

4-32 Assiniboia Hall
Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada T6G 2E7
Tel: 780.248.1192
wgs@ualberta.ca
www.uab.ca/wgs

Research Proposal

Experiences of Sexual Assault Among Transmen: A Feminist Narrative Inquiry

Aaron Kimberly

MA Candidate - Gender and Social Justice

Women's and Gender Studies

University of Alberta

“Feminism is for everybody. It is not about man-hating, it is about justice.”
—bell hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, 2000

Introduction

I approach this inquiry from overlapping vantage points that shape my epistemology and interpretive stance. I am a transman who has lived through the social, cultural, and embodied realities of being positioned first as female, then as a lesbian, and now as a transman. My life and professional practice have been interwoven with the lives of others who have endured sexual violence—experiences that are devastatingly common yet rarely theorized. Although I have not personally experienced rape, listening to peers’ accounts has profoundly informed my understanding of vulnerability, responsibility, and collective obligation. My background as a psychiatric nurse adds a further dimension to this perspective: trauma is not merely a psychological event but a reconfiguration of embodiment, identity, and social belonging. The nurse’s attentiveness to stories of harm aligns naturally with narrative inquiry’s concern for experience and meaning; both understand storytelling as an act of care, and negotiate power imbalances between interviewer and storyteller.

This study is grounded in feminist analyses of rape as a political instrument of patriarchal power. Foundational thinkers such as Brownmiller, MacKinnon, and Dworkin conceptualized sexual violence as a mechanism of gender domination that operates through the body. Yet these frameworks often presuppose a coherent and universal category of “woman.” While politically useful, this assumption limits their explanatory power. Feminist rape theory has not yet fully

accounted for those whose experiences blur or transgress the boundaries of sex and gender. As a transman, I inhabit a position that both intersects with and unsettles the category of “woman.” My intention is not to reject feminist rape theory but to interrogate and extend it: to ask how it might be reshaped through the narratives of transmen who have experienced sexual assault.

The silence surrounding this topic is not merely empirical but epistemological and ethical. Sexual violence is a sex-based act that depends upon and enforces cultural meanings of the sexed body. To study it requires foregrounding embodiment—a task that has become increasingly fraught within contemporary gender discourse. In contexts where discussions of sexed embodiment are perceived as politically suspect or exclusionary, scholars may avoid addressing how sexual assault operates through the body itself. Yet this very avoidance perpetuates another form of erasure. To understand transmen’s experiences of sexual violence, embodiment cannot be treated as irrelevant; it is the site where power, vulnerability, and identity converge. The discomfort of acknowledging sexed embodiment within feminist and queer scholarship may therefore help explain why assaults against transmen remain largely unexamined. This inquiry enters that contested space, seeking to theorize sexual violence in ways that are both inclusive of trans experience and attentive to the embodied structures through which it occurs.

My motivation is simultaneously intellectual and moral. The absence of discourse on this topic is not a neutral omission but a form of epistemic harm that contributes to the social invisibility of survivors. When transmen’s assaults go unnamed or untheorized, the knowledge produced about sexual violence remains partial and distorted. This project therefore seeks to bring those experiences into conversation with feminist thought, expanding theoretical understanding while

contributing to justice. It proceeds from the conviction that silence itself can be a mechanism of violence and that naming constitutes a necessary step toward repair.

Narrative inquiry offers a methodological framework suited to these aims. It foregrounds experience, story, and meaning, emphasizing how individuals construct sense within broader cultural and structural contexts. Stories are never purely personal; they are entangled with social scripts, discourses, and power relations. Feminist narrative inquiry therefore aligns with the theoretical premise that experience is both embodied and political. By engaging survivors as co-constructors of knowledge, it allows for the exploration of trauma as lived, spoken, and interpreted—without abstracting it from the social structures that produce it. In the context of sexual assault, this approach recognizes storytelling as a potential act of resistance and reparation.

This inquiry, then, is both ethical and theoretical: an act of listening that seeks to make visible what has been rendered unspeakable. By documenting and theorizing the sexual assaults of transmen, it challenges feminist scholarship to confront the full complexity of sexual violence—its sex-based structures, its gendered variations, and its intersectional dimensions. The goal is not simply to add new data but to reimagine the theoretical vocabulary through which sexual violence, embodiment, and justice are understood.

The Research Puzzle

The central questions I wish to answer are: how are transmen impacted by rape, and how do their experiences affirm or challenge theoretical frameworks about rape? Feminist scholarship has long situated rape at the core of women's oppression. Foundational theorists such as Brownmiller, MacKinnon, and Dworkin conceptualized sexual violence as a political act that maintains patriarchal power through control of women's bodies. These frameworks exposed rape as structural, yet often treated "woman" as a unified category defined by shared vulnerability. Without deeper attention to race, class, sexuality, and gender diversity, they cannot explain why some groups are disproportionately targeted or how sexual violence functions across shifting identities.

Transmen disrupt and extend these theories. Born and often socialized as female, many share formative vulnerabilities associated with womanhood, yet as transmen they encounter new risks and exclusions. Their assaults may resemble "female rape" in form and motivation but also reveal how patriarchy operates across gender boundaries. This tension underscores the need to refine feminist rape theory to account for fluid embodiment and intersecting hierarchies.

Research on male rape has likewise challenged heteronormative assumptions that equate masculinity with invulnerability. Alyagon-Darr and Lowenstein Lazar show that cultural silence around male victimization polices masculinity itself. Yet transmen appear in neither feminist nor male-rape literatures. Their erasure is not simply academic but political: when victims remain unnamed, their suffering risks being treated as less real or less urgent. This absence mirrors broader cultural mechanisms of invisibility and demands theoretical attention.

Rape is a sex-based act that operates through meanings attached to the body; to understand transmen's assaults, researchers must address how sexed embodiment interacts with gender identity. Haraway reminds us that all knowledge is situated, while Harding emphasizes that objectivity emerges from reflexivity, not neutrality. For transmen, assaults occur within layered realities—having been born female, transitioning socially or medically, and being positioned as male-passing within patriarchy. These shifting positionalities trouble neat categories of victimhood and power, requiring re-examination of how knowledge about sexual violence is produced.

Quantitative studies provide prevalence data but little insight into meaning. They rarely distinguish experiences relative to medical transition or gender presentation, nor examine how survivors interpret violence in relation to identity and embodiment. Without qualitative depth, transmen remain statistics rather than narrators of their own lives. Narrative inquiry responds to this gap by centering lived experience and meaning-making. Stories reveal not only what happened but how survivors interpret, resist, and reframe it. Clandinin and Connelly describe narrative inquiry as relational, while Smythe and Murray stress that stories are ethically co-owned, making this approach particularly suited to ethically sensitive research on trauma.

The ethical and theoretical dimensions of this project are inseparable. Feminist research seeks to amplify marginalized voices; the absence of transmen's narratives exposes a gap in feminist praxis itself. Yet representing trauma carries risks of retraumatization, exposure, and misrepresentation. Smythe and Murray remind us that consent and confidentiality must be negotiated throughout. The aim is not simply to protect participants but to honor their agency, ensuring that research remains collaborative rather than extractive.

Literature Review

Population-based surveys consistently show disproportionately high rates of sexual assault among transmen. The *U.S. Transgender Survey* (James et al., 2015) found that 54% of transmen had experienced sexual assault, nearly identical to Trans PULSE Canada's estimate of 53% (Trans PULSE Canada). Recent epidemiological studies confirm these trends: Clossen et al. (2024) reported elevated lifetime sexual violence among transmen compared with transwomen and cisgender populations. Earlier research also noted widespread victimization and its consequences. Kenagy (2005) documented high rates of violence and harassment among transgender people, while Testa, Sciacca, and Wang (2012) linked exposure to trauma with post-traumatic stress, suicidality, and disruptions in identity. Advocacy organizations such as the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (2011) and the Trevor Project (2021; 2022) have emphasized that sexual violence constitutes a major public health and mental health concern among LGBTQ+ populations.

The pattern is unequivocal: transmen experience sexual assault at alarming rates. Yet these statistics reveal scope, not meaning. Prevalence studies document magnitude but fail to capture context or survivors' own interpretations, leaving the phenomenon under-theorized and survivors' subjectivity largely absent from research.

Ison et al.'s (2025) scoping review identifies multiple intersecting risk factors for sexual violence among LGBTQ+ adults, including stigma, social isolation, discrimination, and previous victimization. Structural inequities like poverty, racism, disability, and immigration status compound these vulnerabilities. For transmen, such risks intersect with barriers to healthcare,

education, and employment (Kenagy), increasing both exposure to violence and difficulty accessing support. Prior victimization, often beginning in adolescence, heightens later vulnerability, creating cumulative cycles of harm. Black, Indigenous, and racialized transmen, as well as those engaged in prostitution/posrnography, or living in poverty, face particularly acute risk, yet these groups are underrepresented in most studies. Intersectionality thus exposes not only prevalence but inequity: not all transmen face equal vulnerability, and those at greatest risk are least visible.

International evidence confirms that these patterns are global manifestations of patriarchal control and gender policing. In South Africa, Human Rights Watch (2011) reported cases of “corrective rape” against transmen and lesbians intended to enforce heterosexual conformity. In Uganda, assaults have been linked to heightened HIV risk and systemic barriers to treatment (Wirtz et al., 2020). In Bhutan, Saxena et al. (2023) documented pervasive stigma and its psychological toll. In the United States and Canada, violence correlates with PTSD, suicidality, and social disconnection (Testa, Sciacca, and Wang; Kenagy). Across contexts, sexual assault functions simultaneously as a universal mechanism of patriarchal enforcement and as a culturally specific practice shaped by local norms.

Feminist theory provides the most developed framework for conceptualizing sexual violence. Brownmiller (1975) positioned rape as a political strategy of male dominance; MacKinnon (1989) theorized it as eroticized inequality; Dworkin (1987) analyzed sexual scripts of domination; and Cahill (2001) understood rape as a violation of embodied subjectivity. Marcus (1992) reframed rape as a language of power that women can resist and rewrite. Collectively, these scholars reveal sexual violence as both structural and semiotic—an institution of

patriarchy. However, early feminist frameworks often assumed “women” to be a singular class, overlooking intersections of race, class, and sexuality. As a result, they fail to explain nuances which account for why some female populations are victimized at higher rates.

Recent contributions by Mardorossian (2002) and Gavey (2018) advance intersectional and cultural approaches that move toward inclusivity, yet direct engagement with transmen remains minimal. The assaults of transmen raise questions existing theory cannot fully answer: should these be read as patriarchal domination of “women,” as enforcement of gender norms, or as a hybrid phenomenon that troubles both? These tensions demand theoretical refinement rather than rejection of feminist theory.

Parallel literatures on male rape offer relevant insights. Alyagon-Darr and Lowenstein Lazar (2023) show that heteronormative assumptions have rendered male victims nearly invisible in law and culture, reinforcing masculinity as antithetical to vulnerability. Recognizing male rape exposes how sexual violence also disciplines men and enforces hierarchies within masculinity. For transmen, however, embodiment complicates this picture. Their assaults may reflect both the gendered subordination associated with femininity and the punishment of gender deviance. Integrating feminist and male-rape frameworks may therefore yield a more nuanced account of how sexual violence operates across shifting gendered positions.

Despite substantial quantitative evidence, major gaps persist. Most surveys report lifetime prevalence without distinguishing between pre- and post-transition experiences, leaving unclear how risk changes over time or across social presentation. Perpetrator characteristics are rarely reported, obscuring whether assaults are most often committed by heterosexual men, intimate

partners, or others within queer communities. Longitudinal data are minimal, and intersectional analysis remains limited. These omissions hinder understanding of how structural inequality, embodiment, and identity transformation intersect in experiences of violence.

Qualitative research on meaning-making remains particularly scarce. Very few studies have invited transmen to narrate their assaults or explored how they interpret and survive them.

Without narrative data, survivors become statistical abstractions rather than knowers of their own experience. This absence is both empirical and ethical: it reproduces silencing and limits theory's capacity to evolve. Smythe and Murray remind us that stories are co-constructed and carry moral obligations; researchers must therefore attend to the ethics of representation and co-authorship.

In sum, existing literature reveals a paradox of visibility and silence. The prevalence of sexual assault against transmen is well established, yet its meanings remain largely unexplored.

Feminist and male-rape frameworks each illuminate aspects of this violence but fail to address its full complexity. The gap between numerical evidence and lived experience underscores the need for feminist narrative inquiry—an approach that centers embodiment, meaning, and relational ethics, and that treats storytelling as both knowledge production and a practice of justice.

Design and Methodology

My epistemological stance integrates interpretivist and critical paradigms, grounded in second-wave feminist theory and refined by poststructuralist insights. Interpretivism assumes that human

experiences are best understood through the meanings people assign to them, aligning with my aim to center survivors' own sense-making of sexual assault. A critical orientation ensures that these meanings are examined within systems of power, patriarchy, and structural inequality. Together, they allow attention to both the intimate textures of experience and the broader cultural forces that shape them.

Poststructuralist contributions, particularly Haraway's "situated knowledges" and Harding's standpoint epistemology, further guide this positioning. Haraway emphasizes that knowledge is always partial and embodied; Harding argues that marginalized standpoints offer crucial vantage points on power. For transmen, whose perspectives are largely absent from feminist rape theory, these frameworks highlight the need for reflexivity. As a transman, I occupy both insider and outsider positions: my embodiment opens certain insights while limiting others. Reflexivity thus becomes a method of accountability and an ethical stance within the research process. As England (1994) notes, feminist reflexivity demands awareness of how one's positionality shapes the research relationship and the production of knowledge.

Feminist narrative inquiry provides the methodological framework through which these commitments are enacted. Narrative inquiry conceives stories not merely as recounts of events but as meaning-making practices shaped by relationships, discourse, and temporality. Clandinin and Connelly describe it as "stories lived and told," emphasizing that narratives are both experiential and constructed. Unlike phenomenology, which seeks essences, or grounded theory, which aims to generalize, narrative inquiry privileges particularity and relationality. Bresler (2006) conceptualizes this as an embodied methodology of connection, highlighting how stories emerge through bodily, emotional, and ethical engagement between researcher and

participant. This approach is especially apt for studying sexual assault—an experience that is simultaneously personal and political, individual and structural.

Sharon Marcus's conception of rape as "language" complements this methodology. Marcus theorizes rape as a cultural script through which power relations are reproduced and contested. This framing illuminates how certain groups become targets and how assaults communicate social hierarchies. For transmen, whose existence troubles the categories of "male perpetrator" and "female victim", the metaphor of rape as language reveals how assaults both reproduce and destabilize dominant gender scripts. Narrative inquiry enables examination of survivors' stories as participation in, and resistance to, these cultural languages.

The study follows a multi-stage design. Participants will be recruited through community networks and personal contacts, prioritizing trust and autonomy. Semi-structured, dialogical interviews will invite participants to narrate their experiences in their own words, focusing on events, interpretations, and meanings rather than standardized categories. Conversations will occur via Zoom for accessibility and safety, recorded with consent, and transcribed verbatim. Each interview will be 60-90 minutes in length and expected to be completed by Oct 17, 2025.

Transcription will be done between October 17-21, 2025. Narratives will then be analyzed iteratively through thematic, structural, and critical lenses. Thematic analysis will identify recurring images, metaphors, and motifs related to embodiment, identity, and power (Riessman). Structural analysis will attend to the form of stories—the silences, temporal disruptions, and narrative breaks that often characterize trauma (Labov). Dialogic or performance analysis will examine how participants position themselves in relation to me as interviewer and to imagined

audiences. Finally, critical analysis will situate these stories within broader cultural discourses of sex, gender, and violence, interpreting them through Marcus's lens of rape as language. These layers will be recursive rather than sequential, allowing movement between close reading and theoretical reflection. The analysis will be completed by November 20, 2025 and the final report will be completed by December 4, 2025.

To ensure accuracy and ethical co-authorship, participants will review and revise their transcripts. This process reinforces narrative inquiry's relational ethic—stories are co-constructed rather than extracted (Smythe and Murray). Follow-up conversations may be conducted to clarify meaning or deepen interpretation, ensuring participants remain collaborators in analysis.

Interviews will be compared and contrasted with existing empirical data and publicly available accounts of transmen's sexual assaults. These texts extend the analytic corpus and allow for comparison between individual and collective storytelling. Analyzing these narratives alongside interview data strengthens the study's capacity to identify both shared and context-specific themes.

Throughout analysis, feminist theory functions as both frame and interlocutor. Second-wave perspectives on rape as political power (Brownmiller; MacKinnon) remain indispensable but incomplete. Narrative inquiry enables their refinement by showing how transmen's experiences both conform to and exceed their scope. For instance, themes of gender policing or erasure in healthcare will be interpreted not simply as personal struggles but as expressions of heteropatriarchal power.

By combining interpretivist and critical paradigms within feminist narrative inquiry, this design operationalizes theory as method. It acknowledges survivors as meaning-makers and situates their stories within structural contexts. The methodology is thus both epistemological and ethical: it enacts reflexivity, co-authorship, and attentiveness to embodiment as foundations of feminist research. Through this integration, the study aims to generate knowledge that honors survivors' narratives while contributing to theoretical advancement and social justice.

Data Collection and Ethical Considerations

Field texts will consist of interviews with three adult transmen who have experienced sexual assault, recruited through word of mouth and community networks. Some are acquaintances who have previously shared aspects of their experiences publicly. Interviews will be conducted via Zoom, recorded with consent, and transcribed for analysis. Using a narrative framework, questions will invite reflection on the context and timing of assaults relative to transition, and on how these events shaped identity, embodiment, and relationships. Interpretation will be collaborative: participants will have opportunities to review transcripts, clarify meaning, and respond to my analyses.

Interviews will be conducted within a trauma-informed, supportive framework. Rapport will be established through a conversational tone and selective self-disclosure, drawing on my background as a psychiatric nurse. Before participation, individuals will be screened for current psychological stability and suicide risk. They will be reminded of their right to pause, skip

questions, or withdraw at any time, and re-screened after each session to ensure emotional regulation. Safety checks, grounding techniques, and post-interview debriefing will be routine. These steps operationalize feminist ethics of care (Gilligan) and beneficence (Reinharz) as active, embodied practices rather than abstract commitments.

Narrative inquiry demands relational ethics that extend beyond procedural compliance.

Following Clandinin (2006), I recognize that researcher and participant co-create meaning; stories cannot be separated from the relationships in which they are told. Smythe and Murray (2000) further emphasize that stories are co-owned, not extracted. Ethics therefore concern the quality of engagement as much as the data itself. As a member of the same trans community, maintaining boundaries is essential. The research will not be discussed in other community contexts, and personal relationships will be kept distinct from the research relationship.

Participants will be informed of these boundaries to support transparency and mutual respect.

Though I may share many experiences with my participants, each is an individual and I may not share locations of race, socio-economic status, or participation in prostitution/pornography.

Where these difference exist, I'll remain attentive to how those positions are woven into the participants' own meaning-making.

Meaning will be negotiated throughout. I will regularly ask participants whether my interpretations align with their intended meanings, and dissenting views will be included in the analysis. This collaborative authorship ensures that participants remain active agents in how their experiences are represented. The goal is not to impose theoretical readings but to create interpretive space where participants' own analyses and my scholarly reflections coexist.

Informed consent will be treated as an evolving dialogue rather than a one-time agreement. Following Oakley's call for reciprocity and trust, participants will be consulted at multiple stages—before, during, and after interviews—about how their narratives are recorded and used. They will be fully briefed on the study's aims, potential risks, and their rights to withdraw or redact material. If a participant disagrees with my interpretation, their alternative perspective will be documented in the final report. Consent, in this model, becomes a continuous conversation grounded in mutual respect and negotiation.

Confidentiality will be handled collaboratively. Participants will choose pseudonyms, and data will be stored securely on an encrypted, password-protected device accessible only to me.

Because anonymity can distort meaning in narrative research (Smythe & Murray), decisions about identifying details will be made jointly to balance safety and narrative integrity.

Participants will approve direct quotations and may request edits or deletions. When necessary to prevent identification, composite stories may be created. All recordings, transcripts, and consent forms will be destroyed after completion of the study; only the final report will remain.

Managing potential distress is an ethical priority, with respect to beneficence. Interviews will be structured around participant pacing, with breaks and grounding exercises available as needed.

My clinical background enables immediate suicide-risk assessment, crisis intervention, and appropriate referral. Each interview will conclude with emotional debriefing and confirmation of support resources. Participants will guide whether sensitive material is included in publication and how it is framed, ensuring continued agency over their stories. These practices embody feminist relational ethics by making care an integral part of the research process.

Positionality and reflexivity will be central to maintaining ethical integrity. My identity as a transman provides shared understanding but also potential for over-identification. Riessman cautions that narratives are “jointly produced,” and my interpretations will inevitably reflect my standpoint. To address this, I will keep reflexive field notes on emotional responses, assumptions, and interpretive tensions. If my perspectives diverge from participants’, those differences will be discussed with them and transparently analyzed in the final text. Following Harding and Haraway, I regard subjectivity not as bias but as situated knowledge that strengthens accountability through self-awareness.

Ethical responsibility extends beyond data collection. After interviews, participants will be debriefed and offered follow-up contact to ensure psychological well-being. Clandinin and Connelly remind researchers that inquiry leaves “a wake” in participants’ lives; my ongoing communication and care are meant to mitigate that impact. Oakley’s principle that feminist research should be “for” rather than “about” participants guides my approach: participants retain agency in how their stories are represented and may choose to withdraw sections if they feel misrepresented or exposed.

In addition to original interviews, this study will analyze public accounts from *We’ll Show You You’re a Woman* (Human Rights Watch), a collection of over one hundred interviews with lesbians and transmen in South Africa. As published materials, these narratives do not require confidentiality measures but will be interpreted contextually, with sensitivity to geopolitical and cultural difference. When compared with Canadian participants’ stories, analysis will avoid collapsing unique contexts into universal claims, instead identifying both structural continuities and cultural specificities of gendered violence.

Overall, ethical practice in this study is not limited to institutional compliance but embedded in every stage of research. Trauma-informed interviewing, iterative consent, negotiated confidentiality, and reflexive self-awareness will ensure that participants remain collaborators and co-authors of meaning. The project's feminist ethical orientation thus lies not only in protecting participants but in enacting justice through relationship, care, and shared interpretation.

Analysis / Interpretation

Data analysis will follow a feminist narrative inquiry approach, combining thematic, structural, dialogic, and critical strategies to address both the personal meanings survivors construct and the broader cultural discourses shaping those meanings (Clandinin and Connelly). Narrative inquiry views stories as situated meaning-making practices—how individuals organize and interpret experience within social, cultural, and relational contexts.

Thematic analysis will identify recurring images, metaphors, and ideas related to embodiment, identity, vulnerability, and resilience. Reading transcripts iteratively, I will cluster themes that reflect both shared patterns and divergences across participants, attending to how assaults are contextualized within transition, gender expression, and social power (Riessman, *Narrative Methods* 74). This approach highlights how personal experiences articulate structural dynamics of sexual violence while preserving individual difference.

Structural analysis will focus on the form and organization of trauma narratives. Because trauma often fragments chronology and coherence, attention to pauses, silences, contradictions, and shifts in temporal order (Labov; Riessman) can illuminate how survivors embody trauma in storytelling. Comparing accounts before and after medical transition may reveal evolving self-positioning and shifting relations to vulnerability. Narrative disruptions themselves—hesitations or omissions—will be interpreted as meaningful expressions of trauma, resistance, or unspeakability.

Dialogic and performance analysis will examine how stories are co-constructed between participant and researcher. Narratives are never autonomous texts but relational performances shaped by audience and context (Riessman 23). I will attend to how participants position themselves in relation to me—as interviewer, transman, and fellow community member—and how these dynamics influence disclosure. Attention will also be given to imagined audiences (feminist scholars, policymakers) to reveal how participants situate their stories within wider social conversations about gender and power.

Critical analysis will situate individual narratives within cultural scripts of sex and domination. Marcus’s notion of rape as “language” offers a lens for interpreting how assaults communicate and enforce gender hierarchies. For transmen, this includes violence that punishes gender transgression, denies victimhood, or reproduces heteronormative binaries. Using feminist theories of rape as structural power (Brownmiller; MacKinnon; Dworkin), I will test how far these frameworks capture transmen’s experiences and where they require revision. Stories will be read both as evidence of patriarchy’s adaptability and as acts of resistance that reconfigure its grammar. Following Chadwick’s (2017) call to think intersectionally through narrative

methodologies, analysis will attend to how race, class, sexuality, and disability shape each participant's vulnerability and agency.

Validation and reflexivity are integral to this analytic process. Participants will review transcripts and comment on preliminary interpretations to ensure accuracy and co-ownership. Reflexive memos will document my evolving understanding and the influence of my standpoint as a transman researcher. This iterative engagement foregrounds transparency and accountability, aligning with feminist commitments to relational rigor and ethical knowledge production.

Through this layered approach, analysis becomes both interpretive and political. It reveals how transmen narrate sexual assault not only as personal trauma but as encounters with the structural operations of gendered power. By examining how these narratives are composed, disrupted, and contested, the study seeks to illuminate how survivors reclaim agency and how feminist theory might evolve to account for experiences at the margins of its own definitions.

Disclosure Statement:

I acknowledge the use of OpenAI's ChatGPT (GPT-5) as a digital writing assistant to check grammar, structure, and reference accuracy, and to help condense sections for length. All conceptual development, interpretation, and argumentation are my own. The use of AI was limited to editorial refinement, consistent with ethical publishing standards.

Works Cited:

Alyagon-Darr, Orna, and Ruthy Lowenstein Lazar. "Toward a Socio-Legal Theory of Male Rape." *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, vol. 113, 2023, pp. 433–70.

Bresler, L. "Embodied Narrative Inquiry: A Methodology of Connection." *Research Studies in Music Education*, 27(1), 21–43, 2006.

Brownmiller, Susan. *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*. Simon and Schuster, 1975.

Cahill, Anne J. "Feminist Theories of Rape: Sex or Violence." *Rethinking Rape*, edited by Ann J. Cahill, Cornell UP, 2001, pp. 15–49.

Chadwick, R. "Thinking Intersectionally With/Through Narrative Methodologies." *Agenda*, 31(1), 5–16, 2017.

Chase, Susan E. "Narrative Inquiry: Multiple Lenses, Approaches, Voices." *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 3rd ed., Sage, 2005, pp. 651–79.

Clandinin, D. J. Narrative inquiry: A methodology for studying lived experience. *Research studies in music education*, 27(1), 44-54, 2006.

Clandinin, D. Jean. *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*. Left Coast Press, 2013.

Clandinin, D. Jean, and F. Michael Connelly. *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Clossen, A. M., et al. "Experiences of Violence Among Transgender Men Compared With Transgender Women in the United States." *JAMA Network Open*, vol. 7, no. 6, 2024, e2820301. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.20301>

Dimyon, C. B. "Prison Populations x 10: Canada & USA." *Sex Segregation*, n.d., www.sexsegregation.org.uk/prison-populations-x-10/canada-usa

Dworkin, Andrea. *Intercourse*. Free Press, 1987.

England, K. V. L. "Getting Personal: Reflexivity, Positionality, and Feminist Research." *The Professional Geographer*, 46(1), 80–89, 1994.

Gavey, Nicola. "The Gender of Rape Culture." *Just Sex?: The Cultural Scaffolding of Rape*, Routledge, 2018.

Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Harvard UP, 1982.

Grant, J. M., et al. *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011.

Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1988, pp. 575–99.

Harding, Sandra. *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?: Thinking from Women's Lives*. Cornell UP, 1991.

hooks, bell. *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. South End Press, 2000.

Human Rights Watch. "We'll Show You You're a Woman": Violence and Discrimination against Black Lesbians and Transgender Men in South Africa. Human Rights Watch, 2011.

Ison, Jessica, et al. "LGBTQ+ Adult Sexual Violence Critical Scoping Review: Victimization Risk Factors." *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838024131193>

James, Sandy E., et al. *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. National Center for Transgender Equality, 2016.

Kenagy, G. P. "The Health and Social Service Needs of Transgender People in Philadelphia." *International Journal of Transgenderism*, vol. 8, no. 2–3, 2005, pp. 49–56.
https://doi.org/10.1300/J485v08n02_05

Labov, William. *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular*. U of Pennsylvania P, 1972.

MacKinnon, Catharine A. *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*. Harvard UP, 1989.

Marcus, Sharon. "Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention." *Feminists Theorize the Political*, edited by Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, Routledge, 1992, pp. 385–403.

Mardorossian, Carine M. "Toward a New Feminist Theory of Rape." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2002, pp. 743–75.

National Sexual Violence Resource Center. *Sexual Violence and the Spectrum of Prevention: Toward a Community Solution*. National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2011.

Oakley, Ann. *Experiments in Knowing: Gender and Method in the Social Sciences*. Polity Press, 2000.

Reinharz, Shulamit. *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. Oxford UP, 1992.

Riessman, Catherine Kohler. *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. Sage, 2008.

Saxena, Vinita, et al. “Stigma and Discrimination against Transgender Men in Bhutan.” PLOS ONE, vol. 18, no. 4, 2023, e0283411. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0283411>

Shultz, Jackson W. “Supporting Transmasculine Survivors of Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence: Reflections from Peer Support Facilitation.” *Violence Against Women*, vol. 29, no. 9, 2023, pp. 1810–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012221114843>

Smythe, W. E., & Murray, M. J. (2000). Owning the story: Ethical considerations in narrative research. *Ethics & Behavior*, 10(4), pp. 311-336.

Testa, Rylan J., Laura M. Sciacca, and Florence Wang. “Effects of Violence on Transgender People.” *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, vol. 43, no. 5, 2012, pp. 452–59. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029604>

The Trevor Project. National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2022. The Trevor Project, 2022, <https://www.thetrevorproject.org>

The Trevor Project. Sexual Violence among LGBTQ Youth. The Trevor Project, 2021, <https://www.thetrevorproject.org>

Trans PULSE Canada. Community-Based Survey of Health and Well-Being among Trans and Non-Binary People in Canada. Trans PULSE Canada, n.d., transpulsecanada.ca. Accessed 17 Sept. 2025.

Wirtz, Andrea L., et al. “‘You Are Not a Man’: A Multi-Method Study of Trans Stigma and Risk of HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections among Transmen in Uganda.” PLOS ONE, vol. 15, no. 12, 2020, e0242997. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0242997>