perceived sexual worthiness—accounted for 901 posts in the dataset while generating nearly 382,000 engagements, a relatively high level of audience interaction. Such posts often assigned numerical scores to women and described them as losing value as they aged (e.g. in posts indicating that they were "out of eggs"). Additionally, posts often directly ridiculed women's body size and shape, compared women to animals, and portrayed makeup and cosmetic surgery as tools used to deceive men. TFGBV-related actors produced substantially more of this kind of material compared to those associated with targeted hate and violent extremism.

'Purity' and 'body-count' policing

Another prominent narrative revolved around discussions and criticisms of women's past sexual experiences, with those with high 'body counts' being deemed low-value, unsuitable for long-term relationships, or incapable of obtaining a respectable partner. Notably, sexual activity was frequently likened to sex work, with women being told to 'keep their legs closed.' In line with these framings, sex workers and female content producers on OnlyFans—a subscription-based service widely used for adult content—were frequently the subject of direct criticism, a dynamic that will be explored in further detail in the case study below. Again, TFGBV actors were the most active perpetrators of this narrative, producing twice as much of this content as violent extremists. This reveals the tendency among misogynistic communities to police women's bodily autonomy and shows how misogyny is often funneled through pseudoscientific arguments about a woman's supposed value.

Racialized misogyny

Racialized misogyny was another common theme across the data, although such narratives were more concentrated among targeted hate and violent extremist actors, with TFGBV-related accounts producing relatively low volumes of such content. These narratives blended misogyny with ethnonationalist, racist and anti-immigrant framings. For example, white liberal women were frequently deemed 'race traitors' for supporting pro-immigrant causes, promoting diversity or for having non-white partners. Other posts argued that white women needed to be 'forced' to have more children due to the alleged threat to white people posed by immigration, drawing directly from the conspiracy theory known as the 'Great Replacement'.

Several identity groups emerged as a particular focus within this sub-theme. Muslim women were repeatedly framed as being oppressed and 'owned' by Muslim men, while Muslim men were depicted as posing a sexual threat to white women. Meanwhile, black women were often targeted with racialized and gendered slurs and framed as lazy or aggressive. Elsewhere, Jews were framed using antisemitic tropes claiming they promoted promiscuity and LGBTQ+ identities. Such narratives are indicative of the clear intersection that often exists between misogyny and extremist or hateful ideologies.

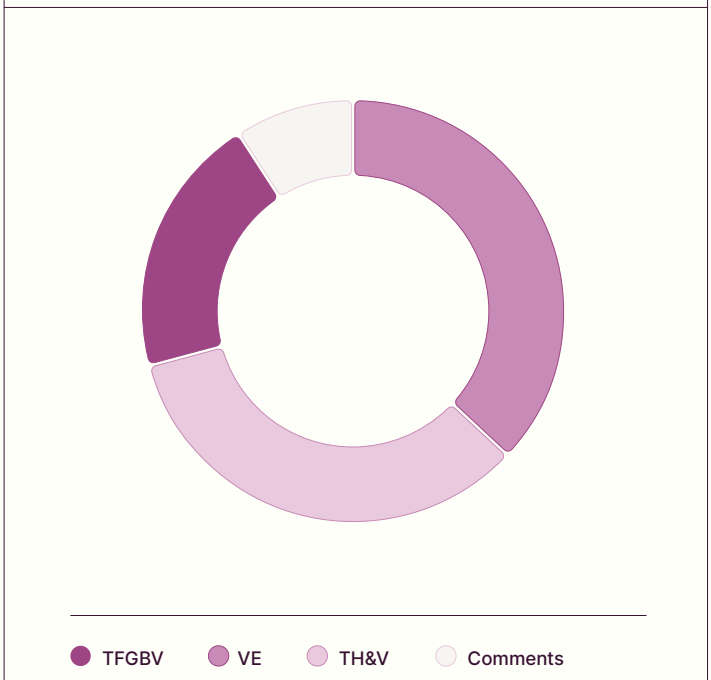
NARRATIVE CASE STUDY: ANTI-TRANS HATE AFTER THE TUMBLER RIDGE SCHOOL SHOOTING

On 10 February 2026, a school shooting in Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia, left 9 people dead and 27 injured. After the perpetrator was identified as a transgender woman, the attack prompted a sharp increase in anti-LGBTQ+ and especially anti-trans rhetoric online, a trend also documented in previous ISD analysis. Within the dataset collected for this project, the days immediately following the shooting produced the fourth-largest spike in misogynistic content during the period analyzed. To understand what was driving the increase, ISD examined misogynistic posts published between 10 and 17 February 2026— covering the day of the shooting and the following week—to assess how different actor groups interpreted and exploited the attack.

Across X, Facebook and Instagram, actors in ISD's seed list published 680 posts classified as misogynistic during this period. Of these, 156 (or 23 percent) directly referenced the Tumbler Ridge shooting. Violent extremist actors comprised 37 percent of these posts, followed by targeted hate and violence actors at 34 percent, and TFGBV actors at 20 percent. The remaining 9 percent consisted of comments from users outside ISD's seed list on Facebook. Notably, the prominence of the attack across all three actor categories shows how quickly a single incident can become a shared focal point for otherwise distinct misogynistic and anti-LGBTQ+ constituencies.

FIGURE 6

Percentage of misogynistic posts referring to Tumbler Ridge per actor category



Although the three actor categories often reached similar discriminatory conclusions about transgender people, the narratives they used differed. Violent extremists primarily connected the shooting to broader political grievances. The most common narrative blamed the Canadian government and Prime Minister Mark Carney for allegedly promoting "trans ideology," presenting the attack as a consequence of progressive policies regarding gender identity. Other posts generalized from the perpetrator to the wider trans population, falsely portraying transgender people as unusually violent or a threat to public safety. This included calls to remove trans rights "for the safety of the general public," alongside slogans such as "ban trans not guns" and the false claim that transgender people had killed more Canadians than AR-15s. In this framing, the actions of one individual became evidence for a much broader argument against transgender rights and inclusion.

Targeted hate actors drew more heavily on narratives about children and gender-affirming care. Posts claimed that the shooting demonstrated the dangers of "trans ideology," including assertions that it resulted from children being "pumped full of drugs." These narratives incorporated the attack into an existing, widespread discourse that portrays gender-affirming care and greater acceptance of transgender identities as threats to children. Targeted hate actors also frequently used slurs, dehumanizing language and statements denying the legitimacy or existence of transgender identities. Accordingly, the shooting was exploited by targeted hate actors to reinforce existing anti-trans narratives, presenting the attacker as representative of the trans population more generally.

TFGBV actors focused more heavily on how the perpetrator was described by the media and law enforcement. Posts repeatedly criticized journalists and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for using the shooter's preferred pronouns, with some presenting this as evidence of an attempt to "cover up trans violence." This shifted attention away from the circumstances of the shooting toward a broader grievance that institutions supposedly protect transgender people from criticism or accountability. Similar narratives appeared in Facebook comments, where users frequently portrayed transgender people as inherently unstable, violent and dangerous. Across these discussions, choices around terminology and pronoun use became evidence of an alleged institutional unwillingness to acknowledge the threat posed by trans people.

Many of these themes were also present on 4chan, although slurs and dehumanizing language were considerably more prominent. The most common narrative portrayed transgender people as a violent or terrorist threat, followed by allegations that the media and police were concealing the perpetrator's gender. 4chan also featured conspiracy theories that were largely absent elsewhere, including claims that the shooting was a 'false flag' or psychological operation orchestrated by Mossad, the CIA or the Illuminati. Such posts illustrate how the event was absorbed into broader conspiratorial worldviews, with the attack being interpreted to align with beliefs about supposed elite manipulation.

The response to Tumbler Ridge illustrates how a high-profile act of violence can become a flashpoint through which existing anti-trans narratives are intensified. Importantly, different actor groups used the attack in different ways: violent extremists tied it to progressive politics and public safety; targeted hate actors focused on children, gender-affirming care, and dehumanization; and TFGBV actors emphasized alleged media and institutional protection of transgender people. Despite these differences, the narratives shared a common feature—the actions of one perpetrator were generalized to transgender people as a whole. The case therefore illustrates how different ideological communities can use distinct grievances to arrive at a shared portrayal of transgender people as dangerous or undeserving of equal rights.



NARRATIVE CASE STUDY: MISOGYNISTIC FRAMINGS OF SEX WORK

Narratives about sex work and pornography revealed a recurring contradiction in misogynistic online communities—within such discussions, women were often sexually objectified while simultaneously being ridiculed for exercising sexual autonomy. Across the dataset, ISD identified 359 misogynistic posts discussing pornography, OnlyFans or sex work more broadly, representing 2.6 percent of all misogynistic posts. Of these, 29 were produced by TFGBV actors, 25 by violent extremist actors and 3 by targeted hate and violence actors. The remaining 302 were comments made by users on Facebook videos published by actors in the seed list.

Taken together, these posts provide a useful lens for examining how different parts of the ecosystem police women's sexuality, and how rigidly enforced gender expectations can be expressed through both mainstream misogyny and broader ideological narratives.

Of note, more than half of the posts identified in this case study were concentrated around a Facebook video posted by a Canadian-American media group classified in our dataset as a TFGBV actor. The group initially gained prominence through prank videos before expanding into male lifestyle and right-wing political content. The video in question—titled 'Can an OF [OnlyFans] girl be a wifey?'—depicts a young woman who is referred to as 'Panties' and who is told to have some 'standards' after revealing that she has an OnlyFans account. She then leaves the interaction, stating that she no longer wants to participate.

Comments on the video overwhelmingly framed the woman's involvement with OnlyFans as disqualifying her from being considered a legitimate romantic partner. Users also repeatedly described OnlyFans creators in general using sexualized slurs like 'whore,' 'slut,' and 'hoe,' portraying them as being disreputable. Others called for the woman to be publicly shamed, while some continued to sexualize the woman in the clip, including by suggesting that she was inappropriate for marriage but suitable 'for recreational use.' Such posts illustrate how women are simultaneously viewed within misogynistic spaces as commodities for men and objects for ridicule.

This combination of sexual objectification and moral condemnation was pervasive in posts about sex workers across the wider dataset. The distinction between a woman who is 'wife material' and one who exists for 'recreational use' divides women according to whether they are considered worthy of respect, while continuing to reduce both groups to their sexual relationship with men. This example also shows how relatively mainstream online content can galvanize audiences to produce derogatory content at scale, even when the original post does not explicitly call for harassment.

Violent extremist actors more often used pornography and sex work to suggest that society writ large was in a state of decline, presenting sexual liberation as evidence of broader moral corruption. Notably, some posts used antisemitic rhetoric to allege that Jewish people controlled pornography websites, while a prominent Canadian white supremacist argued that pornography was becoming increasingly 'degenerate' before asking whether it was time to "put an end to internet harlotry and fix society." Here, hostility toward women's sexuality blended together with antisemitism and was incorporated into a broader argument about moral collapse and the restoration of a supposedly better social order.

The significance of these discussions lies in the assumptions shared across otherwise distinct communities. TFGBV actors often used sex workers to reinforce ideas about women's character and sexual value, while violent extremist actors folded many of the same judgments into narratives about societal decay. While this does not establish that sexual shaming itself steers individuals toward violent extremism, it shows that similar ideas regarding women's sexuality can appear across both TFGBV and extremist spaces alike, where they are used for different purposes. Across the ecosystem, women's exercise of sexual autonomy became a basis for enforcing strict gender norms, with deviations from those expectations being portrayed as evidence of individual moral failure or wider social decline.

Key TFGBV Harms and Tactics in Canada

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Using a mixture of automated approaches and ethnographic research, ISD identified numerous examples of TFGBV across the Canadian dataset. However, while the examples surfaced through this analysis provide insight into how TFGBV presents itself across online ecosystems, they should not be understood as a comprehensive measure of how prevalent TFGBV is across the data as a whole. This is because research methods and data availability differed depending on the platform examined, and because the analysis focused primarily on content produced by specific accounts rather than systematically scraping and coding platform-wide data.

Within the data, online harassment was the most consistently visible form of TFGBV, often manifesting in body- and slut-shaming, including attacks on women's physical appearance and weight, as well as sexualized insults portraying certain targets as overly promiscuous and thus undeserving of respect. Gendered and sexist hate speech was also prominent across the dataset, ranging from conventional misogynistic slurs to terminology associated with niche online subcultures, including the word 'foid,' a dehumanizing slang term used to describe women that has been adopted from incel spaces.

Such attacks are significant not only because of their abusive nature, but because of the rigid gender expectations that they implicitly—if not explicitly—enforce. Across the data, women were often judged according to whether they were considered physically attractive, whether their sexual behavior was deemed appropriate, and whether they adhered to traditional notions of femininity. Sexualized abuse therefore appeared to operate as a form of discipline, treating specific women as contemptible and laying the groundwork for further humiliation. Notably—and as the case studies below will illustrate—these tactics were frequently directed toward women who play a prominent role in public life, allowing political and ideological hostility to be expressed through gendered attacks rather than through substantive engagement with their work.

Similar forms of gender policing were also apparent in cases where harassment was directed toward LGBTQ+ people. In one case, images of the actor Elliot Page taken before and after his gender transition provoked widespread derisive reactions which accused him of suffering from mental illness. Elsewhere, photographs of the queer actress Kristen Stewart were used to question whether she could be considered a 'real woman,' while the Canadian powerlifter Audrey Yun was deliberately misgendered. While such examples involved different targets, they were rooted in a common assumption that people who deviate from rigid gender expectations are valid subjects of ridicule and harassment, and demonstrate how misogyny reinforces broader gender hierarchies rather than operating through hostility against cisgender women alone.

Importantly, TFGBV was not limited to actors whose primary ideological focus was misogyny, but was also widespread across targeted hate and violent extremist actors. However, the context and purpose of the abuse across these categories often varied. For TFGBV-related actors and violent extremists, more personally degrading forms of harm, such as body- and slut-shaming, were more prominent, and were often used to target specific women. By contrast, targeted hate actors more frequently used hate speech to dehumanize women in general.

This dynamic points to an important finding of the analysis, which is that misogynistic harassment often serves as a shared tactic across otherwise distinct online ecosystems. Gendered ridicule, attacks on one's physical appearance and sexual humiliation are frequently adapted to serve different

grievances or ideological narratives. Accordingly, misogyny should not be understood as being confined to 'manosphere' ecosystems, but can also provide actors focused on other concerns with a means of attacking and punishing their enemies. The case studies below illustrate this dynamic, with the targeting of a Canadian journalist concentrated largely within violent extremist networks, while attacks against a former Canadian politician were observed across a broader range of ideological communities.

Notably, platform functionalities played a crucial role in shaping how TFGBV harms were conducted. On X, numerous examples of TFGBV were observed in replies or comments sections, such as in cases where gendered harassment was incorporated into direct responses to a target's own original content, or in posts discussing those targets. In several instances, the original posts did not necessarily meet ISD's threshold for TFGBV[2], but nevertheless created opportunities for audiences to direct misogynistic abuse against the person being discussed. This is a critical distinction, because participatory harassment does not necessarily require explicit coordination. Instead, a prominent actor can highlight an identifiable target to a large audience, after which followers can engage in dogpiling through replies, comments or reposts.

2 ISD defines TFGBV as any "act that is committed, assisted, aggravated, or amplified by the use of information communication technologies or other digital tools, that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological, social, political, or economic harm, or other infringements of rights and freedoms."

ISD's analysis also identified numerous examples where different forms of TFGBV harm were directed toward the same target. In particular, ISD found four examples of intimate image abuse that were assessed to have been AI-generated, three of which involved the spread of the same synthetic image of a Canadian journalist in replies on X (the fourth example targeted a former Canadian politician). Notably, the journalist was also the target of extensive cross-platform harassment as well as an apparent attempt to publicize her personal information. These examples, which are discussed in further detail below, show how TFGBV often operates as a networked process whereby AI-generated material, repeated targeting, and audience participation intensify each other rather than manifesting as isolated incidents.

The scale of harassment recorded in this research should be treated with some caution, as public insults, abusive replies and visible pile-ons in comments sections are more readily captured through the actor-based analysis of publicly accessible online spaces that was the focus of this study. Other forms of TFGBV, including sexual extortion, impersonation and account access abuse are significantly more difficult to observe using this methodology. Their relatively limited prominence across this data should therefore not be taken as evidence that these forms of TFGBV are uncommon in Canada. Instead, the findings illustrate how TFGBV functions as a cross-cutting tool across explicitly misogynistic ecosystems as well as targeted hate and violent extremist environments, with platform features and audience participation enabling isolated acts of gendered abuse to progress into broader patterns of networked harassment.



TFGBV HARM CASE STUDY: ONLINE HARASSMENT OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC LIFE

The targeting of two highly visible Canadian women—a prominent journalist hereafter referred to as 'Journalist A,' and a well-known former public official, hereafter referred to as 'Public Official A'—shows how TFGBV can manifest as a networked form of harassment against women in public life. While the ideological circumstances surrounding these cases differed, both involved gendered and sexualized attacks that went beyond criticism of their professional activities and instead sought to undermine their credibility and authority, with the potential to deter their participation in public life.

The cases also illustrate how misogynistic harassment can materialize across different segments of the online environment. In Journalist A's case, 95

percent of the posts collected in this study that included TFGBV harms were produced by violent extremists. This concentration is especially important given that the journalist's work often focuses on enhancing the Canadian public's understanding of extremist movements. On the other hand, the TFGBV harms directed against Public Official A were more equally distributed across TFGBV actors, targeted hate actors and violent extremists. The latter case shows how misogynistic harassment directed toward politicians often act as a cross-cutting tactic across ideologically diverse constituencies.

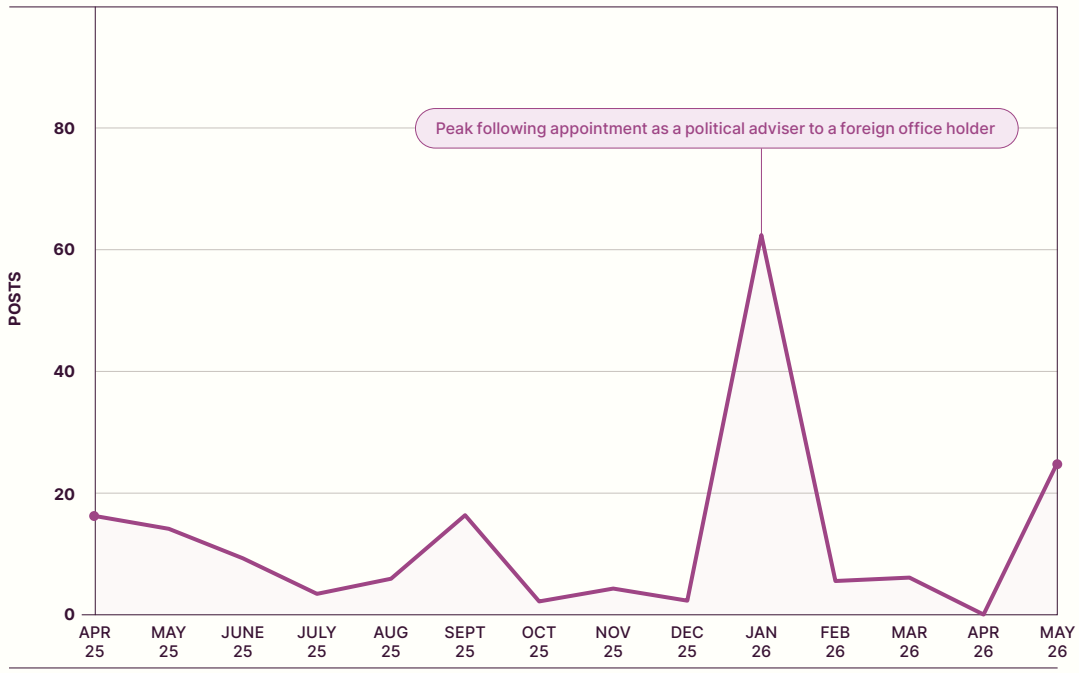
FIGURE 7

Volume of posts over time mentioning Journalist A



FIGURE 8

Volume of posts over time mentioning Public Official A



In each case, online harassment was the most prominent form of TFGBV across ISD's data. Attacks against these individuals frequently focused on their bodies, physical appearance and perceived sexual histories, and often included body- and slut-shaming as well as sexualized insults. Importantly, the impact of this kind of abuse transcends simple hostility—by shifting the focus away from women's professional work and toward their bodies, sexuality, or compliance with traditional gender expectations, misogynistic harassment can serve to delegitimize women who hold important roles in public life. In the case of Public Official A, such harassment often included political and conspiratorial narratives undermining her trustworthiness, showing how gendered forms of abuse can blur together with political hostility.

The cases also illustrate how harassment can be shaped by platform design and audience participation. ISD repeatedly observed gendered abusive replies and comments beneath posts that did not themselves contain TFGBV. Instead, content about identifiable women could act as a focal point around which other individuals engaged in body-shaming and sexual humiliation, even when the original posts did not explicitly call for coordinated harassment and abuse. Cross-platform sharing often further extended this process, creating opportunities for audiences to harass the same individual in different online spaces.

In Journalist A's case, the harassment was especially pervasive and sometimes extended beyond mere verbal abuse. For example, ISD identified several instances of manipulated and AI-generated imagery used to demean her appearance. There were also several attempts to intimidate her by exposing sensitive information and details about her personal life. In January 2026, alongside the period in which ISD observed some of this online activity, the journalist experienced an offline confrontation with individuals involved in the same extremist milieu she had reported on. While the available information does not definitively establish a direct relationship between this online exposure of her personal information and the offline intimidation, the case suggests a significantly elevated risk when online abuse incorporates references to a target's personal information.

Public Official A was likewise subjected to manipulated and threatening imagery, particularly in audience responses to posts made by actors examined in this study. Harassment targeting her was observed across multiple ideological communities and actor categories, with different groups drawing on similar gendered forms of abuse despite their differing ideological motivations. This illustrates how misogynistic attacks can cut across ideological boundaries, providing a common means of attacking women who are perceived as political opponents.

Collectively, these two cases show that TFGBV against women in public life often functions as a networked process rather than as an assortment of isolated abusive posts. Actors often placed identifiable women before potentially hostile audiences, which then spurred harassment through replies, comments and reposting. Such targeting often consisted of gendered insults, reputational attacks and intimidation, with the most extreme cases including manipulated imagery and doxxing. The clearest takeaway from this is the potential chilling effect of the abuse—consistent harassment raises the 'cost' of participating in public life, particularly for women who work in highly visible or sensitive spaces. Even beyond the immediate targets themselves, this can discourage journalists, public officials and other publicly visible women from speaking openly, engaging in civic discourse or taking on roles that could expose them to gendered abuse.

Conclusion

The Canadian data shows that online misogyny operates across a broad ecosystem encompassing TFGBV-related actors, proponents of targeted hate and violence, and violent extremists. However, misogyny manifests in different ways across these categories. For example, TFGBV actors tended to embed misogynistic narratives across a wide range of non-ideological content, including gaming, politics, culture and media. This may help explain their substantially higher levels of engagement and means that misogynistic content can reach audiences who would not otherwise actively seek out, contributing to its broader normalization. By contrast, targeted hate actors and violent extremists had comparatively less reach but more often integrated misogyny into ideological discussions or worldviews pertaining to race, immigration or nationalism. The distinction is therefore not simply one of reach, but also of how audiences encounter misogynistic narratives: higher-reach actors may expose broader audiences to misogyny through otherwise non-ideological content, while more overtly ideological actors tend to embed it within established extremist or hateful worldviews, with potential implications for social cohesion and violence.

Across actor categories, misogyny provides a shared basis for enforcing rigid gender hierarchies. In particular, anti-LGBTQ+ hate was an especially prevalent narrative that reflected this dynamic, showing how misogyny can extend beyond animosity toward cisgender women and include punishing those perceived as transgressing traditional gender expectations. Other common narratives also sought to police women's behavior or demonize them—generalized misogyny portrayed women as illogical or manipulative, appearance-based narratives reduced their worth to physical and sexual characteristics, and women's sexual histories were used as a measure of their perceived value. Racialized misogyny illustrated a different dynamic in which women's value is tied to their ability to procreate and thus 'protect' the white race from a perceived existential threat.

The analysis also suggests that otherwise distinct communities can arrive at similar misogynistic conclusions while drawing on different grievances and ideologies. The reaction to the Tumbler Ridge school shooting highlights this clearly—in this case, TFGBV actors and those associated with targeted hate and violent extremism understood the case through different lenses, while each exploited it to portray transgender people as threatening or worthy of societal exclusion. This shows how misogynistic ideas can transfer across ideologies and be adapted to a wide range of social and political grievances.

Critically, misogyny also offered a practical means of attacking individual women. Across the data, gendered slurs, body- and slut-shaming, humiliation, and attacks on one's physical appearance were repeatedly aimed at identifiable women, with Canadian journalists and politicians serving as outsized targets for sexualized harassment used to silence and intimidate. Prominent actors were often observed placing identifiable women in front of a hostile audience, fueling a cycle of abuse that would occur through replies and comments sections. In severe cases, this harassment gave rise to intimate image abuse or doxxing attempts.

Collectively, the findings show that misogyny within the Canadian online ecosystem functions as an extremist worldview in itself, a means of enforcing gender conformity and a tactic for punishing ideological foes. Its influence cannot be addressed by targeting only so-called 'manosphere' communities or extremist ideologies principally concerned with misogyny. Prevention efforts must also recognize the role of mainstream influencers in normalizing misogyny, as well as the ways in which it underpins hateful or extremist worldviews that can contribute to violence. Across these ecosystems, misogyny is not merely peripheral but acts as a cross-cutting theme that shapes broader grievances or provides a gendered framework through which exclusionary ideas are justified.

These findings point to the need for a multilayered analytical and prevention approach that encompasses a broad spectrum of actors, from mainstream influencers to violent extremists and those who occupy a middle ground between these spaces. Interventions should span efforts to identify and address the risk of imminent online harm as well as the more pervasive spread of misogyny by high-profile actors who may not rise to the level of targeted hate or violent extremism but nevertheless generate substantial online engagement and contribute to its normalization. Prevention approaches also need to be informed by local contexts. In Canada, misogyny often manifests as anti-LGBTQ+ hatred or intersects with white supremacy. Finally, policymakers and practitioners should consider how major events may create opportunities to spread misogynistic narratives and engage in TFGBV, while recognizing that high-profile women experience heightened levels of misogynistic hate, often in the form of networked harassment.



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