



**TURUN  
YLIOPISTO**  
UNIVERSITY  
OF TURKU

# FRAMING TRANS

Affective Articulations of Trans Bodies and Violence

---

Valo Vähäpassi





**TURUN  
YLIOPISTO**  
UNIVERSITY  
OF TURKU

# **FRAMING TRANS**

Affective Articulations of Trans Bodies and Violence

---

Valo Vähäpassi

## **University of Turku**

---

Faculty of Humanities  
School of History, Culture and Arts Studies  
Media Studies  
Doctoral Programme in History, Culture and Arts Studies (Juno)

## **Supervised by**

---

Professor, Susanna Paasonen  
University of Turku

Professor, Leena-Maija Rossi  
University of Lapland

Associate Professor, Jin Haritaworn  
York University

## **Reviewed by**

---

Senior Lecturer, Signe Bremer  
Mid Sweden University

Professor, Eliza Steinbock  
Maastricht University

## **Opponent**

---

Professor, Eliza Steinbock  
Maastricht University

The originality of this publication has been checked in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

ISBN 978-952-02-0142-5 (PRINT)  
ISBN 978-952-02-0143-2 (PDF)  
ISSN 0082-6987 (Print)  
ISSN 2343-3191 (Online)  
Painosalama, Turku, Finland 2025



UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

Faculty of Humanities

School of History, Culture and Arts Studies

Media Studies

VALO VÄHÄPASSI: Framing Trans: Affective Articulations of Trans Bodies and Violence

Doctoral Dissertation, 163 pp.

Doctoral Programme in History, Culture and Arts Studies (Juno)

May 2025

## ABSTRACT

Within the past 15 years, the cultural and political visibility of trans people has grown at an unprecedented rate; at the same time, social media increasingly mediates and shapes people's coming together, activism, politics, and public expression. Social media provides the infrastructure for the counterpublics of trans people and their allies, and even enabled them to disseminate counterpublic discourses to a wider audience. Mainstream media and political visibility for the existence of trans people and trans movements has likewise increased.

However, rather than eliminating violence or oppression faced by trans people, increased visibility might at times exacerbate violence against trans people—a phenomenon trans studies scholars call the paradox of trans visibility. In the United States and internationally, the existence of trans people and their access to various spaces currently faces heightened opposition, as gender populist political discourses frame trans people as potentially threatening or even violent.

In this thesis, I ask how trans bodies, identities, and violence are articulated in affective publics? What implications does this have for trans and other bodies in society? The dissertation addresses the politicized co-articulations of violence and trans bodies and the trans paradox of visibility through four sub-studies. The sub-studies examine the affective articulations of trans bodies and identities in a trans counterpublic, in videos of real violence shared on a user-generated entertainment platform, in the rhetoric and campaigning of the Christian right, in the frames of the International Trans Day of Remembrance, and in intersectional activist rhetoric that politicizes and reframes other frames of violence.

Methodologically, the research combines the idea of following affect with the cultural studies idea of doing research as studying contexts and articulations. The research implements a critical-reparative approach that is open to surprises but interested in intersecting power relations. The dissertation combines internet research with feminist theorizing on the relationships between rhetoric, affects, and bodies.

The case studies of the dissertation show that affective-discursive media practices bring people together into affective publics around trans bodies, trans identities and violence. Frames, figures, and stories of (un)belonging bring people together into different affective publics, where emotions are attached to trans bodies and identities in ways that can impact the lives of trans and other people. The

affordances of online platforms can further amplify affective responses and accelerate the attachment of affects to trans bodies and the coming together of people around these affective practices. Simultaneously, the intensive dissemination of affective frames via the internet offers activists the opportunity to seize and destabilize such frames.

The relationship of the trans publics to society and its prevailing discourses turns out to be ambivalent. I show how the transmasculine counterpublic I studied participates in trans world-making by circulating complex stories of trans bodies and identities. My analysis reveals how TDoR's framings of violence that focus on a singular trans identity produce powerful affects that are then channeled into Finnish trans activism. I critically examine how such affective framings obscure intersectional causes of violence. In one case study, the entertainment-based sharing of violence against trans people on a video-sharing service further continued the symbolic violence against the trans women already present in the violent situation, even as this video offered intersectional activists the opportunity to grab and reframe both the video and the violence faced by the trans women.

This dissertation extends the US-centric research debate on the articulations of violence and transness in trans activism to the European and Finnish context. Instead of discussing trans visibility in a unitary manner, I propose that researchers should consider trans visibility through a layered conceptualization of multiple publics that seek to disseminate their own framings and, at least occasionally, gain broader visibility.

Media brings people together in ways that evoke emotions and affect, with social media being particularly affective. I argue that the expansion of trans visibility enabled by the internet and social media is a pharmakon, that is, both medicine and poison. Rather than presenting a solution to the affective politicization of transness through mere rational argumentation, I emphasize the possibility of affective-reflective solidarity and a tactical relationship to trans visibilities.

**KEYWORDS:** trans visibility, affective practices, trans studies, social media, affective publics, figure, frame, violence

TURUN YLIOPISTO

Humanistinen tiedekunta

Historian, kulttuurin ja taiteiden tutkimuksen laitos

Mediatutkimus

VALO VÄHÄPASSI: Framing Trans: Affective Articulations of Trans Bodies and Violence

Väitöskirja, 163 s.

Historian, kulttuurin ja taiteiden tutkimuksen tohtoriohjelma (Juno)

Toukokuu 2025

## TIIVISTELMÄ

Transihmisten kulttuurinen ja poliittinen näkyvyys on kasvanut viimeisten 15 vuoden aikana ennennäkemättömästi. Samaan aikaan sosiaalinen media on alkanut välittää ja muovata ihmisten tulemistä yhteen, aktivismia, politiikkaa ja julkista ilmaisua. Sosiaalisen median alustat ovat tarjonneet infrastruktuurin transihmisten ja näiden liittolaisten vastajulkisoille että vastajulkisoissa kehitettyjen puhetapojen levittämiseksi laajemmalle. Myös valtavirran media ja politiikka ovat tarjonneet transihmisten olemassaololle ja transliikkeille näkyvyyttä.

Näkyvyyden kasvu ei ole kuitenkaan poistanut transihmisiin kohdistuvaa väkivaltaa, ja Yhdysvalloissa ja kansainvälisesti transihmisten olemassaoloa ja pääsyä erilaisiin tiloihin vastustetaan nyt ennennäkemättömällä voimalla, liittäen transihmiset väkivallan uhkaan. Transitutkimuksen piirissä onkin puhuttu transnäkyvyyden paradoksista.

Miten transruumiita, -identiteettejä, ja väkivaltaa artikuloidaan affektiivissa julkisoissa? Mitä implikaatioita tällä on trans- ja muille ruumiille yhteiskunnassa? Väitöskirja tarttuu väkivallan ja transruumiiden politisoituihin yhteisartikulaatioihin ja näkyvyyden paradoksiin neljän osatutkimuksen avulla. Osatutkimukset tarkastelevat transruumiiden ja identiteettien affektiivisia artikulaatioita sekä transihmisten vastajulkisuudessa, käyttäjien tuottaman viihteen alustalle jaetussa oikeaa väkivaltaa kuvaavassa videossa, kristillisen oikeiston retoriikassa ja kampanjoinnissa, kansainvälisen transmuistopäivän kehyksissä, ja intersektionaalisessa aktivistiretoriikassa, joka politisoi ja uudelleenkehystää toisia väkivallan kehystyksiä.

Menetelmällisesti tutkimus yhdistää affektin seuraamisen ja kulttuurintutkimuksellisen kontekstin ja artikulaatioiden tutkimisen ideaan. Tutkimus toteuttaa kriittis-reparatiivista lähestymistapaa, joka on avoin yllätyksille mutta kiinnostunut risteävistä valtasuhteista. Väitöskirja yhdistää feministisiä teoretisointeja retoriikan, affektien ja ruumiiden suhteista internet-tutkimukseen.

Väitöskirjan osatutkimukset osoittavat, että affektiivis-diskursiiviset mediakäytännöt tuovat ihmisiä yhteen affektiivisiksi julkisoiksi transruumiiden, transidentiteettien ja väkivallan ympärille. Kehykset, figuurit ja (ei)kuulumisen tarinat tuovat ihmisiä yhteen erilaisiksi affektiivisiksi julkisoiksi, joissa transruumiisiin ja -identiteetteihin liitetään tunteita tavoilla, jotka voivat vaikuttaa trans- ja muiden ihmisten elämään. Verkkoalustojen ominaisuudet puolestaan voivat voimistaa affektiivisia reaktioita ja nopeuttaa affektien kiinnittämistä transruumiisiin ja

ihmisten tulemista yhteen näiden affektiivisten käytäntöjen äärelle. Samalla affektiivisten kehystysten intensiivinen levittäminen internetissä tarjoaa aktivisteille mahdollisuuden tarttua näihin kehystyksiin ja horjuttaa niitä.

Myös tutkimieni transjulkisoiden suhde vallitseviin diskursseihin ja ympäröivään yhteiskuntaan osoittautuu ambivalentiksi. Tutkimani transmaskuliininen vastajulkiso osallistui trans-maailmantekemiseen kierrättämällä tarinoita cisnormatiivisia käsityksiä laajemmista trans- ruumiiden ja -identiteettien yhdistelmästä. Transmuistopäivän yhteen identiteettiin keskittyvät väkivallan kehystykset tuottavat voimakkaita affekteja, joita kanavoitiin suomalaisessa transaktivismissä. Samalla nämä affektiiviset kehystykset peittivät näkyvistä väkivallan intersektionaalisia syitä.

Transihmisiin kohdistuvan väkivallan vihteellinen jakaminen videonjakopalvelussa puolestaan jatkoi transnaisiin jo väkivaltatilanteessa kohdistunutta symbolista väkivaltaa, mutta tarjosi samalla aktivisteille mahdollisuuden kaapata väkivallan kehystys ja kehystää väkivalta uudelleen intersektionaalisesta näkökulmasta.

Väitöskirja laajentaa Yhdysvalta-keskeistä tutkimuskeskustelua väkivallan ja transihmisyyden artikulaatioista transaktivismissä eurooppalaiseen ja suomalaiseen kontekstiin. Esitän, että sen sijaan, että transihmisten näkyvyydestä puhuttaisiin yksikössä, tutkijoiden kannattaisi tarkastella transnäkyvyyttä kerroksellisena ja useiden julkisoiden pyrkimyksinä levittää omia kehystyksiään ja ainakin ajoittain saada laajempaa näkyvyyttä.

Media tuo ihmisiä yhteen tunteita ja affekteja nostattavilla tavoilla, ja sosiaalista mediaa pidetään erityisen affektiivisena. Väitöskirja esittää, että internetin ja sosiaalisen median mahdollistama laajeneva näkyvyys on farmakon, eli sekä lääke että myrky. Sen sijaan, että esittäisin ratkaisuksi transihmisyyden affektiiviseen politisointiin pelkkää rationaalista argumentaatiota, painotan affektiivis-reflektiivisen solidaarisuuden mahdollisuutta ja ehdotan taktista suhdetta näkyvyyksiin.

ASIASANAT: transnäkyvyys, affektiiviset käytännöt, transtutkimus, sosiaalinen media, affektiiviset julkisot, figuuri, kehys, väkivalta

# Acknowledgements

Scholarly thinking does not happen in isolation. Our thinking is shaped and enriched by all the encounters and impulses we get from our environment. I'm deeply indebted to the "human infrastructure" which has made my work possible and enabled me to develop my craft; friends, teachers and networks of people. Life and activism outside of university also shapes our thought, and gives our scholarly work meaning. To that note, I have been especially grateful to everyone who has told me they read my work and found it inspiring or relevant to their activism.

I went to university to better understand power relations; It's no surprise therefore, that I turned to Gender Studies. At Christina Institute at the University of Helsinki, I met Leena-Maija Rossi, who introduced me to both cultural studies, queer studies and intersectional methodology – great gifts for a budding young researcher. As my supervisor, Leena-Maija has always pointed out the strengths as well as weaknesses of my texts. In the last stages of the thesis work, Leena-Maija provided important help in streamlining the thesis. Thank you, Leena-Maija!

At Helsinki Gender Studies, I had the great fortune to be supervised by Susanna Paasonen, first on my Masters. Susanna talked with me about my ideas, introduced me to affect theory, and generously gave her comments, time, and encouragement. After first starting my PhD at University of Helsinki, I decided to follow Susanna to University of Turku, Media Studies. Susanna's quick mind, intellectual curiosity and rigor have inspired me more than I can tell. Thank you so much, Susanna!

Tuija Pulkkinen introduced me to Jin Haritaworn, who was a visiting scholar at Helsinki Collegium, and I was lucky to get them as my third supervisor. Jin's intersectional work on affective articulations of transness and violence was a key inspiration for me to shift my focus and continue that line of work in this thesis. Even as we have been in different countries most of the time of this work, when we were in contact, they have been encouraging and made me feel that there is potential in this work. Thank you, Jin!

At Turku University, Media Studies seminar, I was happily surprised by the non-hierarchical environment in which experienced scholars like Kata Kyrölä and Mari Pajala seemed to treat us beginners as if we were their equals. I want to thank the Media Studies people who have taken part in creating this supportive atmosphere,

commented on my papers and given words of encouragement in big and small matters: Susanna Paasonen, Veli-Matti Karhulahti, Heidi Keinonen, Kata Kyrölä, Mari Pajala, Jukka-Pekka Puro, Laura Saarenmaa, Jaana Teinilä.

For sharing this PhD journey with me at Media Studies at different times, I want to thank Hanna Varjakoski, Niina Oisalo, Heidi Mikkola, Alekski Rennes, Miia Siutila, Mayara Araujo Caetano, Golnar Gishnizjani, and Ihsan Can Asman. With some of you, we have started to know each other a bit better in this last stretch of my PhD, and I look forward to continuing our solidarity and friendship.

With some of the media studies PhD students, we have formed bonds that feel deep. For being there in mutual support, I want to thank Sanna Spisak, Kaisu Hynnä-Granberg, Laura Antola and Mari Lehto. Sanna, we really got to know each other at a conference trip in London, and how happy I am that we did. You have been an unwavering support to me. Kaisu, I enjoy reading your theoretical and methodological thoughts and value your solidarity. Laura, I revel in learning about popular culture from you and it's a delight to dive into popular cultural treasures such as Christmas movies with you. When I needed someone to rant with, you were there to have a beer with me. Mari, you are the strong media studies person. Your down-to-earth attitude, directness and humor make you a joy to be with.

At an early point of this work, I had the chance to attend the seminar of the National Gender Studies Doctoral School, and get feedback from both gender studies professors and PhD students, as well as receiving money for conference travelling, for which thanks are due. I am especially happy to have shared this experience with Niina Vuolajärvi and Aino-Kaisa Koistinen. I value the methodological and life discussions with Aino-Kaisa. Niina, I treasure the way you are always excited for me when something good happens, the way you used to send me job announcements and now send me flames and hearts on Instagram. I can't wait to travel to meet you.

University of Turku residence in Tartu, Villa Tammekan, has enabled me focused writing periods. It was also at Tammekan, where I encountered the partners of soon-to-be-established Leivät (The Breads)-collective, Lotta Aarikka and Elli Lehikoinen. It has been truly invigorating to go to sauna or drinks with you two and savor the wisdom and sustenance that is Leivät.

I have had the opportunity to join various trans studies and queer studies networks and groups and to co-operate with trans and gender studies scholars. As a side project, I co-authored a book chapter in the book *Muokattu elämä* together with my fellow thinker Touko Vaahtera. The book editors Mianna Meskus, Venla Oikkonen and Kuura Irni helped us become better writers. Likewise, writing my first article for *SQS*, was a chance to learn from the editors, trans studies scholars Jan Wickman and Lotta Kähkönen. Warm thanks to people who have commented my work at Gender Studies seminar at University of Turku, including Vilja Jaaksi, Anu Koivunen, Taru Leppänen, Riikka Taavetti, Anastasia (A) Khodyreva, and others.

At University of Turku, Kuura Irni and Lotta Kähkönen led the research group *Science, Embodiment and Transformation*, which gathered trans and intersex studies scholars and led to editing a *Sukupuolentutkimus* journal issue on trans and intersex studies together with Varpu Alasuutari, Sade Kondelin, Luca Tainio, and Roosa Toriseva, guided by Kuura Irni. Thank you, Lotta and Kuura, for building structures which enable joint work. I am grateful for Kuura for providing a model of a theoretically inspiring trans/feminist studies scholar, and happy to call them a friend. Varpu has become a great friend whose ability to get things done I admire. Thank you to the *Slow Academy* group and *Finnish Trans Studies Network*.

Through another side project, I was able to co-operate with the *Affective Activism* research project, led by Tuula Juvonen. I am grateful for the inspiring networks fostered by Tuula! Thank you to Anu Koivunen for believing in me enough to give me the opportunity to work at *Intimacy in Data-Driven Culture (IDA)* project, and as university teacher at Gender Studies. Anu also introduced me to Vilja Jaaksi, who I co-wrote a book chapter with. Vilja, it has been a joy to work together. Thank you to Anna Vuorinne for inspiring discussions at Arcanum and your inspiring work.

Trans and queer (studies) networks give me inspiration and a sense of community and purpose. I want to thank trans/queer studies colleagues Joonas Sääntti, Lotti Harju, Luca Tainio, Utu-Tuuli Jussila, Kaarna Tuomenvirta and Vilja Jaaksi for being a light in the world which seems increasingly dark, and for crafting spaces where we can all feel connected and imagine queer/trans futures together.

Thank you also to inspiring trans studies people I have met during the years while travelling to conferences and workshops. Special thanks to Ludo Foster, Das Janssen, Sara Barbo, Dinah Bon, and Ruth Pearce. Thank you to all the marvelous people from the Lausanne workshop, for making me feel, in Dinah Bon's words "intellectually nourished, spiritually held and politically ignited".

Thanks to my friends from different times in my life for support, inspiration, and fun. Thank you, Anna, Venni, Laura, Nino, Jenny, Virpi, Ulla, Tapio, Ere, Lauri, Ave, Kajo, and others. Tapio, thank you for giving me your old computer. Ere, thank you for getting to University with me and for always being there for me "in sickness and health". You are the most empathetic and most low-key radical person I know. Thank you, Joa, for being an amazing listener and a force of change.

I am grateful to my parents Kaisu Taskinen and Kari Vähäpassi for their love and support. They encouraged my curiosity, my passion for writing and thinking, and for social change. Thank you importantly also to my bonus parents Jukka and Gudrun for taking part in raising me and Teitur for being a great little brother. Thanks to also my relatives for appreciating curiosity, writing and research. I am thankful to the people with whom I jointly raise my kid, who is a caring and smart young person. Aale, thank you for telling me that sleep is a good idea, being goofy together and watching *The Great Pottery Throw Down* with me.

I share my life with my love, Touko Vaahtera. Thank you, Touko, for truly seeing me. Thank you for being my partner in love and occasionally work and for allowing me to be a 1950's husband when finalizing this thesis. I promise, all the laundry is now on me.

I have much gratitude to anonymous referees and editors of the journals I have published in. I was honored when Signe Bremer and Eliza Steinbock agreed to serve as my thesis preliminary examiners. I have looked up to both as inspiring scholars whose work I value greatly. I express my deepest gratitude to Signe and Eliza for taking the time for thoroughly engaging with this work, and for providing constructive feedback. I thank Eliza for also agreeing to act as the opponent.

Last but not least, thanks are due to my funders. My thesis work has been funded by Finnish Cultural Foundation, Oscar Öflund Foundation, Finnish Concordia Foundation, Ella and Georg Ehrnrooth Foundation, and Turku University Foundation.

Turku, 25 April 2025  
*Valo Vähäpassi*

# Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>List of Original Publications</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>16</b>
1.1 Objective: Addressing Trans Visibilities.....	18
1.2 Addressing the Paradox of Trans Visibility .....	21
1.3 Research Questions.....	28
1.4 Articles and the Structure of the Dissertation.....	29
1.4.1 Article I.....	29
1.4.2 Article II.....	30
1.4.3 Article III.....	31
1.4.4 Article IV.....	31
1.4.5 Structure of the Dissertation .....	33
<b>2 Theoretical Background: Affective Publics and Politicization of Trans Bodies and Identities</b> .....	<b>34</b>
2.1 Publics and Politicization.....	36
2.1.1 Politicizing Publics.....	39
2.1.2 Publics as Politicizing .....	44
2.1.3 Publics as Affectively Politizing .....	47
2.2 How Affect Brings People Together into Publics and Audiences .....	49
2.2.1 Figures Bring People Together.....	49
2.2.2 Framing as Affective-Discursive Practice .....	54
2.2.3 Figuring Spaces and Nations .....	57
2.2.4 Layers of Violence.....	58
2.2.5 Affective-Discursive Practices Bring People Together.....	61
<b>3 Methodological starting points</b> .....	<b>64</b>
3.1 “Flexible” Intersectionality and Cultural Studies.....	65
3.2 Critical-Reparative Analysis .....	67
3.3 Affective and Contextualizing Methods.....	70
3.4 Material and Methods of the Articles .....	72
<b>4 Findings</b> .....	<b>77</b>
4.1 Trans Counterpublic Media .....	77
4.2 User-Generated Reality Enforcement.....	78

4.3	Imaginative Geography of Linear Gender .....	80
4.4	Affective Framings and Solidarity .....	82
<b>5</b>	<b>Conclusions .....</b>	<b>86</b>
	<b>List of References.....</b>	<b>91</b>
	<b>Original Publications .....</b>	<b>101</b>

Figures

Figure 1 The research problem divided into four sub-questions (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) and the more precise research questions addressed in my articles .....29

# List of Original Publications

This dissertation is based on the following original publications. All the articles presented in this dissertation have been published in peer-reviewed publications.

- I Vähäpassi, Valo. Creating a Home in the Borderlands? Transgender Stories in the Original Plumbing Magazine. *SQS*, 2013; 1-2: 30-41.
- II Vähäpassi, Valo. User-generated reality enforcement: Framing violence against black trans feminine people on a video sharing site. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 2019; 1: 85-98.
- III Vähäpassi, Valo. An imaginative geography of linear gender: Bathrooms, locker rooms and cis vulnerability. *European Journal of American Culture*, 2023; 1: 29-43.
- IV Vähäpassi, Valo. Identity or Solidarity? Trans Affective Publics and Identity Frames of Violence. *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 2024; Online before print (28 Nov 2024). DOI: 10.1080/08038740.2024.2418510

The original publications have been reproduced with the permission of the copyright holders.

# 1 Introduction

In 2009, a friend introduced me to *Original Plumbing* (OP), a new zine for trans men. I was enthralled by the zine, with its interviews of transmasculine people discussing their lives and posing in black and white photos in their homes or the gym, sharing about their experiences at work or with their transitions. They narrated stories of lives they had defined and carved out for themselves, including joys, desires and excitement about their bodies, community, and living with people who loved them. At least in the case of transmasculine people, there was at the time a degree of invisibility and a lack of stories of any kind throughout the media. Thus, this American zine produced across the Atlantic by people who seemed very cool brought me a sense of another reality within a world in which trans and gender non-conforming lives still felt somewhat impossible to me. This zine created a sense of intimacy with these people, who proudly shared about their lives, homes, and bodies, seemingly living as if they had surpassed cisheteronormativity and left it behind. At the same time, in a glimpse of the outside world, the zine also described a demonstration for trans self-determination and against pathologization. All of this seemed wonderful. To me, as a non-binary person still trying to figure out how I wanted to live in the world, the zine brought glimmers of hope, excitement and possibility. This zine helped me embark on a journey of both personal and scholarly significance, the result of which you, my dear reader, are now reading.

My thesis began as a research project on trans (counter) publics—that is, trans articulations of transness through media, or trans ‘visibility’ in trans terms. I concentrated on the trans male quarterly zine *OP*, created by Rocco Kayatos and Amos Mac, which for a time also extended online into a web page with curated blogs and offline into parties. The zine featured interviews by and photographs of trans masculine, genderqueer, and masculine of center people, including photographic portraits of the people interviewed. Taking its inspiration, from the (cis) gay male magazine *BUTT*, *OP* often featured photos with partial nudity and stories about the everyday lives of interviewees. In addition to (medical or bodily) transition-centered narratives, it circulated narratives which had to do with other parts of trans people’s lives, as well as activism. As I argued (Vähäpassi, 2013), these narratives widen the cisnormative—or, as it was later called, transnormative (Vipond, 2015)—idea of the

possible, imaginable forms that trans lives or combinations of bodies and identities can take.

In the context of the history of modern trans visibilities in the Western media, in which much papers have been sold through sensational stories of transition, framed as spectacular transformation and miracles of modern medicine (Stryker, 2008), and in which transness has at times been depicted as either tragic, or entertainingly exceptional, the depictions of trans people by trans people and building a public around trans people and those who love them and act in solidarity, seemed revolutionary. Taking part in the depathologizing of transness through counterdiscourse, the formation of a trans public clearly challenges dominant hierarchies of cisnormative culture and dominant political public sphere (Warner, 2002a).<sup>1</sup> *OP* implicitly and explicitly politicized these hierarchies. It called into question the hierarchies of knowledge concerning trans bodies and identities, shaken received norms over which issues should be publicly addressed, and in which style, positioning *OP* as part of a wider (identity-based, as well as identity-building) public attached to trans movements.

At the time of *OP*'s publication, trans-defined articulations of trans bodies and identities were slowly gaining a wider visibility, even among majoritarian cis politics (Vipond, 2023, p. 178). *OP*'s makers were trans micro-celebrities and central figures in the creation of trans media which defined transness from within. Even while this 't4t' representation was clearly important, I was also keenly interested in the—perhaps utopian—idea of a possible shift in the wider cultural view of trans bodies and identities, as well as gender more widely. Even while the *OP* itself did not, as Vipond puts it, cater to the 'cisgender gaze,' (Vipond, 2023, p. 179), it was meaningful for me that Kayatos and Mac were interviewed in widely circulated mainstream magazines. Might it be that the cisgender gaze was changing? Or that there was no unified center of a cisgender gaze, or that cisness was, not so univocal in the first place and could therefore be made even less unified?

<sup>1</sup> Transness has often been represented in mainstream culture from the viewpoint of the medical model of transness (Baril, 2015; Vähäpassi, 2017), representing transness through so-called 'wrong body' model, which focuses on binary transitions and the bodies of trans people from a cisnormative viewpoint. This is conceptually and historically tied with white Western ideals of binary gender which can be read from/onto the body (Lehner, 2022, p. 4-5; Snorton, 2017, pp. 140-143). Mainstream media has often left out other sorts of trans trajectories, including those in which medical transition is not part of the trajectory and 'passing' is not a goal or a possibility, and/or where the identity of the person is neither man nor woman but for example nonbinary, agender, two-spirit, or travesti.

## 1.1 Objective: Addressing Trans Visibilities

Trans visibility is a term which is used for several often entangled though not synonymous meanings.<sup>2</sup> Trans visibility can refer to a sensed presence of trans people, as well as discourse around transness in and through media. Trans visibility also means the visibility of the trans cause—that is, the visibility of trans movements and their aims. Related to the latter meaning, visibility encompasses the symbolic recognition of transness and trans people as that which not only exists but whose voices should be heard and listened. Trans visibility can also mean surveillance (Beauchamp, 2018). Critical trans studies scholars have warned of what Koch-Rein et al. describe as “‘trap of the visual’ that equates more (mainstream) representation with more societal recognition” (2020, p. 5). Scholars have noted how even ‘positive’ mainstream visibilities of transness leave some trans people—especially marginalized people of color and people who do not comply with white (trans)normative forms of transition—out of the frame (Vipond, 2015), and might increase the possibility of multiply marginalized trans people being targeted for surveillance and harm (Beauchamp, 2018; Berberick, 2018). I consider ‘visibilities’ as multiple and layered, sometimes working in harmful or ambivalent ways. In the case studies of this thesis, I address instances of making transness visible through media as “struggles for visibility” (Thompson, 2005, p. 49), but also as struggles around what has already been visibly framed and intensified.

As I will argue, when trans people are made visible, transness is made available to the senses, awaking affect, but affect itself is framed (Butler, 2010),<sup>3</sup> as is transness—or rather, affect and framing are intertwined, frames are affective. In framing, something is put into view through some means or media, and something else is left out. This is one aspect of representation: one thing will stand in for other things, or, for a wider reality. However, instead of only mirroring reality, rhetoric and images in media have materializing effects. For example, some narratives, images, and figures stand in for transness and evoke affective orientations toward this transness, which then in turn generate material effects in encounters with people, legislation, policies, and so on. Similarly, figures circulated through media have materializing effects that work through affect (Haraway, 1997; Ahmed, 2014); they

<sup>2</sup> I draw my understanding of this double or triple meaning of ‘visibility’ from media studies scholars who write about these different aspects (Mateus, 2014, pp. 260-262), particularly the concepts of “new visibility” and “struggles for visibility” (Thompson, 2005, p. 49) or “visibility struggles” (Mateus, 2014, p. 263) brought about by changes in media specifically and culture more generally.

<sup>3</sup> According to Judith Butler, “What we feel is in part conditioned by how we interpret the world around us,” such that “affect is structured by interpretative schemas we do not fully understand” (Butler, 2010, p. 41).

inhabit people who come together to react to them and can also shape the lives and trajectories of the people attached to them. In this thesis, I consider ‘frames,’ along with figures and imaginative visions, as affective-discursive practices through which affective reactions, dispositions, orientations, and relations are evoked (Wetherell, 2012; Wetherell 2013; Wetherel et al, 2015). I take an affective-discursive viewpoint to ‘visibility,’ as my interest is in how people come together around affective articulations of transness and how these shape the atmospheres in which trans people live.

The material gathering for the sub-studies of my research span about a decade, during which trans ‘visibility’ in all the senses of the word has grown exponentially (Vipond, 2023, p. 178). Trans movements in the USA and Europe and on the Internet translocally (the localities where I have conducted this work), have continued to gain visibility.<sup>4</sup> Trans publics have moved to new media forms and forums and multiplied, facilitated by the Internet and various online social media platforms such as Tumblr (Fink & Miller, 2014; Haimson, et al., 2019), YouTube (Raun, 2010; Horak, 2014; Raun, 2015; Raun, 2016) websites made by trans people (Dame, 2016), and Instagram (Lehner, 2022; Kanchan, 2024).<sup>5</sup> This ‘new visibility’ for trans people and transness has not emerged without backlash,<sup>6</sup> and ‘anti-gender,’ ‘gender-critical,’ and anti-trans movements and ideologies continue to gain force as their rhetoric circulates across national boundaries (Edenborg, 2021; Korolczuk & Graff, 2021; Bassi & LaFleur, 2022; Libby, 2022; Tudor, 2023; Amery & Mondon, 2024). This reactionary phenomenon also unites different and at times surprising actors, such as left-wing politicians (Paternotte & Kuhar, 2018, pp. 13-14) and anti-trans feminists (Amery & Mondon, 2024; Tudor, 2023)

My interest in a multiplicity of publics and specifically in the potential of trans publics has stayed with me through the lengthy process of the thesis work. However,

<sup>4</sup> Ever since the 1990s, the Internet has been important for defining counterdiscourses to trans\* people’s medicalization and for developing and spreading new vocabularies for trans identities and lives (Whittle, 2001; Stryker, 2013, p. 6).

<sup>5</sup> This has not been without troubles and concerns—for example, “real name” policies (Haimson & Hoffmann, 2016), binary gendering by platforms (Bivens, 2017), surveillance (MacAulay & Moldes, 2017), and online forms of harassment and violence (Powell, et al., 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Corredor critiques the “backlash thesis” used by both feminists and LGBTI researchers for being unnecessarily “predicated on an inconsistent model of social change that is at once linear, yet inescapably repetitive, and teleological” (2021, p. 48). She also states that this metaphor might make us too pessimistic and underestimate the strategic possibilities of LGBTI and feminist movements. I consider “backlash” to be contingent and agree with Corredor on the idea that gender populist movements performatively imagine an exclusive nation which has never existed, as is evident in Article 4 of this dissertation.

my enthusiasm over trans visibilities (theorized as publics) was curbed somewhat through the realization that violence in its many forms was so much a part of many trans lives, and the ways in which transness has become visible in recent years include violence. In fact, violence was happening through media, and the way transness had become more widely visible—even those defined by trans people—did not seem to end or even decrease this violence.

These coinciding developments of change in the media and change in cultural visibilities of transness, together with the conundrums I started to see in trans visibilities – and as I noticed that publics were also evoked around anti-trans sentiment – made me refocus my thesis. I began to study the way affect brings people together into publics that gather around articulations trans bodies, trans identities, and violence, evoking people to feel about and relate to transness.

The centrality of violence attached to trans people—both within trans movements and anti-trans rhetoric—led me to concentrate on the ways that violence attaches to trans bodies and identities through the affective rhetoric circulating in both trans and anti-trans publics, predominantly through media. Addressing how media, especially forms of social media, take part in and shape the circulation of affect around trans bodies and building audiences and publics around reacting to trans bodies and identities, I take part in the discussion over trans visibilities through media.

Through four case studies, I address affective articulations of trans bodies and identities in the following media forms: a counterpublic transmasculine zine; user-generated video depicting real violence shared on an online platform; anti-trans rhetoric used by the Christian right in a campaign against trans access to public and semi-public space; frames of Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), circulated online and across national borders, attached with national trans politics in Finland; and intersectional activist reframings of dominant rhetoric to evoke coalitional solidarity between movements of the political left, feminists, sex workers, immigrants, and trans people. I thereby address the politicized visibilities of trans bodies and identities in and through media.

While this thesis addresses affective articulations of transgender identities and violence during the period of 2009–2018 in the USA, Europe, and “glocally,” neither the circulation of spectacularly othering figurations and trans-defined articulations of transness nor the backlash of widespread visibility are without a history. Trans people have taken part in articulating trans identities, bodies, and lives since the very beginning of the Western medicalized “transsexual phenomenon” and developed “imagined communities” around these through counterpublic media (Stryker, 2008; Lewis, 2017). Similarly, widespread media (hyper)visibility, backlash, grassroots information sharing, and trans cultural production through media can be traced back

at least to 1970s (Lewis, 2017, p. 60).<sup>7</sup> At the same time, the Internet, particularly forms of social media, have changed collective/connective action (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012) and publics (boyd, 2010), and trans bodies and identities are exceptionally visible in today's political environment, as they are refigured and reimagined through various networked counterpublics. Within the context of American-centered Internet and wider culture, "the complex global flows of shared subcultural knowledges" (Aizura, 2006, p. 291) and, as I will argue, frames and figures, flow often from the USA to other localities, such that "trans representations circulate globally and are received, resisted, or repurposed locally" (Koch-Rein, 2020, p. 5).

Rather than considering merely explicitly political or legacy media as important for gender political conflicts around bodies and their policing or liberation, I consider even the everyday, ubiquitous forms of networked media, such as social media platforms for user-generated content, as well as forms of "grabbing" (Senft, 2008, p. 46) this content and reframing it, as political and as potential spaces and practices for politicization. I consider even networked affective/counter-publics as 'visibilities.'

## 1.2 Addressing the Paradox of Trans Visibility

In recent years, in tandem with growing trans visibility in all its legal, political and cultural meanings, a critical trans studies discussion over trans visibilities and the "paradox of visibility" (Berberick, 2018) has emerged (Snorton, 2013; Gossett et al., 2017; Lewis, 2017; Koch-Rein et al, 2020; Lehner, 2022). In the simplest sense, the paradox of visibility means that while mainstream representation in all the meanings of visibility has grown, violence and oppression have not ceased. As outlined above, 'visibility' is a multifaceted concept, as is 'representation,' when attached to a group of people in a non-dominant societal position—a group whose very identity is articulated through various forms of visibility. These articulations partly inform how people perceived as belonging to that group are encountered and treated (Dyer, 2002, p. 1). I address this relationship of representations and encounters in the social world through the concept of figure as conceptualized by diverse feminist thinkers whom I see as 'materializing feminists,' including philosophy of science scholar Donna

<sup>7</sup> Writing on increased trans visibility, Lewis states that conundrums of increased visibility as both a promise and a threat were already evident in 1970s America (2017, pp. 60-62), a time and space which already saw mainstream visibility, backlash, violence, and forms of intersectional trans organizing and coalition building which were more interested in resource and information sharing and intersectional political critique of state violence, as well as counterpublic visibilities, than legal reform.

Haraway, sociologists Beverly Skeggs and Imogen Tyler, and affect theorist Sara Ahmed.

The ‘paradox’ has to do with the complex relationship between recognition and visibility, as well as different interests, goals, stakes, and political viewpoints that fall within the trans umbrella. These have implications for whether “visibility” is seen as a promise or a threat—or both, as is often the case in the trans studies discussion over visibility (Cavalcante, 2018; Gossett, et al, 2017, pp. xx; Lewis, 2017; Lehner, 2022). Due to the multifaceted and contradictory character of ‘visibility’ and of representing non-dominant groups, ‘visibility’ has multiple meanings within the discussion over ‘trans visibility.’

Mainstream media representations of trans people have been critiqued for centering representations of white, middle-class, or affluent trans people and for portraying transness as tragic, spectacular, or ridiculous (Cavalcante, 2018; Berberick, 2018), though this might be slowly changing, at least in television (Straube, 2020; see Abbott, 2022 for a contradictory view). The wider tendency of popular culture to co-articulate transness with sexualization, violence, or laughability is also evident in video games (Wiik, 2023). Some more ‘positive’ and even more varied mainstream representations have emerged within the past 15 years, with scholars addressing trans people’s growing visibility in television (Cavalcante, 2018; McLaren, et al., 2021; Straube, 2020; Abbott, 2022) and cinema (Straube, 2014) and video games (Wiik, 2023). However, critical trans studies scholars have argued that the worthy trans subject portrayed in mainstream media is often white, with the acceptance of white trans women being particularly tied to norms of white femininity (Skidmore, 2011; Snorton, 2017, pp. 140–143; Lehner, 2022, p. 5). Even popular cultural visibility of trans feminine people of color, such as actors, has been critically addressed as upholding the white and cis/transnormative concepts of medical transitioning and bodily appearance, perpetuating cis/transnormativity while making transness paradoxically both visible and invisible, even as visibly non-normative bodies are positioned as even more at risk due to politicized transgender “hypervisibility” (Berberick, 2018, p. 127). Moreover, many scholars emphasize that mainstream visibility for trans people does not equal societal recognition and forms of visibility might even increase practices of surveillance (Beauchamp, 2018) or being ‘clocked’ and hunted (Stanley, 2021, p. 86). This might be the case especially for trans feminine people of color, who suffer most from being ‘hypervisible.’

Similar dynamics of “paradox of visibility” have been noted within the visibility of *identity political and anti-violence mainstream trans movement*. In recent years, critical intersectional trans studies research has theorized trans visibility and the place of violence in making transness visible through trans movement visibilities, addressing the central place of co-articulations of transness and violence in what I call the politicization of trans bodies and identities (Lamble, 2008; Haritaworn, 2013;

Snorton, 2013; Westbrook, 2020; Steinbock, 2019; Stanley, 2021). Several trans studies scholars have suggested that trans visibility has benefited only the trans people who benefit from the privileges attached to whiteness, upper- and middle-class status, and citizenship status (Snorton, 2013; Stanley, 2021; Gossett et al., 2017). The contrasting effects of visibility are starkest in the case of trans anti-violence movements' co-articulations of transness and violence through activism such as TDoR, which, as many have argued, have mostly benefitted white trans activists in gaining attention, support, and recognition through “vulnerable subjecthood” (Westbrook 2020, pp. 15, 117-123)—a phenomenon which Snorton and Haritaworn theorize as “trans necropolitics,” in which “trans women of color act as resources...for the articulation and visibility of a more privileged transgender subject” (2013, p. 71).

I address the circulation of these practices of perceiving and reacting to people as belonging to a group, and as arising this feeling or another. My methodological framework is rooted in Sara Ahmed's (2004; 2014) theorization of affective economies and feminist studies scholar Margaret Wetherell's (2012, p. 4, 23) affective-discursive practices—specifically, affective-discursive practices in and through media (see also Wetherell, et al., 2015). I address how these ways of perceiving and feeling are expressed, evoked, and circulated through media in ways that bring people together and separate them. Put another way, I address affective-rhetorical articulations of trans bodies and identities which politicize transness and co-articulate trans bodies with violence, including ones that politicize these conventional framings of transness and violence, interrogating and reframing what has been framed and evoking coalitional solidarity.

I address both frames of violence and violent framings. However, there are always competing frames. It is possible to develop new, subaltern framings, a promise of “alternative media” (Butler 2010, p. 12), or, as I regard them, counterpublics – in this thesis, counterpublics around trans existence, seeking to increase livability of trans lives. As Butler also points out, it is possible to highlight and interrogate existing framings—to “frame” the framing (Butler, 2010, pp. 8, 24), which is what I address through the ideas of re-articulation and “grabbing” (Senft, 2008; Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1598). These are concepts for addressing the work that intersectional trans and sex workers movements do, when interrupting and shaking stabilized articulations of ‘trans people’ with threat of violence.

At times, visibility seems to be represented in the theorization over ‘trans visibility’ as meaning only mainstream media visibility or the visibility as state-oriented identity politics, and only visibility in USA (Koch-Rein, Haschemi Yekani, & Verlinden, 2020, p. 5). This seems to paint an overly homogenous picture of both mainstream media visibility—in its various trans-defined or other instances and uses, including “disidentifications” (Muñoz, 2013; Straube, 2014, pp. 49-50)—and of

practices of making visible or articulating transness (Koch-Rein, Haschemi Yekani, & Verlinden, 2020, p. 5). This also goes for complicating the relationship of forms of violence and visibility, and violent (hyper)visibilities, as described by Koch-Rein, Haschemi Yekani, and Verlinden:

Accordingly, it is vital to distinguish the violence that is linked to the invisibility of structural inequality and the exposure to violence that hypervisibility generates. In analysing the increase and changes in trans representation, we must recognise the *violence of hypervisibility* and distinguish it from recognition and track both visibility and invisibility as they continue to be reproduced to violent—or emancipatory—ends. (2020, p. 5)

This complicating of visibilities, invisibilities, and violence, is what this thesis does. Through the concepts of counter- and affective public and the idea of competing publics circulating affective figures, frames and imaginative visions, seeking to widen their reach, and politicizing transness, I contribute to this discussion over the trans visibilities in the plural. My idea about publics as potentially politicizing joins Kari Palonen's (2003) conceptual framework of politicization with the concepts of affective publics (Papacharissi, 2015) and affective-discursive practices (Wetherell, 2012, p. 4, 23; Wetherell et al, 2015).

Addressing visibilities as various visible-making practices in various media and engaging multiple publics sidesteps the impossible idea of either choosing visibility in the singular or zero visibility (Gossett, Stanley, & Burton, 2017, xx; Koch-Rein, Haschemi Yekani, & Verlinden 2020, p. 5). As Gossett, Stanley, and Burton (2017, p. xviii) emphasize, circulating trans-defined articulations of transness is a way to make possible new futures. The trans-defined articulations of transness on YouTube (Horak, 2014; Raun, 2015), Tumblr (Fink & Miller, 2013; Jenzen, 2017, p. 1633; Byron, et al., 2019, p. 2255-2256), websites made by trans people (Cavalcante, 2016, p. 110), zines (Vähäpassi, 2013; Vipond, 2024), and Instagram (Kanchan, 2024) have been theorized as alternative or counterpublic spaces within which more varied and nuanced articulations of trans bodies and identities are present, and sense of community and belonging can emerge, sometimes even developing “transnational queer and trans political imaginations,” although even counterpublic visibilities can come attached with threats of surveillance, sensorship, and policing (Kanchan, 2024, p. 162).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The policing and surveillance present in online platforms and harming trans\* people connect to the political economy, or profit motive, of the platform companies and with specific cultural, political, and social contexts (Haimson et al, 2021, pp. 348–349; Kanchan, 2024, pp. 166–167).

One of the most intensive and acute forms of mediated trans visibility of recent years is not the visual but rhetorical, textual ‘visibility’ of trans bodies and identities as a politicized presence in media which might mobilize people against trans existence in the social world through ballots or in other forms of action (Billard, 2019; Schilt & Westbrook, 2015; Cizek & Rodriguez, 2020; Amery & Mondon, 2024).<sup>9</sup> I address rhetorical ways of figuring transness which surpass boundaries (e.g., of online networked publics, news media, political speeches, legislation, policies, borders of nation-states) as rhetorical figures and frames travel and spread, intensifying attention and affect attached to trans bodies and their presence in the social world.

Hostile forms of visibility target “trans-feminized” people who face “cultural, legal, and state-level trans panic” (Gill-Peterson, 2024a, p. 55). Trans historian Jules Gill-Peterson and other trans studies scholars address the long history of figuring transfeminized people as sexualized “deceivers” (Bettcher 2007) and representing violence as a justified or rational reaction to their bodies’ purported un-reality/excess—so-called “trans panic” (Gill-Peterson, 2024a; Abbott, 2022) and its relations to legitimating violence against especially Black and people of color trans feminine and transfeminized people.<sup>10</sup> Research has thus far mostly neglected the ways online media shapes this violent visibility. While there are studies on anti-trans memes (Spencer, 2019) and “gender-critical” and “transvestigator” discourse online (Webster, 2024), the online visible-making of real violent acts<sup>11</sup> as entertainment has hardly been studied. Research into the ways this violence – including violent framings – are visibly countered and re-framed by black trans feminine people and trans feminine people of color, has likewise been lacking (however, see: Jackson, et al., 2018; Lehner 2022). The way novel forms of

<sup>9</sup> Billard has studied the increased political attention to transgender people through legacy media (Billard, 2016; 2019). Billard (2019, p. 167) argues that transgender existence has become an important politicized topic in the wider public sphere already within 2003–2013, but digital-native news media driving the legitimation of trans issues as political issues further in 2014–2015 (Billard 2019, p. 172). Schilt and Westbrook (2015) address the politicization of trans people’s existence through newspaper rhetoric around antitrans bills, which also politicize trans existence in online memes (Spencer, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> Sociologists Kristen Schilt and Laurel Westbrook (2009) have addressed the coverage of trans murder victims in the press, showing the phenomenon of legitimating the violence through deceiver tropes is widespread. These tropes have been noted in both television (Abbott 2022) and news media coverage of trans people (Billard, 2016; Capuzza, 2015, pp. 95–96). As I elaborate in Chapter 2.2.4 and article 2, philosopher Talia Mae Bettcher (2007; 2014) has theorized this through the concepts of reality enforcement and epistemic violence.

<sup>11</sup> I use the phrase “real violent acts” here to point to the use of non-fictional violent acts as entertainment. On how I see layers of violence, see Chapter 2.2.1.

ubiquitous mobile and online networked media and their affective logics work in relation to violence, enabling networked visibility attached to violence, is only beginning to receive scholarly attention; this thesis being one such beginning.

In three of the articles below, I address how violence is imagined, made visible, and co-articulated with transness through media and rhetoric. In theorizing re-articulations of violence and transness and the place of media in continuing, interrupting, highlighting or hiding violence, I draw from intersectional traditions of theorizing forms of violence against subaltern people and of violent figurations. Moreover, I draw from feminist and trans studies traditions of theorizing symbolic and epistemic violence—forms of violence which might continue and intensify both concrete physical violence and forms of “slow violence”.<sup>12</sup> I address the way publics and audiences come together around violence against trans people and figurations of transness as attached to the threat of violence, as well as around challenging these through reframings.

Publics coming together around shared trans identity or trans world-making do not necessarily seek at all times to reach as wide public as possible. Rather the discourse circulated in these publics might address trans people and those who love them or work in solidarity. As publics, these publics are, in principle, open to anyone. They can work in an ‘infrapolitical’ manner (Malatino, 2021, pp. 834, 840), constructing a network of solidarity which can be widened—comparable with Fraser’s (1990, p. 68) idea of dual function of counterpublics, as spaces of “regroupment” and as spaces where new vocabularies or imaginaries are developed and rehearsed, before seeking to address wider publics. Some of the media and rhetoric I address do not aim at political visibility based on dominant cultural frames and could therefore be considered ‘unintelligible’ within cisnormative frames (Vipond, 2018, pp. 30-34), or as “opacities” (Stanley, 2017, p. 618) . Even so, I consider them to be visibilities, as I consider the idea of one singular “monolithic mainstream” visibility somewhat misleading (see also Koch-Rein, Haschemi Yekani, & Verlinden, 2020, pp. 4–6). Moreover, as I will argue, rather than pure oppositionality, even trans-defined counterpublic visibilities are part of the wider culture and their relationship with, for example, the medical model of transness (Baril, 2015; Vähäpassi, 2017) is ambivalent in the case I address. I consider also ‘t4t’ (Vipond, 2024) publics and evocation of coalitional solidarity as visibilities. In the case of anti-gender rhetoric, we cannot afford to not take part in public reframing efforts. The question of different levels of and forms of visibility is both a question of how to address what has been made visible and framed, and of situational tactics

<sup>12</sup> This thesis necessarily is also in implicit and at times explicit discussion with literature on structural violence (Zizek, 2008), slow violence (Christian, 2019), state violence (Stanley, 2011; 2017; 2021), and necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003).

which might at times aim at “opacity” ” (Stanley, 2017, p. 618), in other words, networked counterpublic visibilities which aim at coalitional politics rather than state recognition for singular identities.

Through the viewpoint of multiple politicizing (affective) publics, my thesis makes an original contribution to the field of trans studies. My contribution to the discussion on articulations of transness addresses figures, frames, narratives, and visions of belonging and space (imaginative geographies and trans world-making) as *affective-discursive media practices*—that is, as affective practices happening through media and bringing people together through the combination of cross-media figures, frames and visions, and affordances (boyd, 2010) of media. Cultural studies’ methodological concept of articulation, which I combine with affect, allows me to address affective economies (via Ahmed (2004; 2014) which function similarly across diverse forms of media but are sometimes intensified through affordances of specific media in ways I address in Articles 2 and 4.

My study contributes to media studies discussion over the ways networked media enable and shape politics (boyd 2010; Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Dean, 2010; Tufekci, 2013; Boler & Davis, 2020; Papacharissi, 2015; Papacharissi & Trevey, 2018; Nikunen, 2018; Nikunen, et al., 2021; Halperin, 2023; Treré & Bonini, 2024). Scholars have considered affect as driving networked publics and politics (Papacharissi, 2015; Papacharissi, 2016; Nikunen, 2018; Nikunen, et al., 2021; Boler & Davis, 2020; Dean, 2010). By addressing the many, contradictory and ambivalent ways that affect brings people together around trans bodies and identities in current media, this dissertation contributes to these discussions. I extend the work on online world-making (Haimson et al, 2019), affective solidarities (Papacharissi, 2015; Nikunen, 2018), and intensifying hostile atmospheres around groups of people through current media (Boler & Davis, 2020, p. 2; Nikunen et al, 2021; Venäläinen, 2022) and culture (Hemmings, 2020; Tudor, 2023) through what I term materializing feminism (see Theory Chapter 2.2.1). I use an intersectional cultural studies methodology and concepts of figure, imaginative but performative visions, world-making, and affective (framing) practices to contribute to these discussions.

My thesis contributes to the study on rhetoric of reactionary gender populism, of the Christian right in particular, (Mason, 2013; Frank, 2014; Browne & Nash, 2014), and study of current anti-trans/-gender movements broadly (Borba, 2022; Edenborg, 2021; Corredor, 2021; Korolczuk & Graff, 2021; Libby, 2022; Bassi & LaFleur, 2022; Tudor, 2023; Amery & Mondon, 2024). My viewpoint emphasizes the role of affect in anti-trans/-gender politics and contextualizes anti-trans sentiment in the wider norms of binary gender; I see binary and linear gender norms as intertwined with racialized hierarchies and exclusionary visions of nation, which my analysis evokes through affective practices (see also Hemmings 2020, pp. 32–34; Tudor, 2023). Addressing user generated entertainment framings of violence, Christian right

campaigning, trans counterpublic articulations of trans bodies and identities, and trans co-articulations of violence and transness in a single study is something that has not been done before.

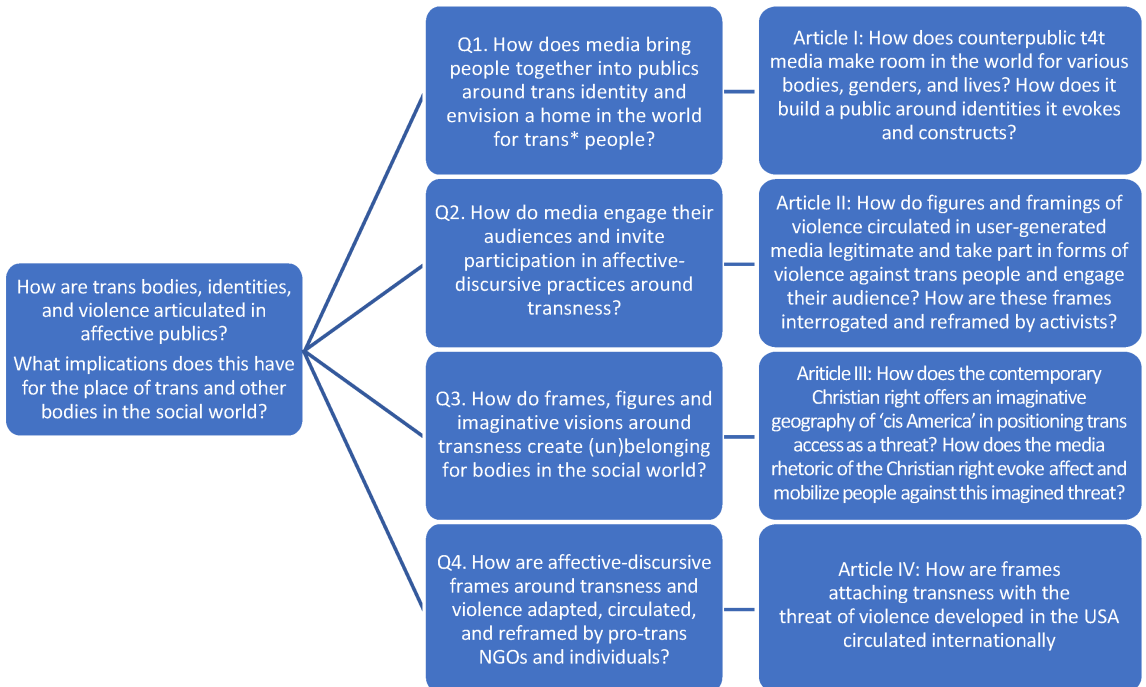
In the context of co-articulating transness and violence in anti-violence activism, I address the way framings developed in the context of the USA are circulated in trans affective publics across national boundaries in Europe and especially in Finland, as well as how an alternative activist framing is circulated transnationally. Scholars writing on the relationship of trans visibility and violence have usually focused on the USA, with some exceptions (Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013; Gill-Peterson, 2024a); addressing the USA-centered circulation of frames and their glocal use and interruption within the European context is another original contribution of this thesis.

I argue that trans bodies, identities, and violence are articulated through media affective-discursive practices: figures, frames, narratives, and visions of belonging and space. I further argue that various affective-discursive practices bring people together into different affective publics, which can be mobilized in defense of bodies perceived as belonging or in solidarity across identity boundaries.

### 1.3 Research Questions

To analyze contradictory visibilities of trans bodies, identities, and their articulation with violence, this dissertation asks: *How are trans bodies, identities, and violence articulated in affective publics? What implications does this have for the place of trans people and other bodies in the social world?*

I have split the research problem into four sub-questions (Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4) which highlight different aspects of the current politicized articulations of transness as they relate to different stances towards transness in the rhetoric evoking a public or an audience. Different articles address the affective media rhetoric of the Christian right, trans masculine counterpublic zine, affective framing of trans bodies and violence through user-generated media, the framings of violence circulated in an affective public of trans people and people who act and feel in solidarity, and reframing of the violence through alternative rhetoric around intersectional solidarity. Each of the four thesis-wide research questions relates to a more specific research question in each of the articles of the dissertation. However, all of the thesis-wide questions are addressed in more than one article. Q1 builds on the research question posed in article I, Q2 in article II, Q3 in article III and Q4 in article IV.



**Figure 1** The research problem divided into four sub-questions (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) and the more precise research questions addressed in my articles.

## 1.4 Articles and the Structure of the Dissertation

### 1.4.1 Article I

In Article 1, I investigate the following questions: How does trans *counterpublic* media make room in the world for various bodies, genders, and lives? How does it build a public around identities it simultaneously evokes and constructs?

Through reading the first six issues of the zine *Original Plumbing* (2009–2011) in conversation with trans theory and counterpublic theory, I argue that trans counterpublics circulate more varied articulations of trans bodies and identities than in the mainstream media and that this functions as trans/queer world-making, creating more varied and livable life trajectories for trans people.

I utilize the concept of counterpublic to address the way “interpretations [of] identities, interests, and needs” (Fraser, 1990, p. 67) are circulated in what I term trans counterpublic media. I also utilize trans theorizations over “home” (Prosser, 1998; Aizura, 2012; Bhanji, 2012) to address the way that trans counterpublics seek to make homes in the world for trans people with various bodies and identities.

Moreover, in Article 1, I contemplate the tensions between what I now see as different ways of politicizing transness within the same counterpublic.

### 1.4.2 Article II

In Article 2, I analyze a case of a viral video of real violence recorded on an Atlanta train on May 2014 and uploaded on the video sharing site Flyvidz (2014). The video clip, which was uploaded on the website for user-generated entertainment, and titled ‘2 TS GET INTO A FIGHT WITH 2 GUYS ON ATL MARTA!’ (2014) also gained visibility through mainstream legacy media and LGBT media *Pink News* (2014) and was then also publicly commented on by the women who were attacked, as well as via a statement by the grassroots organization Solutions Not Punishments (SNaP).

Thinking with feminist theorizations over figures (McRobbie, 2004; Tyler, 2006; Ahmed, 2014; Haraway, 1997), I address the affective articulations of these trans women with the figure of the tranny. Inspired by Sara Ahmed’s (2004; 2014) thought on affective economies, I analyze the evoking of affective intensity, clicks, and shares through affective articulations with this figure, which in turn, evokes attachment with the genre of porn, and the affective intensity attached with “bad sex” (Rubin, 1984). Moreover, I think with Talia Mae Bettcher’s (2007; 2014) concept of reality enforcement, and introduce the new composite concept of *user-generated reality enforcement*. I also draw from theorizations of symbolic violence (McRobbie, 2004; Tyler, 2006) to address the racialized, classed and sexualized character of the figure. I examine the way the figure of the tranny worked in a manner which legitimized using the depiction of the violence as entertainment and delegitimized the trans women as victims.

I argue that the symbolic violence trans feminine people face is in part a result of and a way of maintaining dominant norms of femininity that are tied to cisnormativity, in addition to being tied to class and race. I call these dominant norms of femininity ‘cis norms of femininity.’

Through examining this case of violence gone viral, I reflect how this user-generated form of media and the logic of virality (Nahon & Hemsley, 2013, p. 16) and stickiness (Ahmed, 2004) can sometimes perpetuate violence. I examine the ways in which reality enforcement was accumulated through the user-generated practices of uploading, sharing, commenting, and framing. I also discuss ways in which this case of violence gone viral also enabled another counterpublic framing of the violence, to be articulated and highlighted.

### 1.4.3 Article III

Scholars (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009, 2015; Cizek & Rodriguez, 2020) have observed what I call politicization of trans bodies and trans access to space in the case of so-called bathroom bills. Like these other scholars, I also examine the way trans access to public and semipublic space is rhetorically envisioned as dangerous. I ask, how do frames, figures, and imaginative visions around transness create unbelonging for bodies in the social world?

In response to this question, I explore the rhetoric and online media events of two Christian right organisations, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) and the American Family Association (AFA), with regard to trans access to public and semipublic spaces.

My theorizing of making bodies feel (un)welcome in the social world is inspired by Sara Ahmed's (2006) feminist phenomenological theorization of affect, orientations, and belonging and Signe Bremer's transfeminist work (Bremer, 2011, pp. 40–42; Bremer, 2013, pp. 335–336, 347), which follows Ahmed's (2006) discussion of lines. Inspired by Ahmed's (2006) thought, Bremer (2011) has introduced the concept of linear gender to address the combined cis- and heteronormativity which takes the form of following straight/cis lines in time and space. Ahmed (2006, 92; 96; 139–140) asserts that some bodies encounter "stopping devices," such that figures can stop actual people from moving. In Article 3, I take these theorizations and combine them with the idea of imaginative geographies (Said, 1978) especially as conceptualized by Jaspir Puar (2007). Combining these frameworks, I propose my own concept—imaginative geographies of linear gender—to address the workings of the Christian right's anti-trans rhetoric.

Through studying the narrative visions, affective rhetoric, and media affordances of an online pledge, I argue that the Christian right envisions an imaginative geography of white cis spaces threatened by trespassing bodies through the juxtaposition of the figures of the 'Child' and 'women and children' against the figure of the 'predator,' which is attached to trans feminine bodies. I combine Ahmed's concept of stopping device with Puar's theorization of imaginative geographies to analyze the materializing effects of this rhetoric on the bodies, minds, and lives of trans people and on the spaces and boundaries in which they exist.

### 1.4.4 Article IV

Transgender Day of Remembrance is an annual action day that was originally founded in the USA in 1999. It is also observed in Europe and other areas in the 21st century and is attended virtually and in person by organizations and individuals. The purpose of TDoR is to mourn and politicize the murders of trans and gender variant people. In Article 4, I examine the frames of this violence that are circulated via what

I term trans affective publics around the time of TDoR by people and organizations and which also intensify these publics in a ‘glocal’ way.

In addition to the concept of affective public, I use the concept of the frame, as I elaborate on in my Theory chapter. I contend that affective framing practices bring people together into affective publics around transness and trans politics. In article 4, I especially draw on the movement studies’ thought on framing, but tweak the concept of framing to address affect in framing and affective frames. That is, in addition to replying to questions like “What is going on here” (Snow, et al., 2019, p. 393) and delineating a “situation as ‘injustice’” and providing an answer on “Who or what is to blame” (Snow, et al., 2019, p. 396), in my view frames also define “proper” feelings about the situation.

Compared with other modes of collective action, online settings are characterized by individualized and personal participation; this has been addressed through the concept of personalized (action) frame (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Papacharissi, 2015) and conceptualized as accruing storytelling by the multitude (Papacharissi, 2015; Yang, 2016). In my study on TDoR, I address both “chrySTALLIZED” (Snow et al, 2019, p. 400) frames which predate social media in its current form yet are now circulated online, and others that are loose and frequently materialize in platform-facilitated form as hashtags but also surpass online spaces. I address both the repetitious and occasions of adaption and personalization of “global” frames by social movements and individuals into novel settings.

Through studying Finnish and European material circulated online at the time of TDoR in 2017 and 2018, I address this adaption and circulation of the frames of violence in trans affective publics outside of USA. I examine the rhetoric of TGEU, a prominent European organization advocating trans rights, as well as rhetoric of Finnish trans and LGBT rights organizations and activists, as they occur on websites and on social media. Through scrutinizing this material, I examine the circulation and adaption of the affective frames established years ago in USA and by TGEU, the accumulating affective force they carry, and the uses they are put into in national trans politics in Finland. I contend that identity frames of violence evoke trans feelings and emotions for trans people in a ‘global,’ unifying way, such that circulating identity frames in trans affective publics promotes identification with vulnerability.

Furthermore, I examine how alternative framing of violence challenges the prevalent identity frame of violence through an analysis of a call for action (CFA) also circulated by TGEU and other trans and sex workers organisations. In the CFA, I see the possibility of a coalitional moment that activist rhetoric invokes—as a call to reflexive solidarity (Dean, 1995; Dean, 1996), or what I call affective-reflective solidarity. I view this call to action as an occasion of public making that invites and creates a form of solidarity that transcends identity boundaries.

### 1.4.5 Structure of the Dissertation

The sections in Chapter 2, “Theoretical Background: Affective Publics and Politicization of Trans Bodies and Identities” theoretically contextualize my research. It is divided into two main sections, the first of which situates my viewpoint on publics into theory discussions over publics and explains how I see publics as politicizing. The second elaborates on the devices, or, conceptual tools I use to think about how affect brings people together around trans bodies and identities. Chapter 3: “Methodological Starting Points” introduces my intersectional, cultural studies methodology, critical-reparative approach and affective and contextualizing methods, as well as elaborating on the practical, ethical and political choices I have made in my Articles and introducing the material. Chapter 4 introduces my findings, and Chapter 5 summarizes the main insights and contributions of the research.

## 2 Theoretical Background: Affective Publics and Politicization of Trans Bodies and Identities

My conceptualization of figures, frames, and performative visions as ‘collecting the people’ (i.e., gathering people together into publics) understands affect and discourse as intertwined. I will now briefly elaborate on how this insight relates to traditions of thinking about ‘affect’, and ‘emotion’, before returning to affect in relation to public expression in chapter 2.1.3 ‘Publics as Affectively Politicizing’.

Within the humanities and social sciences as well as interdisciplinary feminist studies in recent decades a “turn to affect” in scholarly theoretical and methodological frameworks has been noted by many scholars.<sup>13</sup> As feminist media studies scholar Anu Koivunen (2010, 11) points out, the “turn” is not univocal but consists of several strands and motivations.<sup>14</sup> For many scholars advocating for a turn to affect within feminist studies, it represents “broad range of criticisms of the linguistic turn and its effects on feminist research” (Koivunen 2010, p. 9).<sup>15</sup> Some consider this a move away from and ‘beyond’ discourse (Wetherell, 2013). Moreover, a will to think about experience as both social and embodied (Koivunen,

<sup>13</sup> Claims about such “turn” understood as a radical break, have also been critiqued for missing important histories of scholarly interest in the affective, both within sociology and anthropology there was interest in “the emotional” (Koivunen, 2010, p. 22) within feminist thought situated knowledge, or more widely, the relationship between the social and experience (Koivunen 2010, p. 23) has been theorized, and antiracist thought has addressed affect before the “turn” (Hemmings, 2005, pp. 564-565). Another history of thinking about affect and the political could be traced to the conservative sociology of Gustav le Bon (Goodwin, et al., 2000, p. 60; LeBon, 1960 (1895).

<sup>14</sup> Koivunen (2010, p 11) deciphers in the feminist interest in affect and emotion ““four main threads: (1) revisiting the Cartesian subject, (2) an investigation of the subject of feminism as embodied, (3) a critique of social constructionist approaches to the subject, signification and the social, and (4) a historical, critical analysis of emotion cultures.”

<sup>15</sup> Similarly, according to historian of science Ruth Leys (2011, p. 440) the turn represents within humanities “a widespread reaction against what has come to be seen as the straitjacket imposed by the poststructuralist emphasis on language and psychoanalysis”.

14-15), as well as a desire to critically address public feelings and “emotion cultures” (Koivunen, 2010, 19), motivate scholarly investments in ‘affect’.

In contrast to the wish to move beyond discourse, I have from the start been interested in both discourses around transness, circulated publicly, and the affective aspect of rhetoric circulated in media. As I discuss below, I argue that affect circulates and is modulated through rhetorical devices that I identify as affective-discursive practices, per Wetherell’s framework.

Discourse is by far not the only thing which is moved away when scholars are moving turning to affect or emotion. Within movement studies, similarly to theories of affective or intimate publics, the scholarly trajectory toward affect and emotion is one of moving away from over-emphasis of rationality (Goodwin et al, 2000; Papacharissi, 2015). In theorizing politics, affect offers a promise of the novel and the unexpected, of agential modalities beyond merely rational collective or individual actors (Papacharissi, 2015; Protevi, 2009).

While new materialist scholars have been crucial proponents of the ‘move to affect,’ other traditions of addressing that which moves people stem from movements studies (Goodwin et al 2000), sociological “crowd theories” (Le Bon 1960 (1895), and feminist studies (Koivunen 2010; Hemmings 2005). Various (trans)disciplinary perspectives theorizing publics also address the not-merely-rational forms of communication and engagement (Warner, 2002a; Calhoun, 2013).

New materialist scholars often separate ‘affect’—understood as bodily intensity or a change in the body’s state—from what they term ‘emotion,’ which they understand as culturally named and interpreted modulation of embodied sensations, and from ‘feeling,’ understood either as “personal” (Shouse, 2005) or as a publicly shared expression of emotion.<sup>16</sup> Social psychologist Wetherell and others (Wetherell et al, 2015) have argued for a methodological viewpoint which departs from affect as asocial or presocial (Massumi, 2002) and addresses affect, emotion and public feeling as intertwined.

Thinking about affect as bodily intensity or reaction—or a change in the body’s state—positions affect as an embodied sensation or experience that might shift into emotion, specifically as a reaction in one individual body.<sup>17</sup> However, affect has

<sup>16</sup> Gender studies scholar Elspeth Probyn (2005, p. 11) states that ‘emotion refers to cultural and social expression, whereas affects are of biological and physiological nature’

<sup>17</sup> New materialism frames affect as a bodily reaction or intensity which happens together with emotion, or alternatively, affect can be translated into emotion (Paasonen, 2011, p. 22–23; Papacharissi, 2015). However, Wetherell (2013) asserts that bodily intensity and cultural meaning happen simultaneously, not sequentially. Similarly, Ahmed (2004) writes about cultural meanings and previous experiential encounters being stimulated at the same time as an affective reaction arises. These cultural meanings do not have to be conscious or linguistically identified in the mind to have an effect.

another aspect, ‘affectivity’. Affectivity means the encounters or relations between bodies which set “bodies in motion (affection)” (Grossberg, 2010, p. 193). Affect thus also has a more political aspect of increased or decreased capacities of bodies coming into contact with each other. Per this meaning, beyond merely bodily reaction contained within one body, affect also encompasses something what Wetherell theorizes as ‘affective-discursive practices’ (2013; Wetherell et al, 2015); this aspect of affect is perhaps even more difficult to separate from public feelings and expressed emotions which evoke similar emotions in others.<sup>18</sup> Following Ahmed (2004; 2014), Wetherell (2013; Wetherell et al 2015) and Nikunen (2018), in my analysis, I do not separate the public, the embodied and the social aspect of affect into different planes (cf. Massumi 2002; Shouse 2005).

While partly inspired by some new materialist media and feminist studies using the concept of affect, my viewpoint is more aligned with Wetherell’s affective-discursive framework and Sara Ahmed’s (2004; 2008; 2014) phenomenological approach to affect/emotion. Both consider affective-semiotic practices as happening in minute contexts (with possibilities for agency) related to histories of cultural meaning and affective encounters (Ahmed 2004) or practices (Wetherell 2013). Affect and discourse are entangled in their thought work, along with (re)produce relations, boundaries, and affinities. To answer questions such as how affect brings people together into publics and drives them apart, my work draws on Ahmed and Wetherell to analyze the ways in which affective relations materialize through entangled discourse and affect (i.e., affective-discursive practices).

## 2.1 Publics and Politicization

I address the current (hyper)visiblity and politicization of trans bodies and identities through the conceptual tool of ‘publics’—understood as plural, affective (Papacharissi 2015), identity-evoking, and potentially politicizing. Coming together through circulation of discourse through media, publics and the discourses evoking them have a potential to ‘politize’—both in the sense of making something ‘political’ (i.e., not given) and in the intertwined sense of making something affectively intensified and center of public attention. Looking at instances where publics are evoked through circulating rhetoric about trans bodies and identities, I address this ambivalent politicization through rhetoric that simultaneously depicts and invites “proper feelings” about trans people as a group. Aligning with other scholars who have addressed the visibility of trans movements (Westbrook, 2020; Snorton &

<sup>18</sup> Following Wetherell (2013, p. 363), media studies scholar Kaarina Nikunen (2018, p. 31) argues that affect as intensity is difficult or even impossible to separate from cultural meanings and the circulation of public feeling in the study of public solidarities.

Haritaworn, 2013), I see trans publics as somewhat ambivalent with regard to challenging wider cultural hierarchies; when trans counterpublics act in a politicizing manner, their affective rhetoric draws from cultural resources and can have unintended consequences.

My view of ‘politicization’ combines conflict-oriented but non-foundational viewpoints of politics and democracy (Mouffe, 2000; Palonen, 1993; 2001) with a cultural studies-inspired understanding of publics. I see ‘the political’ extending beyond institutionalized or representative politics (e.g., electoral politics) while also keeping such forms in view, as bills and policies are rhetorical forms with acute materializing effects.

My view on ‘publics’ draws from theorists of publics within cultural studies, feminist studies, and queer theory: feminist philosopher Nancy Fraser (1990), literary and queer studies scholar Michael Warner (2002a; 2002b), cultural studies scholar Lauren Berlant (2008), and communication and political studies scholar Zizi Papacharissi (2015)—specifically, I weave together Fraser’s and Warner’s conception of “counterpublics” and Papacharissi’s “affective publics” (2015). These scholars highlight aspects of publics which differ from the idealized rational public (Habermas, 1991 [1964]) and Deweyan’s idea of publics, which see them as merely transparently communicating ready life-world interests (Marres, 2005).

My first article utilizes the concept of counterpublics, and in the last article, I use the concept of affective publics. Articles 2 and 3 are about people coming together into audiences and publics around transness through media, though in these articles I do not explicitly engage with theories about publics. Given that the cases addressed in this thesis differ in terms of their medium, reach, and pace of circulation, as well as the date of writing (with Article 1 being written before Papacharissi’s (2015) book and addressing print media and Article 2, 3, and 4 addressing online media), it is fitting that I move conceptually from ‘counterpublics’ to ‘affective publics.’ However, I see all counterpublics as ‘affective publics’ in a stretched sense.

Fraser, Warner, and Papacharissi’s theorizations facilitate my analysis of how transness is made visible in and through different publics which circulate discourses that are either explicitly or implicitly competing with discourses circulated in other publics. That is, they aid my examination of the rhetorical struggles of competing publics, or the way alternative publics seek to reach wider audiences and might at times, influence the wider public sphere (or: non-partisan news media and institutionalized politics) (Fraser, 1990, p. 68; Asen, 2000, pp. 428, 441; Calhoun, 2013, p. 81; Papacharissi, 2015), as well as culture more broadly. I understand the struggles for and against trans people’s right to exist in the social and symbolic space of the nation, as well as competing perceptions about transness and ‘proper’ feelings about transness, as struggles between various publics. While philosopher Fraser’s theorization on counterpublics is important for this thesis, various cultural studies

perspectives on publics (Warner, 2002a; 2002b; (Berlant, 2008; Papacharissi, 2015) help illuminate the way counter- /affective publics are not purely rational nor are they merely an extension or proto-face of social movements; these framings also deepen my analysis of how such publics can also work in contradictory ways, as I address in Articles 1 and 4.

I am interested in what draws people together into publics, whether understood to be ‘counter-’ or ‘affective.’ My articles address how affective rhetoric devices practices bring people together and drive them apart (Papacharissi 2015) through media. Article 2 addresses what I conceptualize as an audience—as distinguished from a public—coming together around and reacting to trans bodies and violence.<sup>19</sup> These concepts contribute to my overarching research questions: How are transgender bodies, identities, and violence articulated in affective publics? What implications does this have for the place of trans and other bodies in the social world? As I explain more thoroughly in the next chapter, I address the coming together into publics through affective framing practices, figures, and imaginative visions. Seen through the theories of multiple publics, the publics gathering around trans bodies and identities seek to widen the reach of the framings of trans bodies and identities circulated within them.

Therefore, I will address how Warner’s (2002a) and Fraser’s (1990) conceptions of counterpublic critique Habermas (1964) and how these theories influence my thought (including compatibility with the idea of politicization (Palonen, 1993; 2001). In my analysis of trans publics, I will also explain my application of ‘counterpublic’. Towards the end of this chapter on publics, I will explain how I conceptually stretch ‘affective publics’ via my own interpretation. In the next section, I will briefly explain some cultural studies scholars’ perspectives on publics.

<sup>19</sup> From some cultural studies viewpoints audiences and publics are not necessarily far from each other, and this pertains especially to networked audiences or publics (Livingstone, 2005, p. 9; Ito, 2008; boyd, 2010). The difference between conceptualizing taking part in a public and an audience – either through expression or ‘listening’ or paying attention – is in my view, the political potential which is essential for the concept of a public. This potential of ‘sovereignty’ and action is theorized by Warner, who separates audiences from publics, even though the ‘minimal’ form of participation in a public is for him, merely paying attention (Warner 2002a, p. 53). This political potential is, however, also a part of the publics which come together around something which seems apolitical. An audience is a public ‘paying attention’ without this potential, and the potential can be a matter of interpretation – by both the participants and by the analyst. The ‘counterness’ of counterpublics, as I discuss further in this chapter, however, emphasizes the political potential of these publics, as politizing agents.

### 2.1.1 Politicizing Publics

My understanding of ‘publics’ engages cultural studies scholar Sonia Livingstone’s definition, wherein:

‘Public’ refers to *a common understanding of the world, a shared identity, a claim to inclusiveness, a consensus regarding the collective interest*. It also implies a *visible and open forum* of some kind in which *the population* participates in order that such *understandings, identities, values and interests* are recognised or contested. (2005, p. 9, emphasis added).

According to Livingstone (2005, p. 9), ‘public’ denotes both a forum and the “population” participating in it. Similarly, German social theorist Jürgen Habermas’ influential work, which draws on earlier philosophical thought on publics to theorize the historical bourgeois public and its demise (1964), positions ‘public’ both as a (political) public sphere, a collection of people coming together to discuss and construct this sphere, and the mode of coming together. Within cultural studies, the idea of public as (a space for) discussion which derives from Roman city-state models and idealized, direct, face-to-face democracy has been supplanted by models where media circulation of discourse or frames around “identities, values, and interests” (Livingstone, 2005, p. 9) evoke the public into being through repeated address, attention, and acceptance of the address, forming a “stranger sociality” (Warner, 2002a; see also Asen, 2016, p. 4).

I draw from theorizations of ‘publics’ as formations of public expression, address, and attention involving people coming together through reflexive circulation of texts or discourse (Fraser, 1990; Warner, 2002a, p. 50; Berlant, 2008). Papacharissi rearticulates the idea of ‘publics,’ arguing that today’s networked publics (boyd, 2010) come together through affect, evoked and channeled by accumulating rhetoric and attention (Papacharissi, 2015) and facilitated by media.

The divergences between traditions of thought on publics have to do with disciplinary differences but also differing views of politics and the political.<sup>20</sup> Most theoretical traditions describe publics as having a relation to the political while being separate from the state (Warner, 2002a, p. 51; Habermas, 1991[1964]); publics may

<sup>20</sup> Communication studies scholars Ojala and Ripatti-Torniainen (2024, p. 146–147) divide traditions over ‘publics’ into political theory tradition, media and communications tradition, sociological tradition, and cultural studies tradition. However, as they also note, the cultural studies tradition draws from all the other traditions. Whereas Ojala and Ripatti-Torniainen (2024) do not pay attention to feminist and queer studies tradition of theorizing counterpublics, this is one of my main theoretical influences for thinking about publics emerging around transness.

be tied to and inform institutionalized politics as ‘the political public sphere’ (Habermas, 1991 [1964]), not-quite-political or almost-political entities coming together around a shared social position and the identities tied with this (Berlant, 2008), or temporarily coming together around an issue (Marres, 2005). Publics might also come together through solidarity around the suffering of others (Boltanski, 1999, p. 30; Papacharissi, 2015) or against the norms and exclusions of wider society and the dominant public sphere (Fraser, 1990, p. 61; Warner, 2002a, p. 86; Brouwer, 2006, p. 197).<sup>21</sup> As I explain below, the latter could be considered as politicizing the norms and exclusions of the ‘political’ within dominant public sphere.

Through rational argumentation and the bracketing of difference and inequality, the historical bourgeois public considered itself able to reach a consensus over the ‘common good’ within the nation-state; by contrast, counterpublics can emerge as a result of a ‘blockage’ in access to take part, be heard, or even be spoken for within a dominant public (Warner, 2002a, p. 52, see also Brouwer 2005, 197). As feminist scholars have argued, these blockages have to do both with the ideal of “bracketing” (Fraser, 1990), as well as with access, the “need to presuppose forms of intelligibility already in place” (Warner, 2002a, p. 54), and “any selection of genre, idiolect, style, address, and so forth” (Warner, 2002a, p. 55).

Rather than assuming or normatively theorizing ‘public sphere’ as a level playing field for rational argumentation with transparent, equally accessible language and the possibility to reach consensus over the common good, the thinkers I draw from take a conflict-oriented viewpoint to politics and publics, assuming that in an unequal society, several publics are better—especially for the subaltern (Fraser, 1990; Warner, 2002a). Rather than forwarding neutral issue publics, counterpublic thinkers theorize a conflictual relationship between counterpublics and the dominant (political) public sphere, in which counterpublics politicize the latter’s norms and exclusions, interrogating what is taken as common sense in the hegemonic framings circulated by the dominant public. These could include, for example, how gender is understood, what ‘Americanness’ is, the position of trans people, and the position of people facing ‘trans panic’ in society.

<sup>21</sup> Even being an (active) audience of entertainment can be seen as enacting a public, according to the cultural studies viewpoint which seeks to destabilize the boundary of publics and audiences (Livingstone, 2005, p. 12; Ito, 2008; boyd, 2010) and emphasizes the identity-evoking character of all publics, (Livingstone, 2005, pp. 12–13). Ojala and Ripatti-Torniainen (2024) consider the media studies tradition to distance ‘publics’ from politics. This might be the case for some media studies scholars’ examination of publics. However, in my view, when identity publics are seen as (proto)political, and when no publics are seen as transparently communicating life-world interests (cf. Marres 2005), all publics come to be seen as in a sense identity publics, and this distinction between political and non-political publics becomes less clear.

Publics are, in practice, dependent on some sort of media and infrastructure of circulation. Changes in media in turn shift publics, invigorating novel thought on them. The idea of a singular political public sphere which emerged from the bourgeois public sphere—historically tied with the print press (Habermas, 1991 [1964])), has become more challenged after the advent of internet and the “new visibility” (Thompson, 2004, p. 49) discussed above, and especially after the advent of social media (Bruns, 2023).

Continuing the thought of Sonia Livingstone (2005), danah boyd (2008; 2010) together with communication scholar Nancy Baym (2012) argued that social media and the Internet have changed publics, and many scholars now consider there to be many publics, enabled by social media generally (boyd, 2008) and such online platforms as discussion forums (Wright & Street, 2007), comment sections of online newspapers (Toepfl & Piwoni, 2015), blogs (Steele, 2018; Kaiser & Puschmann, 2018) Twitter (X) (Jackson & Foucault Welles, 2015; Kuo, 2018), Tumblr (Renninger, 2015; Byron, et al., 2019), Facebook (Lowenstein-Barkai, 2024) and Instagram (Butkus, 2023) and at times moving between different online forums and contesting hegemonic ideas in mainstream online spaces (Kaiser, 2017) or working to critique and undermine other publics (Xu, 2020). Networked publics have been variously theorized as ad-hoc publics (Bruns & Burgess, 2011), affective publics (Papacharissi, 2015), and intimate publics (Dobson, et al., 2018). Some communication scholars now consider there to be a “networked public sphere” (Benkler, et al., 2015, p. 596), in which there are different publics (Kaiser, 2017, pp. 1662-1664; Kaiser & Puschmann, 2018), but many scholars agree with cultural studies scholars John Hartley and Josh Green in believing that “ ‘the’ public sphere is a convenient fantasy” and has always been so (Hartley, 2006, pp. 346-347).<sup>22</sup>

Importantly, scholars holding a conflict-oriented viewpoint to publics and politics have argued that many publics precede the Internet. Habermas (1964) has been critiqued for taking at face value the self-understanding of the bourgeois public as ‘the’ public.<sup>23</sup> Scholars have argued that other, non-dominant publics have existed

<sup>22</sup> Expression and activism via online platforms have also been addressed in terms of “affective capitalism” (Dean, 2010) with platforms themselves being addressed in terms of “surveillance capitalism” (Zuboff, et al., 2019). While some consider the agency of activists on platforms to be a sort of lure (Dean, 2010), I take a more reparative view, as two ideas can be true at the same time: The platforms profit from data being sold through each action on these platforms; at the same time, the surface expression on the platform is also real and can have effects (Maly, 2020, p. 447). The surveillance side of online publics is outside of the scope of this thesis.

<sup>23</sup> The conceptualizations over Internet as a “public sphere” within the “fragmentation debate” or polarization debate have likewise been critiqued for failing to consider power relations within society and between publics, in other words, for failing to take a conflict-oriented viewpoint to politics (Dahlberg, 2007, pp. 829, 836-839).

as long as the bourgeois public which challenge its dominant norms and exclusions (Warner, 2002a; Fraser, 1990; Asen, 2000). Fraser (1990) and Warner (2002a; 2002b) offer an analysis of conflict between publics (especially non-dominant publics conflicting with the dominant public) as essential to theorizing publics and their rhetoric.

While Habermas (1964) envisions one united public sphere as the best option for democracy even today, Fraser critiques this assumption. Fraser (1990) suggests that in “stratified societies,” the norms of expression in dominant publics tend to favor the societally dominant groups. Members of nondominant groups can develop their “counterdiscourses” per their own “subaltern counterpublics” in a manner which is not possible in the wider public. Therefore, having several publics allows “widening discursive space” (Fraser, 1990, p. 67), and secondly, serves the emancipatory needs of the nondominant groups. However, the status of counterpublics as publics means that they are not simply separatist, and that they can seek to widen the reach of the “counterdiscourses” developed within them to also the wider public (see also Calhoun, 2013). In other words, for Fraser, counterpublics serve a double function first as spaces for free development of thought and rest from the dominant public sphere and also as spaces for regroupment out of which counterdiscourses can spread.

In another important critique of Habermas’ single public, Warner emphasizes that while publics are in principle open-ended, they are, in practice, restricted through both the economics and infrastructures of production and circulation. When addressing “the public” in the meaning of a general public or population at large, public participation is never equally accessible to all (Warner, 2002a). According to Warner, the address of a public explicitly or implicitly defines its addressees as part of some common collective body. This could be Americans, Christians, trans people, leftists, feminists, sex workers, travestis, people in solidarity with these groups, or even the identity group of people who explicitly defy identities of all kinds. However, the address of a public is not as specific as a personal address but rather creates a ‘close-enough’ identification (Fraser, 1990; Warner, 2002a; Berlant, 2008). I examine explicit address of publics in Articles 1 and 4 and to a lesser extent in article 3, specifically the evocation and widening of a public around affective reactions to trans bodies in social space.

The understanding of what exactly constitutes a public vary depending on the theoretical and scholarly tradition; sociologists and communication studies scholars have been interested on current forums of expression were as different as possible discussants would gather to discuss topics which are political in a narrow meaning. Scholars within cultural and media studies have often been interested in addressing ‘identity publics’ emerging online. (Ojala & Ripatti-Torniainen, 2024.) From a feminist cultural studies perspective, publics explicitly gathering around identities

are at least proto-political and thus, as I argue, can be politicizing; and all publics are evoking identity. Moreover, enticing entertainment audiences by evoking reactions to trans existence in social world can have political and everyday consequences for the people who are encountered through the frames attached to trans bodies in these entertainment fora. Amidst the current rise of reactionary forces and publics (Amery & Moldon, 2024), it is clear that public making around cis and trans identities can be powerful political force.

While all publics are ‘poetic’ or performative in their discourse, this is more visible in the case of subaltern publics (Warner, 2002a, pp. 81–82), such that the manner of describing the world is itself world-creating in both dominant and subaltern publics. However, subaltern publics might seem more openly imaginative, as they are not simply reproducing the status quo in their rhetoric. In this way, even when not explicitly political in the sense of a parliamentary/electoral or movement political manner, non-dominant publics are politicizing in the sense of questioning what is usually taken as given in the dominant world-view.

Cultural studies is generally critical of hierarchies of knowledge and expression, including the norm of emotionally reserved or distant-appearing styles or forms of expression which are often characteristic of elites. For example, Calhoun (2013) suggests that counterpublics of the non-dominant have traditionally used forms of expression which evoke emotion, such as songs. Demonstrations are an example of publics taking to the streets, and their forms of expression are often repetitive and chant-based, rather than arguments in a ‘discussion.’

The question over ‘masses’ or ‘crowds’ has long divided cultural studies and sociological (or broadly normative) thought on publics (Livingstone, 2005; Ojala & Ripatti-Torniainen, 2024).<sup>24</sup> Whereas the conservative sociological thought aims for clear distinctions between what is seen as ‘collective behavior’ and non-rational action, on the one hand, and rational ‘collective action,’ on the other (Ojala & Ripatti-Torniainen, 2024, p. 152; (Dolata & Schrape, *Social Movement Studies*, p. 4; Goodwin et al, 2000, pp. 66–67), media and cultural studies tradition joins culturally oriented movement studies in questioning and deconstructing such distinctions and is suspicious of the politics of making these distinctions, as often it is the subaltern whose action is defined as nonrational, crowdlike, emotional, and so

<sup>24</sup> Sonia Livingstone emphasizes “the claim by Williams (1961, p. 289) that there are no masses, ‘only ways of seeing people as masses’” (2005, p. 22). Similarly, movement studies scholars who emphasize the importance of emotions for movements have critiqued the ideas of Le Bon (1960 [1895]), which paint “masses” as emotionally suggestible and emotions as spreading and moving people in “masses”, in contrast to political action proper (Goodwin et al 2000).

on. Papacharissi's (2015) theorization of 'refrains' and hashtags as frames uniting people continues this line of thought within counterpublic theory on forms of expression which publics utilize in coming together, articulating themselves, and widening their reach.

### 2.1.2 Publics as Politicizing

I argue, that (alternative) publics can act as vehicles of politicization, both in the common sense meaning of making people interested in politics and in a more precise meaning laid out by political theorist Kari Palonen as an opening up of what has been seen as given (Palonen, 1993; 2001; 2003); that is, presenting something as political, and opening alternative futures. This idea closely aligns with Warner's (2002a) idea of poetic world-making, and Fraser's idea of widening "discursive space" through new vocabularies developed in counterpublics (1990, p. 67), through which what has previously been taken for granted is politicized.

This meaning of politicization is especially pertinent to the publics loosely tied to new social movements (Melucci, 1980)—for example, feminist, trans, and other publics which open up gender and sexuality as political (Fraser, 1990). In Palonen's thought, politicization is not exclusively about institutionalized politics; rather 'the political' is open-ended (1993; 2001, p. 133, pp. 143–145). Similarly, radical democracy theorist Andrew Schaap, (2008, p. 71), discussing political theorist Chantal Mouffe's (2000) idea of politicization, points out open-endedness of the political and the way politicization, or "radical politics" questions the taken for granted limits of politics. However, institutionalized politics (e.g., of the state) are part of 'the political.'

My methodological framework combines the idea of multiple publics (particularly counter/affective publics) with the idea of politicization (Mouffe, 2000; Schaap, 2008; Palonen, 1993; 2001; 2003). Counter/affective publics allow for the politicization of "the terms of belonging" (Schaap, 2008, p. 70) in the social/symbolic space and "within the political association" (Schaap, 2008, p. 70). That is, counterpublics can challenge the "terms of belonging," as well as the terms of being political (e.g., through style or subject matter) (Fraser, 1990, p. 61; Warner, 2002a; Asen, 2000, p. 425–427). Counter/affective publics may question what is considered natural, private, or taken as given (Fraser, 1990, pp. 70–73; Warner, 2002a, pp. 79–80). This denaturalization may happen through 'counterdiscourse' (Fraser, 1990), which may also ask who is considered a proper, respectable participant (the being heard part of 'voice') or who is considered part of the politically imagined 'we' in the first place. The tension between universality of human rights as transcending the 'demos' as necessarily bounded (Schaap, 2008, Mouffe, 2000) materializes through the exclusion from rights and belonging of the

literally and juridically excluded (i.e., non-citizens) and those imagined as ‘improper’ citizens who are deemed undeserving of rights or even humanity in a given rhetoric/ political imaginary.

In that sense, counterpublics can be forces of politicization par excellence questioning, putting into motion, and de-articulating what has been tightly articulated together, as well as that which has materialized or gained the “the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface that we call matter” (Butler, 1993, p. 9). They can question what is taken for granted in rhetoric and action and pull apart the positions and relations which have gained rigid materiality through the force of convention, ripping power relations and power-knowledge of their self-evidentiality. This idea supports my view that counterpublics are politicizing in the sense of challenging and making political whatever they are formed around; for example, politicizing relations of gender and sexuality, such as via feminist, LGBT, queer, and trans counterpublics, or the exclusions from rights of whoever is considered transgressing the norms of binary and linear gender.

We can consider also reactionary ‘social movements’ such as the Christian right to have their own counterpublics which also seek to widen the reach of their framings and spread into the wider political ‘public sphere’ or legacy media (attached with ideas of objectivity and non-partisanship) and parliamentary politics.<sup>25</sup> While these reactionary counterpublics are not “subaltern counterpublics” in the same meaning as the non-dominant counterpublics tied with emancipatory social movements (Fraser, 1990), they can still function as somewhat alternative and separate spheres. This relative separateness allows them to circulate their own discourses without being put to the test against the perceived objectivity and non-partisanship of the mainstream legacy media. Further, they allow for alternative formulations of identities (such as ‘Christian’) to mainstream news media (Warner, 2002a, p. 86). In this sense, they function similarly to the counterpublics attached to non-dominant social groups’ identities, i.e., allowing the participants a sort of freedom from those with other or dominant interpretations of their identities or even opposing interpretations of the character and inclusivity of the wider ‘we’ of Americanness, humanity, or of political issues and goals. While I do not use the concept in Article

<sup>25</sup> Even though her focus is on democracy-enhancing counterpublics, such as the feminist counterpublic, Fraser also notes that some counterpublics are “explicitly anti-democratic and anti-egalitarian” (1990, p. 67). Likewise, Warner notes that “U.S. Christian fundamentalism” also has its own counterpublic (2002a, p. 86). Robert Asen has suggested that counterpublics are formed in opposition to a public which is seen as dominant and a felt/perceived or rhetorically constituted exclusion from that dominant (political) public and the hegemonic discourses in it (2000, p. 427). Therefore, not all counterpublics are egalitarian.

3 to address Christian right rhetoric, I now consider the Christian right as also having counter- or affective publics which seek to widen their reach.

Kari Palonen's (1993; 2001; 2003) conceptualization separates 'politicking' of the already 'politicized' (i.e., already challenged and destabilized, or not "given" any longer) from the act of 'politicizing'; according to this, the Christian right would be 'politicking' with gender and trans bodies and identities already politicized by feminist and LGBT movements and the counterpublics loosely attached to these movements. From another viewpoint, perhaps there are forces of movement and stasis, or politicization and depoliticization, in the rhetoric around trans people's existence in society, such that the Christian right is one force of politicization. This would entail seeing 'politicization' as free from the positive meaning given to it by Mouffe (2000), who considers human rights as key to politicizing exclusions in our societies (Schaap, 2008, 59).

These reactionary counterpublics work differently compared to the politicizing counterpublics of emancipatory movements: though they bring other voices to visibility, they do not advance agonistic democracy (Mouffe 2000) or human rights.

Following legal theorist and political philosopher Carl Schmitt (2007 [1932]), Mouffe sees the area of the 'political' as one of irrefutable conflict. Departing from Schmitt, she proposes agonistic action as a form of democratic, conflictual public action, so long as it does not refute the humanity of the opponent. She therefore distinguishes 'agonism' from the sort of pure 'antagonism' that sees the opponent purely as an enemy and would deny the opponent human rights. I see the Christian right as having affective/counterpublics which might introduce irrefutable conflict into public life in a manner which denies the human rights of the people opposed, such as attaching trans people to dehumanizing figures like the predator.

Mouffe's theory reveals how the Christian right's rhetoric on trans bodies specifically and gender more widely often works in a purely antagonistic manner, which is in itself antidemocratic in the sense of opposing human rights, even while continuing to work through democratic forms such as media and parliamentary institutions. Therefore, the counterpublics of the Christian right can work against democratic human rights and even against the widening of discursive space through circulating rhetoric which dehumanizes trans people and makes it harder for many people to imagine trans people as belonging or as having voices which should be heard. This rhetoric of the Christian right could at times even legitimate concrete violence against trans people, and it certainly legitimates violent bills and politics, which make it harder for trans people to inhabit social space.

### 2.1.3 Publics as Affectively Politizing

The previous sections discussed theorizations of counterpublics, as well as the stakes for democracy of different publics around transness in light of post-foundational and conflict-oriented theories of politicizing and democracy, especially concerning the politicization of trans people's existence and position in society. I addressed the relevance of cultural studies viewpoints for thinking about politicizing transness through multiple publics. Next, I will address the role of affect/emotion in publics.

I have thus far considered politicization from the point of view of questioning the given and opening up what has been materialized. I think there is another aspect of politicization which is closer to everyday meaning of the word and necessary for politicization in Palonen's meaning—namely, gathering attention or recognition as concrete visibility/audibility (Mateus, 2013, p. 261) - 'grabbing' (Senft, 2008, p. 46) attention. In Warner's (2002a, 53) view, "attention" is also the 'minimal' criteria for participating in a public. The publics I address are attached to movements. All movements need attention (Tufekci, 2013, p. 849) to compete in the "social problems marketplace" (Westbrook, 2020, p. 5; Best, 1993, pp. 15-20) and politicization in the sense of bringing something to the center of attention and thus to the political agenda is key to the way current networked publics can affect institutionalized politics (Papacharissi & Trevey, 2018, pp. 93-94).

Attention (individually and collectively) is essential for politicization, publics, and the struggle over widening their reach. Making something symbolically important by positioning it as contingent instead of given on a wider cultural and societal level (i.e., politicization in Palonen's meaning) requires intensified attention. Attention could even be less intensive or half-hearted to count as taking part in a public (Warner 2002a, p. 53). However, when a matter is politicized in the sense of it coming to matter, the intensified attention is not merely a matter of individuals calmly or half-heartedly reading, listening, or viewing, or even taking part in the expression. What is crucial for this increased sense of a topic like trans people's existence in the social world mattering politically? Following Papacharissi (2015), what brings people together into publics through networked media is affect.

When anti-trans and trans publics gather around trans bodies and identities, and the existence of trans people is politicized, especially *more widely*, this entails that there is a sense of felt sense of urgency and importance. Papacharissi's ideas over centrality of affect for public's help address *both widening visibility* of trans bodies and identities *and the sense of importance* attached to the articulations trans bodies and identities – and to articulations of a trans "we" - in trans counterpublics.

Affect circulates in publics along with rhetorical frames (Papacharissi, 2015), such that it is key to people coming together through social media, whether understood as communities, publics, or activism. If we think of media as action at a distance, and affectivity as moving bodies, all media can potentially be 'affective,'.

Thus it is possible to extend Papacharissi's idea that affect brings people together into publics besides those enabled by social media. Discourse or frames circulated in publics are always to some extent affective also, in so far as they manage the gathering of an audience. In that sense, even the counterpublic formed around the zine *Original Plumbing* can also be considered an affective public.

Despite this, Papacharissi's theorization is especially relevant to addressing current public making through social media, which I address in Article 4. Papacharissi defines affective publics as networked publics (boyd 2010) that come together through "expressions of sentiment" (Papacharissi, 2015, p. 125). I take these "expressions of sentiment" to be expressions of opinion, knowledge or ideas entangled with expressions of emotion.

In social media, expressions of sentiment take the form of tiny stories, which could be tweets, retweets, or similar forms of storytelling. These expressions are joined together through 'frames,' such as hashtags in the case of Twitter (X), which gather and modulate the intensified affect—both in a sense of urgency and of feelings—in turn joining people into "affective publics." Together with the networked media infrastructure, these "connective" (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012) action frames enable "attunement" (Papacharissi 2015, pp. 22-23,71,93) to causes, events, and feelings across the world almost without delay, enabling a feeling of sharing and taking part in the public—which can also enable taking the public to the streets or mobilizing in other ways across great geographical distance. Networked media functions to transmit these attunements and allow them to amplify in "feedback loops" in connection with others (Papacharissi 2015, p. 23).

'Affective' in the concept of 'affective publics' has several aspects. The aspect of 'affectivity' that results from bodies coming to contact with other bodies—which Paasonen (Markelj & Bueno, 2021, p. 38) sees as also encompassing bodies of thought—results in altered bodily states, enhancing or inhibiting the body's capacity to act (per Spinoza's definition of decision and action). In my view, affectivity in 'affective publics' means: 1) emotional valence being shared and attuned to through media; 2) attuning to the coming together of people, which has to do with the 'affective' character of media; and 3) affect as people being moved or affected in a manner which might make them act politically.

The explicit concern for bodies being moved and moving each other through spreading affective rhetoric and frames through media, partly in media-specific ways, is better suited to addressing what is happening in today's media-molded, 'user-generated,' and user-engaging politicization of transness than a more discussion-based idea of publics or politics. The emphasis on entanglement of emotion and discourse in expression, on repetitive or choir-like expression, and on cumulatively accruing attention is useful for addressing (engaging people in) politicizing transness within today's publics.

According to Papacharissi's definition of affective publics, they are enabled by the Internet (especially social media) and the concomitant fast cumulativeness of 'choirs' chanting the same message through the "storytelling infrastructures" (Papacharissi, 2016) of platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram. However, this definitional aspect does not equally apply to all the media I have addressed, thus my use of the concept requires stretching it: I emphasize the intensity of emotions, emotional storytelling, frames, and (imaginative) figures instead of the intensity of pace and volume afforded by platforms like X or videosharing sites (such as the one I address in Article 2).

While I welcome the emphasis on affect/emotion, I assert that we must not neglect analysis of signification and conventions of thinking, feeling, and relating when analyzing publics. Her explicitly Spinozist definition of affect (i.e., as changes in the body's state and bodies affecting each other) notwithstanding, Papacharissi addresses the circulation of 'frames' when theorizing affective publics (2015)—that is, linguistic and semiotic devices and expressed emotions —through reading online rhetoric. In order to research publics coming together around transness, the new materialist interest in 'moving bodies' needs to be supplemented with analysis of articulation through affective-discursive practices to understand *how* bodies are moved and move each other through media.

## 2.2 How Affect Brings People Together into Publics and Audiences

In this section, I introduce my conceptual framework for defining and analyzing figures, frames, and imaginative geographies. Moreover, I explain what I see as layers of violence, my focus on symbolic violence, and violent figurations. The purpose of this chapter is to show the conceptual roots and scholarly influences to which I turn as starting points for my own analysis.

Toward the end of this section, I describe my own interpretation of frames and framing as affective-discursive practices and how thinking the select case studies together brings me to the conclusion that each of these rhetorical devices (figures, frames, rhetorical visions) enact affective-discursive practices.

### 2.2.1 Figures Bring People Together

I argue that cultural figures circulated through media and attached to trans existence bring people together into publics and audiences. Through these figures, the place of trans bodies in culture, is (re-)articulated. A figure embodies ways of thinking, perceiving, and most of all, feeling, about a social group – or, people perceived as belonging to a category – which can be (re)produced through the figure. Moreover,

‘figure’, as a term, is a way to think about the relationship between the rhetorical and the ‘material’ in various meanings of the term. Thirdly, figures often act as tools of symbolic violence. ‘Figure’ is a key concept in Articles 2 and 3 of this thesis.

I will begin with a version of ‘figures’ as materializing apparatuses through thinking with feminist thought on materialization. I then described some ways in which this materialization can be interrupted. When interpreted through the ideas presented in the last section of this Theory chapter, these materializing apparatuses reveal themselves to be practices.

I do not see apparatuses and practices as mutually exclusive; the opposition between structure and agency is a false one. Figures are both materializing, routinized, situation-specific, and open to interrogation and even re-interpretation. To view them as devices is to emphasize their power over individual people, whereas, to address them as practices is to show how they necessarily happen through situational action—that is, invitations for feelings and for ways of relating which might also be acted upon (e.g., interrupted or turned down) by others.

Toward the end of this chapter, I consider the situatedness of figures in the current media environment and the affective-discursive practices taking place through specific media. This brings us back to publics and the argument that affect bring audiences and publics together through the circulation of figures, frames, and imaginative visions.

Let us start with the materializing aspect of figures and the question of how to address materialization, or the power of rhetoric to affect concrete people and lives? My conceptual use of figures draws from a mix of feminist theorists with an interest in the interplay of rhetorical and “material” – variously understood - through affect. Both articles 2 and 3, in different ways, address the way figures attached with trans feminine people work in materializing ways.

Donna Haraway, perhaps the best-known feminist thinker of ‘figures,’ states: “A figure collects up the people; a figure embodies shared meanings in stories that inhabit their audiences” (1997, p. 23). A figure communicates ‘stories’ strong enough to ‘inhabit’ the people who are their audience. As I see it, figures often also draw people together in shaping relations to others perceived through them, building affective affinity (or what Sundén and Paasonen (2019) call affective homophily), a sense of commonality, and - at least when figures embody a threat - the figure “collects” people against the figure. In that sense, figures are powerful vehicles for politicizing the existence of some bodies in the shared social world.

In my interpretation, to “embody” these “shared meanings” means that rhetorical figures gather cultural meanings into one unit or imagined body, which can then be understood as literal (hiding its semiotic production) and can become “embodied” through encounters in which bodies are perceived as literal embodiments of this figure (Haraway, 1997, p. 23).

Aspects of the figure can be embodied, as the figure shapes and limits the lives of the people who are attached to it in micro-level encounters, as well as laws and policies (Einboden, et al., 2024). In the context of figures attached to transness, trans studies scholar and historian Jules Gill-Peterson (2024a) has recently addressed the way trans feminine people, travesty, hijras, and other groups of people with their own histories, identities, and cultural contexts have been “transfeminized” through attachment to Western figures by colonial powers. This has entailed sexualization, attachment to aggressive transgression of gender and sexual boundaries, and dehumanization, affecting the life chances of people like the hijras, who lost their traditional manner of income through new stigmatization and policing introduced by colonizers, prompting a turn to sex work. I assert that this exemplifies the materializing power of figures, as well as their globalized circulation.

Feminist and queer studies scholar Sara Ahmed also theorizes materializing effects of both affect (2014, pp. 24–25) and affective figures (2014, pp. 79–80) through which bodies are perceived and constituted as separate entities. As the figures Ahmed addresses are figures of threat or fearful figures, this separateness is perhaps even more pronounced.

In her intersectional phenomenological work, Ahmed (2014) theorizes the way figures produce boundaries while evoking emotions around the perceived un/belonging of bodies. Figures that turn some bodies into unbelonging, unwelcome bodies—such as the figures of the ‘bogus’ asylum seeker (80) attached with the figure of the ‘terrorist’ (79)—have material consequences for the people attached with these figures in concrete encounters. Ahmed theorizes the work that figures do in making bodies unwelcome through racism and racialization, attaching fearful affect to bodies that are considered unbelonging.

In Article 3, I draw from Ahmed’s (2014, p. 79-80) theorization in order to think about how the figure of the ‘predator’ performatively shapes spaces, bodies, and trajectories of bodies in spaces and lives. My thought is here aligned with other scholars who have addressed the way the figure of the ‘predator’ is attached to trans feminine people (Schildt and Westbrook, 2015; McLaughlin, 2017), prompting me to ask how the fearful figure of the predator is juxtaposed with the figures of ‘The Child’ and ‘women and children’ and how this juxtaposition might performatively shape people’s life trajectories and trajectories in space.

I am also inspired by a pair of feminist thinkers of materialization that draw from Marxist tradition in cultural studies. Drawing from sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, media and cultural studies scholars Angela McRobbie (2004) and Imogen Tyler (2006) address affective figures evoked in media as social reproduction; through the use of figures, material (economic) power relations and social order are reproduced in and through media. Through the circulation of figures, some people are represented as disgusting or shameful in a manner which reproduces class as a social relation of power.

Tyler (2006) gives the example of media circulations of the ‘chav,’ a figure of working-class subjectivity and especially working-class femininity, represented as disgustingly underclass (Tyler 2006). In Article 2, I combine these theories of figures as social reproduction with trans studies scholar Talia Bettcher’s (2007; 2014) theorization of epistemic violence and “reality enforcement” to address the entanglement of symbolic and epistemic violence with concrete violence and the circulation of a video of the violent encounter.

This violent framing attaches trans feminine people to the ‘tranny,’ a figure of entertaining and sexualized un-reality, thus extending and perpetuating the violence of the physical encounter through epistemic violence. Reality enforcement is a specific form of anti-trans violence based on the prevalent cultural idea that gender expression represents the shape of a person’s genitalia (Bettcher, 2007, p. 53). This leads to the perception of trans people as unreal frauds who violate the gendered norms of their assigned gender, legitimizing violence as a form of punishment of ‘transgressive’ bodies and identities. I see this anti-trans view of trans bodies as enacting symbolic violence in itself. ‘Reality enforcement’ names the imbrication of epistemological power over trans bodies and identities with other forms of power; as seen in the enforcement of un-reality upon trans people, including through physical violence. In my view, it is possible to claim that Bettcher’s term also addresses the materialization of relations of power.

The idea that figures are literal-appearing affective-semiotic formations which can carry and reproduce societal power relations, making these relations seem as literal qualities of bodies, unites the Bourdieu-inspired thought on figures by Imogen Tyler (2006; 2008), the postmodernist and Marxism-inspired theory of Donna Haraway, and the phenomenological thought of Sara Ahmed. What I call the materializing power of figures Haraway calls the ‘hybrid quality’ of figures, such that their existence in the social world is at once material and semiotic. This means that figures are both imaginative and performative. As my interpretation of figuration emphasizes repetition and materialization, I argue that figuration is a form of performativity (Butler, 2002 [1990]).

Even as these viewpoints to the materializing power of figures differs from each other, repetition, coagulation, sedimentation, and materialization—both in the micro-level encounters and wider social position of groups articulated through figures—are shared theoretical aspects of figuration from which I draw. All of these thinkers see figures as simultaneously affective and semiotic formations. My use of the term figure emphasizes the affect-carrying and -evoking aspect of figures; they “collect up people” (Haraway, 1997, p. 23) and carry meaning and affect, attaching to bodies through the figure.

When figures materialize, the ‘material’ is also a matter of atmospheres as (learned) patterns of feeling towards bodies perceived in certain way—i.e., (mis)recognized as

something—and of potential violent acts toward those bodies attached with both affect and meaning. The figures I address in this thesis (the ‘predator,’ ‘women and children,’ and the ‘tranny’) are materializing devices. In other words, they embody and stabilize cultural meanings and feelings attached to various (trans and cis) bodies. In Article 3, I investigate the way the organisations of the Christian Right, which I regard as ‘rhetorical machineries,’ use the figures of ‘women and children.’

Figures are not only materializing devices, they also often act as politicizing devices. Figures can evoke affect intertwined with meaning and politicize the existence of certain (individual and collective) bodies in society. Drawing from Ahmed’s (2004; 2014) idea of affective economies, this happens through chains of signs, meaning, and affect. Figures, as signs, are attached with other signs, and through these, with cultural meaning and affect. Ahmed (2014, pp. 79-80) analyses how the ‘bogus’ asylum seeker and the ‘terrorist’ rhetorically function to politicize the existence of immigrants in the imagined space of the nation and intensify encounters in the micro-level spaces that make up our shared social world.

From a media studies viewpoint, circulation of figures like these through media brings people together around affectively reacting to a figure, moving some people and stopping those to whom figures are attached from moving. Article 3 especially addresses the way the figure of the predator is attached to trans women and trans feminine people and is used to enhance reactions and draw people together. This attachment can also move people in ways that constitute a threatening environment/atmosphere toward the trans people attached to this figure, so that they are less able to move in various spaces. Moreover, as I argue in Article 3, drawing from trans studies scholar Zein Murib’s (2020) work, this figure is used to mobilize people in support of legislation and policies, which effectively renders trans people’s existence ‘illegal’ or illegitimate in public space.

In Articles 2 and 3, I argue that figures attached to and juxtaposed with transfeminine people (‘the Child,’ ‘women and children’) are used to collectively imagine transfeminine people—or even simply those people who are perceived through these figures<sup>26</sup>—as always already violent, as sexualized and stigmatized

<sup>26</sup> This means people included in Gill-Peterson’s word “transfeminized” (2024a, 1). This term brilliantly illustrates the ways colonial powers have perceived and policed very different people in very different cultural contexts with their own histories and identities in a Western manner, which combines perceptions and tactics of sexualization, being perceived as an aggressive threat, and being perceived as gender and sexual transgressors. This then legitimizes violence and violent policies of both the state and individuals, above all cis men. Trans movements that present all “transfeminized” people as belonging to the same trans/gender identity can be understood as participating in and perpetuating the colonialization of diverse people with other histories, contexts, identities, and possibly politics, such as the travesti in Brazil.

through attachment to sex work, or both, serving to delegitimize them as potential victims and citizens. Moreover, threatening or fearful figures which attach to trans bodies justify violent policies, and can entice and legitimize concrete violence. Forms of ‘slow violence’ or exposure to forms of harm and neglect, what Stanley (2021, 8) calls “paradigmatic neglect,” also happen through attaching trans people—especially trans feminine people—to figures who threaten the lives and futures of ‘women and children’ and to the collective future attached with this figuration in the Christian right’s anti-gender rhetoric. Gill-Peterson understands this phenomenon as intertwined necro- and biopolitics (2024a; 2024b, 199-200).

My analyses in Articles 2 and 3 align with arguments that various cultural figures are not only used to justify violence, they even, in a sense, enact violence (Stanley, 2019; Gill-Peterson, 2024a). Moreover, my analysis aligns with several scholars who have addressed figures attached to trans people in recent years. As I address the way figures circulate through forms of online media, my analysis contributes to scholarly conversations on cultural figures generally (Ahmed 2014; Tyler 2006; MacRobbie 2004) and on the way figures are attached to trans people in the media and culture (Westbrook & Schildt 2015; Westbrook, 2020; Gill-Peterson 2024b, 200).

## 2.2.2 Framing as Affective-Discursive Practice

As a key concept of this thesis, ‘frame’ has various disciplinary meanings but was originally coined by sociologist Erving Goffman (1974).<sup>27</sup> Similar to the concept of ‘figure,’ frame and framing have diverse scholarly applications based on different epistemological, ontological, or genealogical assumptions. Similar to my use of figures, I engage frames as materializing devices or rhetorical tools which create (affective) relations and shape concrete life-world encounters and politics, which at times also materialize through policies. In other words, my use of the concept of frame is inspired by the materializing feminisms I describe above.

I also draw from movement studies, in which frames function as devices in a conflictual discursive field (Snow et al, 2019), and Papacharissi’s (2015) view of the circulation of connective action frames and the cumulative framing by the many.

Inspired by Wetherell’s (2013) and Ahmed’s (2004) views on affect and language, I see frames as affective devices which not only answer questions such as

<sup>27</sup> In Goffman’s (1974, p. 8) theory, a frame is an answer to “What it is that is going on here”, or, how actions are to be interpreted – for example, as play or bullying, or, play or crime – frames which have material consequences for people when they are decided upon in for example a court. Goffman was especially interested in frames or “brackets” which define interaction in a given situations as in a sense unreal or unserious, such as defining interactions as play, art, satire or make-believe. According to Goffman, this happened through common, intersubjective “frames.”

“What is going on” but “How should one affectively relate to that which is going on”—in terms of, for example, trans people’s existence in social space and violence against trans people, gender variant people, and people who are perceived as transgressing norms of linear binary gender. Even though frames can materialize in encounters and policies, I do not see frames as all powerful, as it is possible to “frame the frame” (Butler, 2010); moreover, there are conflicting frames.

Within trans studies, Laurel Westbrook (2020) has used the term ‘frame’ to address the articulations of transness and violence by trans anti-violence activists. Like Westbrook, I also focus on frames related to the co-articulation of transness and trans bodies with violence.

My use of the term varies slightly between different articles; in Article 4, I situate my use of frame within discussions about activist ‘action frames,’ while in Article 2, I address acts of framing of both violence and the people targeted for violence through ostensibly ‘apolitical’ and activist frames. Rather than only staying at the level of different explicitly political discourses, I address also user-generated acts like uploading a video on an entertainment platform, as well as commenting and uplifting a comment, as acts of framing. In Article 4, I consider ordinary social media users, as well as NGOs, as taking part in a sort of participatory framing or at least frame stabilization.

My examination of the framing of the attack against two trans feminine persons of color on an Atlanta train in Article 2 comes close to Goffman’s original analysis of frames (1974); namely, the implicit definition of situations (or representations) as something shared through frames which then guides people’s (inter)actions. My use of frame is tied with the analysis of the medium and the case at hand; when addressing the acts of the users making comments on a video platform, I think of the uplifting of one comment through ‘likes’ into a position where it frames the content of the video as a sort of cumulative framing by many individual users. My analysis therefore resembles Papacharissi’s (2015) idea of participatory, cumulative framing of issues by many individuals using the same Twitter hashtags, and creating and uplifting shared frames.

Much of this thesis is about framings of violence and the framing of groups of people as inherently attached to violence—whether as perpetrators or victims. Indeed, which violence is recognized as such and which violence is seen as merely the usual goings-on of the world or even completely a legitimate state of affairs has been the interest of several scholars taking a critical viewpoint to frames of violence (Butler, 2010; Butler, 2013; Stanley 2019).

Butler (2013), for example, has theorized the way Black people are routinely rhetorically framed as inherently violent and aggressive, such that even video documentation of violence against them is presented as proof of *their* violence. This viewpoint is very relevant in the case of affective articulations of transness and

violence. Trans studies scholar Eric Stanley (2019) interrogates this attachment of violence to the victim, when they depart from the cultural image of victimhood as attached with whiteness and linear gender, in the case of videotaped police violence against a trans feminine person of color. Likewise, Gill-Peterson (2024a) has brought up the way trans feminine people especially are attached with sexualized aggression and legitimized as targets of both concrete violence and policing in a ‘globalized’ manner.

During my research, my interpretation of ‘framing’ shifted to one in explicit discussion with movement studies, in which the concepts of framing and (action) frame have been often used to address the discursive work that movements do (Snow, 2008; Snow et al, 2019). The concept of ‘action frame’ is an essential contribution to thinking about the discursive work that movements do (Snow, 2008; Snow et al, 2019). Following Bennett and Segerberg (2012), Papacharissi (2015) uses the concept of action frame but shifts it into the idea of participatory, networked frame construction that is shaped by online networked media.

In Article 4, I make the term my own to analyze what I call *affective-discursive framing practices*. Emphasizing affect, I have refashioned the concept of framing into the concept of affective-discursive framing practices. I have found inspiration in Goodwin’s and others (2000, p. 72) request that researchers address emotion in frames, urging me to address framing as an affective-discursive practice. I do not merely see action frames as rhetorical devices which answer questions such as “What is going on here” (Snow et al 2019, p. 393), and define a “situation as ‘injustice,’” as well as responding to the question “Who or what is to blame” (Snow et al 2019, 396). I also think that frames are devices which answer questions like what one is to feel, as well as what the objects of this feeling ought to be.

In combining the term (action) frame with the concept of affective-discursive practice, I combine movement studies thought on framing with Wetherell’s idea of affective-discursive practices. The term affective-discursive practices reconciles discursive research approach and the “turn to affect,” as Wetherell argues that affect and emotion cannot be separated in empirical research (and according to psychological research, affect and meaning are activated simultaneously) (Wetherell et al, 2015, p. 59). I contend that affective-discursive practices invite emotions and stances toward certain bodies and social groups; through circulation and over time, these practices solidify relations between objects and subjects of feeling, which in turn materialize in a tangible, everyday manner in face-to-face encounters and their atmospheres, expectations, and bodily acts.

Like figures, powerful framings affect the bodies and lives of people in the world through micro-level encounters, as well as bills and policies. Even gendered ‘realness’ is achieved through framings. As is evident in Goffman’s (1974) original idea, there are always competing framings of any ‘one’ thing within culture. As

Butler (2010) asserts of frames around violence, the materializing and affect-evoking power of framing is not all-powerful. According to Butler (2010), there are breaks inherent in the contextual character of frames (see also Koistinen, 2015).

Circulating alternative framings in the manner that trans and sex worker movements do with regard to violence is a way to challenge framings which legitimate or repeat (symbolic, epistemic, concrete) violence or cover intersectional power relations behind concrete violence. In terms of online social media and user-generated forms of media, framings are circulated through media by individuals and organizations, entailing both possibilities and dangers with regard to the circulation of violent frames.

Context collapse (Marwick & boyd, 2011) in networked media allows for grabbing (Senft, 2008; Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1598) and recontextualizing framings circulated online. As I will argue in the conclusion, highlighting and recontextualizing framings can be ways to interrupt dominant and violent frames. This is work that even research such as mine can take part in.

### 2.2.3 Figuring Spaces and Nations

Much of this thesis is about figuring nations and spaces, including the imagined (global) trans nation (Anderson, 2016 [1984]); (Steinbock, 2019), through media-circulated rhetoric. In Article 3, I address the way the nation and spaces of white cis ‘America’ are imagined together in exclusionary ways through the rhetoric of the Christian right on trans access to micro-level (semi-)public spaces. I examine the way micro-level spaces and America (i.e., the space of the nation) are imagined together through this rhetoric.

I am inspired by Jaspir Puar’s (2007) use of the concept of imaginative geographies within feminist cultural studies. ‘Imaginative geography’ is a concept coined by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* (1978), and he used it to address the construction of the ‘West’ relative to ‘the Orient,’ with the latter embodying a Western projection which solidified the identity attached to the West by constructing the Orient as a monolith, radically different than the West. ‘Imaginative’ in the term does not mean mere fantasy, as the discursive and affective construction of space and belonging has material effects; it is performative.

Puar (2007) theorizes the way ‘America’ is performatively imagined through representing the USA and its ‘others’ and how this creation of imaginative geography happens through figures such as the ‘terrorist.’ Like Puar, I also examine the way nation and space are performatively figured together through figures such as the ‘predator’ attached to trans women, as well as ‘women and children,’ with its connotations of innocence and vulnerability, attached culturally with whiteness.

In my analysis of rhetoric and campaigning around trans access to public and semi-public space by the Christian right in article 3 I combine the concept of imaginative geography with the concept of linear gender, developed by Signe Bremer (Bremer 2011; 2013; see also Ahmed 2006, 16), forming my own composite concept, ‘imaginative geography of linear gender’. My combination is in line with the overall interest in the rhetoric and material as intertwined, and what I describe above as materializing feminisms.

In Article 1, rather than ‘imaginative geographies,’ I use the concept of ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 1984), here stretched to address the way a community of trans men and trans masculine people is envisioned and performatively brought into being through circulating discourse addressing a trans masculine public. In the first article, I start to address the way trans publics are performatively imagined across national boundaries and across great geographical distance (see also Steinbock 2019). This task is something I take up again in Article 4, which addresses the way the action frames circulated on TDoR, as well as around fatal violence against victims who are designated as ‘trans’ in the aftermath of their death by campaigns such as TGEU’s Transgender Murder Monitoring project, create an imagined trans nation portrayed as global.

I also address the way affective publics are evoked around solidarity, which transgresses boundaries of both nations and identity categories, when trans sex workers organisations call for solidarity around intersectional structural forces that exacerbate their vulnerability to violence enacted by individuals, states, and policies. In that article, I build on intersectional critiques of identity politics centering on one single identity, and on theories of reflective solidarity (Dean, 1995; 1996), proposing an affective-reflective form of solidarity in line with the rhetoric and goals of the intersectional trans sex workers organization which CFA I address.

## 2.2.4 Layers of Violence

As stated in the introduction, most of the cases I address in this thesis have to do with co-articulations of transness and violence by publics connected to trans movement, as well as publics which are brought together through circulating rhetoric around trans bodies and identities and around trans people’s access to spaces. Following trans studies scholar’s discussion over the uses of violence as attached with transness (Westbrook, 2020; Steinbock, 2019; Lamble, 2008; Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013), I am interested in how these co-articulations of violence work, and how they shape both trans lives and trans politics. This means that I need to situate media depictions and rhetoric about trans people and violence in the wider context of intersectional power relations and to address what is in the frame and what

is left out, or veiled through various framings of transness, as attached to the threat of violence.

I have come to think about the visibility of concrete violence through theorizations of structural, slow, and incipient violence, which situate violence not only in terms of spectacular or individual acts but also in the oppressive hierarchies embedded in capitalism and racism. Another way to think about the relationship of media and violence in this wider understanding is the insight that figures and framing act as vehicles of symbolic and epistemic violence which in turn can be theorized also as the violence of norms.

In Article 1, I write about the violence of gendering, which I also address in Article 3 through the concept of normative binary and linear gender, attaching this norm with whiteness. The stopping devices I address in Article 3, such as anti-trans “bathroom bills,” are ways of forcing binary and linear gender norms on people or stopping people from existing in the social space, at least publicly, if they do not comply with this norm. Therefore, an effect of these can be the violent erasure of trans bodies from the public space.

In today’s networked publics, symbolic and epistemic violence happen in a user-generated manner through circulating figures and frames which evoke disgust, aggression, or fear—particularly the evocation of disgusted, aggressive, or fearful affective reactions to trans people as a group, which I address in Articles 2 and 3.

There is a conundrum in trying to think forms of violence together—fast and slow, structural and individual, symbolic and concrete. Sometimes, these forms of violence seem to work in tandem, strengthening each other. It can therefore be tempting to address violence as a sort of iceberg, of which the tip (concrete, spectacular violence) is most visible yet merely representative of the unseen portion of the iceberg. This happens when, for example, LGBT organisations present concrete violence encountered by people belonging or allocated by the organization to these identity groups as the tip of discrimination against LGBT people. However, such rhetoric easily misses its own rhetorical character and the power of categorizations in producing narratives and knowledge. If characterized differently (e.g., through intersectional epistemology), the tip might look different; moreover, the tip might not look like a tip of one singular iceberg, but more like bridge between various icebergs.

Ways of presenting, seeing, and understanding violence have concrete implications for anti-violence work (Westbrook, 2020; Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013; Haritaworn, 2013). As critical scholars writing on violence have pointed out, focusing on spectacular, concrete violence can shift our attention away from structural power relations and deflect our understanding of the context in which these spectacular acts become possible in part through structural forms of violence (Zizek, 2008), and state violence (Stanley, 2011; 2017; 2021) or “paradigmatic neglect”

(Stanley, 2021, p. 8). This makes addressing rhetoric around violence particularly important, as three out of the four articles in this thesis do.

I address both the way trans people are attached with violence through public politicized remembering of deaths claimed as ‘trans deaths’ in trans publics, and the way trans bodies are co-articulated with violence in Christian right rhetoric, through attaching them with narrative visions of violent transgression and harm to children. When trans people, trans feminine people especially, are attached with figures which either articulate trans feminine bodies with violence and aggression, or delegitimize trans feminine people as victims and citizens (or, victim citizens), I consider these to be violent figurations. I therefore address both depictions of or rhetoric over concrete violence, and violent figurations. I also address the latter through the concept of symbolic violence.

The concept of symbolic violence describes the way societal hierarchies and oppressions are legitimated and reproduced through symbolic means, that is, for example through representing groups which are oppressed as being worse and less deserving than others. The ‘violence’ in the term thus points to violent hierarchies, though symbolic violence that I address in Article 2 also legitimizes concrete, physical violence.

Figures often work as symbolic violence, and in the cases I address in Articles 2 and 3, this violence has to do with evoking affective reactions toward figures and the people attached to them. In Article 2, I draw from Bourdieau-inspired feminist media studies scholars to address the way disgust and desire are simultaneously attached to the figure of the tranny and by extension to the trans women targeted for violence as seen in the video recorded on a mobile device and shared online as entertainment.

To understand the figuration of trans feminine people as less deserving of (vulnerable) citizenship or rights, the concepts of epistemic violence and reality enforcement (Bettcher 2007; 2014) help address representations of trans women and trans feminine people as less deserving and further as un-real.

Through trans studies scholar and philosopher Talia Mae Bettcher’s (2007; 2014) concept of reality enforcement, I argue that the concrete and symbolic violence in the case I address has to do with connotations of un-reality attached to trans women, especially trans women of color. These connotations of being a ‘deceiver’ are, according to Bettcher, culturally used to legitimize violence against trans women or people who are perceived in a manner which, in Gill-Peterson’s (2024) term, transfeminizes them via a mix of desire and disgust, feelings which are culturally sanctioned through the circulation of rhetoric like that which I address in Article 2. This has to do with the cultural politics of compassion (Berlant, 2004), affective logics of media (Dean 2010), and, as I argue, the affective character of publics.

This problem is exacerbated by the cultural attachment of vulnerability to whiteness and innocence and the way vulnerability and agency are often culturally

understood as mutually exclusive in ways I address in Articles 2 and 3. Through my analysis in Article 2, I argue that the sexualization and cultural co-articulation of trans feminine people of color with sex work, along with the devaluation of sex work, are juxtaposed with the norms of white respectable femininity and work to exclude many trans feminine people of color from the vulnerable citizenship which is considered deserving of (state) protection.

In Articles 2 and 4, I discuss how the rhetoric of trans and sex worker intersectional activists shakes the rhetoric of more dominant anti-violence framings. This intersectional, coalitional, or solidarity-centered rhetoric points to the structural and symbolic violence underlying concrete and spectacular violence. Following these intersectional scholars and activists, I argue it is crucial to critically address rhetoric that highlights singular acts of concrete violence from a single identity frame (Westbrook 2020), as these framings can veil the intersectional, structural reasons behind concrete violence—reasons that also reduce people’s life chances or increase the likelihood of violence and suffering in ways that have been addressed as “paradigmatic neglect” (Stanley, 2019, p. 8).

## 2.2.5 Affective-Discursive Practices Bring People Together

While I do not use the term in all of the articles, I now consider figures, frames, and rhetorical visions, when circulated through media, to be affective-discursive media practices (Wetherel et al, 2015, p. 58). I have made this conceptual choice because of all the parts of this term: affective, discursive, and practice. Although I explained the term briefly in Chapter 2.2.2., I will now elaborate on how I see this concept in relation to especially the concept of practice, and in relation to Ahmed’s (2006) thought.

According to Wetherel (2012, 4, 23; Wetherel et al, 2015, p. 58) affective practices express an emotion, and, in context of public expressions, invite the emotion expressed. Through media affective practices, subject positions and stances towards groups of people are expressed and invited (Wetherel et al, 2015, p. 58). Combining Ahmed’s phenomenological thought (2006) with Wetherell’s approach, I see media affective-discursive practices as affective ways of orienting toward groups of people and thus also constitute them as separate.

Ahmed’s theorization over lines and paths (2006, 16) inspires me to see affective-discursive practices as both paths and acts of following the path. The phenomenology of Ahmed (2006) can be categorized as belonging to the broad umbrella of practice theories, and Wetherell (2013, 351) explicitly situates her thought within this school of thought. Practice theories better allow for change and variation compared to structuralist theories (Schatzki, 2001; Postill, 2010). The

multiplicity of practices and their contextual and processual character allows for change.

Feminist media studies scholar Kaisu Hynnä-Granberg (2022, p. 34) drawing from Wetherell (2012, p. 4) characterizes change of affective practices as taking new “routes”. To continue with the metaphor of paths, this change would be a reorientation from or of a path. Paths are, however, somewhat easy to follow and harder to reorient (from). Paths create their followers, made salient by the way practices (of following paths) are often ‘routine,’ conventional, unconscious acts of following and expressing (Postill 2010, p. 11; Reckwitz, 2002, p. 256; Swidler, 2001, p. 83). Reckwitz asserts that “social practices are bodily and mental routines” (2002, p. 256).

Affective-discursive viewpoint sees both emotion and language as practices Wetherell (2013, 351). Affective-discursive practices are ways of expressing (and in a way embodying) a relation and an emotion which, in the context of public displays of emotion and relation, also invite the emotion they express. They are ways of expressing and thus making places for social groups and inviting proper feelings for them, as well as subject positions from which to feel and relate (Wetherell et al, 2015). The term ‘practice’ emphasizes both ‘routine,’ conventional, patterned aspects and the multiplicity, changeability, and agency with regard to ways of thinking, affectively relating, and expressing (around) transness. These practices can be more or less sedimented. What I present here as affective-rhetoric ‘devices’ are examples of these somewhat sedimented practices of expressing and inviting affect and relations between groups.

As practices of un/belonging, affective-discursive practices are ways of collecting people up (Haraway, 1997, 23) and often of enticing people to both feel and act. Media affective-discursive practices (circulating figures, frames, and imaginative visions) around trans bodies and identities collect people up for reacting to, feeling about, and possibly acting politically around transness. That is, affective practices bring people together and draw them apart in affective publics. Media studies scholar Kaarina Nikunen takes a partly similar viewpoint to media affective practices in her research on media solidarities (Nikunen 2019) and far-right image sharing (Nikunen et al 2021).<sup>28</sup>

Media has a specific place in society, serving to ‘anchor’ other practices (Swidler, 2001; Couldry, 2010, pp. 47-50). Media invite and model ways of relating,

<sup>28</sup> Wetherell’s (2012; 2013) concept of affective(-discursive) practice is beginning to be applied and developed within media studies. Other application of ‘affective practice’ are Kaisu Hynnä-Granberg’s (2021) conceptualization of selfies as “socio-technological affective practices” (see also Hynnä-Granberg 2022, pp. 58-59, 65) and Mari Lehto’s (2021, pp. 36-39, 61-62) “affective practice of anxiety.

and constitute identifications across distance, creating ‘imagined nations’ (Anderson 1984). The practices of making transness visible, imagining transness, and affectively relating to transness, through various public discourses and in various media model ways of relating to concrete trans bodies in micro-level encounters – or in voting or other political action.

Moreover, in social media, people take part in the affective-discursive practices of making transness visible and relating to transness, inviting others to join, and creating sense of community across distance around relations to transness and to, for example ‘America’, ‘children,’ or ‘women and children.’ Apart from violent media practices figuring transness, there are also challenges to these. It seems to me that the most promising places to find agency and multiplicity or different and opposing affective-rhetoric practices around transness are in affective (counter) publics.

At the moment, this politizing and affective-rhetorical struggle over the place of transness and trans people happens largely through social media. Hence, I touch on how affordances (boyd 2010) of specific forms of social media—such as the possibility to easily share pledges on websites, the organization of comments according to ‘most likes’ on user-generated video sharing sites, the possibility to easily and quickly click and sign a pledge, or the ease of making one’s own post on an issue or event which seems pressing—might make certain media especially ‘affective’ in several senses of the word, and enhance the quick circulation and affective force of figures, visions, and frames.

The practices I address happen through and are situated in specific media, and the ‘affective’ character of specific media might enhance these affective practices. Figures, frames, and imaginative visions circulate more quickly through media such as platforms for user-generated video content, petitions on websites, and Facebook. These devices spread calls to feel and act, inviting people to both feel the feelings that are expressed, spread the content and framings, add their own personalized version of a frame, and to possibly act also in a face-to-face manner in defense of bodies, groups and even spaces and nations which are represented as threatened.

Media affective-discursive practices constitute subject positions and relations (Wetherell et al, 2015) or materialize relations and societal and cultural places for groups of people. However, competing affective-discursive practices (i.e., competing practices of collecting people up) mean that there is agency and that change is possible. Instead of simply considering the affective character of (certain types of) media as a problem and of offering rational rhetoric as the solution (cf. Dean, 2010), I consider different affective-rhetoric practices, namely those of what I call ‘affective-reflective solidarity,’ as paths to solidarity in Articles 2 and 4.

### 3 Methodological starting points

Niang (2024, p. 53) describes methodology as a way of asking questions. Indeed, this is how I have seen methodology during the research of this thesis. While convention dictates that I present theory and methodology in separate chapters of the thesis, I do not see theory or concepts as separate from methodology. This is entangled with the idea of ‘concepts as methodology’ (Slaby, et al., 2019, p. 30): through making conceptual choices, one decides how to ask questions and which questions to ask. This viewpoint emphasizes the choices I have made as a researcher; with different theoretical viewpoint and different concepts, the research would be very different. This aligns with the idea of situated knowledge as ‘non-innocent’ knowledge, emphasizing the agency and choices of the researcher (Haraway 1997), as well as the idea that conceptual choices are choices of (re-)articulation (Grossberg, 2010) or choices regarding framing the world (Slaby et al, 2019, p. 30). From this viewpoint, conceptual choices are not separate from the ethics or politics of the research (Slaby et al, 2019, p. 30).

If the research is to work in the world, from a material-semiotic (Saukko, 2003) invested (Haraway, 1997) viewpoint, then conceptual choices are world-making, though this world-making happens in wider societal, economic and cultural contexts (Saukko, 2003). When we think of my chosen concepts as part of the method, my Theory chapter (2) can also seem ‘methodological,’ as it also explains my approach and my way of de- and re-articulating the visibilities of transness. My conceptual choices have developed over time, as I have searched and encountered new material and ‘cases’ and sometimes re-evaluated my concepts in discussion with new theories. This has been a long and careful process; at points, I used concepts in the drafts of articles and later decided to drop or replace them with other concepts which seemed to “work” (Slaby et al, 2019). My questions have been reshaped through encounters with data and new theories or concepts (bodies of thought) (Markelj & Bueno 2023, p. 38). Writing is also part of the method in research like this; through writing, reading, and discussing what I have written, I have made decisions about sticking with some concepts and dropping others, as well as combining concepts in a sometimes unorthodox manner. The thesis is also articulating concepts, as concepts or composite-concepts developed through the process of writing my articles. Despite

the changes I have made over time, there are strong commonalities across the articles: an intersectional cultural studies approach, what I now see as an affective-reflexive approach, and a processual research path to address the context. I will now address these methodological aspects more thoroughly.

### 3.1 “Flexible” Intersectionality and Cultural Studies

In this thesis I take an intersectional cultural studies approach to trans visibilities. I see intersectionality as a relational (political and) theoretical viewpoint, and as a sort of theoretical sibling of cultural studies, and both as parts of (my) theoretical chosen family.

According to Lawrence Grossberg (2010, pp. 25–26) cultural studies is a form of scholarship that is never truly about any ‘object’ of research—as separate or essentialized entity, separated from the processes and relations that produce it—but about context, i.e., the intersecting relations that make up our social world. Thus, research on trans visibilities is not about transness as separate from culture and society as a whole; what transness means, what constitutes its boundaries, what position people seen and (self)defined as trans have in relation to people defined as cis are all contingent on the (power) relations which have produced these positions and their relations to one another. From a cultural studies viewpoint, the relations that make up the world are refigured through culture, economy, and politics (Grossberg, 1996, p. 156). This view is bound up with the methodological concept of articulation as a methodology and theory of cultural studies, which addresses culture through the question of what is joined with what in the cultural texts addressed (Slack, 1996).

Articulation means both expression and joining together (Hall, 1996, p. 141). Cultural articulations are performative, not only representing but also materializing the world and its relations. Culture is always, from a cultural studies view, various articulations and re- and de-articulations.

‘Transness’ does not exist as separate from the relations which make up the world (nor does any other social category or identity) or their articulation in various (discursively constituted and partly discursive) fields, including various media. This is in line with intersectionality as an approach which also is centrally about relations: identities as relational, multiple power relations as constituting the social world, and relations which are reproduced and challenged in part through representations (Karkulehto, et al., 2012).

According to Grossberg (2010, pp. 28–30), cultural studies never assumes in advance, with power relations—or, in the language of intersectionality, axes of power—are the most important dimension in each case studied. I see this view of culture as perfectly compatible with intersectionality, as I interpret intersectionality

to be fluid, unlike the unsympathetic and over-generalizing new materialist interpretation of intersectionality as merely solidifying the everlasting repetition and separation of various axes of power that intersectional scholarship seeks to address (cf. Massumi, 2002; Puar, 2007).

Intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989; 1991) to name what separate analyses of various axes of power cannot grasp: the intersecting nature of power relations and their intertwined production, as well as effects of these in the experiences of people—specifically Black women—living in the intersection of oppressions. In my view, this key intersectional critique against treating power relations as separate allows and perhaps even encompasses within itself a critique of rigid viewpoints to these power relations, including discourses which reproduce social groups as essentially different and separate from each other, unchanging, and without similarities across group boundaries.

Extending from genealogies of Black feminist thought (Hill Collins, 1990) and the activism of the Combahee River Collective (Collective., 2014[1977]), intersectional feminist perspectives interrogate and intervene on essentializing accounts of womanhood or women's oppression. This basic tenet of intersectional feminist thought reveals that, in addition to the category of 'women,' other subject positions/societal positions are also changing, complex, and created in part through discourse.

Theoretical articulations of power relations by intersectional theory are also 'performative' in Karkulehto et al's (2012) view; that is, they also do something in the world. This is a logical conclusion of seeing intersectional power relations as reproduced and reworked through representations, conventionally defined politics, and societal institutions/structures—three areas specifically named by Crenshaw (1991) reproducing intersectional power relations. In my view, seeing research as necessarily 'non-innocent' Haraway puts it, and as taking part in "refiguring" (Haraway 1997, pp. 50, 68, 73) or "rearticulation" (Grossberg 1992, p. 56) of the world, follows from intersectional thought.

I have learned from intersectional and materialist trans scholarship to question the way class—seen working, for example in oppressive policies around migration and sex work—is sometimes forgotten in identity politics centered on single identities (Snorton & Haritaworn 2013; Gill-Peterson 2024a). This ties into the relationships between different forms of violence: tangible and spectacularly visible, symbolic, epistemic, and structural. While I address cultural articulations of violence and transgender bodies, I contextualize these cultural practices within complex relationships between the symbolic and material and in different meanings of 'material,' as I address in the Theory chapters 2.2.1 and 2.2.4.

By saying that I see intersectionality as a fluid viewpoint, I mean that, as with cultural studies, it allows us to address change and variation in power relations and

to sometimes be surprised by the way power relations are (co-)articulated in culture and media. For example, evaluations of sexuality, race, cis/transgender, and class are articulated together in user-generated media around transgender bodies and violence. My application of intersectionality as a fluid methodology aligns with the “performative” and “flexible” view of intersectionality presented by Karkulehto Saresma, Harjunen, and Kantola (2012). As Salskov states, “there are different positions, categories and intersections that need to be analysed case by case” (2020, p. 262).

This means that while race (especially Blackness) and gender have from the beginning been at the heart of intersectional theorization (Collective., 2014[1977]); Crenshaw, 1989; 1990), emphasis on articulations of class and cis/transness as intersecting can be valuable, depending on the case, similar to how body size or dis/ability have been addressed as part of intersectional repetitions and reworkings of power relations (Karkulehto, Saresma, Harjunen & Kantola, 2012, p. 16).

In my analyses for example, I highlight the way class and sexuality are tied into notions of purity attached to proper femininity, which is entangled with the way unrealness is culturally attached with trans femininities in the figure of the tranny. I argue that in and through porn, the figure of the tranny is attached to Black and brown trans bodies more often than white; therefore, the insights of Black feminist thought are essential to unpacking this figure. Even so, my analysis does not linger on the classic triad of race/gender/class but encompasses the way race/gender/class are co-articulated with cis/transness and sexuality, in particular via the notions of realness/un-realness (Bettcher 2007; 2014) and good and bad sex (Rubin, 1984).

### 3.2 Critical-Reparative Analysis

The idea that we do things in the world through our theoretical work and that reading practices (or interpretative frames and concepts) also take part in world-making is key in gender studies discussions about so-called reparative and paranoid readings, as theorized by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1997). Cultural texts or practices could be read for their possibilities (or ambiguities), instead of the way they reproduce power and oppression. This idea is similar to the sort of flexible intersectional cultural studies approach I introduced above in advocating openness for surprises, as well as in seeing research as world-making or world-figuring, and my work partly aligns with this idea, especially as interpreted by Roseneil (2011).

According to Sedgwick, the ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’ common within queer studies (Sedgwick, 1997) could be replaced or supplemented with a reading which would emphasize the possibilities opened up by (our readings of) texts, as in reading the unexpected and the potential, which can be traced to the inherent polysemy of texts (Koistinen, 2015, pp. 45-48). The practice of reading itself could therefore

bring some light into the world, rather than taking part in naming or repeating the power relations for which the reader was already searching. This sort of reading practice entails openness for both disappointment and good surprises.

In addition to addressing polysemy of texts, Sedgwick's advocacy for reparative reading can be interpreted as a call to emphasize and uplift "counter-normative practices" (Roseneil, 2011, p. 130) and counter-normative discourses happening already in the now, which could in turn open up imagining the future as different from the oppressive past, i.e., not as a repetition of already-known power relations. I assert that highlighting the capacity of queer/trans subjects to imagine better worlds through counterdiscourses and rhetorically call those into being by evoking solidarity is a reparative research practice.

Especially in the beginning of my work, I took a reparative approach to trans counter publics, emphasizing their possibilities in imagining and even creating different worlds through trans world-making. In the final article, I emphasize world-making through activist rhetoric that invokes a form of solidarity not based on single identity frames but a coalitional form of solidarity I call affective-reflective solidarity. In Articles 1, 2, and 4, my work entails "giving analytical time and space to counter-normative practices" in pursuit of the "opening up of possible alternative futures" (Roseneil, 2011, p. 130). However, I have in this thesis also practiced something akin to what Koistinen terms 'critical-reparative analysis' (2015, pp. 46–47), or combining analysis of "counter-normative practices" with "casting an old-fashioned critical lens to normativities and dominant practices and discourses" (Roseneil, 2011, p. 130).

My viewpoint incorporates both criticality and hope when analyzing a trans public in my first article; as the very existence of 'counter-normative practices'—especially those that are connected with movement work of reframing transness—exist in relation to normative and violent figurations of transness within dominant discourses and practices, such as those of the medical model. As Roseneil states:

At the same time, this opening up of possible alternative futures requires acknowledgement of the suffering and oppressions, the troubles, and pains—social and psychic—which coexist with, are part and parcel of, these counternormative practices and new ways of living (2011, p. 130).

This is why Koistinen proposes a 'critical-reparative analysis' as an alternative reading practice (2015, pp. 46–47), one which maintains critique of the violence of norms while also opening up 'possible alternative futures' (Roseneil 2011, p. 130).

This practice would both name and critique the repetition of norms such as heteronormativity upheld by cultural texts and also show the ambivalences inherent

in their polysemy (Koistinen, 2015) or in the multiplicity of practices and their changing character (Roseneil, 2011).

In my own work, I am closer to Roseneil's idea (2011, p. 130), which emphasizes addressing counternormative practices instead of concentrating solely on harmful and violent norms. I do this through analyzing trans counter publics, as well as 'counternormative' interrogations of normative framings. Examples of activist counternormative interventions include when they 'grab' and interrogate depictions of violence being used as a form of entertainment, as discussed in Article 2, or when activists lament the worsening of immigrant sex workers' situations by anti-sex work legislation, as I unpack in Article 4.

The 'reparative' aspect of my analysis is in highlighting alternative rhetoric and interrogation of dominant rhetoric practiced by trans and sex workers movements. In such texts, I also find hope in a different future beyond the future as mere repetition of the past (Sedgwick, 1997, p. 22; Koistinen, 2015, p. 46; Roseneil, 2011, p. 130). In fact, the very act of theorizing multiple publics instead of merely one is a hopeful act, as I suggest in Chapter 2 on Publics.

There are also portions in my thesis in which I emphasize "casting an old-fashioned critical lens" (Roseneil, 2011, p. 130) over hope, especially in Article 3. These tendencies have to do with changing times, as well as my uneasiness with the sort of advocacy for reparative viewpoints which over-emphasize love and positivity or seek to do away with ambivalence (Wiegman, 2014, pp. 10-11; Stacey, 2014). Critique is a queer/trans joy (or power) of its own.

With regard to trans visibilities, I find that it is important to address oppressive, harmful and violent rhetoric just as much as more 'positive' forms of rhetoric. While my analyses of the Christian right rhetoric in article 3 could perhaps be called 'paranoid' – I do trace intersectional power relations and their reproduction through juxtaposed figures of threat and vulnerability – as well as exclusions from an imagined nation – these readings are also, in my view, necessary.

While I do consider research as a form of rearticulation, I also find that research discourses are only a small part of articulations in the wider social world. In my own research, naming intersecting categories, power relations, and the systematicities in the way these materialize are attempts at making interruptions, or calls for interrupting, the production of these categories and their boundaries as well as the power relations, and these interruptions cannot be done without naming these categories (for similar points, see Salskov, 2020, p. 262; Koistinen, 2015, p. 48). At the same time, the sort of fluid intersectionality I seek to practice does not know beforehand which power relations are reproduced or interrupted in each case. In that sense, intersectional reading is both paranoid and reparative, insofar as 'paranoid' denotes searching for reproduction of power relations, and 'reparative'

denotes open to being surprised. Thus, the very distinction between paranoid and reparative is not set in stone (Rossi, 2017, p. 3; Cvetkovich, 2003).

### 3.3 Affective and Contextualizing Methods

My study aligns with research viewpoints presented by Halberstam (1998) and Niang (2024). From a queer studies (Halberstam, 1998, p. 13) and Black Studies (Niang, 2024) perspective respectively, Halberstam and Niang do a “queering” of methods, questioning usual hierarchies of material and “rules” for what counts as material and suggesting a “scavenging” approach to material in researching marginalized experiences and knowledges. They argue that, whereas traditional archives and methodologies favor those in privileged positions (privileged also to leave traces of their lives and knowledges), a queer/Black studies “scavenging” can salvage value in those traces which are usually not considered valuable or worthy in the dominant hierarchies of knowledge and lives.

Markham and Gammelby (2018) describe “following the flow” as a situated and processual research practice in which the field (in Internet studies) is not seen as bounded but in principle endless. Similarly, in my view, studying the context, seen as the field of multiple and changing power relations, leads to seeing the field as changing and in principle, endless. In the research approach described by Markham & Gammelby (2018) the researchers situatedness and affective engagements with the material are seen as resources rather than hindrances (see also Hynnä-Granberg, 2022, p. 41). Similarly, feminist media studies scholar Mari Lehto (2021, p. 48) uses “researcher’s subjectivity as an analytical resource”.

This practice uses the researchers own interpretative abilities as guidance in the ‘flow,’ following ‘subjective selectivity’ and what I term affective selectivity, seeing the researchers locatedness and affective reactions as part of the methodology of following the flow (for similar methodologies of ‘flow,’ see Lehto Lehto, 2021).

Both scavenging and following the digital flow approaches align with the following of tiny digital traces of affect and action, such as accumulating likes on comments (Article 2) or posts (Article 4), as well as with following what one happens to find in online and offline “scavenging” and what leaves an affective trace or “grabs” (Senft, 2008; Senft & Baym, p. 1598; Hynnä-Granberg, 2022, p. 41) the researcher—all practices I have done. Following the affect is about following what has moved me and what I interpret as accumulating affect around trans bodies and identities being perceived and related to through media.

Through taking the research as study of context seriously, I ended up shifting my research focus. Cultural co-articulations of violence and transgender and accumulating rhetorical articulations of transness (and violence) became the focus, in addition to publics coming together around transness. Shifting to address

articulations of violence and transness was a situated ethical and political choice, since I see careful analyses of these as an important contribution toward the work of making lives more livable. As part of this gradually shifting understanding, while I was at first chiefly excited about the t4t trans visibilities, I considered it important to widen the research beyond these after encountering many political anti-trans co-articulations of transness and violence that were bringing people together against trans access to various spaces.

Searching/scavenging (Halberstam 1998; Ngiang, 2024) through web searches for information which could provide context of the centrality of violence led me to bump into ‘cases’ of people coming together around trans bodies and identities (co-articulated with violence) online, which I then decided to ‘follow’ and analyze. In seeking to understand the context of trans visibilities through what felt like intensely affective, attention-grabbing ‘cases’ (affective both in my own reactions, and that of others), my ‘following’ enacts the practices of following the affect and researching context. Following the affect and doing research on context can seem contradictory, yet I view ‘context’ in this case as a context of affective media, publics, and audiences. Therefore, following affect—both my own affective reactions and what can be deciphered as affect circulating and bringing people together—seems a suitable way to follow context.

I have followed affect in practice in several ways. Firstly, I have followed the tiny digital traces in likes and views, which in my interpretation are traces of affective reactions. Secondly and more interpretatively, I have followed affect through cases in which transness was being made visible and center of affective attention, including in my analysis of the instance of videotaped violence which went viral and got visibility in mainstream media (Article 2), Christian right rhetoric and campaigns against trans access to public spaces (Article 3), instances of counterpublic media politicizing cisnormativities (Article 1), and the accumulation trans affect at the time of and around TDoR (Article 4). All of these are cases of affectivity of media, understood as ‘moving bodies’ both in the sense of feeling- and emotion-expressing bodies and bodies sometimes being moved to speak or act in solidarity towards, or against, trans people.

Throughout this project, I have spent time engaging with what can be called variously t4t and/or activist media, as well as bumping into and scavenging for (Halberstam, 1998; Ngiang, 2024) information on and co-articulations of transgender and violence, anti-trans legislation and policies, and rhetoric supporting these. In all my articles, I have used thorough and repeated reading of the material selected for closer analysis, as well as notation and mind-mapping of material and conceptual interpretations, in a manner resembling the sort of iterative research process described by Markham and Gammelby (2017). On some occasions, I have

used my own reactions to media as part of the process, making notes about these in a media autoethnographic manner (Kyrölä, 2010).

In the first article, I constructed themes in a way I now see as similar to reflexive theme analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). In the last three articles, I did minute, repeated, close readings of selected material, analyzed it in discussion with theories and concepts, and reflected on both my own affective reactions and the textual affective invitations I saw in the texts I addressed—what I came to see as affective-discursive practices. My own affective reactions are, however, mostly decentered in the finished articles; as I stated above, they are rather a part of the process and also somewhat visible in the article text in my readings of the material (Articles 1, 4). However, tracing or interpreting something as affective invitation or practice (i.e., interpreting which emotions are expressed and called for) requires an emphatic rehearsal of sorts, even when one is not exactly identifying with the intended audience or ‘conjured’ public or the emotions being raised through rhetoric, images, buttons for signing, and so on. In the last article, as I started to understand what I addressed as affective frames or affective framing practices, I constructed the frames in discussion with concepts, theories, and earlier research. I have aimed to study what is affective in the affordances (boyd, 2010; Sajir, 2019; Westberg, 2021) of specific online media, while also addressing framings and figures which evoke affect and circulate across forms of media.

To analyze these affective affordances of media, I have engaged with the material and pondered over some of the minute aspects of media in discussion with theories over (online) media and affect. I have reflected on how these aspects of media work together with the rhetorical devices or practices I address. Instead of merely asking what is present/visible and what is not, I have also investigated how the media addresses, engages, or ‘conjures’ (Warner, 2002a) a public, as well as which emotions are expressed and called for; how the media invites taking part in both expression and action; and how medium-specific features (i.e. affordances) take part in this. In Article 3, for example, I address the visual representation and rhetoric of the text and the affordances of online pledge with a signing button in order to study the ways these affectively engage a public.

### 3.4 Material and Methods of the Articles

Using my own locatedness as a resource (Markham & Gammelby, 2018; Haraway, 1997) was how I started this research. For my own personal reasons as a sort of self-search, I had initially delved into trans publics before settling on any material for this research while simultaneously developing the idea that these could be researched as counterpublics. I had become a member of a large online bulletin board and I was finding trans publics online via websites and bulletin boards, as well as offline

through zines like *Original Plumbing*. My own affective investment in trans publics and politics and in particularly zines, as well as in the widening reach of the counterdiscourses through the visible of the founders of *OP* in mainstream media, made me focus on trans zines and *OP* especially. The other zines ended up dropping out of the focus, as I decided to focus on *OP*. Reasons for concentrating on the first issue of *OP* was that its text “grabbed” (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1598) me via its explicit address of a public together with an explicit commitment to building and diversifying one. I partly based my selection of texts for closer analysis on the affective effect they had on me.

In the first article, I read the material in *OP* several times and deciphered themes through a trans theoretical application of (counter)publics, which in turn informed my questioning and reading of the material.

In the spirit of cultural studies critique of hierarchies of knowledge, I decided to address trans theories at the same level as the stories in the trans counterpublic media, treating all of these as stories which take part in queer/trans world-making. In the article, I analyze the way a public (meaning, in this material, trans male and trans masculine community) is addressed and called into being and how trans people’s existence in the social world is politicized and a ‘home’ in the world, as well as in body, is built through telling stories about micro-level encounters, along with stories about bodily change and activism for trans rights, such that I argue that this counterdiscourse contributes to building a sort of ‘home’ in the world.

Through following the (affective) context, I moved from studying trans counterpublics to studying articulations of transness and violence.

In the second article, I studied case of videotaped violence on an Atlanta train, and the sharing of the video online as entertainment on the website *Flyvidz* (2014). I first encountered the case through a story on the LGB(T)-media website *PinkNews* (2014). I then found out that the video had been shared as entertainment on *Flyvidz*. At this point, I scavenged for other data about the case through online searches, finding an article on another online news site and a statement by grassroots activists of SNaP (2014).

To understand the video in its context, I familiarized myself with the site itself, watching other videos to understand what the website was like. I watched the video and read the comments on the site several times, made notes, and thought about the video through theories and concepts.

My watching the video and familiarizing myself with the website *Flyvidz* can be considered as affective encounters with media (Kyrölä, 2010). However, as a white person living in Finland watching a video of real violence in Atlanta (a historically Black-majority American city), I felt that concentrating on my own reactions and feelings would have been both ethically wrong and not very interesting. Moreover, in this case, I was not the intended or usual audience of *Flyvidz*, and my reactions,

while necessarily part of encountering the media material for me, went against those of the people liking the most-liked comment.

In this case, I decided to follow the affect in the sense of concentrating on what, in my interpretation, made the video and the website” sticky” in the sense of raising affect (Ahmed 2004; Nahon & Hemsley, 2013, p. 62) and getting visitors and views (Nahon & Hemsley 2013, p. 16). I addressed this through analyzing the rhetoric of the most-liked comment and the title of the video, as well as addressing the affordances of the medium in question, together with *affective articulations*, or articulating of trans feminine people of color with what I consider the affective figure of the tranny with (stigmatizing attachments to) porn and sex work.

Similarly, while scavenging for data and following the digital flow (Markham & Gammelby, 2018) in the case of Article 3, I bumped into a tweet by a spokesperson for a Christian right organization urging people to “Boycott Target” and suggesting that she would use her gun if a “man” entered the locker room she was in; this followed Target’s initiation of a trans-friendly policy stating that everyone would be able to use the locker room that best corresponded to their gender, including trans people.

This tweet had attracted the attention of mainstream media, and I also reacted to it. This initial affective encounter with the case of online Christian right boycott campaigning against Target and against trans access led me to study the way Christian right affectively articulates violence and transness through figures like the predator and ‘women and children.’

The tweet that first caught my attention did not end up being part of my article; instead, I chose to address the rhetoric of two key Christian Right organizations and their campaigns at certain key moments during which there was heightened visibility and politicization around trans access to public spaces in USA—moments in which the meaning of trans bodies and their (un)belonging within US micro-level spaces and the symbolic space of the nation was openly contested.

I familiarized myself with the rhetoric through their websites (ADF 2024; AFA 2024). For analysis, I chose the *Boycott Target* website (AFA, n.d.) with its pledge and button for signing, as well as the site’s blog posts, which both affectively “grabbed” me and were published at key moments when trans access to public space was intensely politicized. I also selected a letter to school districts by a Christian right organization advocating for anti-trans policy for my analysis.

In addition to my own affective encounters and reactions as guiding me, what enabled me to find the material in the case I address in Article 3 was the campaign’s visibility in legacy media, visibility which in itself is also indicative of the affective power of the campaign and its news value as seen by news outlets; the legacy media itself also contributes to both the affective value and importance of the campaign through boosting its visibility.

I read and reflected repeatedly on the material selected for closer analysis, including some material which, in the end, I dropped from the article and “listened” to what I see as affective invitations (Kyrölä, 2010) or affective-discursive practices and “conjuring” (Warner, 2002a) of a public through address.

I addressed this conjuring through (visual) representation analysis and an analysis of what is articulated with what. This analysis necessarily builds on earlier theories, concepts, and studies of, for example, articulations of sexualized purity and vulnerability with the figure of the Child and on my cultural skills as a researcher to address familiar rhetorical articulations. At the same time, even this analytical rehearsal is emphatic: I was able to feel the potential for uproar of “think of the children,” even though I did not agree with the message.

Article 4 was long time in the making. The process began with what initially was to be an article on the blogs of *OP*, focusing on the emotions expressed in the blog posts, when my interest was captivated by a post about TDoR. As my understanding of the context shifted, so too did my focus toward cultural co-articulations of violence and transgender and accumulating and travelling rhetorical articulations of transness (and violence), informed by my own repeated encounters with these rhetorical articulations. In the end, I left out the blog post about TDoR from the article, along with the media autoethnographic perspective which was initially part of the text; I decided that I did not want to concentrate too much on my own emotions when encountering stories about violence against others.

After initial versions which addressed US counterpublic material, I decided to concentrate on Finnish and European material, as well as the travel and adaptation of US affective-discursive frames to Europe and Finland and their circulation by individuals and NGOs (TGEU, SETA, Trasek) during the yearly event of TDoR.

For this article, I decided to include as material a Facebook post I encountered through my own corner of networked affective trans public. This selection was an instance of following something that affected me, an encounter that also worked as an example of the intensified affect on trans publics at the time of TDoR and the cumulative encounters with similar posts, which circulate and personalize the framings developed in USA and circulated online and transnationally by NGOs and individuals.

Starting from writing about these affective encounters, I moved to a more critical and contextualizing or affective-reflective research practice and searched for material in a more systematic manner. I researched the rhetoric of TGEU, the most important European trans rights organization, its Transgender Murder Monitoring website (TGEU, n.d.) and Finnish trans and LGBT rights organizations’ and activist’s rhetoric, as found on websites and public posts on social media platforms.

In the article, I address Finnish and European material during TDoR in 2017 and 2018. In addition to material that I encountered through my own social media, I did

web engine searches and searches on Facebook and Instagram to collect NGO material. In 2018, I made an Instagram query with the hashtag #transmuistopäivä (Finnish for #transdayofremembrance) and surveyed the results. The Instagram material that I selected for analysis represent material which has most “likes” within the wider material of all public Instagram posts around TDoR using the Finnish hashtag #transmuistopäivä. Simultaneously, the examples selected for closer analysis also partly represent affective selectivity, in the sense that these examples also “grabbed” me when going through the data.

During the lengthy process of writing various drafts of that article, I shifted to a more contextualizing and critical reading of what I now see as affective practices, and to a text that practices the affective-reflective reading that I describe above. There are traces of my own affective attunement to TDoR and to rhetoric I address in the text, though I also critically interrogate the affective practices which have invited this attunement in me and others. I think the process of reading both affectively (attuning) and critically several times, vacillating between closeness and distance (Kyrölä, 2010), has been beneficial for my analysis.

The cases represent different publics or audiences and different media. Moreover, the focus in the articles is different. Article 2 considers the aspects of the user-generated media platform I analyze and the way user-generated media affordances enhance quick reactions and circulation or spread of viral content, enhancing attachment of trans bodies with the figure of the tranny and quick and affective reactions to that figure. Article 3 is more concerned with the rhetoric circulated, while also touching on the way the media affordance of quick signing (and possibly circulating) of the online boycott pledge enhances affective reactions and their spread (together with the powerful rhetoric) in a way which can be used by “rhetorical machineries” of the Christian right, such as the organisations whose rhetoric I address.

In Articles 1, 2, and 4, I address counterpublic or alternative articulations of transness; Articles 2 and 4 also address alternative articulations of trans bodies and violence by intersectional social movements. I wanted to highlight the way some actors engage with, and reframe dominant framings of the violence and dominant articulations of trans identity with (threat of) violence. I see this as a politically and ethically important part of the way I rearticulate transness and violence in my own scholarly world-building work.

## 4 Findings

In this dissertation, the following questions guided my research: *How are trans bodies, identities, and violence articulated in affective publics? What implications does this have for the place of trans and other bodies in the social world?* To answer these, I have delved into four cases where trans bodies and identities are co-articulated, and in three of the studies, they are also co-articulated with violence. Three of the case studies address US-based media. The fourth addresses the circulation and adaption of US-based frames through networked publics.

However, even in other cases, the circulation of either the media addressed or the frames, figures, and imaginative stories I address surpasses US context through the transnational flows of information and affect through networked media. Therefore, the focus of this thesis is on cases of US and US-centered counterpublic and networked media in the period of 2009–2018, a time of increased (hyper)visibility of transgender bodies and identities, and their co-articulations with violence. These cases are instances where the existence and place in social space of trans bodies is politicized.

In this chapter, I introduce the findings of this research. All of the sub-chapters address one research question, focusing on one article, in which that question is thoroughly examined. All of these sub-questions are, however, addressed in more than one thesis article. I therefore occasionally refer to these other articles the chapters below.

For a more encompassing view of the findings and the research, I encourage the reader to familiarize themselves with the articles of the dissertation, which can be found at the end of this introduction in the order of publishing.

### 4.1 Trans Counterpublic Media

In Article 1, I investigate *how media brings people together into publics around trans identity and envision a home in the world for trans people*. I argue that circulating stories about everyday lives and encounters in the social world and of being at home and becoming seen in these encounters make trans lives livable; such stories make livability more imaginable for the reader. At the same time, *Original Plumbing* also circulates stories about medical transitions and finding a home in

one's body through these. In that sense, the stories *OP* tells can be interpreted as reiterating the medical model.

Efforts to widen the reach of the counterpublic framings of transness, such as through demonstrations “against trans pathologization,” are affectively narrated in the zine. I argue that the bodies in the streets and in the pages of the zine work into the same direction, with both affectively moving bodies. The counterpublic frames of trans bodies and identities aim to shake the dominant framing, i.e., the medical model of transness. This exemplifies a transgender politics of visibility that circulates a counterdiscourse to the medical model.

Even the modes of politicizing transness are at times in tension with each other within the same public. In addition to—or instead of—aiming at revolutionizing gender for all, trans publics I have addressed seek to make trans lives livable through, for example, enabling trans access to care in a manner which could enable invisibility or stealthness for some trans persons. These two modes of politicizing trans people's position in the social world are combined in *OP*, as well as in the demonstration depicted in the zine.

In the identity-centered public addressed, there is a tension between the inherent in-principle-openness of all publics as publics and the exclusionary character of identity, as well as between aiming to embrace inner diversity and building belonging around an identity.

Drawing from Ann Cvetkovich (2003), public cultures of non-dominant people, such as trans media, are both political and therapeutic; emotion and knowledge are entangled in the way bodies are moved both in the streets and through pages of a zine. (see also Berlant & Warner, 1998; Warner, 2002a). At the same time, it possible to claim that challenging the world is in tension with building a feeling of connection. Feeling of connection can be “juxtapolitical”, staying at the level of feeling understood through an “intimate public” instead of politicizing this feeling related to a similar position in the world (Berlant 2008).

However, and more reperatively, a trans public building this feeling of connection can be “infrapolitical” (Malatino, 2021, p. 834); it can be an infrastructure for trans existence which can either enable wider politicizing, in the manner of the second function of counterpublics as theorized by Fraser (1990), apart from a space to ‘regroup’; or it can simply offer a sense of connection which in itself, can be life-sustaining but not necessarily politicizing.

## 4.2 User-Generated Reality Enforcement

*In Article 2, I investigate how do media engage their audiences and invite participation in affective-discursive practices around transness?*

Through an analysis of the affective articulations of trans bodies and violence in this viral video, I analyze how ubiquitous mobile phones with their cameras and especially user-generated forms of online media can at times work in ways which continue the violence against trans feminine people —especially those facing the combination of racism and poverty — who are often perceived or stigmatized as sex workers. I show that in this case, user-generated forms of visibility continue the devaluing of trans femininity, especially as attached to people of color.

I address the attachment of the ‘tranny’—a cultural figure laden with affects of disgust and desire—to the trans women depicted in the video of physical violence. I address the way the articulation of the women facing violence with the figure of the ‘tranny’ attaches both value and disgust on their bodies through this figure. Framing trans feminine bodies through attaching them to the tranny, the genre of porn, and cultural meanings attached to sex work brings the affective intensities of forbidden or ‘low’ sexuality into the framing.

The video depicting trans feminine people facing violence, attached with the affective figure of the tranny through the framing of the video, is used to evoke affective reactions and engage people as an audience, enticing them to take part through sharing, clicking and commenting. As the line between user and producer is blurred on social media platforms (Bruns, 2008), this means that people are called into taking part in the user generated framing, or, as I see it now, user generated affective-discursive practices – in other words, acts of displaying and evoking emotions and relations towards trans feminine people, as attached with the figure of the tranny.

I use Talia Mae Bettcher’s concept of “reality enforcement” (2007; 2014) and introduce the composite concept of user-generated reality enforcement. The trans women were framed as ‘unreal,’ both by the most-liked comment, which worked as a sort of cumulative framing, and through their attachment to the figure of the tranny, in a manner which repeated the symbolic and epistemic violence in the face-to-face encounter, which itself also started through a verbal anti-trans harassment. Therefore, the reality enforcement at play in the encounter was continued through media framing.

While the mainstream LGB(T) media outlet *PinkNews* circulated the news of the attack internationally, it was a local grassroots coalition who radically reframed the violence within the wider context of structural violence which enables concrete violence (e.g., police neglect of trans women’s needs).

I have come to see the multiple reframings of the violence being widely circulated as also connected with the context collapse (Markham & Baym 2011) characteristic of online forms of media and with virality. In online networked media, videos, images, and their framings spread and gather affect quickly (Jenkins, et al., 2013, p. 1). Videos can be taken with the ubiquitous mobile phones, and used as

documentation, witnessing, or as continuation of the violence. The context collapse (Marwick & boyd., 2011) characteristic to much online media means that the images, texts, or videos that “grab” us (Hynnä-Granberg, 2022, p. 41) can also be “grabbed” (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1598) by anyone— that is, besides intended audiences— and circulated in other online spaces. They are framed in a new manner which can also facilitate *framing the framing*: shedding critical light on dominant frames while circulating alternative frames, as I also address in Article 4.

New or other publics can be evoked through circulating these novel frames across national and/or identity boundaries, evoking affective-reflective solidarity. This was perhaps the aim of the UK-based PinkNews reporting of the case of violence in Atlanta, but it failed to include an intersectional structural critique, framing the case through the familiar “hate crime” framing. However, even SNaP’s frames were momentarily highlighted in legacy media through the visibility of the viral video. In this way, *the networked visibility is a pharmakon*, both poison and cure (Derrida, 1981, p. 70; Paasonen, 2021, pp. 5, 94–95), with potential for grabbing and reframing violent framings.

### 4.3 Imaginative Geography of Linear Gender

Scholars have theorized politicization of trans bodies and trans access to space in the case of so-called bathroom bills (Schilt & Westbrook, 2015; Ciszek & Rodriguez, 2020). Like them, I study the way trans access to public and semipublic space is rhetorically envisioned as dangerous. Through an analysis of rhetoric and online media events by two Christian right organisations, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) and the American Family Association (AFA), I ask the following questions: *How does the contemporary Christian right offer an imaginative geography of ‘cis America’ in positioning trans access as a threat? How does the media rhetoric of Christian right evoke affect and mobilize people against this imagined threat?*

Through studying the rhetoric of two prominent Christian Right organizations at moments of heightened visibility and politicization around trans access to public spaces in the US and carefully examining the narrative visions, affective rhetoric, and media affordances (such as buttons for liking or signing an online pledge), I argue that the Christian right offers a imaginative geography of white cis spaces threatened by trespassing bodies through the juxtaposition of the figures of the ‘Child,’ ‘women and children,’ and the ‘predator,’ with this latter figure being affectively attached to trans feminine bodies. I argue that this performative vision has powerful effects. I combine the idea of the stopping device with the idea of imaginative yet performative geographies to address the way the rhetoric of the Christian right has materializing effects on the bodies, minds, and lives of trans people, as well as on spaces and boundaries.

Imaginative geography names an imaginative/performative vision of space and belonging. Per Signe Bremer (2011), linear gender refers both to the division of bodies into two strictly bounded categories, the performative nature of which means ‘doing’ these genders by following a ‘cis’ line across time and space. I utilize the notion of straightening devices, which double as stopping devices, as coined by Ahmed (2006, pp. 92, 96), to examine how material-semiotic devices, such as bills, policies, or signs on doors, compel people to trail the cis line, or halt people from moving in public spaces. I contend that also rhetorical apparatuses such as figures of the the ‘predator,’ the ‘Child,’ and ‘women and children’ function as straightening and stopping devices. These rhetorical figures are tools used to construct an imaginative geography of linear gender—an imaginative vision in which ‘America’ consists of cis spaces which are threatened by bodies imagined as trespassers, or ‘threatening’ bodies which deviate from their designated lines.

I draw on intersectional feminisms to explain how, similar to the figuration of ‘women and children,’ the figure of the Child is a cultural concentration of intense worry and hope and simultaneously attached to vulnerability, innocence, sexualization, and worry about sexual ruin that is attached to whiteness (Epstein, et al., 2017; MacLaughlin 2017; Frank, 2014). I argue, that the affective rhetoric and campaign webpage rhetorically envisions a white cis America that is pure from those represented as transgressors and not deserving citizenship. As addressed in Articles 2 and 3, the figures tied with vulnerability or the perceived lack of vulnerability turn out to work in ways that delegitimize the deserving citizenship of trans people, especially trans feminine people, and this is compounded for trans people of color who also often face other material-semiotic practices which undermine their belonging in Euro-American spaces, as I discuss in Article 4.

Together with the concept of linear gender, I see imaginative geography as a tool to address the way rhetoric shapes material encounters, atmospheres, and spaces. I argue that anti-trans rhetoric around so-called bathroom bills and policies shapes material encounters via micro-level perceptions of and encounters with trans people. Imaginative geography allows me to conceptually address the way figures and imaginative visions circulated by the Christian right shape concrete spaces by enticing anti-trans policies, evoking fear, and even mobilizing people to act against trans access. I theorize these material-semiotic exclusion devices through Ahmed’s (2006) concept of the “stopping device,” such that this stopping can happen either through violent acts or through atmospheres which create bodily and mental experiences that prevent trans people from moving and existing in various public spaces, including schools and shopping centers.

## 4.4 Affective Framings and Solidarity

While valuable, much of the trans studies scholarship on visibility and public-evoking rhetoric around ‘violence against trans people’ and TDoR has focused on North American context (for example, Lamble, 2008; Westbrook, 2020). There is almost no research on the “glocal” circulation of these discourses outside of North America. Snorton and Haritaworn (2013) address this in the European context through analysis of a case of trans anti-violence activism in Berlin. Steinbock (2019) has addressed the current role of the European NGO TGEU in compiling figures of deaths constructed as “trans deaths” and in repeating and circulating rhetorical frames of violence originally established in the USA. However, scholars have yet to address the way these frames are circulated online, taken up and adapted in national contexts far from where these deaths occurred (e.g., the USA), specifically in Europe and Finland. I address this in Article 4 by investigating *how affective-discursive frames around transness and violence are adapted, circulated, and reframed by pro-trans NGOs and individuals*.

As TDoR is one of the most visible, wide-reaching, and longstanding forms of trans activism, and as it makes transness visible through attachment to the threat of violence, it is a crucial form of *evoking and intensifying affective publics around transness*. It is an instance where the frames of transness and violence developed in trans publics are circulated more widely, with the effort to gain more visibility beyond trans people.

Papacharissi (2015) notes that affective publics do not generally create new ideas but circulate older ones more widely by evoking affective attunement to ‘movement goals’ and creating visibility. I consider the concept of affective publics to be a good way to address how people come together around “expressions of sentiment” (Papacharissi, 2015, p. 125) about trans identities, trans lives, and trans politics, in a manner which at times surpasses infrapolitics (Malatino, 2021, p. 834), rising to the level of wider politicization. In Nancy Fraser’s (1990) division of two functions of counterpublics—namely, offering a space where those in socially dominant positions do not dominate the discussion and where frames are developed that then spread to wider publics—‘affective public’ offers a way to address the latter, at least as a goal and as momentary waves of wider reach.

Moreover, ‘affect’ in the concept of affective public points to the momentary intensification of feeling and expression. As stated in my Theory chapter, in my interpretation of the concept of affective public, the emphasis on emotional aspects of public expression and coming together through attuning to emotions which are at least imagined as common is the more essential rather than the specific social media enabled infrastructures of feeling, expression, and attuning. As such, ‘affective public’ is conceptually useful for addressing current trans publics which surpass single platforms and take place both in online spaces and in the streets.

In addition to waves of widening reach, the intensification of affect in trans publics around TDoR is also an accumulated effect of frames repeated annually, shaping trans feelings and feeling for trans people. At the same time, online forms of media have always been and remain crucial for TDoR.

Whereas other feminist (Butler, 2010) and trans studies scholars (Westbrook, 2020) have addressed frames of violence, my view of framing emphasizes its affective circulation across national contexts and the way frames evoke affective publics and build transnational “imagined communities.” Through the wider circulation of affective frames of TDoR, solidarity is evoked for “trans people,” a global imagined nation, which I argue is constructed through these affective-discursive framing practices. These work as affective practices, both expressing and inviting a feeling, as well as the proper object of feeling.

Through my examination of Finnish uses of TDoR in 2017 and 2018, I assert that precisely because of their affective power, these frames that connect transness with the threat of violence are sometimes articulated with national trans political frames and adapted for trans political uses which do not have much to do with addressing either the concrete violence, or the structural forms of violence and neglect which often are behind the physical violence.

I argue that in the material I address, the moment of framing TDoR is used for affective value, which is then repurposed to evoke compassion for ‘trans people’ as a unified whole. Articulating membership in the category ‘trans people’ with being threatened by ‘hate,’ NGOs and individuals in Finland repeated the strongest frame of TDoR, the framing of violence caused by anti-trans sentiment and targeting trans people simply because of transness. As many scholars (Lamble, 2008; Westbrook, 2020; Steinbock, 2019; Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013) have pointed out, this articulation veils the intersectional causes behind the violence and figures violence as individual rather than arising from the state (Stanley, 2019). Moreover, through articulating national frames with the global identity frame of TDoR and through using and evoking (the emotions attached to) TDoR, the affective frames of TDoR are used to further Finnish national trans political goals, such as the new trans law regulating alteration of juridical gender and the name law.

Indeed, visibility through the mainstream transgender anti-violence activism has been critiqued for using the deaths of POC trans women and travesti to vitalize trans activism by giving transness and the ‘trans nation’ visibility in a way which does not help the people who are most likely to face fatal violence, structural forms of violence, and “paradigmatic neglect” (Stanley, 2019) and state violence (Lamble, 2008; Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013). Seeking visibility and symbolic recognition for trans people as a unified group through “vulnerable subjecthood” (Westbrook 2020) can further claims to citizenship and rights for some, but recognition is often tied with respectability and perceived innocence, which again, are culturally tied with

whiteness – something I address in articles 2 and 3. Ending stigma and oppression for trans people or travesti who are migrants and sex workers—that is, people more likely to be remembered at TDoR—is left out of the most widely circulated, identity-centered framings of TDoR.

The identity frame of violence is, however, not the only one. In Article 4, I also address a CFA shared on TGEU which I see as an instance of public-making across identity categories: titled “September 21 – Call for International Day of Action in memory of Vanessa Campos and against [violations of] trans, migrants and sex workers’ rights” was jointly released by TGEU and other trans and sex workers organizations. The CFA reframes the violence and disarticulates violence and trans identity, highlighting internal power imbalances within the “LGBT community” and the intersectional oppressions and repressions which exacerbate vulnerability to fatal violence, including state policies which hinder especially trans sex workers who are migrants from getting protection from the police and drive them to work in more dangerous areas.

This CFA points to anti-immigrant policies and especially France’s adoption of the so-called Swedish model (also called the Nordic model), i.e., criminalizing the purchase of sexual services, as increasing the vulnerability of sex workers, especially those who are trans and migrant.<sup>29</sup> In the dominant framings of TDoR, increasing numbers of deaths work as affective frames, emphasizing urgency. In this CFA, the numbers provided by both TGEU/TMM and Médecins du Monde France are used to shake these dominant framings of the deaths as simply having happened due to anti-trans sentiment. The call to action highlights the proportion of victims who had been sex workers and stresses the sex workers increased exposure to violence, as well as worsening stress and isolation, after the adoption of the Swedish model in France. The CFA therefore calls for solidarity in ending this and anti-migrant policies.

Articulating state repression against migrant sex workers as an underlying reason for the death of Vanessa Campos, the CFA invites intersectional action not based on belonging in a nation (even the so-called “transgender nation”). Aiming to evoke a

<sup>29</sup> Swedish model (or Nordic model) is a term often used in policy debates about laws criminalizing the purchase of sexual services (Vuolajärvi, 2019, p. 151). Swedish model was first introduced in Sweden in 1999, and has then spread to other countries in Europe and North America (Vuolajärvi 2019, p. 152), even becoming “part of the country brand” (p. 154). Migration studies and sex work scholar Niina Vuolajärvi (2019) argues based on an extensive ethnography conducted in Sweden, Norway and Finland, that the Nordic model works as “governing in the name of caring”. As the Nordic model works together with immigration laws and policies and with “racialized policing” (p. 159), it creates a “double standard” (p. 152) between those sex workers who have citizenship and those who do not, embodying the underlying “contradicting motivations to protect and exclude” (p. 155) and creating unsafety and increasing risk of violence for especially non-citizens (of EU/ETA).

public via solidarity, the CFA is directed at “LGBT, trans, sex workers, migrant, anti-racist, syndicalist and feminist organizations” (TGEU 2018a). Inviting compassion and action surpassing single identity politics, the rhetoric anticipates a “coalitional moment” (Chavez, 2013, p. 13). Therefore, while also this rhetoric is affective, it evokes reflective solidarity (Dean, 1995; 1996) across identity categories, from left movements to migrants, sex workers and (other) feminists. Reflective solidarity delineates its “we” not as fixed but as susceptible to change and expansion (Dean, 1995, p. 127; Dean, 1996, p.31). This “we” critiques oppression and exclusions, including its own, seeking to critically listen (Dean, 1995, p. 127; Dean, 1996, pp. 31–32).

Whereas Dean distinguishes “affectual empathy” from the rational form of solidarity she promotes (1995, p. 116), I propose that reflective solidarity can be achieved via compelling rhetoric that fuses the cognitive and the affective. Given that I see also research as taking part in articulations, I contend that this thesis also takes part in calling for coalitional moments and for affective-reflective solidarity.

## 5 Conclusions

This dissertation examines current politicized visibilities around transness. The purpose of this work is to address the trans paradox of visibility at a time of heightened and politicized (hyper)visibility, wherein the focus of both LGB(T) movements and the Christian right has shifted to trans bodies and identities and framings of transness circulate through online forms of media, moving and mobilizing more people than ever across national boundaries. Like many other scholars within trans studies, I have addressed the paradox of highly visible co-articulations of violence and transness by both anti-trans actors and trans movement, as the oppression and violence continue seemingly unaffected by forms of visible activism, and the violent forms of politicized trans visibility even increase.

Within the extensive theorization of the paradox of visibility, some scholars have argued for a politics not of visibility but of opacity (Stanley, 2019; see also Vipond, 2024). My perspective builds on these important critical, intersectional trans studies scholars theorizing the paradox of visibility yet takes a slightly more reparative angle to visibility through the idea of visibilities in the plural, as processual and contested, along with the concepts of affective publics and media affective-discursive practices.

I think through these heightened visibilities in the wider context of structural, epistemic, and symbolic violence or violent norms but also through a media and cultural studies viewpoint which emphasizes the importance of affect for visibility efforts of politicizing anything (e.g., trans people's existence) and for publics as politicizing vehicles. Through the case studies in this dissertation, I have argued that affective-discursive media practices bring people together into affective publics around trans bodies, trans identities, and violence, in a manner which might mobilize them against trans people, in solidarity with trans people, or an even a wider affective-reflective solidarity.

More precisely, I have argued that affective publics are brought together through circulating affective frames, figures and stories envisioning (un)belonging of bodies, trans and cis. Whereas these frames, figures and narrative visions can be thought as devices, I argue that they can also be understood as affective-discursive practices (Wetherell, 2012; Wetherell et al, 2015). That is, they are ways of simultaneously depicting and inviting feelings about, relations to, and boundaries between groups of

people whose boundaries and definitions are articulated through these very practices. This conceptual approach allows for some hope for change, though I have here emphasized the aspect of affective practices which is tied with convention.

The specific forms of media through which these affective practices take place also shape the way people come together around and take part in these practices. The ease of participating and sharing in many of the forms of media I have addressed enable participatory ways of framing transness, creating relations to transness and to the others who are brought together around affectively reacting and expressing sentiments. This goes for both anti-trans publics and publics which come together through trans identity and solidarity with trans people.

As my case studies show, even as people come together through counterpublic, online, and social media to articulate trans bodies and identities in a trans-defined way, people also gather to react, feel, and share feelings about trans bodies and identities in a manner which delegitimizes trans people's existence and solidify norms of binary and linear gender that are, as shown through my intersectional reading of the case studies, entangled with norms of whiteness. Mediated visibility of trans bodies and identities turns out to be a *pharmakon* (Derrida, 1981, p. 70; Paasonen, 2021, pp. 5, 94–95), or a “double-edged sword” (Thompson, 2005, p. 41).

These counterpublic and social media shape coming together and the circulation of figures, frames, and stories. Forms of networked media at times continue the violence which has materialized in concrete violent encounters, and enable fast-paced circulation of violent figurations of trans bodies, provoking people to act based on these figurations in ‘clicktivist’ ways or in the streets or on ballots. Media can therefore bring people together around anti-trans sentiment, take part in and continue violence, and sustain violent atmospheres in the social world. At the same time, counterpublic and social media enable coming together around trans solidarity and solidarity for trans people. The context collapse and “grabbable” (Senft, 2008) character of much of online and mobile media enables grabbing and reframing images, videos, or texts, as well as reframing the dominant frames, for example, around transness.

The case studies of the thesis succeed in illuminating the contradictions of trans visibility, or trans visibilities, as I would put it. Although I have wanted to illuminate these contradictions through the combination of trans movement and Christian right visibilities, as well as through including user-generated entertainment which then was politicized through reframing, my dissertation is theory-driven and does not offer a comprehensive or generalizable picture of trans visibilities, though this would scarcely be possible. The book does point to, however, a wider understanding of a field of trans visibilities in which affective-discursive practices, such as figures, frames, and performative visions are utilized across national boundaries, and publics

are conjured into being through depictions of and reactions to trans bodies and identities.

Earlier trans media and communication studies research (Schildt & Westbrook 2015) and trans movement studies research (Westbrook, 2020) on trans visibilities has already theorized what I call the politicization of trans bodies and identities through the conceptual tools of figure (Schildt & Westbrook 2015; McLaughlin 2017) and frame (Westbrook, 2020). My research aligns with these studies in utilizing similar theoretical-methodological tools. While valuable, this earlier research has not fully addressed the way forms of networked and counterpublic media and the figures, frames, and imaginative stories work together. Moreover, no studies have thus far theorized anti-trans and trans publics together.

My case studies illuminate the role of networked media in enabling and shaping engagement through and participation in what I call affective-discursive media practices. I have here introduced the concept of *user-generated reality enforcement* to address the epistemic and symbolic violence which ensues when cultural figures, mobile phones, and platforms for entertainment combine to affectively frame violence against trans people, specifically transfeminine people of color.

Earlier studies on trans visibilities have not addressed the way these figures, frames, and imaginative visions are attached to trans bodies and often co-articulate them with violence; travel to new contexts across great geographical and social distances; and are adapted and utilized in these new contexts (one exception is Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013). This is the focus my analysis of the way frames of TDoR are adapted and utilized in Europe and Finland, constituting one of my key contributions to the critical intersectional scholarship on trans politics and trans imagined nations. Particularly in my final article, I take part in the study of “globalized” politicization of transness and critical study of “globalization of hate crime activism” introduced by Snorton and Haritaworn (2013, p. 67).

Most studies focus on either violent or resistant framings. In two of the case studies in this dissertation, I highlight the grabbing of a visible case of mediated violence by intersectional trans and sex worker activists, thus addressing a more dominant together with a counterpublic articulation. While I have used relatively small sets of data and case studies in my theory-driven research, I find that this has enabled careful analysis of and theorizing through individual cases by addressing dominant and alternative affective practices together, as both evoke publics around co-articulations of transness and violence. Moreover, the case studies illuminate how even trans-defined and counterpublic visibilities exist within wider culture and have at times an ambivalent relationship with dominant discourse. Moreover, rather than simply stable formations of what is counterpublic or dominant, my analysis accounts for the ways that these formations can shift, such that our perception depends on the angle (James, et al., 2020); as highlighted in two of the case studies, the rhetoric

evoking a public around intersectional solidarity refers to a public which is a counterpublic in relation to a more dominant LGBT public.

In examining publics which come together around trans bodies and belonging and publics which are evoked around threats attached with trans bodies in various spaces, on the other hand, I address rhetoric which materializes in atmospheres, bills, policies, and concrete encounters in the social world and even as violence.

I show how rhetoric circulated in both these publics envision social space and trans bodies in material and symbolic space through performative storytelling, with one envisioning trans bodies as belonging and the other envisioning trans bodies as trespassers to be excluded from various spaces of the nation and possibly even from citizenship and humanity.

At the same time, the frames which seek to legitimize trans people's existence, might do so, at the price of affectively utilizing others pain, as happens in connection to TDoR and the rhetorical attachment of trans people with the threat of violence depicted to have happened merely because of transness or anti-trans hate and thus veiling the intersectional structures of oppression, which make transfemininized persons especially vulnerable to violence by individuals (Gill-Peterson, 2024a), entangled with forms of paradigmatic neglect and structural and state violence.

My research contributes to the discussion on gender-segregated spaces (Browne, 2004; Doan, 2010; Bender-Baird, 2016; Vaahtera & Lappalainen, 2018) and their politicization (for example Schildt & Westbrook, 2015; Kafer, 2016; McLaughlin, 2017; Murib, 2020). I have argued that the Christian right creates an imaginative geography of 'cis America' through figuring trans access as a threat. I theorize this via the notion of *imaginative geography of linear gender*. While in this dissertation I have addressed imaginative geography of linear gender as attached to 'America,' I believe that this concept could be utilized also for addressing ethno-nationalist, anti-gender, and gender conservative rhetoric across national boundaries. I therefore see this as a contribution to the study of anti-gender rhetoric more widely.

I address coalition political rhetoric as a form of reframing violence, a de-articulation of trans identity and violence, and a contextualization of the violence in wider intersectional power structures, including the stigma of sex work, the Swedish model of policing sex work, and anti-migrant policies. I also highlight other framings of this violence by intersectional trans and sex worker activists.

While addressing the affective rhetoric of this coalition political rhetoric, I propose the concept of affective-reflective solidarity, questioning the separation of reflective and affectual solidarity (contra Dean 1995; 1996) to propose that coalitional rhetoric around the violence can evoke publics around solidarity across identity categories, a form of visibility which is based on networked solidarity rather than recognition within dominant norms of intelligibility and respectable/vulnerable citizenship.

In two of the articles, I have addressed the way rhetoric circulated in trans publics envisions a trans imagined nation which surpasses national borders. Some of the visibilities addressed here might represent another angle, such as opacities (Stanley, 2019), as they are networked visibilities which aim at cross-movement solidarity that surpasses boundaries of identities and nations, rather than aiming at greatest visibility for singular identities through state recognition.

Theorizing these forms of visibility, violence, and solidarity has been a part of my journey to becoming a scholar, but the importance of thinking and interrogating these issues is not a mere academic matter. The calls for intersectional solidarity I have addressed in this thesis should be taken seriously both within and beyond academia.

# List of References

- Abbott, T. B., 2022. *The history of trans representation in American television and film genres*. s.l.:Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ahmed, S., 2004. Affective economies. *Social text*, 22(2), pp. 117-139.
- Ahmed, S., 2006. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S., 2014. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. 2nd ed. London & New York: Routledge.
- Aizura, A. Z., 2006. Of Borders and Homes: The Imaginary Community of (Trans)sexual Citizenship. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 7(2), p. 289–309.
- Aizura, A. Z., 2012. The persistence of transgender travel narratives. In: *Transgender Migrations*. New York & London: Routledge, pp. 139-156.
- Amery, F. & Mondon, A., 2024. Othering, peaking, populism and moral panics: The reactionary strategies of organised transphobia. *The Sociological Review*, 72(6), pp. 1-17.
- Anderson, B., 2016 [1984]. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Asen, R., 2000. Seeking the “Counter” in Counterpublics. *Communication Theory*, Volume 10(4), p. 424–446.
- Asen, R., 2016. Communication is the public. *Communication and the Public*, 1(1), pp. 4-8.
- Association, A. F., 2024. *American Family Association webpage*. [Online] Available at: <https://afa.net/> [Accessed 23 12 2024].
- Association, A. F., n.d.. *Sign the Boycott Target Pledge!*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.afa.net/target> [Accessed 23 12 2024].
- Baril, A., 2015. Transness as debility: Rethinking intersections between trans and disabled embodiments. *Feminist review*, 111(1), pp. 59-74.
- Bassi, S. & LaFleur, G., 2022. Introduction: TERFs, Gender-Critical Movements, and Postfascist Feminisms. *TSQ*, 9(3), p. 311–333.
- Baym, N. K. & b. d., 2012. Socially Mediated Publicness: An Introduction. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56(3), p. 320–329.
- Beauchamp, T., 2018. *Going Stealth: Transgender Politics and U.S. Surveillance Practices*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.
- Bender-Baird, K., 2016. Peeing Under Surveillance: Bathrooms, Gender Policing, and Hate Violence. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 23(7), p. 983–988.
- Benkler, Y. et al., 2015. Social Mobilization and the Networked Public Sphere: Mapping the SOPA-PIPA Debate.. *Political Communication*, 32(4), p. 594–624.
- Bennett, W. L. & Segerberg, A., 2012. The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics. *Information, communication & society*, 15(5), pp. 739-768.
- Berberick, S. N., 2018. The Paradox of Trans Visibility: Interrogating the “Year of Trans Visibility”. *Journal of Media Critiques*, 13(4), pp. 123-144 .
- Berlant, L., 2004. Introduction Compassion (and withholding). In: L. Berlant, ed. *Compassion*. s.l.:Routledge, pp. 1-13.
- Berlant, L., 2008. *Female Complaint*. Durham: Duke University Press.

- Berlant, L. & Warner, M., 1998. Sex in public. *Critical inquiry*, 24(2), pp. 547-566.
- Best, J., 1993. *Threatened children: Rhetoric and concern about child-victims*. s.l.:University of Chicago Press.
- Bettcher, T. M., 2007. Evil Deceivers and Make-Believers: On Transphobic Violence and the Politics of Illus. *Hypatia*, 22(3), pp. 43-65.
- Bettcher, T. M., 2014. Trapped in the Wrong Theory: Rethinking Trans Oppression and Resistance. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 39(2), pp. 383-406.
- Bhanji, N., 2012. TRANS/SCRIPTIONS: Homing desires,(trans) sexual citizenship and racialized bodies. In: *Transgender migrations*. New York & London: Routledge, pp. 157-175.
- Billard, T. J., 2016. Writing in the margins: Mainstream news media representations of transgenderism. *International journal of communication*, Volume 10, pp. 4193-4218.
- Billard, T. J., 2019. Setting the transgender agenda: Intermedia agenda-setting in the digital news environment. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 7(1), pp. 165-176.
- Bivens, R., 2017. The gender binary will not be deprogrammed: Ten years of coding gender on Facebook. *New Media & Society*, 19(6), pp. 880-898.
- Boler, M. & Davis, E., 2020. Introduction. Propaganda by Other Means. In: M. Boler & E. Davis, eds. *Affective Politics of Digital Media. Propaganda by Other Means*. . New York: Routledge, pp. 1-50.
- Boltanski, L., 1999. *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*. s.l.:Cambridge University Press .
- Borba, R., 2022. Enregistering “gender ideology” The emergence and circulation of a transnational anti-gender language. *Journal of Language and Sexuality*, 11(1), pp. 57 - 79.
- boyd, d., 2008. Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life. In: D. Buckingham, ed. *Youth, Identity, and Digital Media. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, p. 119–142.
- boyd, d., 2010. Social Network Sites as Networked Publics: Affordances, Dynamics, and Implications. In: Z. Papacharissi, ed. *A Networked Self: Identity, Community, and Culture on Social Network Sites*. New York: Routledge, pp. 47-66.
- Bremer, S., 2011. *Kroppslinjer–Kön, transsexualism och kropp i berättelser om könskorrigering’ (‘Body Lines – Gender, Transsexualism and Body in Stories about Gender Reassignment’)*. Gothenburg:: PhD thesis, University of Gothenburg.
- Bremer, S., 2013. Penis as risk: A queer phenomenology of two swedish transgender women's narratives on gender correction. *Somatechnics*, 3(2), pp. 329-350.
- Brouwer, D. C., 2006. Communication as counterpublic. In: G. Shepherd, S. John & T. Striplhas, eds. *Communication as...: Perspectives on theory*. s.l.:s.n., pp. 195-208.
- Brown, K., 2004. Genderism and the Bathroom Problem: (Re)materialising Sexed Sites, (Re)creating Sexed Bodies. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 11(3), p. 333–346.
- Bruns, A., 2008. *Blogs, wikipedia, second life, and beyond: From production to produsage*. s.l.:Peter Lang.
- Bruns, A., 2023. From “the” public sphere to a network of publics: towards an empirically founded model of contemporary public communication spaces. *Communication Theory*, 33(2-3), p. 70–81.
- Bruns, A. & Burgess, J., 2011. *The use of Twitter hashtags in the formation of ad hoc publics*. Reykjavik, Proceedings of the European Consortium for Political Research Conference.
- Butkus, C. M., 2023. *Social Media, Marginalised Identity and Liminal Publics (Doctoral dissertation)*. Sydney: UTS.
- Butler, J., 1993. *Bodies That Matter*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J., 2002 [1990]. *Gender trouble..* s.l.:Routledge.
- Butler, J., 2010. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*. New York: Verso.
- Butler, J., 2013. Endangered/endangering: Schematic racism and white paranoia. In: R. Gooding-Williams, ed. *Reading Rodney King/reading urban uprising*. s.l.:Routledge, pp. 15-22.

- Byron, P. et al., 2019. "Hey, I'm having these experiences": Tumblr use and young people's queer (dis) connections. *International Journal of Communication*, Volume 13, pp. 2239-2259.
- Calhoun, C., 2013. The problematic public: revisiting Dewey, Arendt, and Habermas. *The Tanner lectures on human values*, Volume 32, pp. 67-107.
- Capuzza, J. C., 2015. Whats in a name? Transgender identity, metareporting, and the misgendering of Chelsea Manning. Teoksessa: L. Spencer & C. J. C., toim. *Transgender communication studies: Histories, trends, and trajectories*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, pp. 93-110.
- Cavalcante, A., 2016. "I Did It All Online:" Transgender identity and the management of everyday life. *Critical studies in media communication*, 33(1), pp. 109-122.
- Cavalcante, A., 2018. *Struggling for Ordinary: Media and Transgender Belonging in Everyday Life*. s.l.:NYU Press.
- Chavez, K. R., 2013. *Queer migration politics : Activist rhetoric and coalitional possibilities*. s.l.:University of Illinois Press.
- Christian, J. M. & D. L., 2019. Slow and Fast Violence: A Feminist Critique of Binaries. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 18(5), p. 1066–1075.
- Ciszek, E. & Rodriguez, N. S., 2020. Articulating transgender subjectivity: How discursive formations perpetuate regimes of power. *International Journal of Communication*, Volume 14, p. 5199–5217.
- Collective., T. C. R., 2014[1977]. A Black Feminist Statement. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 42(3/4), p. 271–280.
- Corredor, E. S., 2021. On the Strategic Uses of Women's Rights: Backlash, Rights-based Framing, and Anti-Gender Campaigns in Colombia's 2016 Peace Agreement. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 63(3), pp. 46-68.
- Couldry, N., 2010. Chapter 1. Theorizing Media as Practice. In: B. Bräuchler & J. Postill, eds. *Theorizing Media and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 35-54.
- Crenshaw, K., 1989. Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, Vol. 1989(Article 8).
- Crenshaw, K., 1991. Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, Volume 43, p. 1241–1299.
- Cvetkovich, A., 2003. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality and Lesbian Public Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Dahlberg, L., 2007. Rethinking the fragmentation of the cyberpublic: from consensus to contestation. *New Media & Society*, 9(5), pp. 827-847.
- Dame, A. P., 2016. Mapping the Territory: Archiving the Trans Website in an Age of Search. *TSQ*, 3(3-4), p. 628–636.
- Dean, J., 1995. Reflective Solidarity. *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory*, 2(1), pp. 114-140.
- Dean, J., 1996. *Solidarity of strangers: Feminism after identity politics*. s.l.:University of California Press.
- Dean, J., 2010. *Blog Theory: Feedback and Capture in the Circuits of Drive*. s.l.:Polity.
- Derrida, J., 1981. *Dissemination*. London: Athlone.
- Doan, P. L., 2010. The Tyranny of Gendered Spaces—Reflections From Beyond the Gender Dichotomy. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 17(5), p. 635–654.
- Dobson, A. S., Robards, B. & Carah, N. (., 2018. *Digital intimate publics and social media*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan..
- Dolata, U. & Schrape, J.-F., Social Movement Studies. Masses, Crowds, Communities, Movements: Collective Action in the Internet Age. 2016, 18(1), p. 1–18.
- Dyer, R., 2002. Introduction. In: *Matter of Images*. 2nd ed. s.l.:s.n., pp. 1-5.
- Edenborg, E., 2021. Anti-Gender Politics as Discourse Coalitions: Russia's Domestic and International Promotion of "Traditional Values." *Problems of Post-Communism*, 70(2), p. 175–184.

- Einboden, R., Varcoe, C. & Rudge, T., 2024. Extending the methodology of critical discourse analysis using Haraway's figurations: The example of The Monstrous Perpetrator within contemporary responses to child neglect and abuse. *Nursing inquiry*, 31(1), pp. 1-9.
- Epstein, R., Blake, J. & Gonzalez, T., 2017. *Girlhood interrupted: The erasure of Black girls' childhood*. [Online] Available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3000695> [Accessed 23 December 2024].
- Fink, M. & Miller, Q., 2014. Trans Media Moments: Tumblr, 2011–2013.. *Television & New Media*, 15(7), pp. 611-626.
- Flyvidz, 2014. *www.Flyvidz.com*. [Online] Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20140628094201/http://flyvidz.com/?order=desc> [Accessed 23 12 2024].
- Frank, G., 2014. The Colour of the Unborn: Anti-Abortion and Anti-Bussing Politics in Michigan, United States, 1967–1973',. *Gender & History*, 26(2), p. 351–378.
- Fraser, N., 1990. Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy. *Social Text*, Volume 25/26, pp. 56-80.
- Freedom, A. D., 2024. *Alliance Defending Freedom website*. [Online] Available at: <https://adfflegal.org/> [Haettu 23 12 2024].
- Gill-Peterson, J., 2024a. *A Short History of Trans Misogyny*.. s.l.:Verso Books.
- Gill-Peterson, J., 2024b. Caring for Trans Kids, transnationally, or, against "Gendercritical" Moms. In: E. Heaney, ed. *Feminism Against Cisness*.. s.l.:Duke University Press.
- Goffman, E., 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Harper Colophon.
- Goodwin, J., Jasper, J. & Polletta, F., 2000. The return of the repressed: The fall and rise of emotions in social movement theory. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 5(1), pp. 65-83.
- Gossett, R., Stanley, E. A. & Burton, J., 2017. Known Unknowns: Un Introduction to Trap Door. In: R. Gossett, E. A. Stanley & J. Burton, eds. *Trap Door. Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*. s.l.:MIT Press, pp. xv-xxvi.
- Grossberg, L., 1996. History, politics and postmodernism. In: *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. s.l.:Routledge, pp. 151-173.
- Grossberg, L., 2010. *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Habermas, J., 1991 [1964]. *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*.. s.l.:MIT press.
- Haimson, O. L., Dame-Griff, A., Capello, E. & Richter, Z., 2019. Tumblr Was a Trans Technology: The Meaning, Importance, History, and Future of Trans Technologies. *Feminist Media Studies*, 21(3), p. 345–61 .
- Haimson, O. L. & Hoffmann, A. L., 2016. Constructing and enforcing "authentic" identity online: Facebook, real names, and non-normative identities. *First Monday*.
- Halberstam, J., 1998. *Female Masculinity*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hall, S., 1996. On postmodernism and articulation: an interview with Stuart Hall. In: *Stuart Hall. Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. s.l.:Routledge, pp. 131-150.
- Halperin, Y., 2023. Reclaiming the People: Counter-Populist Algorithmic Activism on Israeli Facebook. *Television & New Media*, 24(1), pp. 71-87.
- Haraway, D. J., 1997. *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium.FemaleMan©\_Meets\_OncoMouseTM. Feminism and Technoscience*.. New York: Routledge.
- Haritaworn, J., 2013. Beyond hate: Queer metonymies of crime, pathology and anti-violence. *Jindal Global Law Review*, 4(2), p. 44–78.
- Hartley, J. & G. J., 2006. The public sphere on the beach.. *European journal of cultural studies*, 9(3), pp. 341-362.
- Hemmings, C., 2005. Invoking Affect. *Cultural Studies*, 19(5), pp. 548-567.
- Hemmings, C., 2020. Unnatural feelings: The affective life of 'anti-gender' mobilisations. *Radical Philosophy*, Osa/vuosikerta 209, p. 27–39.

- Hill Collins, P., 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. London : Routledge.
- Holm, M., 2019. *The rise of online counterpublics?: the limits of inclusion in a digital age*. s.l.:Uppsala University. Diss. Department of Government.
- Horak, L., 2014. Trans on YouTube. Intimacy, Visibility, Temporality. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 1(4).
- Hynnä-Granberg, K., 2021. 'Why Can't I Take a Full-Shot of Myself? Of Course I Can!' Studying Selfies as Socio-Technological Affective Practices. *Feminist Media Studies*, 22(6), p. 1363–1378.
- Hynnä-Granberg, K., 2022. *The Feeling Body in the Media: Affective Engagements with Body Positive Media*. PhD Dissertation. . s.l.:University of Turku.
- Ito, M., 2008. Introduction. In: K. Varnelis, ed. *Networked Publics*. Cambridge: MIT Press, p. 1–14.
- Jackson, S. J., Bailey, M. & Foucault Welles, B., 2018. # GirlsLikeUs: Trans advocacy and community building online. *New Media & Society*, 20(5), pp. 1868-1888.
- Jackson, S. J. & Foucault Welles, a. B., 2015. Hijacking# myNYPD: Social media dissent and networked counterpublics. *Journal of communication*, 65(6), pp. 932-952.
- James, L., Barber, K., Putnam, L. & Warner, M., 2020. A conversation: Revisiting publics and counterpublics.. *Itinerario*, 44(2), pp. 243-259.
- Jenkins, H., Ford, S. & and Green, J., 2013. *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*. s.l.:NYU Press.
- Jenzen, O., 2017. Trans youth and social media: moving between counterpublics and the wider web. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 24(11), p. 1626–1641.
- Kafer, A., 2016. Other People's Shit (and Pee!). *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 115(4), p. 755– 762.
- Kaiser, J., 2017. Public spheres of skepticism: Climate skeptics' online comments in the German networked public sphere.. *International Journal of Communication*, 11, 22., 11(22).
- Kaiser, J. & Puschmann, C., 2018. Alliance of antagonism: Counterpublics and polarization in online climate change communication. *Communication and the Public*, 2(4), pp. 371-387.
- Kanchan, T., 2024. "Instagram is like a karela": transnational digital queer politics and online censorship and surveillance in India. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 17(3), pp. 162-169.
- Karkulehto, S., Saresma, T., Harjunen, H. & Kantola, J., 2012. Intersektionaalisuus metodologiana ja performatiivisen intersektionaalisuuden haaste. *Naistutkimus*, 25(4), pp. 17-28.
- Koch-Rein, A. H. Y. E. & V. J. J., 2020. Representing trans: visibility and its discontents., *European Journal of English Studies*., 24(1), pp. 1-12.
- Koistinen, A., 2015. *The human question in science fiction television: (re)imagining humanity in Battlestar Galactica, Bionic Woman and V*. PhD Dissertation.. s.l.:University of Jyväskylä.
- Koivunen, A., 2010. An Affective Turn? Reimagining the Subject of Feminist Theory. In: M. Liljeström & S. Paasonen, eds. *Working with Affect in Feminist Readings: Disturbing Differences*. London: Routledge, p. 8–27.
- Korolczuk, E. & Graff, A., 2021. *Anti-Gender Politics in the Populist Moment*. New York and London toim. s.l.:Routledge.
- Kuo, R., 2018. Racial justice activist hashtags: Counterpublics and discourse circulation.. *New Media & Society*, 20(2), pp. 495-514.
- Kyrölä, K., 2010. *The weight of images: Affective engagements with fat corporeality in the media*. s.l.:University of Turku.
- Lamble, S., 2008. Retelling racialized violence, remaking white innocence: The politics of interlocking oppressions in transgender day of remembrance. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, 5(March), pp. 24-42.
- LeBon, G., 1960 [1895]. *The Crowd*. New York: Viking Press.
- Lehner, A., 2022. The Transgender Flipping Point: How Trans Instagrammers Flip the Script on Identity. *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change*, 7(2), pp. 1-15.
- Lehto, M., 2021. *Affective Power of Social Media: Engagements with Networked Parenting Culture*. s.l.:University of Turku.

- Lewis, A. J., 2017. Trans History in a Moment of Danger: Organizing Within and Beyond "Visibility" in the 1970's. In: *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*. s.l.:MIT Press, pp. 57-89.
- Leys, R., 2011. The turn to affect: A critique. *Critical inquiry*, 37(3), pp. 434-472.
- Libby, C., 2022. Sympathy, Fear, Hate: Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminism and Evangelical Christianity.. *TSQ*, 9(3), p. 425–442.
- Livingstone, S., 2005. On the relation between audiences and publics. In: S. Livingstone, ed. *Audiences and Publics. When Cultural Engagement Matters for the Public Sphere*. Bristol, Uk & Portland, OR: Intellect Books, pp. 17-41.
- Lowenstein-Barkai, H., 2024. "Write it down! I am an Arab": The role of reader comments in the formation of networked counterpublics. *New Media & Society*, 26(6), , 26(6), pp. 3327-3346. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448221101163>.
- MacAulay, M. & Moldes, M. D., 2017. Queen don't compute: reading and casting shade on Facebook's real names policy. In: *Queer Technologies*. s.l.:Routledge, pp. 6-22.
- Malatino, H., 2021. The promise of repair: Trans rage and the limits of feminist coalition. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 46(4), pp. 827-851.
- Malatino, H., 2021. The Promise of Repair: Trans Rage and the Limits of Feminist Coalition. *Signs*, 46(4), p. 827–851.
- Maly, I., 2020. Algorithmic populism and the datafication and gamification of the people by Flemish Interest in Belgium. *Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada*, Volume 59, pp. 444-468.
- Markelj, J. & Bueno, C. C., 2021. Ambiguity and Affect in Digital Culture: An Interview with Susanna Paasonen. *The Journal of Media Art Study and Theory*.
- Markham, A. & Gammelby, A. K., 2018. Moving through digital flows: An epistemological and practical approach. In: U. Flick, ed. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data collection*, . London: Sage, pp. 451-465.
- Marres, N., 2005. Issues spark a public into being. In: B. Latour & P. and Weibel, eds. *Making Things Public*. s.l.:MIT Press.
- Marwick, A. E. & boyd, d., 2011. I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Twitter users, context collapse, and the imagined audience. *New media & society*, 13(1), pp. 114-133.
- Massumi, B., 2002. *Parables for the virtual. Movement affect sensation*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Mateus, S., 2014. Visibility regimes in mediatized publicness. *Matrices*, 8(2), pp. 259-281.
- Mbembe, A., 2003. Necropolitics. *Public Culture*, 15(1).
- McLaren, J. T., Bryant, S. & Brown, B., 2021. See me! Recognize me!": An analysis of transgender media representation. *Communication Quarterly*, 69(2), p. 172–191.
- McLaughlin, G., 2017. Divergent Students, Disruptive Students: Gender Anxieties in U.S. K–12 Schools. *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking*, 4(1), p. 1–27.
- McRobbie, A., 2004. Notes on 'What Not to Wear' and post-feminist symbolic violence. *Sociological Review*, 52(2), pp. 99-109.
- Melucci, A., 1980. The new social movements: A theoretical approach. *Social science information*, 19(2), pp. 199-226.
- Mouffe, C., 2000. *The Democratic Paradox*. s.l.:Verso.
- Muñoz, J. E., 2013. *Disidentifications: Queers of color and the performance of politics*. 2nd ed. s.l.:U of Minnesota Press.
- Murib, Z., 2020. Administering biology: How "bathroom bills" criminalize and stigmatize trans and gender nonconforming people in public space. *Administrative theory & praxis*, 42(2), pp. 153-171.
- Nahon, K. & Hemsley, J., 2013. *Going Viral*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Niang, S. M., 2024. In defence of what's there: notes on scavenging as methodology.. *Feminist Review*, 136(1), pp. 52-66.
- Nikunen, K., 2018. *Media solidarities: Emotions, power and justice in the digital age*. s.l.:Sage.

- Nikunen, K., Hokka, J. & Nelimarkka, M., 2021. Affective practice of soldiering: How sharing images is used to spread extremist and racist ethos on Soldiers of Odin Facebook site. *Television & New Media*, 22(2), pp. 166-185.
- Ojala, M. & Ripatti-Torniainen, L., 2024. Where is the public of 'networked publics'? A critical analysis of the theoretical limitations of online publics research. *European Journal of Communication*, 39(2), pp. 145-160.
- Paasonen, S., 2021. *Dependent, distracted, bored: Affective formations in networked media*. s.l.:MIT Press.
- Palonen, K., 1993. Introduction: from policy and polity to politicking and politicization. In: K. Palonen & T. Parvikko, eds. *Reading the political: Exploring the margins of politics*. Helsinki: Finnish Political Science Association, pp. 6-16.
- Palonen, K., 2001. The Conceptualization of Politics on a Periphery. In: *FINNISH YEARBOOK OF POLITICAL THOUGHT 2001*. s.l.:s.n., pp. 113-154.
- Palonen, K., 2003. Four times of politics: Policy, polity, politicking, and politicization. *Alternatives*, 28(2), pp. 171-186.
- Papacharissi, Z., 2015. *Affective Publics: Sentiment, Technology, and Politics*. Oxford University Press. s.l.:Oxford University Press.
- Papacharissi, Z., 2016. Affective publics and structures of storytelling: Sentiment, events and mediality. *Information, communication & society*, 19(3), pp. 307-324.
- Papacharissi, Z. & Trevey, M., 2018. Affective Publics and Windows of Opportunity: Social Media and the Potential for Social Change. In: G. Meikle, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Media and Activism*. Oxon: Routledge , p. 87-96.
- Paternotte, D. & Kuhar, R., 2018. Disentangling and Locating the "Global Right": Anti-Gender Campaigns. *Politics and Governance* , 6(3), pp. 6-19.
- Postill, J., 2010. Introduction: Theorizing Media and Practice. In: B. a. P. J. Bräuchler, ed. *Theorizing Media and Practice*. New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 1-33.
- Powell, A., Scott, A. J. & Henry, N., 2020. Digital harassment and abuse: Experiences of sexuality and gender minority adults.. *European journal of criminology*, 17(2), pp. 199-223.
- Probyn, E., 2005. *Blush: Faces of Shame*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Prosser, J., 1998. *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality..* New York: Columbia University Press.
- Protevi, J., 2009. *Political affect: Connecting the social and the somatic*. s.l.:U of Minnesota Press.
- Puar, J., 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Raun, T., 2010. Screen-births: Exploring the transformative potential in trans video blogs on YouTube. *Graduate journal of social science*, 7(2), pp. 113-130.
- Raun, T., 2015. Archiving the wonders of testosterone via YouTube. *Transgender Studies Quarterly* , 2(4), pp. 701-709.
- Raun, T., 2016. *Out Online: Trans Self-Representation and Community Building on YouTube*. 1st ed. s.l.:Routledge..
- Reckwitz, A., 2002. Toward a theory of social practices: A development in culturalist theorizing. *European journal of social theory*, 5(2) , 5(2), pp. 243-263.
- Renninger, B., 2015. "Where I can be myself ... where I can speak my mind": Networked counterpublics in a polymedia environment. *New Media & Society* , 17(9), pp. 1513-1529.
- Robinson, J. Y., 2023. Climate Nags: Affect and the Convergence of Global Risk in Online Networks. *Continuum* , 38(1), p. 6-23.
- Roseneil, S., 2011. Criticality, not paranoia: A generative register for feminist social research. *NORA-Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 19(2), pp. 124-131.
- Rossi, L., 2017. Hauras, KORjaava ja parantumaton queer: Katse ylpeyden, normatiivisuuden ja (uus) häpeän aikoihin.. *SQS-Suomen Queer-tutkimuksen Seuran lehti*, 11(1), pp. 1-18.

- Rubin, G., 1984. Pleasure and danger: exploring female sexuality : papers presented at the Scholar and the feminist IX conference, Apr. 24, 1982 at the Barnard College, New York City. In: C. Vance, ed. *Thinking Sex. Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality*. Boston: Routledge, pp. 267-319.
- Rubin, G., 1984. Thinking Sex. Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality. In: C. S. Vance, ed. *Pleasure and danger: exploring female sexuality : papers presented at the Scholar and the feminist IX conference, Apr. 24, 1982 at the Barnard College*. Boston: Routledge, pp. 267-319.
- Said, E., 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: : Random House.
- Sajir, Z. a. M. A., 2019. Solidarity, social media, and the "refugee crisis": Engagement beyond affect. *International Journal of Communication*, 13(28).
- Salskov, S. A., 2020. A Critique of Our Own? On Intersectionality and “Epistemic Habits” in a Study of Racialization and Homonationalism in a Nordic Context. *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 28(3), pp. 251-265.
- Saukko, P. A., 2003. *Doing research in cultural studies: An introduction to classical and new methodological approaches*. s.l.:Sage.
- Schaap, A., 2008. Aboriginal sovereignty and the democratic paradox. In: *The Politics of Radical Democracy*. s.l.:Edinburgh University Press.
- Schatzki, T. R., 2001. Introduction: Practice Theory. In: K. Knorr Cetina, T. R. Schatzki & E. von Savigny, eds. *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*. s.l.:Taylor & Francis.
- Schilt, K. & Westbrook, L., 2009. Doing gender, doing heteronormativity: Gender normal, transgender people, and the social maintenance of heterosexuality. *Gender & Society*, 23(4).
- Schilt, K. & Westbrook, L., 2015. Bathroom Battlegrounds and Penis Panics. *Contexts*, 14(3), p. 26–31.
- Schmitt, C., 2007 [1932]. *The Concept of the Political. Expanded Edition..* s.l.:Chicago University Press.
- Sedgwick, E. K., 1997. Paranoid reading and reparative reading; or, you’re so paranoid, you probably think this introduction is about you. In: *Novel gazing: Queer readings in fiction*, . s.l.:Duke University Press, pp. 1-37.
- Senft, T., 2008. *Camgirls: Celebrity and Community in the Age of Social Networks*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Senft, T. & Baym, N., 2015. What Does the Selfie Say? Investigating a Global Phenomenon. *International Journal of Communication*, Volume 9, p. 1588–1606.
- Shouse, E., 2005. Feeling, Emotion, Affect. *M/C Journal*, 8(6).
- Skidmore, E., 2011. Constructing the ‘Good Transsexual’: Christine Jorgensen, Whiteness, and Heteronormativity in the Mid-Twentieth Press. *Feminist Studies* , 37(2), pp. 270-300.
- Slaby, J., Mühlhoff, R. & Wüschner, P., 2019. Concepts as methodology: A plea for arrangement thinking in the study of affect. Teoksessa: A. Kahl, toim. *Analyzing affective societies: Methods and methodologies*. New York: Routledge.
- Slack, J. D., 1996. The Theory and Method of Articulation in Cultural Studies. In: *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. s.l.:Routledge, pp. 112-127.
- Snorton, C. R., 2017. *Black on both sides: A racial history of trans identity..* s.l.: University of Minnesota Press.
- Snorton, R. C. & H. J., 2013. Trans Necropolitics: A Transnational Reflection on Violence, Death, and the Trans of Color Afterlife. In: S. Stryker & A. Z. Aizura, eds. *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Snow, D. A., Vliegthart, R. & Ketelaars, P., 2019. The framing perspective on social movements. Its conceptual roots and architecture. In: D. Snow, S. Soule, H. Kriesi & H. McCammon, eds. *The wiley blackwell companion to social movements (2 ed. pp..* s.l.:Wiley, pp. 392-410..
- Spencer, L. G., 2019. Bathroom bills, memes, and a biopolitics of trans disposability. *Western Journal of Communication*, 83(5), pp. 542-559.
- Stacey, J., 2014. Wishing away ambivalence. *Feminist Theory*, 15(1), pp. 39-49.

- Stanley, E. A., 2011. Introduction: Fugitive Flesh: Gender Self-determination, Queer Abolition, and Trans Resistance. In: E. A. Stanley & N. Smith, eds. *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*. 2nd ed. Oakland, CA: AK Press.
- Stanley, E. A., 2017. Anti-trans optics: Recognition, opacity, and the image of force. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 116(3), pp. 612-620.
- Stanley, E. A., 2021. *Atmospheres of Violence: Structuring Antagonism and the Trans/Queer Ungovernable*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Steele, C. K., 2018. Black Bloggers and Their Varied Publics: The Everyday Politics of Black Discourse Online. *Television & New Media*, 19(2), pp. 112-127.
- Steinbock, E., 2019. The Early 1990s and its afterlives: Transgender nation sociality in digital activism. *Social Media + Society*, 5(4), p. 1–12.
- Straube, W., 2014. *Trans Cinema and Its Exit Scapes : A Transfeminist Reading of Utopian Sensibility and Gender Dissidence in Contemporary Film*. Linköping: PhD dissertation, Linköping University Electronic Press.
- Straube, W., 2020. Introduction: Visibility and Screen Politics after the Transgender Tipping Point.. *Screen Bodies*, 5(1), pp. 56-65.
- Stryker, S., 2008. *Transgender history*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.
- Stryker, S., 2013. (De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies. In: S. Stryker & S. Whittle, eds. *The Transgender Studies Reader*. s.l.:s.n., pp. 1-17.
- Sundén, J. & Paasonen, S., 2019. Inappropriate laughter: Affective homophily and the unlikely comedy of# MeToo. *Social media+ society*, 5(4).
- Swidler, A., 2001. What anchors cultural practices. In: K. Knorr Cetina, T. R. Schatzki & E. von Savigny, eds. *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*. New York: Routledge.
- TGEU, n.d. *Trans Day of Remembrance*. [Online] Available at: <https://tgeu.org/trans-day-of-remembrance/> [Accessed 23 12 2024].
- Thompson, J. B., 2005. The New Visibility. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22(6), p. 31–51.
- Toepfl, F. & Piwoni, E., 2015. Public spheres in interaction: Comment sections of news websites as counterpublic spaces. *Journal of Communication*, 65(3), p. 465–488.
- Treré, E. & Bonini, T., 2024. Amplification, evasion, hijacking: algorithms as repertoire for social movements and the struggle for visibility. *Social Movement Studies*, 23(3), pp. 303-319.
- Tudor, A., 2023. The anti-feminism of anti-trans feminism. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 30(2), 30(2), pp. 290-302.
- Tufekci, Z., 2013. “Not this one” social movements, the attention economy, and microcelebrity networked activism. *American behavioral scientist*, 57(7), pp. 848-870.
- Tyler, I., 2006. Chav Scum: The Filthy Politics of Social Class in Contemporary Britain. *M/C Journal*, 9(5).
- Vaahtera, T. & Lappalainen, S., 2018. Bodies of latent potential: abled imaginary and national belonging in Finnish cultural texts about swimming. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 26(4), p. 593–607.
- Warner, M., 2002a. Publics and Counterpublics. *Public Culture*, 14(1), pp. 49-90.
- Warner, M., 2002b. *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.
- Webster, L., 2024. We are detective”: transvestigations, conspiracy and inauthenticity in ‘gender critical’ social media discourses. *ELAD-SILDA*, Volume 9.
- Venäläinen, S., 2022. Nobody cares for men anymore: Affective-discursive practices around men’s victimisation across online and offline contexts. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 25(4), pp. 1228-1245.
- Westberg, G., 2021. Affect as a multimodal practice. *Multimodality & Society*, 1(1), pp. 20-38.
- Westbrook, L., 2020. *Unlivable lives: Violence and identity in transgender activism*. s.l.:University of California Press.
- Wetherell, M., 2012. *Affect and Emotion: A New Social Science Understanding*. London: Sage.

- Wetherell, M., 2013. Affect and discourse – What’s the problem? From affect as excess to Affective/Discursive practice. *Subjectivity*, 6(4), p. 349–368. .
- Wetherell, M. et al., 2015. Settling space and covering the nation: Some conceptual considerations in analysing affect and discourse. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 16(August), p. 56–64.
- Whittle, S., 2001. 11 The Trans-Cyberian Mail Way. In: J. Hassard & R. Holliday, eds. *Contested Bodies*. New York & London: Routledge, pp. 153-168.
- Wiegman, R., 2014. ”The times we’re in: Queer feminist criticism and the reparative ‘turn’”. *Feminist Theory*, 5(1), p. 4–25.
- Wiik, J., 2023. *Violence, Sexualization, and Otherness : An Analysis on the Representation of Transgender Characters in Video Games*. Turku: University of Turku.
- Williams, R., 1961. *Culture and Society*. London: Fontana.
- Vipond, E., 2015. Resisting Transnormativity: challenging the medicalization and regulation of trans bodies. *Theory in Action*, 8(2), pp. 21-44.
- Vipond, E., 2018. Becoming Culturally (Un)intelligible: Exploring the Terrain of Trans Life Writing. *A/b: Auto/Biography Studies*, 34(1), p. 19–43.
- Vipond, E., 2023. Expanding the Repertoire of Trans Masculinities: The Cultural Legacy of Original Plumbing.. *TSQ* , 10(2), p. 175–188.
- Wright, S. & Street, J., 2007. Democracy, deliberation and design: the case of online discussion forums. *New media & society*, 9(5), pp. 849-869.
- Vuolajärvi, N., 2019. Governing in the name of caring—The Nordic model of prostitution and its punitive consequences for migrants who sell sex. *Sexuality research and social policy*, 16(2), pp. 151-165.
- Vähäpassi, V., 2013. Creating a Home in the Borderlands?. *SQS – Suomen Queer-tutkimuksen Seuran lehti*, 7(1-2), p. 30–41.
- Vähäpassi, V., 2017. Transsukupuolisuuden poliittis-relaationaalinen malli. *Sukupuolentutkimus - Genusforskning*, 30(1), pp. 49-63.
- Xu, W. W., 2020. Mapping connective actions in the global alt-right and Antifa counterpublics. *International Journal of Communication*, 14(22).
- Yang, G., 2016. Narrative agency in hashtag activism: The case of# BlackLivesMatter. *Media and communication*, 4(4), pp. 13-17.
- Zizek, S., 2008. *Violence*. s.l.:Picador.
- Zuboff, S., Möllers, N., Wood, D. M. & Lyon, D., 2019. Surveillance capitalism: an interview with Shoshana Zuboff.. *Surveillance & Society*, 17(1/2), pp. 257-266.





**TURUN  
YLIOPISTO**  
UNIVERSITY  
OF TURKU

ISBN 978-952-02-0142-5 (PRINT)  
ISBN 978-952-02-0143-2 (PDF)  
ISSN 0082-6987 (Print)  
ISSN 2343-3191 (Online)