Feminist Policy Analysis of Newfoundland and Labrador's Provincial Homelessness Policies

by © Laura Cadigan

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Abstract

In Newfoundland and Labrador, there is no overarching policy addressing homelessness across the province. This study analyzes two municipal and one provincial plan addressing homelessness by using feminist policy analysis techniques such as frequency and discourse analyses, complemented by three interviews with policy makers and researchers. This research aims to uncover attitudes and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness within these policies. Specifically, to highlight potential consequences such as resources failing to address the unique needs of marginalized groups, including but not limited to, Indigenous people, women, and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community who are often overlooked in homelessness policy discourse. This analysis draws on feminist, queer, and Indigenous theorizations of homelessness, which advocate for a reframed understanding of homelessness as something people can experience in various dimensions. Concepts such as epistemic injustice, the construction of (in)visibility, and affect help frame the analysis. The research concludes that 2SLGBTQIA+, refugee, and racialized experiences of homelessness are rendered invisible in each of the examined policies.

Key words: Homelessness, Homelessness Policy Analysis, Feminist Policy Analysis, Feminist Discourse Analysis, Frequency Analysis

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1.0 Introduction

When you walk or drive through the downtown core or major intersections in St. John's today it is a regular occurrence to see many people panhandling or holding signs stating that they are hungry and experiencing homelessness. Shelters for people experiencing homelessness are full with waitlists and people are sleeping rough[1] in tents within local parks. In 2019, I began working in housing support at both short-stay emergency shelters and at a long-term transitional living facility for young people experiencing homelessness in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). Through the first-hand experience of serving this community, I gained a much deeper sense of the structural inequalities present within society that have resulted in people experiencing homelessness—a phenomenon that, at the time of beginning this research, seemed largely invisible to the greater public. Anecdotally speaking, when I first started this job, friends and family would ask me many questions such as "Who are the homeless community in Newfoundland and Labrador?" or "What do homeless people here in St. John's look like?" These questions have stuck with me and led me to believe that the general population truly did not know the scale or the longstanding presence of homelessness within this province. In fact, 'visible' homelessness represents a very small minority of the people experiencing homelessness in the province, although there is now a growing number of people sleeping rough or panhandling on the streets of St. John's. The invisibility of the majority of this community has led me to conduct this research, as I would like a better understanding of how current policies created for people experiencing homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador may have contributed to their invisibility.

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[1] Sleeping rough means sleeping outdoors or in places not normally meant for human inhabitation.

1.1 Research Questions

In my study, I ask: how is homelessness 'framed'[2] in policy documents relating to homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador? More specifically, what attitudes towards and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness can be gleaned by this framing? Further, what experiences of homelessness fall outside the frame that is created by these attitudes and assumptions? In particular, I took note of how the policies addressed (or not) the specific experiences of women, Indigenous, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

To glean answers to these questions, I examined several policy documents, starting with the provincial housing policy *Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporations Strategic Plan (2020-2023)*. Due to the lack of a province-wide homelessness policy, I also analyzed two municipal policies. In choosing which municipalities to evaluate, I decided to focus on St. John's and Happy Valley-Goose Bay (HVGB) because each is considered to be the main hub within its respective region, and both municipalities have released comprehensive policies addressing homelessness —respectively, the *St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness 2019-2024* and the *Happy Valley-Goose Bay Community Plan for Addressing Homelessness and Transitional Housing* (2007).

1.2 Research Rationale

In October 2023, a tent encampment aptly named "Tent City 4 Change", first formed in front of the Confederation Building then moved to a park behind the Colonial Building in St. John's, NL. The encampment became home to between 10-20 individuals and couples experiencing homelessness as a form of protest against the unsafe and unsuitable conditions in

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[2] Single quotation marks here flag that I am intentionally using the language of 'framing' to invoke the framing of a house. I use this metaphor throughout the thesis to bring attention to how negative assumptions about marginalized and vulnerable groups can lead to their exclusion within policy documents, which in turn can play a role in framing them out of access to physical homes.

emergency shelters and lack of long-term housing options for people experiencing homelessness in the province. The residents at this encampment have publicly stated how emergency shelters can often be the sites of violence in their experience and that even when availing of these resources individuals are often unable to exit the cycle of homelessness. This protest has attracted significant attention to the issue of people experiencing homelessness locally, with some elected officials making lofty claims such as promising to find housing for all residents of the encampment before Christmas in December, 2023. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this did not happen and residents remained in the encampment until May 8, 2024 when the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary dismantled the encampment (CBC, 2023c). Residents' belongings were removed and the encampment space fenced off, preventing residents from reaccessing this space. The existence, and subsequent forcible dismemberment of a tent encampment in Newfoundland and Labrador strongly illustrates the urgent need for more effective homelessness policies. This encampment emerged as a makeshift solution, reflecting the failure of existing policies to provide safe and stable housing for all individuals and the need for immediate policy interventions that prioritize housing affordability, mental health support, addiction services, and social safety nets to address the complex needs of people experiencing homelessness.

There also has been an escalation in deaths resulting from drug overdoses and violence among the community of people experiencing homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador. This again highlights the need to approach policy responses through a more comprehensive and proactive lens. These tragic outcomes underscore the interconnectedness of experiences of homelessness with complex societal challenges, emphasizing the necessity to move beyond conventional discussions about homelessness, which solely focus on shelter provision. Media have reported that over the course of the summer 2023 there were 11 drug-related deaths alone

(CBC, 2023a). In my own work, I had the opportunity and privilege to work with numerous individuals who unfortunately lost their lives due to drug-related deaths and violence while experiencing homelessness. Addressing homelessness differently entails acknowledging the multifaceted nature of homelessness and recognizing the intersecting structural barriers faced by people experiencing homelessness. In doing so, it becomes evident that a more compassionate, nuanced, and inclusive approach is imperative to mitigate the dire consequences such as those faced by the residents of the tent encampment.

The Labrador North Chamber of Commerce wrote an open letter to the premier of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2021 regarding the longstanding presence of people who are transient or experiencing homelessness in the Happy Valley-Goose Bay area (Atkins, 2021). This letter specifically references the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in this group, the lack of support available in the area, and how the capacity of organizations in the area has been long exceeded. It also calls out the inaction of the provincial government regarding this crisis, emphatically stating that, "We can appreciate the sensitivities and complexities of this issue – words we continue to hear from our government leaders – but this justification is no longer sufficient or appropriate" (Atkins, 2021). I believe this sentiment reigns true for the government's approach in addressing people experiencing homelessness, beyond that in HVGB. It reflects the frustration and impatience with the lack of substantive action or tangible solutions being implemented by all levels of government to address people experiencing homelessness. It also shows how merely recognizing the challenges or expressing understanding towards the issue without taking decisive action to address underlying causes of experiences of homelessness is no longer acceptable. This statement signifies a call for more than just acknowledging the

complexity of the problem and advocates for concrete steps, robust policies, and comprehensive initiatives from the provincial government to tackle homelessness effectively.

In Newfoundland and Labrador there are three types of emergency shelters: non-profit, who receive block funding, meaning that all beds are paid for the duration of the fiscal year; non-profit, who are paid by the night, meaning that only beds used are paid for nightly; and private, for-profit shelters which are also paid nightly. The level of service that you receive at each type of shelter can also differ significantly. Non-profit shelters are often staffed 24/7 with ample food and wrap-around supports[3] available whereas private shelters are mainly unstaffed, with limited pre-made food and no wrap-around support. CBC NL reported that the provincial government spent over $5.2 million between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023 on for-profit housing and hotels for people experiencing homelessness (CBC, 2023b). This does not include the cost of non-profit services, making the overall cost of emergency housing services difficult to enumerate. Despite this significant financial contribution, these actions are still mainly 'managing' people experiencing homelessness in NL instead of addressing long-term or preventative solutions. Individuals are often moved from shelter to shelter, staying for many months at a time. I have seen many individuals stay for 6+ months in emergency shelters who still do not have appropriate prospects for long-term housing.

Protests such as the tent city encampment and the influx of deaths related to drug overdose or violence within the community have brought to light an issue that those of us working within the homelessness sector and with lived and living experiences of homelessness have known for a long time. Homelessness in this province can no longer be overlooked, ignored, or rendered invisible. In conducting this research, I have been constantly reminded of

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[3] Wrap-around supports include health care, harm-reduction, and support in searching for and maintaining housing.

experiences I have had while working within the homelessness sector, specifically moments of great difficulty and memories of people I have known who have lost their life while experiencing homelessness in St. John's. These experiences have motivated this research as I feel I have an obligation to share my own experiences to attempt to fill the vast gaps in research regarding experiences of homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador. Everyday working in emergency housing brings many unknowns: new faces, new challenges, and never knowing what will happen next. But it can often feel extremely frustrating as the same resident's cycle through without long-term solutions and the same challenges are faced by so many people. I often heard stories of how people have found themselves living in emergency shelters often due to drug use, addiction, family violence, or incarceration. These stories are underpinned by colonial, racist, homophobic, transphobic, and patriarchal systems that intertwin to produce conditions where people lack one of the most basic necessities–a safe place to live.

Thus, this research has been inspired by my own experiences of the systemic failures of the current homelessness system in NL. I am both inspired and continually angered by events that I have witnessed working within the homelessness sector. I am reminded of the young clients I worked with under the age of 18 who had to stay in private shelters with adult men, who feared for their safety due to the lack of regulation and oversight. I think about how at points almost half of the clients I worked with were a part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community who faced homophobia and transphobia throughout their lives, underlying factors contributing to their increased prevalence within the community of people experiencing homelessness as well as the lack of inclusive, safe services. I reflect on the extreme incidents of violence resulting in severe injuries and even death witnessed by staff and other residents. Finally, I remember the many lives lost to addiction and drug overdoses that I had the opportunity to know. My own lived

experiences aim to reveal the multifaceted nature of experiences of homelessness, uncovering the intersecting identities and unique challenges faced by diverse individuals within this community. Throughout this thesis I emphasize the need for policies that are not only focused on providing shelter, but are also sensitive to the varied needs, safety concerns, and life experiences of marginalized groups. Incorporating these experiences into the analysis of homelessness policies is vital to ensure that policies are comprehensive, inclusive, trauma-informed, and responsive to the diverse needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, policies aiming not just to offer housing but to provide holistic support and pathways to stability and well-being.

1.2 Newfoundland and Labrador Social Policy

In this section, I discuss the broader social policy context in which homelessness policies are situated. Historically, in periods of sociopolitical and economic crisis, the Newfoundland and Labrador Government has responded with a series of top-down reforms such as resettlement programs in the 1950s and 1960s, the bureaucratization of grassroots anti-poverty movements in the 1970s, and entitlement cuts and service delivery privatization in the 1980s and 1990s (Hudson & Close, 2011, p. 76; Locke & Rowe, 2009, p. 20). For example, prior to 1998, the Government's approach to ending poverty rested on the principle that it was due to the "high level of dependency on the welfare state, not poverty or unemployment" (Hudson & Close, 2011, p. 79); consequently, provincial governments at the time invested in programs to aid small business development rather than social welfare programs (Hudson & Close, 2011).

In 1998, the *People, Partners and Prosperity: A Strategic Social Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador* poverty reduction strategy was introduced. This strategy was developed by the Premier's Council on Social Development. While only in place for four years, the strategy aimed to "facilitate interdepartmental collaboration, public consultation and citizen engagement, and

link voluntary groups and communities to Government" (Locke & Rowe, 2009, p. 23). It also created the basis upon which the 2006 *Reducing Poverty: An Action Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador* was built. However, the 'solution' offered to escaping poverty in 1998 was to move to an economy in which people relied on multiple streams of income or on a household/family system of resource production (Cadigan, 2003, p. 16; Hudson & Close, 2011, p. 80). It was thought that having minimal government supports would drive independence and entrepreneurship within struggling communities. This strategy was problematic in numerous ways, not least because it assumed the existence of an extended family to play the role of social safety net, concentrated economic risks among the poorest individuals, and contemplated social services only for the 'deserving poor' (Hudson & Close, 2011, p. 81).

The 2006 poverty reduction strategy promoted policies to encourage those dependent on state services to transition into the formal wage market, assuming that a stable attachment to the formal wage market is the only way to achieve a good standard of living. In implementing this strategy, the Conservative Government of Danny Williams in Newfoundland and Labrador called for links between government, citizens, and the volunteer sector to allow for greater civil participation in policy making. The government retained its role as an important source of funding for social programs, but because of its insistence on neoliberal decentralization and devolution of policy structures, it left community partners with the responsibility of developing these programs. The devolution of policy structures refers to the process of transferring powers, responsibilities, and decision-making authority from a central or higher-level government such as the federal or provincial governments to lower levels, such as municipal governments, local agencies, or community groups (Leone & Carroll, 2010, p. 390). In the context of homelessness, the devolution of policy structures involves granting more autonomy to municipal governments

or community organizations to address housing and homelessness issues specific to their regions. While this may offer opportunities for tailored solutions, it also requires careful consideration of resource allocation, coordination between different levels of government, and mechanisms to ensure equitable outcomes across regions. Devolution can also exacerbate regional disparities if localities have varying capacities to fund and implement policies effectively (Leone & Carroll, 2010, p. 402). Also, when policies differ significantly across regions or localities, it can lead to fragmentation and inconsistency in service provision. Finally, small municipal governments may face financial constraints and lack adequate resources to address complex issues without sufficient support from higher levels of government (Leone & Carroll, 2010, p. 398).

The 2006 strategy identified that urban homelessness was an important issue that needed to be addressed, allocated specific resources for women, namely in additional funding to the St. John's Status of Women Council, and made a commitment to apply a 'gender lens' to future social policy making processes (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2006, p. 2). Since then, the government of Newfoundland and Labrador has built on this 2006 poverty reduction strategy with strategic plans released every 3 years, the most recent released in 2023, being used to implement aspects of the strategy.

1.3 Public Policy Process in Newfoundland and Labrador

The NL government states that "public policy development is an analytical process which begins with the occurrence or observation of an issue which requires the attention of those affected by the problem and/or those who represent those impacted" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023). The policy cycle followed by the NL government has seven steps: issue identification and definition; policy research and analysis; generating policy

solutions and alternatives; consultation; developing policy proposals; policy implementation; and policy monitoring and evaluation.

The NL government continues to discuss how issue identification and definition begins with the interpretation of 'problems' that can potentially be addressed through public policy. Within this, 'issue identification' raises the question of who has the power to identify and define issues. An example of this could be if policy makers examined the relationship between prevalence of people experiencing homelessness and unemployment rates to gain an understanding of the interconnectedness of these factors. Policy research and analysis involves a multistage procedure, beginning with the synthesis of published articles, discussions with experts and stakeholders, anecdotal stories, the past experiences of researchers, unpublished documents, and staff memoranda. It then moves into a secondary analysis which involves examining data from existing databases (given that policy makers have access to these databases), field experiments to determine the effectiveness of implementation strategies, a cost-benefit analysis, and the collection of qualitative data from focus groups, interviews, participant observation, surveys, and case studies. The NL government then states how the media, public polls, official statistics, traditional knowledge, specialized policy analysis units, think tanks, and community-based research are also used within the research process (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).

The NL government then explains how generating policy solutions and alternatives involves either beginning with generic alternatives or gradually modifying current policy options. These alternatives can then be compared with real experiences or with ideal policy solutions. They then state how the consolation stage actually permeates all stages of the policy development process, allowing for the public, private, voluntary, and community sectors to have

influence on policy decisions. Next is the development of policy proposals, these proposals outline the basis for supporting the policy, the consultation process, and the potential impact of policy alternatives. Then comes the policy implementation stage where action occurs to address the policy problem. In this stage, the clarity of policy goals and strategic planning are identified as important factors. Finally, policy monitoring and evaluation are how the government and public will know if the policies are working as they were intended.

1.4 Homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador

In 2014, it was estimated that 235,000 Canadians had experienced homelessness within the last year and that 1 in 10, or 2.3 million Canadians, would experience 'hidden' homelessness within their lifetime (Rodrigue, 2016)[4]. In 2007, United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, Miloon Kothari, conducted a visit to Canada and prepared a report on the state of housing and the right to an adequate standard of living in Canada. This report details the roles of different levels of government in addressing housing, stating that the federal government "plays an important role in relation to the financial services sector that funds most housing development, and in coordinating national standards related to housing and settlement activity; and is involved in income support and other aspects of social development" (Kothari, 2007, p. 5). Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for the provision of shelter and development of rural and urban settlements through planning legislation and the regulation of building/housing standards (Kothari, 2007, p. 6). This assessment also focuses on many areas of interest related to my current research, namely: homelessness, women's right to adequate housing, Indigenous peoples' right to adequate housing, and

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[4] The number of people experiencing homelessness is estimated through the use of point-in-time counts of people who are 'visibly' homeless, such as those sleeping rough or in emergency shelters.

Indigenous women's right to adequate housing. The Special Rapporteur states that the Canadian government lacked a definition of homelessness, did not have a national housing strategy, and had an uneven distribution of funds between different levels of authority, exasperating regional disparities (Kothari, 2007, p. 9). This report highlights the shortage of social housing stock, the inability of the government to provide accurate statistics regarding the prevalence of homelessness in the country, and issues of overcrowding and inadequate housing conditions especially for Indigenous peoples. Finally, the report brings to light how women, namely Indigenous women, face inadequate living conditions and insufficient social assistance entitlements to meet rising costs of living. It notes that there is a lack of shelter space for women experiencing homelessness and fleeing violence, and that one in five women experiencing homelessness have been sexually assaulted while living on the streets (Kothari, 2007, p. 18). This report clearly highlights shortcomings of both federal and provincial governments in providing adequate housing services for peoples belonging to historically marginalized groups such as women, Indigenous people, and specifically Indigenous women.

Ten years after the United Nations report was published, the federal government of Canada released their first ever national housing strategy, entitled "Canada's National Housing Strategy: A place to call home" (2017). This is a 10-year plan focused on reducing chronic homelessness, creating new housing, and repairing existing housing units. This plan has been implemented through multiple mechanisms. These include: the national housing co-investment fund aimed at providing funding to build new affordable housing and repair existing units; Canada's housing benefit which offers direct financial assistance to low-income households to afford housing costs; the federal community housing initiative which aims to support the sustainability and growth of community housing providers; the affordable housing innovation

fund which promotes new and innovative approaches to housing construction; Indigenous housing programs which seek to address specific housing needs of Indigenous communities both in rural and urban locations; and "Reaching Home" (2022), a strategic plan within the larger National Housing Strategy focused of reducing and preventing experiences of homelessness through a community-based approach (Government of Canada, 2017). The "Reaching Home" strategy is of particular interest to my study as this underpins many of the objectives set by the policies I have analyzed. This strategy was launched in 2019 but has been updated on an intermittent basis, the most up to date version was released in 2022. This strategy emphasizes the need for: a housing-first approach prioritizing stable housing to people experiencing homelessness; community-based approaches to provide resources and initiatives tailored to local needs; coordinated access systems to connect people experiencing homelessness with necessary resources and to improve data collection methods and use of available data. This strategy also claims to focus on prevention of people experiencing homelessness and supporting diverse needs of people experiencing homelessness (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2022).

Even with the presence of "Canada's National Housing Strategy" (2017), the federal government has largely left the responsibility of serving this community to provincial governments, who, in turn, have delegated this responsibility to municipal governments (Hughes, 2013, p. 3). This has left a disparity in service distribution and research production. Specifically, this has left a gap in research on emergent provincial realities of homelessness. The current community-by-community approach has resulted in a concentration of resources in urban economic centers. Moreover, this uneven distribution of resources between urban and rural locations has resulted in a policy focus on urban centers, as many policies do not account for rural homelessness or for larger cross-provincial themes (Christensen, et al., 2017, p. 354; Schiff

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et al., 2015, p. 101). Rural regions are often overlooked in comparison to urban centers regarding the distribution of resources for people experiencing homelessness due to a convergence of challenges. The lower population density in rural areas makes people experiencing homelessness even less visible and therefore harder to quantify by current metrics such as shelter bed usage, leading to a misconception that homelessness is primarily an urban issue. Many rural communities do not have shelters for people experiencing homelessness, meaning that if this is the only metric being used then a region could appear to not have any individuals experiencing homelessness, despite this not being the reality in the region. Factors such as this, collectively create a perception that homelessness is less prevalent or urgent in rural regions, leading to a lack of focus and investment in addressing the specific needs of people experiencing homelessness in these areas.

Some provinces, namely Alberta and New Brunswick, have specific provincial policies available to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness, but in the case of Newfoundland and Labrador there is no singular policy available specifically addressing homelessness. There is a province-wide housing strategy, which makes reference to those experiencing homelessness through the allocation of funding for emergency shelters and transitional living facilities. But these facilities are operated by the non-profit sector and specific homelessness policies seem to be developed and implemented at the municipal level. While investing in these resources is essential for providing adequate services for people experiencing homelessness, it is not a solution to the root causes of homelessness.

There is currently no province-wide enumeration of people experiencing homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador. All data available is from the End Homelessness Campaign's count of people experiencing homelessness, the most recent was conducted in St. John's in 2022.

This means that people living in rural areas or people who are not accessing support services in St. John's were not included in the count. The lack of available data to account for people living in rural areas who are experiencing homelessness in Canada has led to the use of measures of rural poverty and core housing needs as proxy indicators, both of which indicate that rates of homelessness within rural communities are similar to those within urban centers (Schiff, et al., 2015, p. 86). In Newfoundland and Labrador, the percentage of households in 'core housing need,' meaning a household for which housing accounts for more than 30% of gross salary, is 10.5%. The average household income of households in core housing need is $21,044 before taxes (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, n.d.). While data regarding the percentage of households in core housing need and the average household income of such households exists in Newfoundland and Labrador, specific municipal data is only available for Bay Roberts, Corner Brook, Grand Falls-Windsor, and St. John's.[5]

　　　　To understand the ways in which policies work to frame out certain groups of people it is first essential to understand the available data on which these policies are based. In 2016, the population of the St. John's metro area was 205,955, with an unemployment rate of 8.1% in 2018. A significant percentage of the population—10,905 people or 10.7% of the population—receives income support assistance. In 2017 alone, 825 people used emergency shelter beds, 55 people were categorized as chronic shelter users, and the shelter occupancy rate was 86.4%. Out of the 825 people using shelter services, 25.2% of shelter users stayed for more than 30 days and the mean number of days spent in shelter by users was 22. Notably, out of the people surveyed for this count, a disproportionate 26% identified as Indigenous (Homeless Hub, n.d). In 2021, the

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[5] By municipality, the percentage of households in core housing need and their average household incomes before taxes in 2016 were as follows: in Bay Roberts 6.9%, $16,118; in Corner Brooks 7.6%, $18,332; in Grand Falls-Windsor 11.2%, $17,932; in St. John's 11.5%, $22,613 (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, n.d.).

total population was 212,579 and the unemployment rate in 2023 was 4.9% (Homeless Hub, n.d). A point-in-time (PiT) count[6] conducted by End Homelessness St. John's in 2022 counted 900 people experiencing homelessness. This PiT count also identified that out of the people enumerated who completed questionnaires, 38% of people identified as youth, 13% as 2SLGBTQIA+, and 13% as Indigenous (St. John's Point-in-time count, 2022, p. 16). There is currently no enumeration of the population of people experiencing homelessness throughout the entire province. A recent study, "Pull together: Addressing Housing Insecurity in Newfoundland and Labrador" identified that in rural areas of the province between 33 to 43% of people live unaffordably. In fact, the consumer price index data showed a 15% increase in rental rates throughout the province in the last two years (Jamieson, 2024, p. 7 & p. 16).

In Happy-Valley Goose Bay, at the time of their homelessness policies development, there was a population of about 7,500. The biggest employers in the area are sales and services, employing 1,450 people, and construction-related jobs, employing 870 people. Income support is received by about 450 people per month and 34% of people earn less than $15,000 per year, which is below the 2001 poverty line of $15,470 before taxes for a single person. Furthermore, the examined plan details how construction projects, such as the Voisey's Bay Nickel Company's mine and the Lower Churchill hydro project, increase the demand for rental housing due to the influx of workers. There is no publicly available data regarding the percentage of households in core housing need or the pervasiveness of people experiencing homelessness in the community.

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[6] Point-in-time (PiT) count refers to a 'snapshot' or one 24-hour period count of people experiencing homelessness. This count is conducted by volunteers as an attempt to enumerate people sleeping rough or in shelters. A questionnaire was conducted to gain background information about participants.

There are no provincial-wide housing rental price regulations. The rental housing stock accounts for 20-25% of the total housing stock, with the public-owned rental stock accounting for 5,575 public social housing units throughout the province, and the Rental Supplement Program providing rental assistance to 1,841 low-income households in private rental units. Between 31-43% of the housing stock was built in the 1970's and 23-36% was added in the 1980's indicating that there is a significant risk that major repairs or maintenance will be needed to ensure that housing meets quality standards (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, n.d.).

1.5 What does the term Homelessness Mean?

What does it mean to be homeless? Definitions of homelessness change drastically depending on who is doing the defining or who is the subject of these definitions. Home, in the ontological sense, could be thought of as a safe space offering its residents their security and autonomy. Home can also be associated with places of acceptance, emotional-wellbeing, and associative connection. Feminist scholars have defined 'home' as "the place where one lives within familiar, safe, protected boundaries" and a 'house' as not just simply a physical structure or shelter but as an embodiment of "the dominant ideology of a society and [a reflection of] the way in which that society is organized" (Martin & Mohanty, 1997, p. 168; Watson & Austerberry, 1968, p. 3). These conceptions of 'home' and 'house' are directly in conflict with dominant narratives of homelessness, which often construct 'homes' and 'houses' as just physical dwellings or structures.

The Government of Canada divides people experiencing homelessness into various housing situations. Most broadly, "homelessness describes the situation of an individual or family who does not have a permanent address or residence, and does not have the immediate

prospect, means, and ability of acquiring it. More specifically, homeless episodes can include time spent:

- In emergency shelters (permanent or overflow beds);
- In unsheltered locations or places not intended for human habitation (e.g., parks);
- Staying temporarily with others (e.g., family or friends) without guarantee of continued residency ("couch surfing"); or,
- In short-term rentals with no security of tenure (e.g., paying for motels with income or savings)." (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2022)

"A Roadmap for Ending Homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador" (2014) defines homelessness as "when an individual/family lacks a safe, fixed, regular and adequate place to reside, or regularly spends the night in an emergency shelter, institution, or a place not intended for human habitation" (p. 10). Within this definition, ten distinct subcategories of homelessness are also identified, including: absolute, sheltered, at-risk, chronic, episodic, cyclical, hidden, homeless family, and homeless youth (p. 10). Notably, the provincial and federal definitions of homelessness overlap. Both highlight specific scenarios, such as living outside, in shelters, or those without fixed addresses, but there are significant differences in the breadth and inclusivity of both definitions. The federal government classification presents a more observation-based definition focused on visible living conditions, including those living outdoors, in shelters, or moving from place to place without a fixed address. In contrast, the Newfoundland and Labrador Roadmap's (2014) definition is more comprehensive and detailed. It encompasses a wider array of circumstances by defining homelessness as the absence of a safe, regular, and suitable place to reside. Further, its ten distinct subcategories of homelessness capture various complexities within experiences of homelessness. This level of granularity in subcategories offers a more nuanced understanding of different situations and experiences within the homeless population, resulting in a more comprehensive and inclusive definition.

The Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (2012) defined

Indigenous homelessness as:

> a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.

This definition differs significantly from those given by the Canadian and NL governments, which focus almost solely on physical housing conditions, such as living in emergency shelters or unsheltered locations. In contrast, the Aboriginal Standing Committee's definition of Indigenous homelessness emphasizes the importance of accounting for historical, spiritual, and cultural factors which underpin Indigenous experiences of homelessness. It demonstrates how through the lens of Indigenous worldviews the disconnection from kin, land, and culture creates dimensions of homelessness beyond a lack of shelter.

Building on this definition, Indigenous scholar Jessie Thistle (2017) introduces twelve dimensions of Indigenous homelessness:

1. Historic displacement: Indigenous peoples' displacement from pre-colonial lands.

2. Contemporary geographic separation: separation from Indigenous lands after colonial control.

3. Spiritual disconnection: separation from Indigenous worldviews or connection to creator.

4. Mental disruption and imbalance: imbalance of mental faculties caused by colonization's entrenched social and economic marginalization of Indigenous peoples.

5. Cultural disintegration and loss: alienation of Indigenous peoples from their communities and web of relationships known as "All My Relations".

6. Overcrowding: the number of people living in urban or rural Indigenous households exceeds national average.

7. Relocation and mobility: Indigenous people travelling over geographic locations between urban and rural spaces to access services.

8. Going home: Indigenous person who has lived outside of home community is often seen as an outsider in settler society.

9. Nowhere to go: a complete lack of shelter.

10. Escaping or evading harm: fleeing or leaving unstable or unsafe households.

11. Emergency crisis: escaping natural disasters.

12. Climatic refugee: Indigenous peoples whose lifestyles, subsistence patterns and food sources, relationships to animals, and connection to land and water have been changed by drastic and cumulative weather shifts.

These dimensions, similarly to that of the Aboriginal Standing Committee's definition of Indigenous homelessness, differ significantly from the federal and provincial definitions presented above. Thistle's (2017) dimensions incorporate how historical, cultural, and systemic factors intersect with housing issues faced by Indigenous peoples instead of just focusing on physical housing issues. Furthermore, Indigenous definitions and dimensions of homelessness

integrate both physical and non-physical aspects, aiming to address the root causes and broader consequences of homelessness specific to Indigenous peoples.

In his research paper, Thistle (2017) also highlights the interconnected nature of Indigenous homelessness, pointing out that the "complexities of residential schools, intergenerational trauma, [and] child abuse cause kinship networks to fragment, impacting children and youth the most" (p. 22). The loss of intricate social networks and traditional ways of life in Indigenous communities and subsequent experiences of homelessness can be directly traced to colonial projects such as residential schools, the sixties scoop, and the mass number of Indigenous children currently under government care (p. 22). The importance of these factors cannot be understated, and the ability of policies to account for both historical and current practices of colonization is an essential component of my analysis.

In their article, parliamentary researchers Havi Echenberg and Hilary Jensen (2008) explore how homelessness is defined and enumerated in Canada. They begin by explaining how definitions can influence our perceptions of problems and, in turn, can circumscribe possible solutions. Furthermore, they argue that most Canadian definitions of homelessness contain two components: the specific housing situations that a person needs to experience in order to be considered as experiencing homelessness; and the duration/frequency of the episode. For instance, if the experience of homelessness is narrowly defined as literal street homelessness, policies may overlook people temporarily residing with friends, family, or those in other precarious housing situations such as living in trailers or in unsafe conditions. This limited definition can lead to underestimating the scale of people experiencing homelessness. The definition chosen can either limit or expand our understanding of experiences of homelessness and consequently shape the scope and effectiveness of our responses to addressing it.

In their exploration of rural homelessness in the United Kingdom, geographers Paul Cloke, Paul Milbourne, and Rebekah Widdowfield (2002) discuss how homelessness policies are intentionally vague and leave significant room for subjective judgement in relation to who does and does not qualify as experiencing homelessness. The authors continue to discuss how this allows for various interpretations of who qualifies for benefits or resource allocation and leads to an uneven distribution of said resources within these differing interpretations. Broad definitions of homelessness can encompass various living situations, such as sleeping rough on the streets, staying in emergency shelters, couch-surfing, or residing in inadequate or temporary accommodations. However, the criteria for what constitutes inadequate or temporary housing can be left open to interpretation. For instance, policies might not clearly define the threshold for overcrowding or unsuitability of living conditions, leaving room for subjective judgment by policy makers or service providers. Also, some policies require individuals to meet specific duration criteria to qualify as experiencing homelessness, such as being without a permanent residence for a certain number of days or months. However, determining the exact duration of homelessness can be challenging and subjective. For example, does couch-surfing for a few nights count as experiencing homelessness, or does it only apply if someone has been without a permanent residence for an extended period? Such questions may lead to varying interpretations and inconsistent application of policies.

In their examination of urban Indigenous homelessness in Canada, political scientist Yale Belanger, statistician Olu Awosoga, and Indigenous studies scholar Gabrielle Weasel Head (2013) conclude that complicated definitions of homelessness utilized by all levels of government allow for inaction due to people experiencing various dimensions of homelessness falling outside of these complex definitions. The authors demonstrate this in their examination of

urban Indigenous people who may not fit within traditional definitions of homelessness. Urban Indigenous people may be experiencing housing instability or inadequate living conditions due to a variety of factors, such as poverty, discrimination, or lack of affordable housing options (p. 16). However, because their situations do not align with narrow definitions of homelessness that focus solely on literal street homelessness or residing in emergency shelters, they may not be recognized as experiencing homelessness according to official government statistics or eligibility criteria for homeless services (p. 9). As a result, there may be a lack of targeted interventions and resources directed towards addressing the unique needs of urban Indigenous populations experiencing homelessness, perpetuating their marginalization and exacerbating the cycle of homelessness. This illustrates how complicated definitions of homelessness can lead to inaction and inadequate responses to the diverse and complex realities faced by people experiencing homelessness.

Finally, their analysis also highlights how policy approaches present homelessness as an individual problem solved by personal effort, not due to larger societal structures. This framing shifts the focus away from systemic issues such as poverty, discrimination, and lack of affordable housing, instead placing the responsibility on individuals to solve their own homelessness through personal effort (p. 15). Furthermore, the authors emphasize how the lack of a comprehensive national enumeration to accurately capture the extent and complexity of homelessness perpetuates the narrative of homelessness as an individual problem (p. 23). Without comprehensive data that reflects the diverse range of experiences and challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness, policy makers may continue to rely on simplistic narratives that place blame on individuals for their own experiences of homelessness, rather than addressing the underlying systemic issues. Within the remainder of this section, I will further

explore conceptions of 'home' and 'house', and how these definitions are implicated in our understanding of homelessness.

Philosopher Peter Somerville (1992) defines home as an ideological construct created from peoples' emotionally charged experiences about where they live, but without a necessary reference to an actual dwelling. In other words, according to Somerville, homelessness is ideologically constructed, and this construction shapes people's experiences of homelessness. This ideological construction refers to the ways in which societal beliefs, values, and structural factors contribute to the existence of homelessness and, subsequently, influence the way individuals who are homeless experience their circumstances. In other words, homelessness is not just a result of individual actions but is intricately tied to societal ideologies, and understanding these ideological constructs is crucial for comprehending and addressing the issue effectively. Somerville also introduces the concept of 'rooflessness' as a conceptual way of thinking about those without a physical structure to reside within; people experiencing rooflessness, such as those sleeping rough or without a fixed address, can in many instances still consider themselves to have a home. In particular, experiencing homelessness is often associated with irresponsibility and moral failing which may lead to an embodied subjectivity within the experience of homelessness (Farrugia, 2011, p. 73). The embodied subjectivity refers to the intersection of the physical experiences of homelessness and the subjective, lived experiences of individuals who find themselves without stable housing. It involves understanding how the bodily experiences of homelessness shape and are shaped by the individual's subjective perceptions, emotions, and identity. Within the political sphere, experiencing homelessness is often reduced to technical problems such as housing supply shortages or legal issues such as that of citizenship rights (Somerville, 1992, p. 531). But these conceptions of experiencing

homelessness are too narrow as they focus on the minimal meaning of homelessness (i.e., lack of housing structure) isolated from its wider social and affective context. I would be remiss to continue without addressing my choice of terminology regarding framing homelessness as an experience, which I will discuss in greater detail in section 2.1 in my theoretical approach.

It is estimated that 2SLGBTQIA+ people make up between 20-40% of the homeless community, a vast overrepresentation compared to comprising only 5-10% of the housed population (Fraser, et al., 2019, p. 1; Shelton, 2015, p. 10). Within the queer community experiencing homelessness, transgender and gender expansive people make up a disproportionate number, despite receiving minimal attention in homelessness discourse (Shelton, 2015, p. 10). Despite this overrepresentation, this population remains largely invisible to the greater public. Currently in Newfoundland and Labrador there is very little data collected in relation to the prevalence of queer people within the community of people experiencing homelessness. There are no mandatory screening questions on intake forms to account for sexual orientation or gender identity of potential clients, despite scholarship within the field of queer homelessness emphasizing the necessity of accounting for the prevalence of queer people within the homeless community (Robinson, 2018; Shelton, 2015; Shelton et al., 2018). This is essential as members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community often face unique challenges such as discrimination, family rejection, or barriers to accessing shelter services due to their sexual or gender orientation. The only data that exists regarding queer experiences of homelessness in NL is from the PiT count conducted in 2022, stating that 13% of people experiencing homelessness sampled in the study identified as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community (St. John's Point-in-Time-count, 2022, p. 17).

Addressing the prevalence of queer people within the population of people experiencing homelessness is essential to develop targeted interventions and support services that address the specific needs and experiences of queer people, ultimately working towards creating more inclusive and equitable policy solutions. In my research, applying a queer lens to my own policy analysis is crucial for understanding the ways that homelessness policy structures may affect 2SLGBTQIA+ people experiencing homelessness differently. To apply a queer lens, I draw on literature which accounts for the specific experiences of queer people experiencing homelessness through a critique of the cisgenderism and heteronormativity present within homelessness policies (Fraser, et al., 2019; Matthews, et al., 2019; Robinson, 2018; Shelton, 2015; Shelton et al., 2018).

In relation to understandings of homelessness, it is also essential to understand the connection between homelessness and the rapid sociocultural change brought on through colonization. In "'Our home, our way of life': spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada", geographer Julia Christensen (2013) defines home as "a sense of place that is deeply embedded in geography and an intimate knowledge of *places*" (p. 808). This understanding of home challenges neoliberal conceptualizations of home as a physical structure or dwelling, instead acknowledging the significant cultural and spiritual attachments Indigenous people have to 'home.' Thistle (2017) discusses the interconnected nature of Indigenous perspectives of home, including relationships and responsibilities to nature, animals, spirits, lands, stories, teachings, ancestors and human kinship networks. He continues, stating that western societies prioritize physical structures over social networks, "In the establishment of the liberal order framework of colonialism in Canada, webs of significance became less associated with a sense of place,

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replaced by structures of habitation, which are easily measured, valued and commodified, so that relationships of ownership came to be normalized in prevailing modern concepts of home." (Thistle, 2017, p. 15). Disrupting the binary understanding of homelessness as having shelter or not having shelter is an important aspect of my own analysis, as I investigate how homelessness policy discourse constructs the meaning of homelessness and how this construction affects people experiencing homelessness differently.

Christensen also identifies how the provision of modern housing to Indigenous peoples was a strategy to centralize previously nomadic Indigenous peoples and was used as a tool for cultural assimilation. In the Northwest Territories, households are put under strain as rental schemes, traditional reciprocity, and sharing practices compete for the same limited resources. These cultural practices and kinship obligations, such as taking in members with no physical homes, may in the short term prevent absolute homelessness of individuals. However, in the long term, these financial strains and overcrowding could potentially lead to the loss of housing for the entire family (Christensen, 2016, p. 83). The uneven development of rural northern regions for resource extraction, such as mining or oil extraction, has also led to the unequal distribution of services, housing stock, schools, jobs, wealth, and infrastructure. This has caused a centralization of services in urban, economic centers. When people experiencing homelessness travel to these centers to avail of services, there is often a lack of accessible transportation preventing people experiencing homelessness from returning to their rural home communities (Christensen, et al., 2017, p. 354). These issues are of particular interest in my research as rural and northern communities in Newfoundland and Labrador may also be susceptible to similar housing and service distribution issues.

Christensen et al. (2017) also analyze similarities within the population of people experiencing homelessness in the circumpolar north, specifically in Alaska, the Canadian North (including Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut), and Greenland. The three common themes identified are "chronic housing insecurity, overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples among those living homeless, and the significance of gendered experiences of homelessness" (Christensen, et al., 2017, p. 349). Researchers also identified inadequate mental health and addictions services and a lack of public housing options as other underlying factors to experiences of homelessness within these regions. Reviewing analyses of policies and experiences of homelessness from other rural northern regions has proven to be invaluable within my own analysis due to the multitude of similarities shared between them and rural regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Another component to my study is uncovering the ways in which different groups of people experiencing homelessness are, or are not, constructed as (in)visible. There are numerous dimensions to invisibility, including those invisible within policy discourse such as those who house hop, couch surf, or live unaffordably. There is also a scholarly/theoretical invisibility: researchers and policy makers have focused on visible homelessness in city centres, while only recently including suburban and rural locations. Individuals experiencing homelessness can face spatial and/or political invisibility due to their exclusion from public space (usually due to police enforcement of local legislation) or through not being counted in policy statistics (May, 2015, p. 490). My research focuses primarily upon policy invisibility, as without visibility in this domain it is extremely difficult for people experiencing homelessness to access support services.

Public health researcher Anne Andermann and colleagues (2021) discuss how women are more likely, especially if they have children, to couch surf or become provisionally

accommodated, contributing to their increased policy invisibility (p. 1). They also explore how women who exit the foster care system or who have been incarcerated by correctional services are often discharged without an adequate plan, thus experiencing housing instability. The experience of homelessness is often constructed as a male-dominated issue (Bullen, 2021, p. 2). The majority of individuals seen panhandling or sleeping rough or occupying the 'visibly' homeless space are men, contributing again to the invisibility of women within this sphere (Klodawsky, 2006, p. 376). 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals also face invisibility in terms of their exclusion within homelessness policies. In fact, the number of 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals experiencing homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador is largely unknown and only very limited data has been collected (St. John's Point-in-Time-count, 2022, p. 17). Social work scholars Jama Shelton and colleagues (2018) identify the importance of accounting for the existence of 2SLGBTQIA+ people experiencing homelessness to ensure their visibility within policy discourse (p. 10).

Rural communities are also often rendered invisible by homelessness policy discourse. Social work scholars Sue-Ann Macdonald and Dominique Gaulin (2020) discuss the construction of rural locations as 'idyllic' places where homelessness does not occur (p. 170). The urban focus of the majority of homelessness policies is also documented across the scholarship on homelessness (Christensen, et al., 2017, p. 354; Schiff et al., 2015, p. 86). More specifically, the policy focus on centralizing services and resources has resulted in rural communities lacking the capacity to address issues such as people experiencing homelessness. This has often forced people to leave their home communities and relocate to urban centres in order to access support services. Some individuals who migrate to access services and resources are then left without their familial support and often without transportation to home

communities, preventing them from returning (Christensen et al., 2017, p. 354). The invisibility of homelessness in some rural communities is compounded by this rural-urban migration, along with the 'rural-romantic' construction of rural Newfoundland and Labrador (Hudson & Close, 2011, p. 79). The 'rural-romantic' conceptualization of NL, as discussed by Hudson & Close (2011), refers to a stereotypical or idealized perception of rural areas, portraying them as idyllic, picturesque, and removed from social issues such as homelessness. This perception can hinder efforts to address social issues such as people experiencing homelessness effectively, as people genuinely believe that these issues do not occur outside of urban locations. I have heard many people discuss people experiencing homelessness as a "St. John's issue" when, in reality, people experience homelessness in all types of communities.

1.6 Thesis Overview

In Chapter 2, I discuss my theoretical framework. First, I investigate the term 'homelessness,' drawing on literature from feminist, queer, and Indigenous scholars. I then discuss concepts that are foundational to this thesis: epistemic injustice, the construction of (in)visibility, the role of emotion, affect, and objectivity in homelessness policy making, and finally feminist political economic understandings of homelessness. In Chapter 3, I lay out my methodology, beginning with an explanation of feminist policy analysis techniques. Next, I discuss the framework which I use to examine policies.

Chapter 4 is my analysis chapter. In this chapter I first provide summaries of each policy examined. Next, I discuss the source materials and methodologies used in the development of each policy. Then I examine the definitions of homelessness used and overarching themes found in each policy document such as: rural-urban divides; individual vs. structural approaches, gender, sexuality, race, Indigeneity, and other compounding factors; and objectivity in policy

documents. In these sections I draw on results from my interviews, frequency and discourse

analyses. Chapter 5 is my conclusion, where I discuss the main points covered in my thesis, give

each examined policy a report card score, and share final remarks.

2.0 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I describe the main elements of my theoretical framework. I open with an exploration of the term homelessness as a starting point of my study. I then expand on understandings of 'home' within mainstream homelessness literature through the incorporation of feminist, queer, and Indigenous conceptualizations of home and homelessness. After this, I demonstrate how epistemic injustice informs my analysis of the invisibility of certain groups within homelessness policies. I then discuss the relevance of affect theory and feminist objectivity as theoretical touchstones to analyze policy documents. Finally, I incorporate key scholarly work from feminist political economy scholars to contextualize my analysis.

2.1 Homelessness

In beginning this research, I first had to grapple with the terminology I would use in reference to people experiencing homelessness. This project is in part a discursive exploration into how language shapes and informs policies, therefore a theoretical exploration of the term 'homeless' is an essential starting point. As other researchers have suggested, the term 'homeless' often conjures images of disheveled men panhandling or sleeping rough in the streets (Klodawsky, 2006, p. 376). It is a fraught term, with critics arguing that it cannot be separated from a toxic narrative that paints people experiencing homelessness as dangerous and blames the individual for their situation (Willse, 2010, p. 157; Macdonald, 2016, p. 131). Other researchers have theorized how a person experiencing homelessness may still have a 'home' but lack a house or physical dwelling to live in (Somerville, 1992, p. 531). As a result, terms such as houseless, unhoused, or housing insecure have been popularized in the media discourse as more inclusive alternatives. While these critiques of the term speak to the importance of analyzing the

assumptions associated with the word 'homeless', I believe they fail to account for the multitude of experiences of homelessness that fall outside of just the lack of a physical dwelling.

Within this next section, I elaborate on why I choose to use the term homelessness but framed differently—as an experience—drawing on feminist, queer, and Indigenous theorizations of homelessness. Homelessness can be thought of as both an ideological construct and a more materialistic conceptualization within policy rhetoric. After examining these two approaches, I argue that on their own, they are inadequate in accounting for the multitude of experiences of homelessness. The concept of 'home' is culturally located and, as Somerville (1992) suggests, accounts for more than just a physical dwelling. As I have discussed in section 1.5, according to Somerville, homelessness is ideologically constructed, and this construction shapes people's experiences of homelessness. Therefore, the term used to connote being without a home must also account for factors beyond just the lack of an actual dwelling. While undeniably many people who experience homelessness have some type of 'home' which they can think of or refer to, such as a familial home or community, others do not. To state that someone experiencing homelessness is simply unhoused or houseless ignores the fact that some people identify both ideologically and literally with the term homeless. This could be for a variety of reasons including those who are forced out of what should have been their 'home' due to violence or persecution such as women who flee their homes due to domestic violence; queer people who are forced out of their homes due to intolerance; children who are taken from their homes to live in foster care or group homes; or Indigenous people forcibly removed from their homes by colonial states. All of these groups experience dimensions of homelessness that fall outside of the simple lack of a physical structure.

Sociologist David Farrugia (2011) posits that homelessness is frequently linked to notions of irresponsibility and moral failure, resulting in an internalized subjectivity during the experience of homelessness. People experiencing homelessness may internalize these negative associations, in turn reinforcing their marginalized status within society. In broader political and policy discussions, homelessness is often narrowly defined as technical issues like housing shortages or legal matters such as citizenship rights (Somerville, 1992, p. 531). This limited conceptualization neglects the broader social and emotional dimensions of homelessness.

In my research I frame homelessness as something that a person can experience during their life in various dimensions beyond just the lack of a physical dwelling. This is not to negate the very real and harmful associations with the term homeless but instead to acknowledge that alternative terms such as houseless, unhoused, or housing insecure do not necessarily present a more inclusive understanding of dimensions of homelessness outside of the lack of a physical house. Therefore, I refer to people experiencing homelessness as such and to policy documents as homelessness policies. In the next sections, I elaborate on my choice of language regarding people experiencing homelessness within an exploration of feminist, queer, and Indigenous theorizations of homelessness.

2.1.2 Gendered Experiences of Homelessness

A fundamental aspect of my analysis is to understand the ways in which feminist understandings of homelessness differ from hegemonic perceptions of homelessness, and how these differences impact policy responses. Gendered experiences of homelessness refer to the unique challenges that women and gender diverse individuals face when experiencing homelessness. This includes but is not limited to issues related to gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, reproductive health, lack of access to gender-sensitive housing and services, and the

compounding effects of intersecting oppressions such as racism, ableism, and homophobia/transphobia. Gendered experiences of homelessness can be understood through a feminist lens, which seeks to uncover and challenge the gendered power dynamics and systemic barriers that contribute to experiences of homelessness and perpetuate gender-based inequities. These experiences of homelessness also highlight the various dimensions of homelessness that individuals may face beyond the lack of a physical house by emphasizing the role that gendered and sexual violence and patriarchal systems play in the experience of homelessness.

Homelessness is often constructed as a quintessentially male experience, both in popular media and policy discourse. Men are presented as experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates compared to women despite the fact that women often face socioeconomic marginalization, poverty, and poor life chances at higher rates than men, all factors thought to increase the risk of experiencing homelessness (Bretherton, 2017, p. 6). Feminist scholars have highlighted the role of gender-based violence in the experiences of homelessness for women and gender diverse individuals, arguing that domestic and sexual violence often precede and contribute to experiences of homelessness (Bretherton, 2017, p. 7; Bullen, 2021, p. 7; Schwan, Dej, & Versteegh, 2020, p. 152). Others have emphasized the importance of recognizing the gendered nature of poverty and housing insecurity, which disproportionately affect women and gender diverse individuals (Watson & Austerberry, 1986; Watson, 1984; 1986). Feminist theorists have also underscored the importance of recognizing the diversity among women and gender diverse individuals experiencing homelessness, including those who experience homelessness with children, those who are 2SLGBTQIA+, and those who are racialized or have disabilities (Bullen, 2021, p. 2). By centering the experiences of marginalized individuals and groups, feminist

theorists have challenged dominant narratives surrounding people experiencing homelessness, which in turn can lead to more inclusive and equitable policies and interventions.

Social scientists Kaitlin Schwan, Erin Dej, and Alicia Versteegh (2020) claim that women and girls in Canada are among one of the fastest growing groups experiencing homelessness, thereby emphasizing the necessity of expanding traditional definitions to account for gendered experiences of homelessness (p. 154). In her article "Definitions of homelessness: a feminist perspective," feminist scholar Sophie Watson (1984) explores how single people, particularly single women, are rendered invisible as compared to families experiencing homelessness. As a result, families experiencing homelessness in the UK have garnered more government and service provision focus than single people. Watson also notes that women more often find themselves financially dependent on partners for housing security as partners often control rent/mortgage. This emphasizes how women's subordinate position in society is reinforced through men being the heads of households and the providers of accommodation. Some feminist scholars also argue that the invisibility of gendered experiences of homelessness is often due to the elusiveness of the term and its narrow use by policy makers and those who allocate resources, which are often focused on male experiences in research and policy production (Bullen, 2021, p. 13; Watson, 1984). Forty years later, Watson's (1984) arguments continue to resonate. A pan-territorial study conducted by scholar Judie Bopp (2007) identified how women's homelessness in the Canadian north is underpinned by intimate partner violence and forced evictions. Often housing units are exclusively in the name of the male partner and forced evictions occur when women try to flee situations of violence, but their housing is tied to their abusers name (Bopp, 2007; p. 4).

For women or gender diverse people experiencing homelessness, the stakes are exceedingly high, involving threats to their safety, well-being, and even their lives. The tragic case of Frederica Benuen, an Indigenous woman who froze to death outside the Labrador Inn, a hotel regularly used as an overflow shelter for people experiencing homelessness, exemplifies the immediate and life-threatening risks. Inadequate access to safe and warm shelter intensifies the dangers faced on the streets (CBC, n.d). Similarly, the instances of women allegedly murdered by individuals like Jeremy Skibicki highlight the perilous environment for women experiencing homelessness (CBC, 2022). The absence of secure housing can force people into situations where they become targets for violence, exploitation, or predatory individuals. Women and gender diverse people experiencing homelessness often lack the protective barriers that stable housing provides, exposing them to higher risks of physical harm, sexual assault, and even murder. These cases underscore the urgent need for comprehensive support systems, emphasizing safe and secure housing as a fundamental right.

Accounting for gendered experiences of homelessness is crucial within my analysis of homelessness policies, as it helps to identify and address the specific needs and challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness who identify as women, girls, or gender non-conforming. Moreover, in my analysis I adopt a feminist approach that recognizes the ways in which gender intersects with other factors such as race, class, sexuality, and ability. By incorporating a gendered lens into my homelessness policy analysis, I am able to evaluate policies for their ability to account for and address gendered experiences of homelessness.

2.1.3 Queer Experiences of Homelessness

Within my analysis I have also aimed to understand the ways in which homelessness policies can affect 2SLGBTQIA+ people differently. In order to do this, I first had to understand

how queer experiences of homelessness are theorized as different from heterosexual, cisgender experiences. Queer experiences of homelessness are influenced by multiple intersecting factors, including but not limited to family rejection, heteronormativity and cisnormativity, displacement, and programmatic barriers. Sociologist Anne-Marie Fortier (2001) suggests that queer individuals experience home in multiple ways, which can complicate their experiences of homelessness. She argues that "'home' is a destination rather than an origin" (p. 405), not just a physical space, but a place where people feel a sense of belonging, safety, and security. Queer individuals who experience homelessness are thus not only deprived of physical shelter, but also of the emotional and cultural connections that define home. Fortier explores the ways in which queer individuals create alternative forms of home and belonging through their migrations and movements. Queer homelessness can be understood as a form of displacement because it involves a sense of dislocation and insecurity related to identity. Queer and trans youth experiencing homelessness may endure displacement in multiple ways, including through family rejection, and the need to navigate heteronormative and cisnormative environments. This displacement can contribute to feelings of insecurity, a lack of a sense of home or belonging, and has been understood as a form of forced migration, which requires the creation of new forms of community and support (Matthews, et al., 2018, p. 244; Ritholtz, 2022, p. 1855).

Queer and trans scholar Brandon Robinson (2018) highlights how queer homelessness is tied to insecurity and the normalization of heteronormative and cisnormative values in society. Robinson argues that homelessness is often a consequence of the rejection of queer identities by society and family members (p. 392). Similarly, social work scholars Jama Shelton and Coco Wheeler together with policy researchers Jeffery Poirier and Alex Abramovich (2018) emphasize the role of family instability and rejection in queer homelessness. They suggest that conditional

families, in which support is contingent on conforming to heteronormative expectations, can lead to homelessness for queer youth (p. 4). Shelton (2015) focuses on the specific challenges faced by transgender youth who experience homelessness, highlighting how programmatic barriers, such as gender-segregated spaces, can make it difficult for transgender individuals to access services (p. 16).

Lastly, Cree scholar Alex Wilson (2008) offers insights into two-spirit experiences within colonial society, emphasizing the importance of creating inclusive spaces (p. 197). Wilson argues that two-spirit individuals experience a unique intersection of oppression, including racism, homophobia, and transphobia, which are all factors that could make an individual experience homelessness at an increased risk. Wilson's insights can offer a particularly important perspective in analyzing queer theorizations of homelessness as they call for centering two-spirit experiences. Wilson's theorizations highlight the intersections of two-spirit identities with experiences of displacement, marginalization, and colonization. Wilson's work proves particularly useful in challenging prevailing narratives on homelessness, as dominant narratives often neglect or overlook the distinct experiences of Indigenous people, particularly those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. All these perspectives emphasize the ways in which queer experiences of homelessness are underscored by the intersecting effects of heteronormative and cisgendered policy structures.

Incorporating theorizations of queer homelessness is essential in my policy analysis, as through their recognition of the unique experiences of 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, policies and programs can be tailored to address their specific needs. It is crucial to understand the ways in which displacement, forced migration, family rejection, and navigating heteronormative and cisgendered systems all impact 2SLGBTQIA+ experiences of homelessness. These theorizations

account for the ways in which heteronormative and cisgendered structures impact experiences of home, familial relations, and in turn experiences of homelessness, thereby highlighting multiple dimensions of homelessness beyond the lack of a physical structure.

2.1.4 Colonization and Homelessness

Another essential component of my analysis is examining the ways in which Indigeneity or Indigenous epistemology are (or are not) factored into the creation of homelessness policies in Newfoundland and Labrador. In order to do this, I draw on Indigenous theorizations of homelessness, which highlight how these experiences are multifaceted, and deeply rooted in historical and contemporary structures of colonization, systemic inequality, and cultural dislocation. This discussion of colonization and homelessness ties directly into my previous exploration of Alex Wilson's (2008) insights on two-spirit experiences and how that can be connected with experiences of homelessness. In "'Our home, our way of life': spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada," geographer Julia Christensen (2013) defines home as "a sense of place that is deeply embedded in geography and an intimate knowledge of *places*" (p. 808). Thistle (2017) furthers the understand of the interconnected nature of Indigenous perspectives of home, including relationships and responsibilities to nature, spirits, lands, stories, teachings, ancestors and human kinship networks (p. 14). This understanding of home also challenges conceptualizations of home as just a physical structure or dwelling, instead acknowledging the significant cultural and spiritual attachments Indigenous people have to 'home'.

Colonization refers to the forceful implementation of policies by colonial regimes which has resulted in violent assimilation and attempts to control Indigenous peoples around the world. Researchers have documented the fact that colonial policies have had widespread and pervasive

impacts till the present day on Indigenous peoples, including the loss of land and the creation of socioeconomic inequalities. The systemic alienation of Indigenous peoples from their land has led to the collapse of traditional methods of production, furthering their economic subjugation (Belanger, Awosoga, & Weasel Head, 2013, p. 22; Christensen, 2013, p. 815). There is a documented connection between communities impacted by colonization and the prevalence of community members experiencing homelessness. In Canada, there is an overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples within the population of people experiencing homelessness. In many instances Indigenous people have been found to be at least five times more prevalent in populations of people experiencing homelessness than the general population (Anderson & Collins, 2014, p. 959).

Spiritual homelessness describes the distinct experiences of homelessness that Indigenous peoples face through the processes of colonization (Christensen, 2013, p. 806; 2016, p. 84). This dimension of homelessness encompasses the removal of peoples from their land, community, and family, all practices that have existed within Canadian colonial policies. This loss of cultural safety and security results in a form of displacement that is unique to Indigenous peoples in colonized nations and is essential to acknowledge within my analysis of homelessness policies. Residential schools, the forced removal and relocation of children, and the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child welfare and justice systems are all strategies that have removed Indigenous children and adults from their homes, families, and communities, resulting in a loss of home deeper than just the loss of a structure or dwelling. The legacy of colonization, residential schools, and other forms of genocide has resulted in Indigenous peoples' disconnection from their land, culture, and communities. This disconnection has led to a breakdown of traditional social structures and support networks. Addressing issues such as

historical trauma is critical to creating effective policies for Indigenous people experiencing

homelessness. The experience of homelessness for Indigenous peoples extends to the loss of

access to relationships, activities, and knowledge that allow for an individual's cultural identity

to form (Anderson & Collins, 2014, p. 972). These dimensions of homelessness underscore the

importance of understanding homelessness as an experience beyond that of just a lack of a house.

They also emphasize the importance of acknowledging the multifaceted experiences of

homelessness faced by Indigenous peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador.

To reiterate, feminist, queer, and Indigenous theorizations of homelessness are essential

starting points of my analysis and inform my thinking of homelessness as something that a

person can experience in various dimensions in their life. They also work as the theoretical

underpinning for my use of said terminology as opposed to previously discussed terms such as

houseless, unhoused, or housing insecure. These theorizations are also the backbone of this

study, as one of my main objectives is to understand the ways in which some groups of people

have been 'framed' out of homelessness policies.

I now turn to the theoretical underpinnings that I use to undertake the second portion of

my analysis, namely assessing the attitudes and assumptions regarding people experiencing

homelessness within the examined policies.

2.2 Epistemic Injustice and the Construction of (In)visibility

Another key point of my analysis is to determine the ways in which homelessness

policies can 'frame' out some experiences of homelessness and how this in turn can construct

certain groups of people experiencing homelessness as invisible. My understandings of

invisibility are largely influenced by philosopher Miranda Fricker's (2007) book "Epistemic

injustice: power and the ethics of knowing" and migration and development scholars Tara Polzer and Laura Hammond's (2008) exploration of the invisibility of refugee migration.

Fricker's (2007) book explores how the construction of certain groups of people as invisible works as a method of silencing and how this relates to the ethics of knowing. Fricker argues that 'epistemic injustice' is a form of power imbalance that can occur when certain groups are systematically excluded from the production and dissemination of knowledge. She identifies two main types of epistemic injustice: testimonial injustice, which occurs when the credibility of a person's testimony is unfairly dismissed, and hermeneutical injustice, which occurs when certain groups are systematically excluded from the shared resources of interpretation that are necessary to make sense of one's own experience (p. 9-29; p. 147-175). This exclusion perpetuates a cycle of injustice wherein these groups are denied the means to fully engage in the processes of interpretation and communication, further reinforcing their marginalization within broader social contexts. Fricker examines the relationship between epistemic injustice and other forms of injustice, such as social and political injustice. She argues that epistemic injustice is not only a problem for individuals, but also for society as a whole, as it undermines the ability of marginalized groups to participate in democratic processes and to access resources and opportunities. Finally, she argues that addressing epistemic injustice requires a commitment to the idea of 'epistemic responsibility' - a responsibility to seek out and value the perspectives and experiences of marginalized groups, and to be sensitive to the ways in which power and privilege shape our understanding of the world (p. 67-81).

In terms of homelessness policies, I believe the concept of epistemic injustice can be used as a point of analysis in a variety of ways. First, applying an epistemic injustice lens to homelessness policies means analyzing the ways in which policy knowledge is produced and

evaluated, and to whose perspectives and experiences this knowledge is attuned. In other words, policies should be examined for the ways in which policy knowledge is shaped by dominant epistemologies and assumptions, and the ways in which this can exclude or marginalize certain groups. Second, epistemic injustice also emphasizes the ways in which social and political power relations shape knowledge production and communication. In terms of my own analysis, this means examining the ways in which policy discourses and practices are shaped by wider social and economic systems and how these systems might be perpetuating or exacerbating experiences of homelessness. Fricker's approach also involves analyzing the ways in which these systems produce and sustain epistemic injustice and how this can impact the lives of people experiencing homelessness. Finally, using an epistemic injustice lens can help me to identify opportunities for more inclusive and ethical policy approaches that take into account the perspectives and experiences of marginalized groups.

In my discussion of invisibility, I have drawn upon concepts from scholars Tara Polzer and Laura Hammond's (2008) exploration of refugee migration. The authors state, "invisibility is a relationship between those who have the power to see or to choose not to see, and, on the other hand, those who lack the power to demand to be seen or to protect themselves from the negative effects of imposed visibility" (p. 421). Invisibility, in this articulation, refers to the ways in which forced displacement can be hidden or obscured in policy and academic discourses. In terms of analyzing homelessness policies, Polzer and Hammond's conceptualization of invisibility calls for policy makers to first acknowledge the invisibility of homelessness. Just as forced displacement can be invisible in policy and academic discourses, so too can the experience of homelessness. Homelessness is an experience often stigmatized and marginalized,

and policies that do not recognize the scope and impact of homelessness can perpetuate this invisibility.

The authors also assert that policies should recognize the diverse range of experiences and needs of people who their policies are meant to address, in this instance meaning people experiencing homelessness. In doing this, policies can better reflect the needs of those in which they are meant to serve (p. 419). Finally, Polzer and Hammond address the structural inequalities that perpetuate social injustices (p. 426). In terms of homelessness policies this means recognizing structural inequalities such as but not limited to, income inequality, lack of affordable housing, or discrimination. Overall, the concepts of epistemic injustice and the invisibility of forced displacement can help shed light on the ways in which policy and academic discourses can perpetuate inequalities and injustices, particularly for marginalized populations like those experiencing homelessness. By recognizing and addressing these issues, policy makers can work towards creating policies that are more equitable and effective.

2.3 Emotion, Objectivity, and the Role of Affect Theory in Homelessness Policies

One of my main research goals is to determine what attitudes and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness can be gleaned from policies documents. This involves understanding how public policies are created, including what materials are considered and whose voices are heard within this process. Building on my review of the public policy cycle utilized in NL in section 1.3, I outline the roles of emotion, objectivity, and affect theory from a feminist perspective.

Political scientists Kevin Smith and Christopher Larimer (2018) have described the public policy process in Canada as objective, unbiased, and inclusive to those in their consideration (p. 47). Political scientist Bobby Siu (2020) emphasizes the importance of

empirical data, using evidence-based practices and having measurable outcomes throughout the policy process (p. 109; 158). Despite the prioritization of these seemingly objective methods, authors from various backgrounds have all examined the ways in which policy discourse is already rich with emotional language. Social scientists Giada De Marchi, Giulia Lucertini, and Alexis Tsoukiàs (2016) point to the constructive role that emotion can have in the public policy process, namely in the identification and prioritization of issues, providing motivation for action, and building public support for policies (p. 21). They suggest that emotions should be incorporated into the policy making process in a more deliberate and systematic way, rather than being dismissed as irrational or irrelevant. Law scholars Arie Freiberg and W. G. Carson (2010) highlights the need for policy makers to be aware of the emotional factors that shape criminal justice policy and to balance emotional responses with a commitment to fairness and justice (p. 154). Similarly, political scientist Don Welch (1997) suggests that policy makers should be aware of the emotional dynamics of policy debates as it is essential to work to manage and channel emotions in constructive ways (p. 55).

  To shape my own analysis of the extent to which emotion and objectivity are present within the examined homelessness policies, I draw upon feminist understandings of affect theory and objectivity. Affect is inextricably intertwined with power relations and the ways in which these relations can target and disenfranchise marginalized peoples (Bargetz, 2015, p. 581). Affect theory considers how affect, or emotion, plays a crucial role in shaping our perceptions and moral judgements (Little, 1995, p. 122). When examining homelessness policies, affect theory can help to show the importance of factors beyond those that just produce empirical data, such as the emotional experiences of individuals who experience homelessness and the emotions, such as guilt, pity or shame, that are produced and mobilized by homelessness policies. It also

acknowledges how emotions are used to justify or legitimate certain policies, such as those that prioritize certain populations over others, for example people who are visibly experiencing homelessness such as sleeping rough are often prioritized over those experiencing hidden homelessness. Finally, affect theory can examine how affect shapes the ways in which people experience and respond to homelessness policies. For example, it considers the emotional toll of experiencing homelessness and how that can impact a person's ability to access resources and support, as well as the emotional experiences of those who work in organizations that provide services to individuals experiencing homelessness.

My analysis has drawn heavily on feminist scholar Sara Ahmed's understanding of affect theory in "Affective economies" (2004), which expands on previous understandings of the affective power of language through her examination of the "sticky" language of emotion. Ahmed argues that certain emotions, such as happiness, are privileged within dominant cultures and are associated with privileged groups and individuals, while other emotions, such as sadness, are stigmatized and associated with marginalized groups. She suggests that this can lead to a reinforcement of social hierarchies, as those who are privileged are able to "afford" certain emotions and those who are marginalized are not. Ahmed (2004) demonstrates how feelings appear in or as objects "by the concealment of how they are shaped by histories and production as well as circulation or exchange" (p. 121). She uses examples such as that of an asylum seeker or Black man, to show how emotions work as a form of capital and the accumulation of emotional value shapes our social world and the position that marginalized peoples hold within it:

> Negro, animal, bad, mean, ugly. In other words, it is the movement of fear between signs, which allows the object of fear to be generated in the present (the Negro is: an animal, bad, mean, ugly). The movement between signs is what allows others to be attributed

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with emotional value, in this case, as being fearsome, an attribution that depends on a history that "sticks," and which does not need to be declared. (Ahmed, 2004, p. 127)

In this quote, Ahmed lays out a framework for the ways in which certain emotional language can "stick" to groups of people, and how this sticky language in turn creates an affective economy determining how we value people. Within my own research, I apply this concept of 'sticky' language to question the role of emotion and affective language within homelessness policies.

As previously stated, researchers from a variety of backgrounds have highlighted the supposed objective nature of public policies. Within my own analysis, I draw on scholar Donna Haraway to examine the role of objectivity in homelessness policies in NL. Donna Haraway (1988) is a feminist philosopher who coined the term 'feminist objectivity' in her essay "Situated knowledges: the science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective.". Within this piece she argues for a feminist approach to objectivity that takes into account the ways in which knowledge is produced and evaluated from particular perspectives and positions. Haraway demonstrates the ways in which traditional notions of objectivity, often associated with detachment and neutrality, are problematic because they exclude the perspectives and experiences of marginalized groups and perpetuate their marginalization (p. 585). Instead of trying to achieve an impossible and oppressive objectivity, Haraway argues for a feminist objectivity that acknowledges the situatedness of knowledge, that is, the fact that knowledge is produced and evaluated from particular perspectives and positions (p. 590). She suggests that this approach to objectivity allows for the recognition of the ways in which social and political power relations shape knowledge production and evaluation and allows for the inclusion of multiple perspectives and experiences. In other words, she suggests that knowledge production and evaluation should take into account the perspectives and experiences of marginalized groups.

Applying a feminist objective lens to my analysis of homelessness policies involves understanding who is producing the knowledge that informs these policies, and what perspectives and experiences they are drawing from. It emphasizes the importance of questioning the assumptions and biases that underlie these policies, and how they might be excluding or marginalizing certain groups. Feminist objectivity encourages an approach that is open to the perspectives and experiences of those who are most affected by the experience of homelessness. In my analysis, I consider the extent to which homelessness policies in NL reflect the perspectives of people experiencing homelessness.

My analysis expands on frameworks provided by Haraway (1988) in conjunction with Ahmed's (2014) theorization of 'sticky' language to examine the ways in which both affective language and hegemonic perceptions about people experiencing homelessness have infiltrated policy discourse. Overall, affect theory and feminist objectivity help me to illuminate the ways in which homelessness policy discourses and practices are shaped by social and political power relations, and to identify more inclusive and effective policy approaches that take into account the perspectives and experiences of marginalized groups.

2.4 Feminist Political Economy Understandings of Homelessness

The experience of homelessness can be theorized from a feminist political economy perspective that takes into account intersecting forms of oppression and inequality shaped by factors such as heteronormativity, colonialism, and capitalism. Feminist political economists argue that mainstream economics and policies ignore the experiences and perspectives of marginalized communities, particularly women, people of color, and queer individuals, all of whom are disproportionately affected by homelessness. In the context of Canada, feminist political economists Kate Bezanson and Meg Luxton (2006) critique the ways in which

neoliberal social policies tend towards the individualization of the cost of social issues, thus resulting in a more precarious labour market for lower-income workers. Bezanson and Luxton also highlight how neoliberal policies can concentrate power in the hands of decision-makers, stating how in Canada the "federal government devolves and downloads responsibilities for social reproduction to lower levels of government or individuals" (p. 21). They furthermore acknowledge structural issues present within neoliberal policy programmes regarding race, gender, and class, which are all essential elements within my own analysis. A feminist political economy perspective on homelessness highlights the need to address the intersections of oppression and inequality that contribute to experiences of homelessness, including heteronormativity, colonialism, and capitalism. This perspective suggests that policies and solutions must be developed and implemented with a focus on prioritizing the needs and perspectives of marginalized communities and addressing the root causes of homelessness.

Global economist Ellie Gore's (2022) analysis underscores how neoliberal economic policies contribute to economic inequalities and marginalization, particularly for queer individuals. Gore's framework demonstrates how macro-level structures, processes, and practices impact lived experiences of queer individuals, both within and beyond erotic aspects of life (p. 299). Gore suggests that queer oppression is not solely determined by factors related to sexual orientation or gender identity, but rather influenced by interactions with other axes of oppression, such as race, class, and ability. Gore furthermore shows how sexual injustices, including discrimination and marginalization, have material bases and drivers, meaning that they are not solely the result of cultural or symbolic factors (p. 305). This underscores the importance of considering the economic, political, and social structures that contribute to queer oppression and the need to address systemic inequalities and material conditions to achieve meaningful

social change. This framework can be applied to my analysis to highlight how systemic factors, such as discrimination in housing and employment, contribute to the overrepresentation of queer people among the population of people experiencing homelessness. Finally, Gore emphasizes the importance of considering intersectional identities and experiences within queer communities. In my analysis, this approach is useful in shedding light on how intersecting forms of oppression, such as race, gender identity, and socioeconomic status, shape the experiences of queer individuals experiencing homelessness differently. Policies that fail to address these intersectional dynamics may overlook the specific needs of queer people.

Social economist Natalia Diaz Quiroga (2015) investigates internalized heteronormativity within capitalist economic states, pointing to the 'male-centric' economic rationality that favors competition and individualism, values that the patriarchy assigns to men (p. 2). Quiroga emphasizes how neoliberal economic policies focus on the satisfaction of needs at the individual level of the person, which in turn focuses on the proper functioning of markets instead of the needs of the population. This individualistic approach to economics places an emphasis on personal responsibility and self-sufficiency, with the belief that individuals acting in their own self-interest will collectively produce the best outcomes for society. Quiroga suggests that by centering the market as the primary mechanism for meeting needs, neoliberal economic policies fail to address systemic inequalities and structural barriers that prevent equitable access to resources and opportunities. Instead of prioritizing the needs of the population as a whole, neoliberalism perpetuates a system that prioritizes profit over people, exacerbating social disparities and widening economic inequalities (p. 12). In terms of my own analysis, I have applied Quiroga's concepts to evaluate the ways that policies focus on individual responsibility instead of macro-level social structures. The focus on these factors may lead to policies that

prioritize individual solutions, such as temporary shelters or individual assistance programs, over systemic interventions that address root causes like housing affordability, income inequality, and discrimination.

Finally, Quiroga's work highlights how "the commodification of life makes it so that one cannot live without income or rent" (p. 9). This quote demonstrates how access to adequate shelter, which is a fundamental human right, is contingent upon one's ability to pay for housing. As a result, people must secure a source of income to afford rent or mortgage payments in order to maintain a stable place to live. Without a steady income or the means to pay rent, individuals are at risk of experiencing dimensions of homelessness. Furthermore, 'the commodification of life' creates a dependence on income and market transactions for survival. In a capitalist society, the pursuit of profit drives the allocation of resources, and access to essential goods and services is mediated through monetary transactions. This means that individuals must engage in paid labor or other income-generating activities to afford the necessities of life, including housing. This insight is especially poignant within my own analysis, as the experience of homelessness is contingent upon the commodification of housing within the free market, instead of housing being treated as fundamental and essential for human life.

In conclusion, this section demonstrates the importance of adopting a feminist political economy perspective to understand the root causes of homelessness and address systemic inequalities that perpetuate its existence. Bezanson and Luxton's (2006) critique of neoliberal social policies highlights how individualizing the cost of social issues leads to a more precarious labor market and concentrates power in the hands of decision-makers, exacerbating structural issues related to race, gender, and class. Gore's (2022) analysis emphasizes how neoliberal economic policies contribute to economic inequalities and marginalization, particularly for queer

individuals, by commodifying identities and perpetuating systemic oppression. Finally, Quiroga's (2015) work highlights how neoliberal economic policies prioritize market functioning over addressing systemic inequalities, perpetuating a system that prioritizes profit over people and exacerbates social disparities. Quiroga's insight into the 'commodification of life' underscores how access to adequate shelter is contingent upon one's ability to pay, perpetuating a dependence on income and market transactions for survival. Overall, I apply these perspectives in my own analysis to demonstrate the need for homelessness policies to address systemic factors, prioritize the needs of marginalized communities, and adopt an intersectional approach that considers the complex interplay of these factors contributing to experiences of homelessness.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the parameters of my theoretical framework, beginning with a consideration of how feminist, queer, and Indigenous theorizations of homelessness differ from hegemonic understandings of the term. These differences account for experiences of homelessness beyond that of the lack of a physical shelter and include how the ways people interpret and experience home influences experiences of homelessness. I thereby explain why I choose to frame homelessness as an experience and use terminology within my analysis that reflects as much. Framing homelessness as something that a person can experience in different capacities and dimensions throughout their life accounts for experiences of homelessness outside of being unhoused, houseless, or housing insecure. In short, I draw on feminist, queer, and Indigenous theories of homelessness to move beyond binary understandings that reduce the experience of homelessness to one of merely being housed or unhoused.

In the second section of this chapter, I outlined my approach to analyzing policy documents to determine the attitudes and assumptions regarding people experiencing

homelessness—specifically, for understanding the experiences of homelessness that fall outside of the 'frame' of these policies and what the implications may be for groups who have been 'framed out'. To do this I draw on theorizations of epistemic injustice, invisibility, affect theory, and feminist objectivity all within the context of homelessness. I end this chapter with an exploration of feminist political economy understandings of homelessness and how these perspectives inform my analysis.

3.0 Methodology

In this section I outline the methodological approaches used within my analysis of homelessness policies. Initially, my research aimed to explore the impact of homelessness policies on various groups, including disabled, refugee, senior, youth, and racialized populations. However, I found this focus on impact to be beyond the limits of my research methodology—absent interviews with the affected populations—and beyond the parameters of a master's thesis. Consequently, I refined my focus to examine how homelessness is 'framed' in policy documents themselves relating to homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador. I begin by laying out the framework for conducting a feminist policy analysis, which is informed by an intersectional approach and grounded in Indigenous epistemological approaches. I then discuss how I will conduct a feminist discourse analysis as this form of analysis is essential for me to determine what attitudes and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness are present within policy documents. Next, I demonstrate the methodological considerations in conducting interviews with policy makers and researchers to aid me in better understanding the approaches utilized in the creation of homelessness policies. Then, I outline how I conduct a frequency analysis to determine the prevalence of emotionally charged language regarding people experiencing homelessness within policy documents. Within this analysis I also determine the extent to which certain groups are prioritized in policies over others. Finally, I outline how I have engaged with self-reflective methods as a way to draw on my own experiences as someone who has worked within the homelessness sector and to critically engage with the research process.

Currently there is no provincial-wide policy specifically addressing homelessness in NL. Without the presence of a provincial policy, municipalities have been given the responsibility of creating policies and plans regarding homelessness due to the inaction of the provincial

government. With the exception of St. John's, the majority of communities in NL lack the resources and capacity to adequately develop and implement policies addressing homelessness. Due to these factors, I have chosen to analyze the "Newfoundland and Labrador housing corporations strategic plan (2020-2023)", "St. John's community plan to end homelessness 2019-2024" and the "Happy Valley-Goose Bay community plan for addressing homelessness and transitional housing (2007)". These documents were selected to be analyzed based on the following criteria:

a. Document specifically addresses homelessness.

b. Document is the most current version addressing housing and/or homelessness within the area.

c. Document represents distinct economic regions in NL.

3.1 Feminist Approach to Policy Analysis

Traditionally, policy analysis occurs from an ostensibly objective, rational position and normally involves a systematic approach to identifying and evaluating alternative policy options, assessing their potential outcomes and impacts, and recommending the best course of action based on the analysis (Siu, 2020, p. 47; Smith & Larimer; 2018, p. 158). As previously outlined in section 1.3 of my introduction, the Newfoundland and Labrador public policy development cycle involves issue identification and definition, policy research and analysis, generating policy solutions and alternatives, consultation, developing policy proposals, policy implementation, and policy monitoring and evaluation (policy.nl, n.d.). This approach emphasizes the use of empirical data and evidence-based practices in its analysis which, while important, can potentially overlook the political and social dimensions of policy making, as well as the potential for power imbalances and unequal distribution of costs and benefits that can more greatly impact

marginalized communities. In my analysis I have explored the ways in which homelessness policies frame experiences of homelessness and how this frame impacts service provision to different groups. Specifically, my objective is to show who is and is not included in policy documents and what factors contribute to certain groups being invisiblized over others. Within this section, I demonstrate why a feminist approach to policy analysis bridges the gap within mainstream methods of policy analysis by recognizing the complex ways that power, identity, and experience shape policy making and outcomes.

A feminist approach to policy analysis involves the recognition of power imbalances within mainstream policy making processes and calls for the centering of experiences and perspectives from marginalized groups. This method of analysis acknowledges the fact that 'objective' or 'value-neutral' approaches to policy analysis are not possible and aims to remove dichotomies and re-conceptualize power relations. This means that feminist approaches to policy analysis recognize that mainstream policy frameworks tend to rely on binary categories, such as male/female or housed/homeless, and ignore the ways in which power relations are constructed and maintained through social and cultural norms. By removing these dichotomies and re-conceptualizing power relations, feminist policy analysis aims to identify structural barriers that contribute to the unequal distribution of power and resources and challenge dominant narratives that reinforce these power imbalances.

Feminist social work scholar Beverly McPhail (2003) describes feminist policy analysis as conducting a power analysis, achieved through acknowledging who has the power to define the problems and define the solutions (p. 54). She highlights how this method underlines the importance of considering the experiences of marginalized groups and those who have historically been excluded from policy decision-making processes (p. 45). Finally, McPhail

emphasizes the necessity of participatory methods that include the voices and perspectives of those affected by policy decisions to create more equitable and effective policies (p. 46). In my own research, I have applied McPhail's concepts through an exploration of research methods, when available, used in the creation of the examined policies. Such methods might include the use of participatory research methods to engage with community stakeholders, including discussions or meetings with people with lived or living experiences of homelessness. These methods allow for the contribution of people who are directly affected by the policies they are informing.

Feminist policy analysis methods also aim to incorporate historical, political, and economic contexts into the analysis to better situate policy 'problems' (Marshall, 1999, p. 63). This method of analysis critiques inadequacies within bureaucracy and leadership, and also acknowledges the politics of silence and ambiguity within its analysis (Marshall, 1999, p. 68). This conceptualization of the politics of silence and ambiguity proves instrumental in my own analysis of homelessness policies. By emphasizing deliberate omissions or vagueness in policy discourse, I have unveiled underlying power dynamics and intentional, or unintentional, neglect. The politics of silence and ambiguity can expose systemic issues, gaps, and the marginalization of specific groups. This allows for a critical examination of what is left unsaid or intentionally obscured in policy language, shedding light on the hidden dimensions of homelessness, such as but not limited to gendered, queer, or Indigenous experiences, the impacts on marginalized communities, and the shortcomings of policies in addressing root causes of this issue. Throughout my analysis I have drawn on my own experiences of working on the front lines in the homelessness sector. This has informed my ways of thinking and aided me in filling in gaps present within the available literature.

3.1.1 Intersectionality-based policy analysis (IBPA)

Intersectionality-based policy analysis (IBPA), developed by public health scholar Olena Hankivsky, is a methodology originally created to analyze health policy and understand its differing impact across diverse populations. This method emerged as a response to traditional policy approaches that often overlooked or inadequately addressed the complex and intersecting nature of social identities and inequalities (Hankivsky, et al., 2014, p. 3). It firstly aims to generate background information about policy problems, with the goal of better understanding the context, processes, and mechanisms by which policy problems are identified, constructed, and addressed. This reveals assumptions that underpin government priorities, target populations, and what inequalities and privileges are created by current policy responses. It then intends to identify alternative policy responses and solutions aimed at social and structural change reducing inequalities and promoting social justice (Hankivsky, et al., 2014, p. 3).

A key aspect of this model is in the recognition that the experiences of marginalized groups cannot be understood through a single-axis lens. Instead, IBPA frameworks focus on the interplay of multiple identity categories and the ways in which they interact to shape experiences of power and inequality. By examining the intersections of identity categories, this framework aims to identify how policies have the potential to perpetuate or challenge systemic inequalities and contribute to the marginalization of certain groups. Another component of this form of analysis is the focus on advancing equity. The framework recognizes that power is constructed and maintained through the intersections of multiple social categories and that policies have the potential to either dispute or maintain these inequities (Hankivsky, et al., 2014, p. 8). Therefore, intersectionality-based policy analysis provides a critical lens through which to examine the ways in which policies have been developed and implemented and how they impact

marginalized groups differently with the goal of identifying and addressing systemic barriers. Finally, this methodology is characterized by a focus on critical reflection (p. 2). Intersectionality-based policy analysis encourages critical examination of policy assumptions and the ways in which they reflect dominant power structures. It also encourages reflection on the ways in which marginalized groups are excluded from policy development and implementation processes, and how policy makers can more effectively engage with these groups to ensure that their needs are met.

The IBPA model is guided by a list of 12 overarching questions to help shape the analysis. Not all questions have to be used as this model is adaptive to the needs of the research (Hankivsky, et al., 2014). In my own research, I have engaged with the following seven of the proposed questions developed by Hankivsky et al. (2014, p. 4):

1. "What knowledge, values, and experiences do you bring to this area of policy analysis?"
2. "What is the policy 'problem' under consideration?"
3. "How have representations of the 'problem' come about?"
4. "How are groups differentially affected by this representation of the 'problem'?"
5. "What are the current policy responses to the 'problem'?"
6. "What inequities actually exist in relation to the 'problem'?"
7. "How will proposed policy responses reduce inequities?"

I chose to engage with these questions specifically as these were relevant to answering my research questions. Namely in determining what the attitudes and assumptions regarding people experiencing homelessness present in each of the examined policies.

The IBPA model is extremely relevant to my research as homelessness is not a one-size-fits-all issue. People experiencing homelessness belong to diverse social groups, and their experiences are shaped by various intersecting factors, including but not limited to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status. Through my engagement with the above questions, I evaluated the ways in which policies recognize specific needs of various subpopulations within the broader category of people experiencing homelessness. If policies recognize these specific needs it can lead to more targeted, inclusive, and effective policy interventions that address the intersecting factors contributing to experiences of homelessness. This model's focus on the reduction of inequities is also useful in my own analysis, as I consider the extent to which policy solutions actually address the root causes of homelessness or if they work to just manage the current issue. Finally, the IBPA model's use of questions which demand self-reflexivity is an essential aspect of my use of this model. I engaged in self-reflexivity throughout my analysis, which has allowed me to draw on my own experiences working within the homelessness sector to provide useful knowledge to enrich my analysis.

3.1.2 Indigenous Policy Analysis Frameworks

Another fundamental aspect of my analysis will be the incorporation of aspects of Indigenous policy analysis frameworks such as those presented by Indigenous scholars Moses Hernandez (2012) and Roger Maaka and Augie Fleras (2009). Hernandez argues that policy analysis is a political process shaped by various knowledge systems, and that the knowledge systems of marginalized communities are often excluded from policy discussions (p. 153). He analyzes the overrepresentation of quantitative techniques and the simplification of causality that has worked to depoliticize the social world and separate policy research and makers from those who policy affects (p. 159). He continues to explore how Indigenous people tend to be on the

receiving end instead of the creating end of public policy, calling into question the value (or lack thereof) attributed to Indigenous methods of knowledge production within the policy making process. Indigenous knowledge is often compartmentalized to make it amenable to scientific control or manipulation, separating Indigenous peoples from their knowledge (p. 154). Scientific knowledge enters policy processes through formal channels as it is produced by institutions such as policy research institutes, who through their own agreements value scientific methods of knowledge production over all others. This method of analysis also provides a framework to analyze positivism and bureaucracy, the latter developing within policy making structures due to "modernist ideals of the Enlightenment and the ideology of progress and development that the bureaucracy was designed to support" (Hernandez, 2012, p. 157).

In the article "Mainstreaming Indigeneity by Indigenizing policymaking: towards an Indigenous grounded analysis framework as policy paradigm" Roger Maaka and Augie Fleras (2009) present an Indigenous framework for policy analysis that draws on Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing. The authors argue that mainstream policy analysis is often western-centric and does not take into account the unique experiences and perspectives of Indigenous peoples. This western-centric approach is categorized by the authors as a "we know what is best for you" attitude in policy making, working to perpetuate the neo-colonial status quo (p. 3). They further state how "injustices are so deeply embedded in the design, organization, and functioning of modern societies that their effects continue to systemically intrude on their lives despite reforms to remove the most egregious abuse" (p. 4). This quote demonstrates how Indigenous people are continually impacted by policy structures which can reflect and perpetuate colonial values and structures. In relation to my own research, this methodology is relevant for evaluating the ways in which policies acknowledge the systemic nature of homelessness and its underlying injustices

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vis-a-vis Indigenous peoples. Without addressing these underlying systemic inequities resulting in people experiencing homelessness, policies will not be able to create long term, sustainable housing solutions.

This framework presented by Maaka and Fleras (2009) includes three components: ontological, epistemological, and methodological. The ontological component focuses on the worldview and values of Indigenous peoples (p. 4-5), the epistemological component focuses on Indigenous ways of knowing (p. 5-9), and the methodological component focuses on research methods that respect Indigenous protocols and ethics (p. 10-14). This approach calls for the participation and inclusion of Indigenous people and their knowledges within the process of policy making. Within my own analysis this involves evaluating the ways in which policies have Indigenous representation in development and decision-making; address the unique needs and perspectives of Indigenous communities; address the structural inequities and systemic barriers that contribute to Indigenous experiences of homelessness, including historical trauma, colonialism, displacement, and discrimination; and prioritize meaningful engagement and consultation with Indigenous communities and organizations.

Both these articles, "The Politics of Knowledge in Policy Analysis" by Hernandez (2012) and "Mainstreaming Indigeneity by Indigenizing policymaking: towards an Indigenous grounded analysis framework as policy paradigm" by Maaka and Fleras (2009), highlight the importance of acknowledging and valuing different knowledge systems, the need to incorporate marginalized voices and perspectives into the policy making process, and the recognition that policy analysis is a political process that can perpetuate power imbalances if certain knowledge systems are privileged over others. They also emphasize the importance of being attentive to the

cultural, historical, and social contexts in which policy analysis takes place. These frameworks are essential in the analysis of homelessness policies as they highlight the need for the incorporation of experiences and perspectives of those who have experienced homelessness, including Indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups. This may involve using research methods that are respectful of Indigenous protocols and ethics, such as community-based participatory research, and engaging with the diverse knowledge systems that exist within and outside of the policy making process. Additionally, these frameworks can help to identify the underlying power structures and cultural values that shape policy decisions related to the experience of homelessness and highlight the need for policy solutions that are grounded in the unique experiences and perspectives of those who are directly impacted by the experience of homelessness.

Next, I describe how I have applied the frameworks detailed above to analyze homelessness policies in a variety of ways. First, I incorporate the historical, political, and economic contexts to situate current experiences of homelessness. This is to better understand the current climate of homelessness locally and the ways in which this issue has been responded to in the past. Next, I reconceptualize power imbalances through an emphasis on how experiences of homelessness differ for marginalized communities such as but not limited to women, 2SLGBTQIA+, and Indigenous peoples. Accounting for the experiences of marginalized communities is a central point of my research, as I aim to show the ways in which people are, and are not, accounted for in homelessness policies. To do this, I apply an intersectional lens to my analysis, which involves understanding how multiple forms of oppression intersect and interact with each other. This includes analyzing how gender, race, class, sexuality, age, dis/ability, and other social categories intersect to produce unique experiences of homelessness.

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The application of an intersectional lens to analyzing homelessness policies also acknowledges the ways in which structural barriers such as patriarchal, heteronormative, cisgendered, and colonial systems are considered, or not, within homelessness policies.

Another fundamental aspect of my research is in identifying policy goals and objectives as well as any unintended consequences or outcomes. These goals and objectives may be directed at a particular population of people. In my analysis I aim to uncover what consequences may exist for groups that are, or are not, considered in policies. Next, I also analyze policies for their inclusion of perspectives of people experiencing (or who have experienced) homelessness and other marginalized perspectives through their use of methods such as but not limited to community-based participatory research. This is another application of a feminist approach to policy analysis, as this method calls for the inclusion of people who are affected by policies in the creation of those policies. Finally, throughout my analysis I acknowledge and reflect upon my own perspectives, knowledge, and experiences as a worker within the shelter system. My own experiences working in the homelessness sector have given me valuable insight in completing this research.

3.2 Feminist Discourse Analysis

Another aspect of my analysis is in determining what attitudes towards and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness can be gleaned from policy documents relating to homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador and what experiences of homelessness fall outside the 'frame' that is created by the attitudes and assumptions identified. In order to evaluate this, I have conducted a feminist discourse analysis. This form of analysis aims to uncover the ways in which language and discourse shape and reflect social structures, practices, and identities. This

approach is based on the assumption that language is not neutral, but rather reflects and reinforces the dominant social norms and power relations in society. Feminist discourse analysis also seeks to identify and challenge the ways in which language and discourse can be used to marginalize and exclude individuals and groups based on their gender, sexuality, race, class, and other social categories. It is a critical and reflexive approach that recognizes the complexity and diversity of experiences and perspectives and aims to empower marginalized voices and promote social justice.

Linguist Michelle Lazar (2007; 2008; 2014) presents an approach to feminist critical discourse analysis which involves identifying the ways in which language use reinforces and reproduces gendered power relations and ideologies. She argues that feminist discourse analysis is composed of both a theoretical and a practical component, and that the goal is to develop a feminist discourse praxis that can be used to challenge existing power relations and promote social justice. An important aspect of Lazar's methodology is the focus on context. She argues that discourse is always situated within a broader social, cultural, and historical context, and that it is necessary to analyze this context in order to understand the meanings and effects of language use (Lazar, 2008, p. 90). In the context of a discourse analysis of homelessness policies, this means that it is essential to consider the historical and social context of homelessness, as well as the broader political and economic context in which policies are developed and implemented.

Another key aspect of Lazar's methodology is the focus on power. She presents discourse as a site of power relations, and how language can both reflect and reinforce power relations in society (Lazar, 2014, p. 180). In the context of my analysis, this means considering how power relations are reflected in policy language, as well as the ways in which policy language is being

used to challenge or reinforce existing power relations. Finally, Lazar emphasizes the importance of reflexivity in feminist critical discourse analysis (Lazar, 2007, p. 152). Similarly, to feminist policy analysis methodologies, Lazar argues that researchers must be aware of their own positionality and the ways in which their own social location shapes their analysis. Reflecting critically on my own social position, experiences, and knowledge that I have regarding experiences of homelessness and the ways that this may shape my analysis of policy language is an essential point of my analysis. I will further explain how I incorporate this aspect of my analysis in this study in section 3.5.

Psychologists Lucy Thompson, Bridgette Rickett, and Katy Day (2018) assert how discourse plays an essential role in the construction of personal and political identities. They utilize a feminist relational discourse analysis framework that focuses on the intersection of personal and political identities within discursive practices (p. 2). They argue that discursive practices are crucial for the construction and maintenance of identity because they are the means through which individuals position themselves and others within social structures and relations (p. 4). This framework is useful for analyzing homelessness policies as this understanding of the relationship between discourse and identity construction is necessary to identify the ways in which policies construct and reinforce particular identities for individuals experiencing homelessness. For example, policies may position individuals as "victims" or "deviants" and construct particular discourses surrounding these identities. Through my analysis of policy discourse, I identify how different discursive practices contribute to the construction and maintenance of these identities, and how these identities may contribute to the perpetuation of homelessness.

Finally, political scientist Carol Bacchi (2000; 2005) emphasizes how policy discourse can be used to legitimize the interests of the powerful by presenting them as common sense, natural, or inevitable. This process serves to reinforce the status quo and marginalize or silence alternative perspectives and voices (2005, p. 205). Bacchi presents two main strategies that dominant groups use to maintain their power and legitimacy through policy discourse. The first is to frame policy problems in ways that prioritize technical solutions over political or ideological ones (2000, p. 49). This depoliticizes the issues and suggests that they are solvable through so-called objective and neutral means. The second strategy is to use policy discourse to naturalize certain ways of thinking about the world and marginalize alternative views (2005, p. 206). In sum, Bacchi argues that policy can create and reinforce dominant discourses that are presented as natural, inevitable, or common sense, which serve to exclude or silence those who hold alternative perspectives.

Bacchi also emphasizes the importance of examining the language and discursive practices used in policy making processes. She argues that analyzing policy discourse is essential to understanding how power is constructed, maintained, and challenged in society (2005, p. 203). By examining the language and discursive practices used in policy making, it is possible to identify the assumptions, values, and interests that underlie policy decisions. In the context of my analysis, Bacchi's insights are particularly relevant. The experience of homelessness is a complex issue with social, economic, and political dimensions. Additionally, policy discourse regarding homelessness can create and reinforce dominant discourses that naturalize certain ways of thinking about homelessness, such as blaming individuals for their own situation. By analyzing the language and discursive practices used in homelessness policies, I aim to identify the

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assumptions, values, and interests that underlie policy decisions, and challenge dominant discourses that may serve to marginalize or exclude certain groups.

3.3 Interviews

As part of my research, I interviewed three policy makers/researchers who contributed to the creation of—or who were otherwise knowledgeable about—the policies which I have evaluated. This method aided me in answering my overarching research question about the attitudes towards and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness found in or reproduced by policy documents relating to homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador. It was also helpful for thinking about what experiences of homelessness fall outside the 'frame' created by these attitudes and assumptions. I utilized feminist interviewing techniques which included strategies such as, allowing interviewees to choose their interview medium (video or telephone call); sending participants interview questions before beginning the interview; and inviting participants to reflect and respond to the research process by reviewing their answers, to disrupt power hierarchies within the research process (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 118). I consider these interview techniques to be feminist as they embody principles such as autonomy and collaboration. Allowing participants to choose their preferred interview medium grants agency in the research process, recognizing and respecting differing needs and preferences. Sending interview questions beforehand promotes transparency and informed consent, giving participants the opportunity to reflect on their experiences before engaging in the conversation. Finally, inviting participants to review and respond to their answers disrupts traditional power dynamics, acknowledging their expertise in shaping the narrative of their own experiences (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 129).

One of the goals of these interviews was to better understand the types of data and research that policy makers utilized within the creation of policies. I used a semi-structured interview style, meaning that I had a list of questions prepared to ask my participants. The semi-structured format also provided some flexibility within the interview to allow for fruitful conversations to flow and additional questions to be asked should they arise (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 115). In keeping with reflexivity in the interviewing process, I sent my participants the list of questions before our interviews, allowing them time to prepare answers, review necessary material, or refresh themselves on aspects of the policy. The ability to reflect upon questions before answering allowed for a more nuanced conversation to occur, as participants had time to prepare their answers and reflect on questions (p. 115). It is important to note that due to the small number of interviews conducted and the qualitative nature of the research, I do not pretend to make any generalizable claims or conclusions solely based on data from interviews. Instead, conducting interviews with experts helped me to think through the challenges and complexities of homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador. They also provided me with valuable insight into the policy making process used in the development of homelessness policies along with the types of research and data utilized by policy makers. I also gained a better understanding of what degree 'objectivity' and 'rationality' are factors within policy makers' own views on the development of policies. I conducted a thematic analysis on all interview data. I began by identifying and analyzing patterns or themes within the interview data, then I related themes to my research questions and relevant research. Finally, this thematic analysis allowed me to understand patterns and meanings in the interview data and provided valuable insights into participants' experiences, perspectives, in relation to my overarching research questions.

I obtained institutional ethics clearance through ICEHR in order to conduct these interviews. Two interviews were conducted via video call and one interview was conducted over the phone. Participants chose which medium was more convenient for them and they chose a time that worked best for them. All interviews data was stored in the form of audio files, which were recorded and transcribed on Rev.com. In this application, speech-to-text AI (artificial intelligence) is used to produce transcriptions. In the unlikely event that AI was unable to produce transcriptions, an employee of Rev.com would complete the transcription. These transcriptionists are bound by non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) and therefore will not share any interview material. Rev.com has a multitude of security measures to ensure privacy including the encryption and deletion of files once transcription is complete[7]. I alone have analyzed the data from interview transcriptions. After I transcribed the files, I sent the transcript data to all participants, thus giving participants the opportunity to review their responses. All research participants approved of their responses and the subsequent use of their interview content within my study.

3.3.1 Participant Recruitment

To find policy makers I sent recruitment emails to various organizations and persons who were mentioned within the various policies. These emails were sent to non-profit organizations, government offices including the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, Department of Finance, Department of Children, Seniors, and Social Services, as well as individual policy makers. I encountered significant difficulty in recruiting interview participants, only receiving responses from non-profit organizations and independent policy researchers, as no government

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[7] A detailed description of all Rev.com privacy and security measures are available at https://www.rev.com/blog/transcription-security-practices.

offices responded to my requests. Identifying who was important or relevant to speak with was a challenge I faced throughout the participant recruitment process. Positions within government offices change regularly and the policies which people are currently working on are not listed, therefore making it very difficult to know who is currently working on specific policies.

I conducted three interviews in total. I use pseudonyms when discussing participants throughout my discussion. My first interview was conducted with Spencer. They are a policy researcher who has worked to advise numerous policy makers in homelessness policy development and advocates for greater supports and services for marginalized people around Canada. Notably for my own research, they have advised policy creation in rural regions of NL. My second interview was conducted with Katie. They have worked as a community advocate within the homelessness sector for many years. They also have spent a significant amount of time advising housing and homelessness policy throughout the province of NL. My third and final interview was conducted with Griffin, who works in advocacy for homelessness policy research and creation.

3.4 Coding and Frequency Analysis

I used a coding and frequency analysis model within my policy analysis to answer my research questions, namely in showcasing who is accounted for within policies. Sociologist Pavel Pospěch (2020) utilized this method of analysis to evaluate how popular media discourse influenced public opinions about homelessness and in turn directly affected public policy. Pospěch utilized coding to measure "(a) adjectives: what they are like, (b) actions: what they do, (c) company: what groups they are mentioned together with, and (d) risk: what, if anything, do they threaten" (p. 4), and then a frequency analysis to quantify the ways that the media characterized people experiencing homelessness. In my research, I began by coding for 'sticky'

words, as previously presented within my exploration of Ahmed's (2004) 'sticky' language of emotion, associated with people experiencing homelessness and homeless communities. I coded for concepts such as 'risk', 'at-risk', 'vulnerable', and related concepts and then conducted a frequency analysis on this data. A frequency analysis involves the enumeration of specific data, in this case specific words, from a larger dataset, the examined policies. Once the data is enumerated, I put all data into graph format to compare the frequency of certain words over others. This method of coding and conducting a frequency analysis has allowed me to show the presence of these 'sticky', emotionally charged words within the policies. In keeping with MacDonald's (2016) questioning of the categories of 'risk' and 'risk behaviour' associated with youth experiencing homelessness, in pointing out the presence of these terms I aim to contest the neutrality and supposed 'objectivity' of policy makers (p. 128). In conducting my research, it is important to explore how language and emotion are closely tied in order to reveal systems of privilege and oppression, and to understand how hegemonic ways of thinking influence understanding and knowledge creation.

I then coded policies for key themes that I drew from the literature. These themes include concepts that other researchers have identified as important to receive specialized focus within homelessness policies. These include 'rural', 'chronic', '2SLGBTQIA+', 'Indigenous', 'seniors', 'youth', 'refugee', 'disability', and 'women's' homelessness. Within my coding for 2SLGBTQIA+ I also examined policies for any words related to the queer community including 'queer', 'LGBT', 'LGBTQ', 'gay', lesbian', 'bisexual', 'transgender', or any other words that could have been used to describe the queer community within the examined documents. Coding for these concepts gave me an important starting point in evaluating if policies are responsive to current issues faced by the community of people experiencing homelessness. I also conducted a

frequency analysis on these terms as a method to identify which areas are currently of policy focus here in NL. As a control within my analysis, I coded for policy outcomes which were not identified for a specific group of people. This has allowed me to better evaluate the degree to which certain groups receive policy attention. Finally, in order to account for the differing number of pages in each policy, I found the frequency of terms per page. This allowed me to accurately compare frequencies between each of the examined policies.

3.5 Self-Reflexivity

Self-reflexivity is an essential component of both feminist policy analyses and feminist discourse analyses. Reflexivity is widely regarded as a qualitative research tool often used as an attempt to "explore and expose the politics of representation" (Pillow, 2003, p. 176). Self-reflexivity has often been used as a method to deconstruct a researcher's positionality and, while the importance of positionality cannot be understated, this method has also been critiqued in reproducing colonial relations of "power over the subject". (Pillow, 2003, p. 342). If not accompanied by meaningful engagement with decolonial methodologies and practices, self-reflexivity may merely serve to reiterate the researcher's authority and control over the research process. Feminist self-reflexivity involves the investigation of how power is embedded in one's research and can be utilized as a mode of self-analysis and political awareness (Pillow, 2003, p. 178). Utilizing my own lived experiences of working within the housing sector is an essential component in answering my research questions, namely in how experiences of homelessness fall outside of those outlined within homelessness policies. Often, policy analysis occurs from an ostensibly 'objective' position, but I believe that my experience is a valuable contribution to this research.

My self-reflexive process was also informed by autoethnographic methods, which aim to provide a more nuanced understanding of social phenomena by integrating personal perspectives into academic analysis (Butz & Besio, 2009, p. 1660). Throughout my research process, I have drawn on my own personal experiences working within the homelessness sector to provide insights into experiences of homelessness that I feel have been overlooked in homelessness policy discourse. Specifically, I have adopted the concept of reflexive and autoethnographic "vignettes" as developed by journalism and media scholar Michael Humphreys (2005). He discusses how vignettes serve to provide concrete examples of abstract concepts, creating "a more engaging and empathetic connection between the reader and the author" (p. 851). These "layered accounts" alongside other forms of data, analysis, and relevant literature allow for deeper insights into social phenomena. In the context of my research, this means deeper insights into groups experiencing homelessness who are not accounted for in homelessness policies (Ellis, et al., 2011, p. 278). I have woven my own reflections and vignettes organically into my discussion where they felt appropriate.

While working as a Residential Counsellor at multiple shelters, as I have done since 2019, the various intersections of both oppression and power faced by people experiencing homelessness are made abundantly clear. Critically analyzing my own experiences offers "a window into structural oppression and privilege" produced through the narrow conceptions of homelessness within current policies (D'Arcangelis, 2017, p. 340). Within my own analysis, I engaged in self-reflexivity throughout the research process, as a method to show "the intersubjective research relations" that are produced throughout this process (Nencel, 2014, p. 77). These self-reflexive questions demanded me to think about how the interviewees' responses changed my own thinking regarding questions such as the role that policy makers play in

developing homelessness policies and the potential consequences for groups not included in policies. This aided in my own thinking as interviewees had significant insight into the process of policy development that people outside of the policy making process would not be privy to. Disrupting the 'objective' position of traditional policy analysis is an essential component of self-reflexivity within the research process and has added a valuable dimension to my analysis.

Before beginning this study, from working within the homelessness sector, I had a very real understanding of the lack of services and deplorable shelter conditions present both in St. John's and in rural regions. I also recognized that certain populations, such as the queer community, were largely being overlooked in terms of available services. Engaging in self-reflexive practices such as vignettes provided me opportunities to demonstrate how groups such as the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates here in Newfoundland and Labrador despite being consistently overlooked in policy discourse and literature. Through the sharing of my own personal experiences, I have been able to demonstrate the need for policy attention for specific groups despite the lack of qualitative representation which policy makers/researchers traditionally depend on.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I first outlined my feminist approach to policy analysis, specifically highlighting how I integrate an intersectionality-based policy analysis model and Indigenous based analysis methods into my approach. I then present the inclusion criteria for the examined policies, followed by my interview methodology. Within this I presented the interview techniques I used and the ways in which I have coded and analyzed the data garnered from the interviews. Next, I explained how I conducted my coding and frequency analysis, demonstrating what terms I coded for and how I accounted for the differing lengths of each policy. Finally, I

presented how I engaged with self-reflexivity, namely autoethnographic vignettes, throughout the research process. I now turn to my findings in my discussion section.

4.0 Discussion

In this section I first provide a synopsis of the policies which I have examined. I then compare the definitions of homelessness presented in each of the policies and put them in conversation with research to explore the ways in which these definitions include or exclude certain groups of people. I then explore the results of my discourse analysis, interviews, and coding and frequency analysis. Finally, I combine these elements to showcase a holistic understanding of what groups are, and are not, accounted for in each policy and how policy outcomes align with current research.

4.1 Synopses of Examined Policies

This section aims to outline the main goals of each of the examined policies. This will create the basis on which the rest of my analysis will be founded. The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's (NLHC) is a provincial government agency responsible for addressing housing needs and related programs. The NLHC plays a key role in developing and implementing housing policies, initiatives, and programs to ensure access to safe and affordable housing for residents of the province. Some key functions include public housing programs, social housing initiatives, rent supplement programs, housing policy development, and collaboration with community partnerships. The NLHC Strategic Plan 2020-2023 begins with a general statement about those it serves: "[Our] clientele consists of individuals and families with low-to-moderate incomes who require assistance in accessing or maintaining safe, adequate and affordable housing" (p. 2). This plan is 20 pages total, making it the shortest examined policy. It has no graphics, visuals, references, or description of data used to create the plan. The cover consists of a plain white page with a green strip which states 'Strategic Plan'. The plan goes on to outline distinct populations who receive specialized focus including seniors, youth, Indigenous

persons, victims of intimate partner violence, persons with disabilities, and persons with complex needs. This plan aims to address a diverse range of housing needs across the housing continuum, which includes renters, homeowners, and those who are at risk of or are experiencing homelessness. The NLHC plan also addresses the three key issues identified by the National Housing Strategy, outlined in section 1.4, developed and implemented by the federal government: 1) sustaining the existing social housing stock; 2) increasing access to affordable and adequate housing; and 3) strengthening partnerships to address homelessness.

The St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness (EHSJ) 2019-2024 states that it is a living document which is updated yearly. This is the longest plan examined with 104 pages. It includes references, appendixes, definitions, and descriptions of the materials used in the creation of the plan. There are numerous infographics, photos, tables, and figures throughout the document. The cover page consists of a photo of St. John's with the title 'End Homelessness St. John's #WECANENDIT'. It begins with a brief statement on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected its funding and outcome goals. This includes extra funding from the federal government to provide personal protective equipment, isolation space at a hotel, an online community portal to access resources, and an online housing inventory for people experiencing homelessness. EHSJ transitioned from a project of the City of St. John's to an independent non-profit in April, 2020. This transition took place due to the potential conflicts of interest of EHSJ, which previously engaged with community partners for advisory and governance decisions while under the City of St. John's umbrella. Notably, this transition also meant EHSJ becoming one of three Community Entities[8] in the province representing the St. John's area. This plan receives funding from the federal, provincial, and municipal governments for its development and

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[8] A 'Community Entity' is the organization responsible for signing funding agreements with the federal government.

implementation. EHSJ follows five guiding principles including following a 'housing first'[9] philosophy, collaboration with the community, confidentiality of information, a solution focused approach, and integrity in its actions. This plan engages in five main priority areas: systems coordination, knowledge mobilization, community investment, leadership and advocacy, and stakeholder engagement.

The Happy Valley-Goose Bay (HVGB) Community Plan for Addressing Homelessness and Transitional Housing was published in 2007 by the Happy Valley-Goose Bay Homelessness/Transitional Housing Working group. The plan is 73 pages and contains tables and figures of additional information, describing the process of plan development, and the material used in the creation of the plan. The cover has a photo of the Happy Valley Goose Bay wooden town sign and contact information for the Homelessness/Transitional Housing Working group. The main purpose of this plan is to identify issues related to housing and homelessness faced by the people of HVGB and to identify strategic directions for future initiatives in this area. Prior to the development of this plan, there were no existing studies regarding homelessness or other housing issues in HVGB, despite the evidence of housing issues in both this region and the greater coastal Labrador regions. There are two priorities identified by this plan, the first being the implementation of a Housing First approach. This is a priority due to the significant barriers faced by people with multiple or complex needs in accessing adequate and affordable housing. Adopting a Housing First approach means that community supports, and service coordination are integrated into the development of accessible, individual housing units. The second priority identified in this plan is the creation of a housing development/coordination role.

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[9] Housing First is an approach that prioritizes providing stable housing without requiring individuals meet conditions such as employment or treatment. Supportive services, including those related to employment, health, and other needs, are offered afterwards.

The staff of community groups and agencies currently serving the homeless community are able to effectively manage emergencies but lack the time and resources to engage in larger scale planning. The introduction of this role is meant to assist agencies as housing is increased to provide wrap around support services. Finally, six other high priority issues are also identified, which include the need for increased accessible housing for people with disabilities, second stage housing for women and children escaping violence, affordable (longer term) housing for single people, increased regulation of boarding houses, human resources to provide information/support/advocacy to people with serious housing problems, and training for tenants (life skills, finances, literacy, etc.).

4.2 Framing in and out of Homelessness Policies

My research questions ask about what attitudes towards and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness can be gleaned from policy documents relating to homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador and what experiences of homelessness fall outside the 'frame' that is created by these attitudes and assumptions? –To answer these questions, I first delve into the processes by which the examined policies are made. As I have discussed in section 1.3, the NL policy cycle has seven steps: issue identification and definition; policy research and analysis; generating policy solutions and alternatives; consultation; developing policy proposals; policy implementation; and policy monitoring and evaluation. These steps are not overtly stated in any of the examined policies as a part of their policy development process, but one can assume that both non-profits and government entities follow this process. Furthermore, both the EHSJ and HVGB plans provide materials used within their creation. The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporations policy does not provide any insight into its development. There are no works cited or material given to demonstrate who was consulted in the creation of the policy.

Analyzing the types of materials and data sources used in the creation of each examined policy ties into my discussion of epistemic injustice within my theoretical framework and feminist policy and discourse analysis (in Sections 2.2, 3.1, and 3.2 respectively). As I have previously outlined, a key component of my analysis is in exploring the ways knowledge is produced and evaluated. Applying this lens to my analysis of homelessness policies highlights the importance of centering the voices and experiences of people with lived experience of homelessness in policy making processes. In other words, an epistemic injustice lens calls for policies that are informed by the diverse perspectives and needs of people experiencing homelessness, that actively work to dismantle barriers to participation and representation within the policy process. Within my discussion of materials and data sources used within the creation of the examined policies I specifically highlight sources which allow for the participation of people with lived experience of homelessness as part of my application of Fricker's (2007) concepts. Throughout my analysis I discuss policy documents in no particular order.

The HVGB plan mentions the various types of materials used within its creation. It begins by presenting data from town meetings, with the goal of initiating discussions regarding the needs within the community for people experiencing homelessness. The plan then lists all organizations consulted and guides to peer interviews conducted with people experiencing homelessness. These interviews were anonymous and asked questions regarding background information of participants, current housing/living arrangements, income and expenses, and barriers individuals face to find housing and information on housing. Next, two case studies were presented that describe struggles faced by individuals experiencing homelessness in this region, such as migrating from more rural regions for addictions treatment or fleeing domestic violence situations. These case studies also gave the opportunity for participants to give their own advice

to the "*system* which deals with homelessness" (p. 17). One participant stated how "there needs to be more choices for people. I could leave this boarding house but there is nowhere else to go that would help me long-term." (p. 17). The lack of long-term housing options for people experiencing homelessness is something that I will focus on further in section 4.5. Next, interviews and focus groups were conducted with community serving organizations to determine the specific needs they see within the community. Finally, this plan shows photos of tent encampments within the town along with news articles relating to homelessness within the region. The plan also gives references of materials cited in the policy and a further reading list of relevant documents that were not cited within the plan.

The EHSJ plan lists their references, definitions of interest used throughout the policy, and their methodology. They conducted focus groups with community serving agencies which covered four topics: coordinated access, supportive housing, public system discharge planning, and harm reduction. This plan defines a coordinated access system as:

> The process by which individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness are directed to community-level access points where trained workers use a common assessment tool to evaluate the individual or family's depth of need, prioritize them for housing support services and then help to match them to available housing-focused interventions. (p. 69)

This means that people experiencing homelessness are connected to appropriate housing services via a centralized platform. The goal of this platform is to streamline the process of accessing assistance, reduce duplication of services, and ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to those in need. Supportive housing in this plan has several components. 'Rapid rehousing' focuses on moving clients out of shelters and into rental housing, usually with the

support of rental subsidies. 'Transitional housing' refers to intermediate accommodation between experiencing homelessness and entering permanent housing. It combines wrap-around supports such as mental health, addiction, life skills, or employment supports as a requirement of housing. Finally, 'permanent supportive housing' consists of a long-term rental or housing situation for clients which includes "individualized, flexible and voluntary support services for people with high needs related to physical or mental health, developmental disabilities or substance use." (p. 71).

'Public system discharge planning' is the process by which various public systems, such as healthcare facilities, correctional institutions, foster care systems, and mental health facilities, collaborate to prevent homelessness among individuals transitioning out of these systems. Finally, 'harm reduction' emphasizes strategies and interventions aimed at minimizing the negative consequences associated with behaviors rather than eliminating behaviours, such as substance use, completely. In my work experience, the goal of harm reduction was explained to me as 'meeting individuals where they are at'. This plan outlines the harm reduction services such as "managed alcohol programs, supervised consumption services, and harm reduction-focused shelter standards" (p. 51). I will discuss coordinated access and systems discharge into homelessness in further detail in section 4.6.

Creators of this plan also conducted online surveys whose respondents were mainly front-line service providers and management of service providers. These surveys focused on the four points topics above and the role EHSJ as an organization can play in "ending homelessness in St. John's" (p. 79). The plan then outlines documents provided from the federal government such as: 'Functional zero', which aims to end chronic homelessness in Canada; 'By-name list scorecard', which is a self-assessment tool to help build a list of people experiencing homelessness in the

community; and a 'Coordinated access scorecard' to help streamline people's access to homelessness services. Finally, additional information is given such as the federal government's "Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy" (2022) progress report, a list of supportive housing in St. John's, and next steps for coming years for the organization.

Within their methodologies, only the HVGB policy actually allowed for the engagement of people with lived experiences of homelessness. This participation occurs at multiple points during the policy development process including peer interviews and case studies. The EHSJ plan allowed for participation of service providers in both their focus groups and online surveys. In their discussion of stakeholder engagement in the EHSJ plan, incorporating the knowledge of people with lived experience homelessness is highlighted, but it is not present in the development of this plan. In the context of my research, understanding the ways in which the perspectives of people with lived experiences of homelessness are considered in each policy is essential to understanding the frame through which people experiencing homelessness are viewed. This engagement allows for individuals with lived experience to have a direct voice in shaping policies that directly impact their lives, echoing sentiments of epistemic injustice, as outlined in section 2.2, which aims to identify opportunities for more inclusive and ethical policy approaches which take into account the diverse perspectives and experiences of marginalized peoples. It is essential to note here again that the NLHC policy did not provide any information about the types of materials or data sources used within the creation of their policy. This makes it impossible to know if any data collection was conducted with people who have lived experiences of homelessness.

Examining the methodology and materials used within the creation of each policy, when it is provided, is essential to understanding the broader context in which policies are created.

This is a critical starting point for me in conducting a feminist policy analysis, as I have outlined within section 3.1. To gain a deeper understanding of the policy making process, and in turn the lens by which policy makers view people experiencing homelessness, in my interviews I asked questions such as "Can you tell me about what goes into the process of developing a policy—in this case, homelessness policy?" and "What kind of documents, data, or literature are used in the creation of homelessness policies? What role do policy makers play in interpreting these documents?"

Spencer, my first interviewee, discussed that in the development of a policy, policy makers must first identify the 'problem' that the policy seeks to address. They then must look at potential solutions that have been used elsewhere to determine what approaches have had success. Next, policy makers must gather different perspectives about the issue. Spencer highlights the importance of 'numbers' and qualitative data for policy makers who often require the quantification of policy issues to serve as the basis for evidence-based decision making. As I have discussed in section 2.3 regarding the role of emotion and objectivity in policy making, the focus on empirical data sources can privilege certain populations of people over others. Spencer also discusses how often it "is the policy that's created the barrier to being able to do what needs to be done or provide this, or is not responding in the appropriate way to, in terms of an issue, that it's meant to respond to". This means that often when policies attempt to address an issue, such as homelessness, they often create barriers to access services.

Griffin, my third interviewee, highlighted the importance of stakeholder consultation in the policy making process to identify needs at the local level. They also discussed the difficulties in determining how "the needs at the local level fit in with the mandatory objectives through reaching home, which are fairly broad". As I have described in section 1.4, "Reaching Home:

Canada's Homelessness Strategy" (2022) is the federal strategy addressing homelessness in Canada. This document lays out certain objectives that are supposed to be ubiquitously implemented across jurisdictions. Griffin's interview highlights the difficulties that organizations face in honouring both requirements from funding agencies such as the federal government and the needs of people experiencing homelessness, which can differ significantly at local levels.

My next interview question, regarding the types of data, documents, or literature used in the creation of policies, continues to delve deeper into the frame created by policy makers. Spencer explains how "there's a lot of challenges sometimes when people are making policy to be able to put a critical lens on the data that they're looking at and how that information is being presented". They then provide an example of the role that policy makers play in interpreting data, the "At Home/Chez Soi" project, which was the first large scale Housing First project in Canada. Within this program, it was found that 62% of program participants remained housed at the end of the project. This 62% was established as the justification for the success of this program and used by policy makers to advocate for Housing First policies elsewhere (Goering, et al., 2014, p. 17). While 62% of people remaining housed is an extremely important outcome to show, this result received all attention instead of evaluating why 38% of people were not able to retain housing in this program. The reasoning behind 38% of participants experiencing homelessness again after this program is often overlooked. This could be due to the presence of complex needs, meaning mental health, substance use disorders, and histories of trauma, without adequate support, issues with housing quality, and location (Goering, et al., 2014). Spencer further explained how this shows that looking at numbers only tells one side of the story, again emphasizing the need for the contextualization of data and the necessity of incorporating more than just quantifiable results. The focus on methods such as Housing First could potentially

create a frame by which people who are unable to remain housed in these programs are overlooked.

Spencer also identified how factors such as organizational culture can influence schools of thought surrounding homelessness policy. For example, organizations who have cultures that are conscious of things such as the need for anti-racism services in housing may have the issues at the forefront of policies. They also discussed how organization mandates can limit policy options. For example, if an organization focuses solely on housing, they may not be collaborating to work towards solutions that are beyond just providing physical structures. Finally, Spencer highlighted the connection between housing/homelessness policies and other areas such as health policy. They discussed how these policy structures can make people 'vulnerable', instead of focusing on how systems are oppressive, inequitable, and work to render some groups of people as inherently vulnerable. Policy focus shifts with institutional agendas which can be set by government or academies, therefore groups who are or are not included can vary and change given the political climate. They discussed the current focus of anti-racism within policy structures which have emphasized the needs of groups such as Indigenous people experiencing homelessness. When there is a lack of data to illustrate an issue, such as rural homelessness not being accounted for in data collection, policy makers are able to overlook these things.

Interview two, conducted with Katie, highlighted the disconnect between research being conducted and actual policy changes. More specifically, they discussed how there have been multiple research studies by academics on housing issues in rural areas of the province, but it was not apparent to Katie how or if this research actually translates into policy change. This calls into question the types of research being used by policy makers to inform their decisions. Katie

describes policy making as a process which occurs behind closed doors. There are no drafts given to different groups to provide feedback or suggestions, instead just final plans published once they are complete.

In the first portion of this section, I analyzed the types of materials and data sources used in the creation of each examined policy. This is to begin to understand the attitudes towards and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness that can be gleaned from policy documents. Only the non-profit, HVGB and EHSJ, policies list their methodologies and reference material used in the creation of the policies. The NLHC, part of the provincial government plan, does not list any methodologies or source material used in the creation of the policy. Furthermore, only the HVGB plan allowed for the participation of people with lived experiences of homelessness in the creation of the policy. Finally, I discussed responses from my interviewees regarding the process of developing policies and the types of materials used in the creation of policies. Spencer discussed the emphasis on empirical data in the policy making process and how this can create barriers for individuals accessing services. Griffin discussed the difficulty for organizations in determining how local needs fit into mandatory objectives set by the federal government to receive funding. My interview with Katie highlighted the disconnect between research being conducted in regions and actual policy change. They witnessed numerous housing studies being conducted in rural regions, yet felt as though current housing policies were not reflective of this research. Overall, this section highlighted the importance of policies listing the methodologies and source materials they used, in order to better understand their framing of issues such as people experiencing homelessness. This section also demonstrated the disconnect between research, various levels of government, and individual policy makers in developing responsive policies for people experiencing homelessness.

In the following sections I will first discuss differing definitions of homelessness presented within each of the examined policies. Then I will break down specific aspects of each definition in conjunction with material from the entirety of each policy into four themes, namely: urban-rural divides, individual vs. structural approaches, gender, race, sexuality, and other compounding factors, and objectivity in homelessness policies.

4.3 Definitions of Homelessness

To further understand the frame through which the experience of homelessness is viewed within each policy, I compare and contrast definitions of homelessness in each policy document. Definitions of homelessness in the examined policies– Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation Strategic Plan 2020-2023; St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness 2019-2024; and Happy-Valley Goose Bay Community Plan for Addressing Homelessness and Transitional Housing (2007)–vary significantly in terms of ambiguity, inclusivity, and in their individualisation of the issue of homelessness. All of these definitions vary in terms of how comprehensive and inclusive they are. Despite this, there are many similarities among them. In consideration of research questions regarding what attitudes and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness are present within homelessness policies and what experiences of homelessness are 'framed' out of policies, I believe that examining definitions is essential.

All policies identify a lack of affordable or appropriate housing as a key underlying factor within the experience of homelessness. While I cannot overstate the significant impact that not having stable, affordable, and appropriate housing can have on a person's physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, this criterion creates a limited scope of homelessness as something that is just experienced by a person with a lack of a physical dwelling. As I have explored within my

theoretical approach, there are various dimensions of homelessness that occur outside of a person

being simply sheltered or unsheltered.

In place of a specific definition, the NLHC policy document provides a broad statement

about homelessness under a section about strengthening partnerships. It states:

> Homelessness is often the result of systemic or societal barriers, including a lack of
> affordable and appropriate housing, the individual's financial, mental, cognitive,
> behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. For some, the
> experience of intergenerational trauma further compounds the issue. Increasingly,
> provincial and national data speaks to the prevalence of homelessness among key
> demographics, including Indigenous populations, youth, seniors, and those with complex
> service needs. (NLHC, 2020, p.11)

This definition lacks both components of Echenberg & Jensen (2008) requirements for a

definition of homelessness in Canadian policy, which I have outlined in section 1.5. Namely,

there is no mention of specific housing situations that a person must experience to be considered

as experiencing homelessness or duration of time experiencing these housing situations. Without

these components, it is very difficult to ascertain who is, and is not, experiencing homelessness

based on this definition. This definition also mentions how experiences of intergenerational

trauma can compound systemic or societal barriers resulting in experiences of homelessness.

This plan does not discuss any factors that could contribute to someone experiencing

intergenerational trauma, for example, colonization. Without specifically acknowledging

systemic issues such as colonization, this definition overlooks the historical and political factors

that have contributed to specific groups of people experiencing homelessness at disproportionate

rates. The EHSJ plan defines homelessness as:

> The situation of an individual or family who does not have a permanent address or
> residence; the living situation of an individual or family who does not have stable,
> permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of
> acquiring it. It is often the result of what are known as systemic or societal barriers,
> including a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's

financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. (p. 12).

The EHSJ plan offers a much more expansive definition of homelessness than the other two plans I evaluate. It begins by acknowledging that homelessness can be experienced by both families and individuals, describing various contexts in which a person could find themselves experiencing homelessness such as not having appropriate, permanent, or stable housing, or having a lack of appropriate, affordable housing. But, just as in the NLHC policy, the EHSJ policy takes the neoliberal approach of individualization through its association of experiencing homelessness with characteristics or personal attributes of an individual or household such as cognitive, mental, physical, behavioural, or financial challenges. I will be elaborating on this point more in section 4.5. This is where the similarities between the two plans end, however, as the EHSJ plan goes on to define both chronic homelessness and Indigenous homelessness. The EHSJ plan defines chronic homelessness as:

> Individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria: A total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year; recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days) (p. 12).

The term 'chronic homelessness' has been criticized for medicalizing the experience of homelessness, through the use of language commonly used to describe medical conditions or diseases (Willse, 2010, p. 165). Despite this criticism, the term chronic homelessness is widely used throughout policy documents at all levels of government in Canada, including the EHSJ plan. It provides the following specific criterion for an individual to be classified as chronically homeless, this criterion was developed by the federal government in consultation with the Homelessness Data Advisory Committee (Government of Canada, 2017). There is very little

information available regarding how this definition was developed, specifically in how policy makers decided upon these timeframes.

The EHSJ plan continues to list specific contexts that constitute chronic homelessness, including staying in places not meant for permanent human inhabitation, such as unsheltered locations, staying in overnight and emergency shelters, or staying with others without immediate prospects of permanent residency. Furthermore, this definition regards people being "discharged into homelessness from transitional housing or public institutions . . . [as] chronically homeless if they were experiencing chronic homelessness upon entry to transitional housing or the public institution" (p. 12). While the importance of acknowledging the presence of institutional discharge into homelessness cannot be overstated, the requirement of an individual to have been experiencing homelessness directly prior to their entry into an institution and being released directly into homelessness limits the scope of this issue. In my work experience, I have seen many people who have very recently exited institutions such as, correctional or health care, have their housing arrangements break down within the first few months of their release. By this I mean that after exiting public institutions, people may maintain their housing for a short period before experiencing another episode of homelessness, followed by potentially re-entering public institutions, shelters, or eventually another rental situation. I believe that this cycle of chronic experiences of homelessness can occur over longer periods of time than just experiencing homelessness upon entry into and exit from public systems.

In Canada, 22% of children who age out of the foster care system experience homelessness within one year (Piat et al., 2015, p. 2368). The "Coming of Age: Reimagining the Response to Youth Homelessness in Canada" (2014) report also calls attention to the correlation between youth exiting institutional systems and entering homelessness. This report states that

about 43% of youth who have experienced homelessness lived in foster care or group homes at one point in their life and that more than half of youth who have experienced homelessness have also been to jail, prison, or spent time in a youth detention center (Gaetz, 2014, p. 12). Authors Gaetz and O'Grady (2009) have also highlighted the "revolving door" of people in Canada who enter the prison system and have experienced homelessness, and the fact that once they are discharged, they experience homelessness again (p. 2). In 2010, the John Howard Society of Toronto published a study revealing that in the Greater Toronto Area, one fifth of male prisoners experienced homelessness at the time of their incarceration and that one third of prisoners would be discharged into homelessness (Kellen, et al., 2010, p. 16). These studies emphasize the high degree of correlation between institutional discharge and experiencing homelessness.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the data for people who exit institutional systems into homelessness or who have spent time within institutional systems and have experienced homelessness are not publicly available. Without this information, it is not possible to discern the true scope of the correlation between institutional exiting and homelessness. Repeated episodes of homelessness among individuals or families, no matter the duration or frequency, indicate a larger systemic issue of sustained housing insecurity or deprivation. The high degree of correlation between institutional discharge and experiencing homelessness, whether fitting into these narrow definitions of chronic or not, highlights the importance of policies accounting for this correlation. This definition also makes no reference to subpopulations, such as Indigenous or racialized communities, who are overrepresented within institutional systems such as the child welfare or prison system (Cesaroni, et al., 2019; Martel, et al., 2011; Owusu-Bempah, et al., 2021; Tetrault, et al., 2020).

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The EHSJ plan defines Indigenous homelessness through a definition provided by the federal government in the National Housing Survey (2017). While this definition is extensive in addressing various dimensions of Indigenous homelessness, these dimensions are not included in the broader definitions of both homelessness and chronic homelessness within this plan. Acknowledging the distinctions in the experiences of homelessness between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within policies has been identified by various researchers as essential in understanding the connection between colonialism and homelessness (Belanger, Awosoga, & Weasel Head, 2013; Christensen, 2013; 2016; Christensen, et al., 2017). The HVGB plan defines homelessness as:

> Homeless people fall into three defined categories: the absolute, the hidden and those who are at risk of losing housing. The absolute homeless are those sleeping rough (outside) or using public or private shelters. The hidden homeless include those staying with friends or family because they cannot afford housing for themselves. Without this temporary fix they would be living on the streets or in an emergency shelter. In addition, the at-risk-for-homelessness group is those in grave danger of losing housing with nothing lined up." (p. 4).

The plan furthers this definition by stating that "it is the hidden homeless and under-housed people who form the vast majority of those experiencing homelessness and housing stress in Happy Valley-Goose Bay" (p. 4).

The HVGB definition lacks one of the main components identified by Echenberg and Jensen (2008) as essential for any policy on homelessness as there is no reference to the length of time that a person experiences these circumstances. Without both of these components it is extremely difficult to account for who this plan categorizes as experiencing homelessness. While this policy does define homelessness as a result of systemic or societal barriers, it nonetheless presents an ambiguous viewpoint of who is experiencing homelessness and the factors that can result in groups of people experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates. In other words,

the scope of what may constitute a barrier that could result in an individual experiencing homelessness is limited. The HVGB plan divides people experiencing homelessness into three categories: the absolute, the hidden, and those who are at risk of losing housing. According to this plan, the vast majority of homelessness in the context of HVGB falls into the hidden category. The definition of homelessness in this plan is brief and does not elaborate on the greater societal structures that may result in groups of people experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates. Despite this limited definition, this plan does elaborate on the issue of rural homelessness, an issue not mentioned in other policies.

The HVGB definition does not elaborate on issues such as chronic homelessness or specifically Indigenous homelessness, though it does include (outside of their homelessness definition) that Indigenous people in the area experience homelessness at higher rates. It does acknowledge difficulties in measuring rates of homelessness in this area due to the somewhat subjective nature of indicators, including core housing need, which do not take into account issues such as doubling up. In the development of this plan, researchers found that the public perception of homelessness is that it is largely an urban issue. Therefore, the acknowledgment of the existence of rural homelessness in its various presentations was essential in developing effective policy recommendations for this region. Overall, while brief, this definition does highlight important issues relevant to HVGB, namely that of rural homelessness.

In this section, I have compared the definitions of homelessness from all three policy documents. The NLHC policy lacks a definition, instead it has a broad statement which does not have specific criteria such as the housing conditions that a person must be experiencing to be considered as experiencing homelessness or the length of time someone must experience these conditions. This statement also does not address systemic issues, such as colonization, that has

resulted in certain populations experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates. The EHSJ plan offers a much more expansive definition, acknowledging various contexts in which someone can experience homelessness. This plan also delves much further into Indigenous experiences of homelessness than the other examined policies and is the only plan to define chronic homelessness. The HVGB plan categorizes people experiencing homelessness in three categories: absolute, hidden, and at-risk, noting that in the region most people are experiencing hidden homelessness. This is the only plan to highlight rural homelessness and the ways that it differs from urban experiences. Overall, my analysis of these definitions has emphasized the need for definitions of homelessness that specifically recognize the impacts that systemic barriers have on people experiencing homelessness.

In the next sections, I delve into some of the issues I have discussed in more detail. Namely in urban-rural divides in policies, individual vs. structural approaches, gender, sexuality, race, Indigeneity, and other compounding factors, and objectivity in homelessness policies. I draw on data from my discourse analysis, interviews, and frequency analysis throughout my discussion.

4.4 Urban-Rural Divides within Homelessness Policy

A key finding within my research is the disparity of services and policy attention between urban and rural areas of the province. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the vast majority of communities are considered rural, with St. John's being the main urban hub of the island portion of the province. As I have outlined in my introduction, there is often a romanticized view of rural regions as not experiencing social issues such as homelessness (Hudson & Close, 2011, p. 79). A preliminary study investigating the prevalence of homelessness in rural NL identified how supports for people experiencing homelessness are "unfairly concentrated in St. John's"

(Jamieson, 2024, p. 8). All of the examined policies, to varying degrees, mention the presence of homelessness within rural regions. Rural homelessness is marked by rapid economic growth and decline through the boom-and-bust economies of extractive industries such as mining, oil, and timber. Several scholars have described the relationship between boom–bust economies and the increasing rates of homelessness in rural areas (Okkola & Brunelle, 2018, p. 18; Schiff, et al., 2015, p. 97). The HGVB plan identifies how rural homelessness may present differently, including people being under-housed or people living with friends, in a car or in a cabin, compared to people sleeping rough in the streets as they are more likely to do in urban locations.

The HVGB policy, based in a rural region of the province, discusses the unique experiences of rural homelessness in the area. The plan emphasizes how people experiencing rural homelessness

> are less likely to live on the street or stay in a homeless shelter since there are far fewer shelters in rural areas. They are more likely to sleep in a car, a cabin or stay with friends or relatives in overcrowded or substandard conditions. In the rural reality, the definition of homelessness includes those described as "under housed". (p. 4)

The 'under-housed' can also be described as hidden homelessness, as I have explored in section 1.4 of my introduction. The population of people experiencing hidden homelessness in NL is largely unknown as there are currently no measures taken to enumerate this population. Measures such as core housing indicators are instead used to quantify people experiencing housing insecurity in rural regions (Schiff, et al., 2015, p. 86). Both the HVGB and EHSJ plans make reference to the experience of homelessness beyond that of absolute homelessness, such as sleeping rough or in shelters. More specifically, the EHSJ plan outlines how not having stable, permanent, or appropriate housing qualifies a person as experiencing dimensions of homelessness beyond that of absolute homelessness. Interestingly, despite the overwhelming support in the literature regarding how hidden homelessness comprises the vast majority of the

population of people experiencing homelessness in Canada, only the HVGB plan explicitly includes hidden homelessness within their definition. Furthermore, this plan identifies how hidden homelessness is the most widespread form of homelessness experienced in the region, a fact which is true in every jurisdiction in Canada even if not specifically named. This is a glaring absence in other policies, as without even mentioning its existence, how can policies make any efforts to account for this population?

Rural experiences of homelessness are often underlined by migration from rural to urban areas for services such as mental and physical health or addictions services. This migration between rural and urban areas creates instability in individuals' lives, as people participating in these circular migrations may face difficulty in maintaining employment or housing (Belanger & Weasel Head, 2013, p. 18). For Indigenous peoples, these migrations can hold different meanings. Migrating home to reserves can serve as a method to reconnect with culture and kin, and to escape discrimination often experienced in urban centers (Belanger & Weasel Head, 2013, p. 19). Indigenous women also participate in these migrations; family violence is often an underlying factor as women often have to move to urban centers to access support services or to access their children who have been relocated to urban centers under the child welfare system (Christensen, 2013, p. 812). A profound lack of affordable or available rental housing and substandard housing conditions are also factors within rural experiences of homelessness, as rural areas often do not have affordable housing developments or a large housing stock (Schiff, et al., 2015, p. 100).

I have kept these factors in mind throughout my examination of each policy, as the ways in which these policies conceptualize rural homelessness should consider these essential factors. The HVGB plan is the only of the examined policies to talk in depth about rural homelessness.

This policy makes reference to almost all of the major issues I have discussed above namely, forced migration to HVGB from more remote regions to receive services without adequate resources to return to home communities, lack of rental availability, and the lack of housing for women escaping violence with and without children. Interestingly, my interview with Katie also touches on this last point. They identified how:

> You know you have someone who is struggling with mental health and addictions and complex needs and they go to treatment right, and their children goes into care. They go to treatment. They come back. They can't get their children back until they got an apartment. You know they're all cleaned up. They can't get their children back because they can't get housing.

The quote illustrates the significant challenges that women, often Indigenous women, face in rural regions when experiencing homelessness. Women with complex needs, such as mental health issues and substance use disorders, often struggle to access treatment and support services in rural areas due to limited resources and infrastructure. As a result, they may be separated from their children, who are placed in care while the women seek treatment. However, the requirement to secure stable housing before family reunification presents a major barrier, as affordable housing options in many rural areas are extremely difficult to find. Kate at a later point in the interview states how a one-bedroom apartment can rent for about $1,500 a month, which is virtually unattainable for a single person. This systemic barrier perpetuates the cycle of homelessness and family separation, as women may find themselves unable to regain custody of their children despite making efforts to address their mental health and addiction issues.

In the NLHC plan, the only reference to rural homelessness emphasizes the need for consultation with rural stakeholders in order to support localized responses. There are no specific outcomes listed as to what this consultation entails and no reference to what type of localized responses they wish to support. The EHSJ plan identified the importance of 'knowledge

mobilization', meaning data collection and sharing between jurisdictions. However, there is a huge gap in data collection throughout the province, a problem that has been highlighted throughout rural regions in Canada (Schiff, et al., 2015, p. 97). As I have outlined in my introduction, outside of the St. John's area there is no specific data regarding the prevalence of people experiencing homelessness. Most communities in NL do not have any services related to homelessness, such as emergency shelters, a likely reflection of the prevailing thought that homelessness is an urban issue. As demonstrated in my literature review, there is research within the Canadian context showcasing the longstanding prevalence and comparable rates to urban centres of homelessness in rural areas (MacDonald & Gaulin, 2020, p. 169; Schiff, et al., 2015, p. 97). This issue was not brought up in other policies and I feel that this is a major gap which manifests as a dearth of available homelessness services.

While the EHSJ plan focuses mainly on the urban centre of St. John's, the NLHC plan is supposed to address housing issues throughout the province of NL. The lack of acknowledgment of the issues faced by people experiencing homelessness in rural locations is thus a significant oversight, considering the vast majority of the province's communities are considered to be rural. This oversight again echoes sentiments in which rural regions are not thought of as experiencing issues such as homelessness. In my interview with Spencer, they discussed how the diverse geographic/cultural context of Canada has to be taken into account when discussing housing issues, but rarely does the geographic or cultural context become a factor within policies. As I have discussed in further detail within section 1.4 of my introduction, due to the "long-standing traditions of rural residents preferring self-help and reliance on relatives, friends and neighbors, this form of solidarity has long disguised the magnitude of the problem." the 'problem' being that of homelessness (MacDonald & Gaulin, 2020, p. 169). Rural experiences of homelessness

are often hidden, with many rural people migrating to urban centers to receive services for people experiencing homelessness due to the lack of available services in home communities or the stigma experienced in rural locations due to experiencing homelessness (MacDonald & Gaulin, 2020, p. 173). Spencer also discussed how programs that work in urban centres such as Toronto may not have the same efficacy in rural communities, yet due to the unavailability of data regarding housing programs within these jurisdictions, often these models are applied ubiquitously across the country.

The NLHC policy seems to perpetuate this notion of applying programs from urban centers to rural communities. As I have stated above, there are no references to any services specified for rural communities. In my own experience, I have witnessed the gap in resources for rural populations of people experiencing homelessness. Often people from rural communities are required to migrate to St. John's to receive supportive services, as there are no resources in home communities. I have seen people take buses for more than eight hours or even flights from more remote places in Labrador if there are no available resources closer. This, in turn, removes people from their social support networks and can create a variety of new issues as an individual is now experiencing homelessness, often living in emergency shelters, in an unfamiliar city. Providing localized responses is essential in preventing this forced migration to St. John's that for some people can have devastating effects.

In this section, I began by discussing differences between rural and urban homelessness, focusing on the prevalence of hidden homelessness in this population. Only the HVGB policy specifically addresses the issue of hidden homelessness, despite this being the most widespread experience of homelessness in all jurisdictions. I also discussed the migration that people experiencing homelessness in rural places participate in to receive services such as mental health

or addictions treatment. This migration makes it particularly difficult for people in rural regions to maintain employment and housing, a sentiment echoed in my interview conducted with Katie. The NLHC plan was the only provincial plan analyzed. Despite this, the only mention of rural experiences of homelessness was the need to consult with rural stakeholders in order to ensure localized responses. As I have outlined in my introduction, many communities in NL do not have any resources for people experiencing homelessness, therefore localized responses in these areas are not possible unless services are expanded. Finally, the NLHC plan seems to perpetuate the application of urban homelessness perspectives to the experiences of homelessness in rural communities. As I explored in my interview with Spencer, the diverse geographic and cultural contexts of Canada have to be considered in the creation of policies and services for people experiencing homelessness in the region. Overall, only the HVGB policy specifically addressed rural homelessness to a substantial degree. The NLHC plan briefly referenced the need to consult rural stakeholders but did not delve deeper into the issue.

4.5 Individual vs. Structural Approaches to Homelessness Policy

Another finding in my research concerns the interplay of individual and structural approaches that the examined policies took to addressing homelessness. In this portion of my analysis, I have drawn on conceptualizations of feminist political economy discussed in Section 2.4. I argue that the individualization of homelessness reflects neoliberal ideologies that prioritize market-based solutions and individual responsibility, while downplaying the role of structural inequalities and systemic factors in shaping individuals' experiences of homelessness. Feminist political economy critiques the individualization approach by highlighting how neoliberal policies perpetuate socioeconomic disparities and fail to address the root causes of homelessness, such as income inequality and housing unaffordability (Bezanson & Luxton,

2006, p. 5; Quiroga, 2015, p. 9). Instead, feminist perspectives advocate for a structural analysis of homelessness that considers the intersecting systems of oppression and discrimination that contribute to dimensions of homelessness.

When homelessness policies seek to individualize the issue of homelessness, they frame it as a problem stemming from the personal characteristics or behaviors of individuals experiencing homelessness, rather than acknowledging the larger societal factors that contribute to housing insecurity. This approach tends to focus on individual-level interventions, such as emergency shelters or support services, while neglecting systemic issues such as poverty, lack of affordable housing, and systemic discrimination. All policies accounted for both structural and individual factors, though to differing degrees.

As seen in my examination of the policies' definitions of homelessness, section 4.3, both the NLHC and EHSJ policies present homelessness as a result of systemic or societal barriers, almost in the exact same language. It is unclear if this matching definition might have come from any specific source, but the presence of this matching definition highlights a priority by either governments or policy makers. While the policies acknowledge how societal or systemic barriers can contribute to certain groups' experience of homelessness at higher rates than others, they also state that people may experience homelessness due to their own physical, mental, cognitive, behavioral, or financial challenges. Although the interplay between micro (individual) and macro (societal) factors within the experience of homelessness is variable and dependent on individual situations, the connection between the two is undeniable. Both policies acknowledge the presence of both factors, yet systemic or societal barriers are not expanded upon beyond listing racism as the only barrier. In short, individual factors are given the focus within these definitions.

While there is a combination of both individual and structural factors involved within a person's experience of homelessness, the focus on individual factors individualizes the issue of homelessness instead of problematizing societal barriers such as ableism or classism and how these barriers may result in people with disabilities or people of a lower socioeconomic class experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates (Burchardt, 2004, p. 745). It implies that individuals who have physical, mental, cognitive, behavioral, or financial challenges experience homelessness due to these challenges, not due to the larger societal factors that *create* and *sustain* those challenges. Additionally, while the NLHC plan recognizes the prevalence of intergenerational trauma within individual experiences of homelessness, it does not discuss societal barriers that intersect with experiences of intergenerational trauma and that may cause individuals to experience homelessness at higher rates. It also does not acknowledge factors, such as the longstanding effects of colonialism, that can increase the prevalence of intergenerational trauma in specific populations, such as that of Indigenous peoples. Instead, intergenerational trauma is presented as a factor that merely exacerbates the issue of homelessness. Authors Belanger, Awosoga, and Weasel Head (2013) discuss how homelessness policies in Western Canada work to individualize the issue, instead of accounting for the influence that systemic barriers have on the experience of homelessness (p. 17). All told, while the plans acknowledge the impact of systemic barriers on experiences of homelessness, they fall short in fully adopting this into their plans, instead largely following a neoliberal paradigm of conflating issues such as homelessness with personal characteristics of an individual.

In my discourse analysis, one of the key ideas found within all policies is that of housing affordability and conditions, which play a critical role in the experience and perpetuation of homelessness. For many individuals and families, the escalating costs of housing, relative to

stagnant or inadequate incomes, render secure housing out of reach. This financial strain is further exacerbated by the limited availability of affordable housing units, forcing many to allocate a disproportionate amount of their income to rent, leaving little for other basic necessities. Additionally, even when housing is affordable, substandard conditions can pose significant challenges. Poor housing conditions, such as mold, lack of proper insulation, or structural issues, not only jeopardize the health and safety of the residents but can also lead to eviction or the need to relocate. The NLHC policy begins with a discussion of the current condition of the social housing stock. It then continues to discuss the significant gap in available infrastructure as the majority of social housing available is 3+ bedroom homes, whereas 90% of NLHC applicants need 1-2-bedroom spaces. This is an important point of consideration given the majority of the social housing stock does not meet the needs of people facing housing insecurity, which could lead to people falling into various dimensions of homelessness.

Based on my personal observations, I have known of individuals who have remained on waitlists for extended periods, spanning several years, before securing social housing. During this wait period, they have cycled through private rentals and emergency shelters resulting in deteriorating physical and mental health, and a deeper entrenchment in the cycle of poverty and homelessness due to their fluctuating housing status. A prolonged wait for social housing can hinder an individual's ability to find and maintain steady employment. Without a stable address or a place to store belongings, attend to personal hygiene, or rest properly, the odds of securing or keeping stable employment diminish. This lack of employment further entrenches the cycle of poverty and experiencing homelessness. In my interview with Katie, they indicated these lengthy wait lists are a huge issue for people experiencing homelessness in rural areas. When discussing their own experiences in trying to secure housing for clients, they stated how organizations said

"we stopped taking names for the waiting list because there was [sic] too many. So, if anything comes up then just keep calling back. Great. Wow, that's the answer I got". These longer wait times for social housing can also lead to issues such as increased social isolation. For example, the stigma associated with experiencing homelessness can strain relationships with friends or family and over time, people may withdraw from social networks or community activities. Due to the precarious nature of their housing status, people face undo stress and hardship that could be avoided by mitigating these wait times.

The NLHC plan also states that in 2016 core housing indicators showed that 22,495 or 10.3% of the population in NL are in core housing need. Furthermore, the plan indicates that housing affordability issues go beyond just rent or mortgage payments and can include utilities and property tax. The NLHC currently provides 1,800 households with rent assistance. The NHS has set the goal of expanding community housing by 15% by 2028, which in NL means adding 894 units. Laying the framework for what part of the population are in core housing need is an important starting point for demonstrating the pervasiveness of housing insecurity in NL.

The acknowledgment that housing affordability needs to extend beyond just rental and mortgage payments shows the spectrum of issues that can contribute to housing insecurity. This area of the plan also outlines how the NL government specifically provides home repair assistance for seniors in rural areas. This is an important outcome, as providing support for seniors to stay in their homes through home repairs can help to prevent them from entering into a further position of housing insecurity or potentially from experiencing homelessness. There seems to be a gap in support for anyone who falls outside being a senior in rural areas and requiring home repairs. This plan does not outline how the NLHC provides services for other

people in core housing need, as there is no mention of any other sub-population who may need specific consideration and services from the NLHC.

The EHSJ policy identifies community investment as one of their main priority areas. Addressing structural causes of homelessness involves tackling issues such as housing affordability, availability, and suitability. The EHSJ does so through funding housing options to ensure safe, secure, affordable housing for tenants through incentives given to landlords, investing in community resources and programming, and implementing initiatives which complement existing funds. These initiatives include programs such as enhanced supported referrals, which provide financial support as "utility arrears, rental arrears, security deposit, first month's rent, or other resources required to remove barriers to housing stability" (p. 47) and the development of a rental assistance program for previous program participants. In NL as a renter or homeowner, you must have an account set up with either Newfoundland Power or Newfoundland & Labrador Hydro, depending on where you are located. This means that if an account is in arrears, you will not be able to rent/own a new property. For people experiencing homelessness, this presents yet another barrier to accessing new housing, which the EHSJ plan seeks to address. The HVGB plan also highlights how the availability of affordable housing is a major issue in the community, specifically a lack of short term and transitional housing for single men, single women, and women with children. Similar to the issues identified in the NLHC plan regarding the social housing stock, there is a lack of 1-2-bedroom apartments appropriate for single people. This plan also identified how there is a lack of housing regulations in the area, meaning that substandard housing is common. This includes mold and mildew, old buildings not up to code and tenants forced to do their own repairs in asbestos-filled buildings.

My interview with Griffin brought to light other factors regarding housing conditions, specifically in relation to the conditions of emergency shelters. They discussed how there is a push for province-wide shelter standards to be created as this would benefit both service users and providers to know what they can expect on either end. I worked in shelters operated by non-profit organizations, which, while not being held to an enforced provincial standard, still had standards maintained by staff and the organization. Cleaning occurred regularly, the cooking and preparation of meals was conducted throughout the day, and even if not completed at the pace staff would have wanted, maintenance work was done when necessary. As I learned from Griffin in our interview and in my own discussions with residents I worked with, the same cannot be said for privately run shelters. These shelters are unstaffed, with very little cooking and cleaning being done. They are notoriously dangerous, and it is largely unknown what happens in these shelters at night. I received many calls from ex-residents who stayed in these facilities who spoke about the deplorable conditions and the unsafe nature of the shelters. One client in particular, who at the time was under the age of 18, called me in distress stating how there were four other men staying in the shelter all of whom appeared to be in their 40s or older using drugs at the kitchen table while he was stuck in his room with a door that did not properly lock. These instances have stuck with me. Not only was it extremely difficult to hear about the substandard conditions that someone was being forced to live in, but there was nothing more I could do to further assist this person, as this was the only resource available at the time.

Next, my discourse analysis identified the ways in which advocacy and stakeholder engagement have been present in each policy. These concepts are relevant in taking a structural approach to addressing experiences of homelessness, as both advocacy and stakeholder engagement target systemic change, aiming to address the root causes of homelessness. The

NLHC plan focuses on strengthening partnerships to address homelessness. Notably, this is the only section that specifically addresses homelessness in the policy. It outlines how in 2018, NLHC took over responsibility for the oversight of emergency shelters and transition houses. Within this, a 24/7 toll-free emergency shelter line was created to manage and prioritize requests for shelter. This line is able to connect people experiencing homelessness with short-term accommodation, food, and transportation. Having a centralized referral source for people experiencing homelessness to be connected with resources is an essential component in providing accessible services. This line can easily be found if a person has access to the internet and searches for information about services for people experiencing homelessness. The EHSJ's final, fifth, priority area is stakeholder engagement. A focus is given to engaging with other community entities due to the complex nature of factors leading to homelessness. This plan identifies noteworthy areas of engagement such as engaging Indigenous experiences of homelessness through consultation with the Indigenous Community Entity for NL, the Labrador Friendship Centre in HVGB. Engaging the voice of lived and living experiences of homelessness is also identified as an essential point of engagement through a 'Lived Experience Council' to ensure that these perspectives are integrated into EHSJ approaches.

In my professional experience, I have found the NLHC emergency shelter line to be an essential referral source for shelter clients. The workers refer clients to shelters that they feel will be the best fit for them (given they fall within the age and gender parameters). This process has been fairly successful in the past, but within the last three years, the volume of calls and lack of turnover at shelters has caused a huge back-up in services. When I have called the line, I have waited for hours for a reply and have been told on numerous occasions that there is nowhere for an individual to sleep that night. I have been encouraged to tell the individual who is currently

experiencing homelessness that they should try to avail of personal resources, like sleeping on a friend's or family member's couch, or that this person will have no shelter to sleep in that night. While this service meets a vital need of connecting people experiencing homelessness with shelter services, it cannot make up for the structural issue of a glaring lack of resources available.

The EHSJ plan emphasizes the importance of engaging with the perspectives of those who have lived or who are living experiences of homelessness, which offers the opportunity to disrupt traditional power dynamics and allow for the contribution of people from outside of the policy making sphere. I believe that this engagement is an essential element that sets this plan apart from the rest. As I have previously outlined in my discussion of feminist objectivity, feminist political economy, and feminist policy analysis, (sections 2.3, 2.4, and 3.1 respectively) engaging with perspectives of people who have or are currently experiencing homelessness is essential in developing policies that move beyond individualized approaches to addressing homelessness and are responsive to the diverse challenges and needs of the community. This appears to be the entry point to understanding the specific needs of people experiencing homelessness in St. John's and I believe will aid EHSJ in creating responsive plans in the future. The HVGB plan focused on these factors to a lesser degree than the other two, but still identified the need for a housing coordinator who could aid in advocacy for people experiencing homelessness.

In my interview with Katie, they emphasized the autonomy of people experiencing homelessness in making decisions about where they stay, specifically, the autonomy of people choosing to stay on trails or in makeshift encampments. Policies and resources should be reflective of this and honour individuals' right to choose where they want to live. They gave the example of how in rural locations the increase of outreach workers was presented as one way

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that policies have reflected people's autonomy to live where they choose. These workers can provide support services to individuals choosing to not stay in forms of accommodation where staff may be present such as emergency shelters or hotels.

Overall, Katie indicates how most policies are prescriptive and solution focused, which may not give space for individual autonomy. Katie also discussed the disconnect between institutions, such as correctional facilities and housing resources. This is important because often people are discharged from institutions into homelessness. Finally, Katie acknowledged the significant lack of accounting of language barriers within service provision within the homelessness sector.

The interplay between individual and structural factors in experiences of homelessness are complex but having policies that are responsive to both is essential in ensuring that policies address root causes of homelessness not just Band-Aid solutions. In the next section, I will discuss the ways in which sexuality, gender identity, race, Indigeneity, and other compounding factors are addressed in the examined policies.

4.6 Gender, Sexuality, Race, Indigeneity, and other Compounding Factors

When examining the frame by which people experiencing homelessness are viewed, the consideration, or not, of race, gender, sexuality, Indigeneity, and other compounding factors have been recurring themes throughout my research. This has aided me in answering my second research question:

What are the potential consequences for the groups who have been 'framed out' of

homelessness policy?

I have previously identified in section 4.3 how racism was the only form of discrimination specifically listed in the examined policies. Racism as an underlying factor resulting in people

experiencing homelessness has been documented across Canada. For example, studies such as those by Schiff et al. (2015) and Belanger, Awosoga, & Weasel Head (2013) highlight the widespread racism faced by Indigenous people throughout Canada both on behalf of landlords and the greater community. This works to further subjugate Indigenous people experiencing homelessness as they may be discouraged from accessing support services. Other scholars, such as May (2015) and St. Arnault & Merali (2019), have explored the underlying racism in the experiences of both Black men experiencing homelessness in Toronto and refugees experiencing homelessness in Edmonton. These studies, while in different contexts, all emphasize the importance of recognizing the significant and widespread prevalence of racism underlying experiences of homelessness and therefore supports a distinction within homelessness policies between racism and other forms of discrimination. While these policies acknowledge that people experiencing homelessness face discrimination outside of racism, they fall short of distinguishing what these other forms of discrimination may be.

In this portion of this section, I will first present data from my frequency analyses conducted on the examined policies, next I will discuss results of my discourse analysis. The purpose of the frequency analysis is to show the degree to which policies do, or do not, acknowledge marginalized groups who can experience dimensions of homelessness differently. If a policy mentions a particular group to a higher frequency, this indicates a more significant policy focus is placed on said group. My discourse analysis aims to show the intended or unintended consequences for groups who are, or are not, a policy focus. For instance, while my frequency analysis can show that a particular group received no attention in a policy, my discourse analysis examines the potential impacts in conjunction with relevant literature justifying the need for said group to have specific policy consideration.

Throughout this portion of my analysis, I have drawn on the concepts of invisibility and epistemic injustice, discussed in Section 2.2 of my theoretical approach. Polzer and Hammond's (2008) conceptualization of invisibility is especially important here for people experiencing homelessness as invisibility can occur when their needs, experiences, and voices are overlooked or marginalized within policy making processes and decision-making structures. If policies overlook fundamental aspects of a person's identity, such as race, gender, sexuality, or Indigeneity, how can interventions be responsive to the needs of the person? Frickers' (2007) theorization of epistemic injustice is also useful here as failing to attribute policy outcomes to specific populations of people who may experience homelessness at disproportionate rates perpetuates epistemic injustice by overlooking the unique needs and challenges faced by marginalized communities.

Figures 1 and 2 aim to show what groups receive attention within the policies. The frequency at which groups do or do not appear within the policies shows what groups receive specific interest from government agencies and policy makers. If a group does not receive policy attention it is not to say that they are not experiencing homelessness, rather that they will not have specialized services to meet their respective needs. My methodology for conducting this frequency analysis is explained in section 3.4, in which I describe other synonyms which I searched for and how I expanded upon the methodology presented in the Pospěch (2020) study.
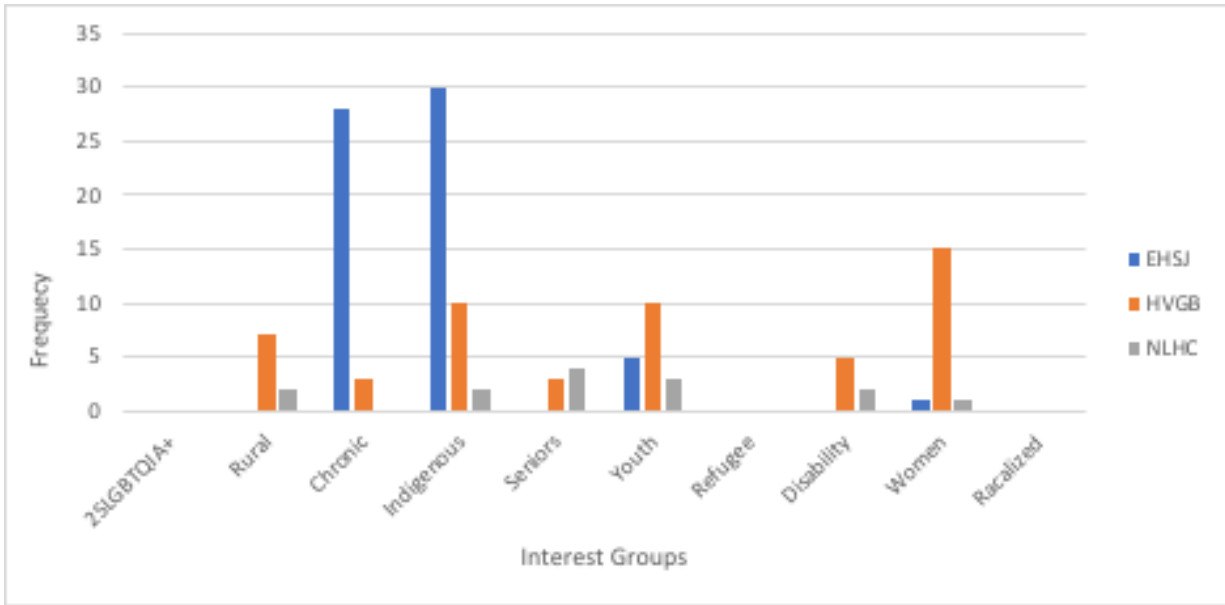
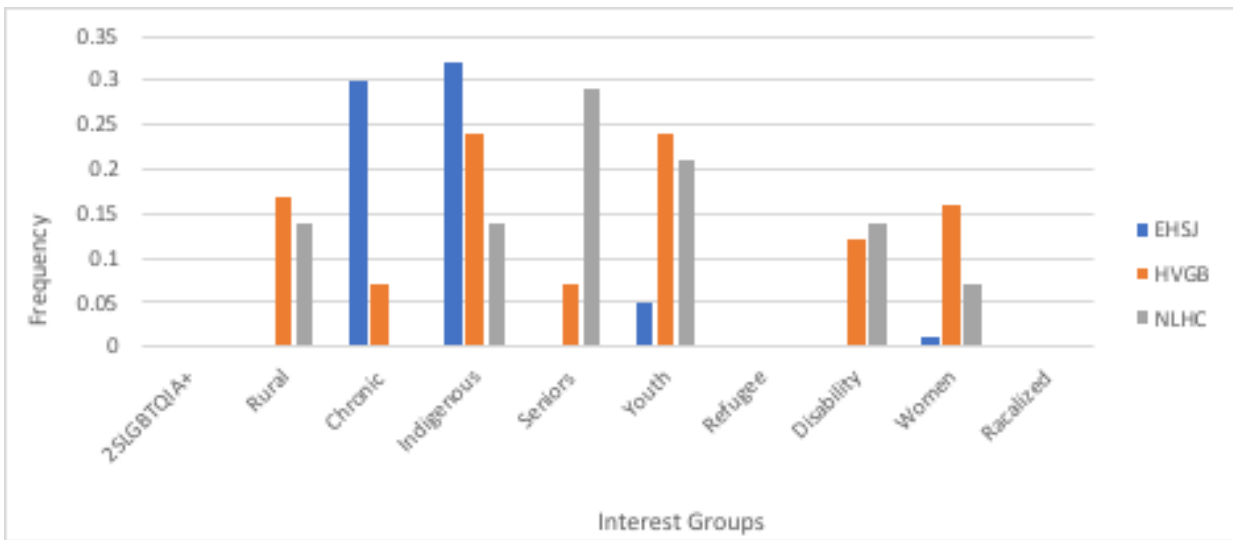*Figure 1: Frequency of interest groups per policy document*

Figure 2: Frequency of interest groups in policy document per page

Figure 1 presents the data regarding the frequency that interest groups were mentioned in the entirety of the examined policy documents. This graph does not take into account the differing lengths of each policy, but clearly demonstrates that the EHSJ policy discusses both Indigenous and chronic levels more frequently than the other two policies. It also shows how the

HVGB plan mentions women, youth, and rural homelessness more frequently than the other policies.

Figure 2 demonstrates the frequency that interest groups are mentioned in each policy when accounting for the differing lengths of each policy document. This graph demonstrates how the EHSJ plan discusses chronic homelessness significantly more than the HVGB plan and that seniors experiencing homelessness are discussed in the NLHC plan more frequently than the HVGB. Most notably, these graphs show that 2SLGBTQIA+, refugee, and racialized experiences of homelessness are not mentioned in any of the examined policy documents. Rural seniors, and people with disabilities experiencing homelessness are not discussed in the EHSJ plan. Finally, the NLHC plan did not discuss chronic homelessness at all.

This leads me back to my research questions, as 2SLGBTQIA+ experiences of homelessness are rendered invisible in each policy. The prevalence of homelessness within each of these groups is something I have seen in my own work, though to differing degrees. As I have previously discussed in my explanation of queer homelessness, researchers estimate that between 40-60% of people experiencing homelessness identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community (Fraser, et al., 2019, p. 1). Statistics about the prevalence of this issue in Canada are limited but the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation estimates that between 25-45% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community (cmhc-schl.gc.ca, n.d.). In NL, the only data regarding the existence of queer homelessness comes from a point-in-time count conducted in St. John's, which indicated that 13% of people counted as experiencing homelessness identified as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ (St. John's Point-in-time count, 2022, p. 16). There is no data available for the prevalence of queer homelessness in outside of the downtown St. John's core.

In my own experience working within the homelessness sector, I have seen the widespread prevalence of 2SLGBTQIA+ people experiencing homelessness. At points, the majority of clients I worked with identified as part of the queer community, with many being trans or nonbinary. This highlights the need for supportive services specifically designed for queer people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness. However, the scope of this issue in Newfoundland and Labrador is largely unknown as there are currently few agencies collecting data or reporting on this issue. As I have discussed in Section 3.1, policy makers often necessitate the presence of qualitative data in order to consider something an 'issue'. Yet, despite this, there is no data collected regarding the sexuality or gender identity, for example, of people experiencing homelessness.

During my interviews I posed the question "what do you feel are some potential consequences for groups who are not specifically considered in homelessness policies?" Griffin, my third interviewee, responded, "I don't see how anything gets better. And it's, you know bluntly. I guess it's that simple. Like if you don't consider it, then it's not going to get better." This response echoes my own sentiments as I believe without specific consideration of the ways in which different groups of people experience homelessness, there is little done to support differing needs. I will next examine the ways in which each of the policies allocate resources and policy outcomes to differing interest groups.
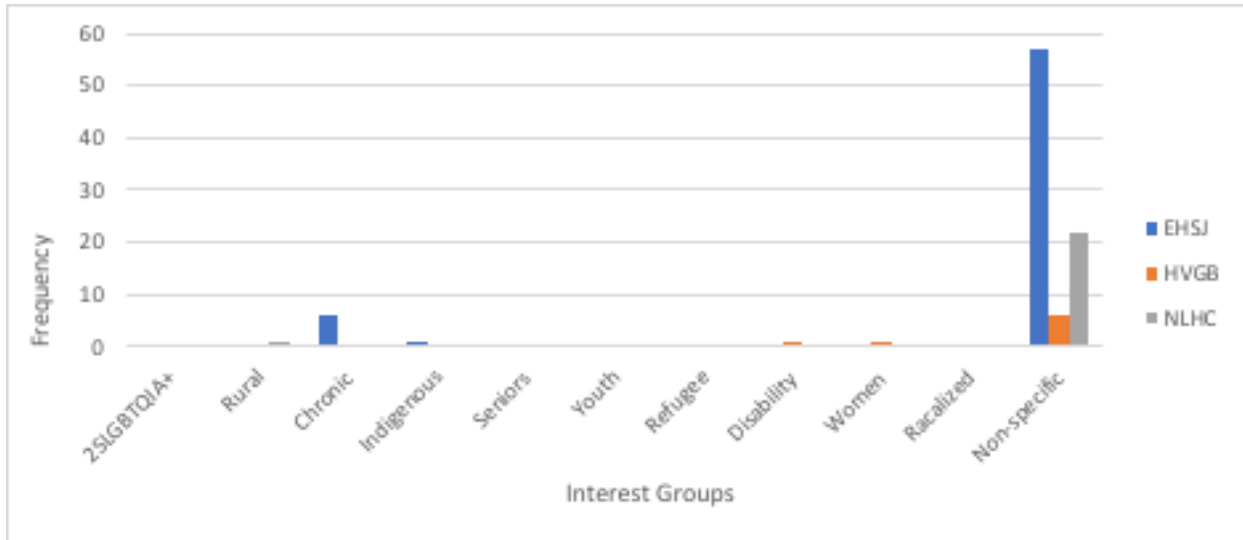
Figure 3: Frequency of policy outcomes associated with interest groups per document
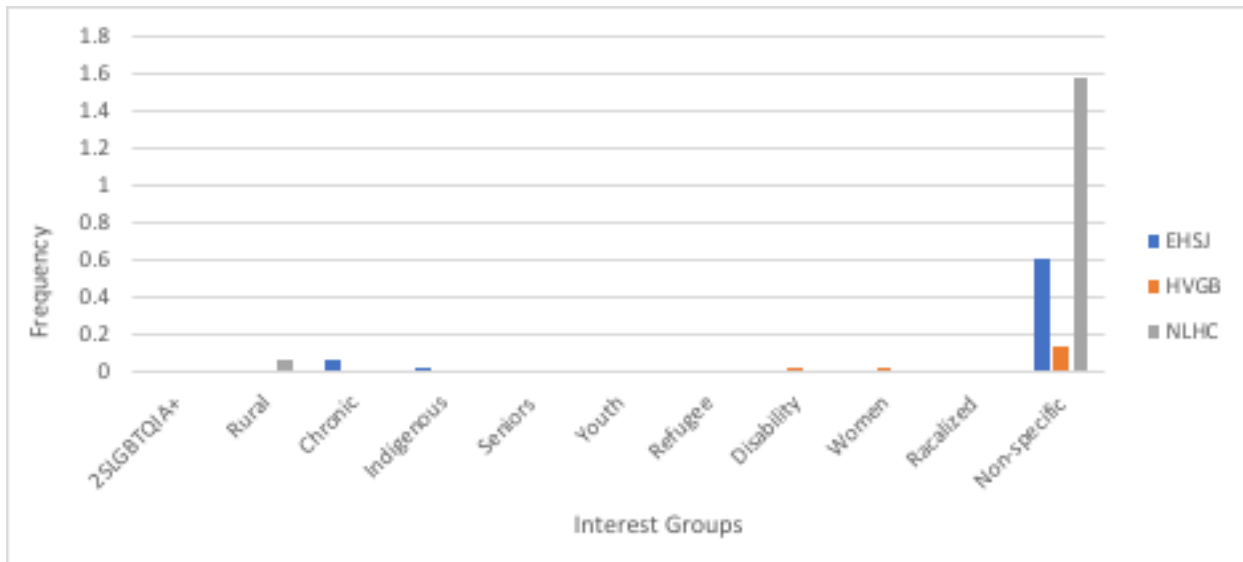

Figure 4: Frequency of policy outcomes associated with interest groups per page

Figure 3 and 4 demonstrate that the vast majority of policy outcomes are associated with a non-specific target group. To quantify the number of policy outcomes not associated with a target group, I enumerated the total number of outcomes that were not associated with any specific group, as these nonspecific outcomes are supposed to be ubiquitously applied across all populations. The NLHC plan is the only that has specific outcomes for people experiencing rural

homelessness, the EHSJ only for chronic homelessness, and the HVGB is the only plan with

outcomes for women and people with disabilities experiencing homelessness. In theory, having

the vast majority of all policy outcomes not associated with any specific group may seem like it

would allow for everyone experiencing homelessness to access supportive services. But, in

reality, this can create obstacles for people who fall outside of the traditional 'frame' of who

experiences homelessness. As I have shown throughout my theoretical explorations of women's,

2SLGBTQIA+, and Indigenous experiences of homelessness, there are a variety of ways that

people experience homelessness differently. Addressing the needs of specific populations within

homelessness policies is imperative as homelessness is not a monolithic experience; by tailoring

policies to cater to the unique challenges faced by distinct populations, policy makers can create

more effective interventions. A one-size-fits-all approach may inadvertently overlook or

exacerbate challenges faced by specific groups of people, while a targeted strategy can address

root causes and specific barriers, offering a more comprehensive solution.

  As I have stated above, my discourse analysis demonstrates many insights regarding the

consequences of specific populations being accounted for, or not, within the examined policies.

All three policies identify specific target populations, albeit to varying degrees. The NLHC

policy outlines their clientele as consisting of (1) individuals and families with low-to-moderate

incomes requiring assistance accessing or maintaining safe, adequate, affordable housing; and

(2) distinct populations, namely, persons with disabilities, complex needs, seniors, youth, victims

of intimate partner violence, and Indigenous peoples. The HVGB plan identifies the spectrum of

people experiencing housing issues as Indigenous people, people with disabilities or a mental

illness, youth, women, single men, seniors, low income, and people involved with the justice

system. The EHSJ plan does not reference as many specific target populations, but people

experiencing chronic homelessness and Indigenous peoples are specifically mentioned in their

definitions of homelessness. While these policies do not provide a rationale as to why certain

groups are given priority over others, their acknowledgment can help in reducing disparities in

access to housing and support services. It is important to once again note here that

2SLGBTQIA+, refugee, and racialized people experiencing homelessness are not specifically

mentioned within any of the policies. The EHSJ plan outlines Indigenous homelessness as:

> Indigenous Peoples who are in the state of having no home due to colonization, trauma
> and/or whose social, cultural, economic, and political conditions place them in poverty.
> Having no home includes those who alternate between shelter and unsheltered, living on
> the street, couch surfing, using emergency shelters, living in unaffordable, inadequate,
> substandard and unsafe accommodations or living without the security of tenure; anyone
> regardless of age, released from facilities (such as hospitals, mental health and addiction
> treatment centers, prisons, transition houses), fleeing unsafe homes as a result of abuse in
> all its definitions, and any youth transitioning from all forms of care. (p. 15).

This plan also outlines 'Twelve Dimensions of Indigenous homelessness' drawn from Thistle's

(2017) exploration of Indigenous homelessness and identified by Indigenous peoples across

Canada:

> Historic displacement homelessness, contemporary geographic separation homelessness,
> spiritual disconnection homelessness, mental disruption and imbalance homelessness,
> cultural disintegration and loss homelessness, overcrowding homelessness, relocation and
> mobility homelessness, going home homelessness, nowhere to go homelessness, escaping
> or evading harm homelessness, emergency crisis homelessness, climatic refugee
> homelessness (p. 17).

Despite listing Thistle's (2017) dimensions, the EHSJ's definition of Indigenous homelessness

does not account for the differing relationship with the concept of 'home' that Indigenous

peoples may have, such as valuing relations with kin, animals, land, spirit, ancestors, and

teachings, as I discussed in section 1.4 of my introduction. That said, it does acknowledge the

correlation between Indigenous experiences of homelessness and connections with public

institutions such as prisons, hospitals, and the youth care system, all stemming from colonial

methods such as residential schools or the sixties scoop. Although this policy is the only one to specifically define Indigenous homelessness, it still falls short of encompassing the breadth of impact that colonization, both historically and in modern times, has had on Indigenous experiences of 'home' and in turn, homelessness. Notably, both the NLHC and HVGB plan fail to account for these differences in experiences.

Another key idea yielded from my discourse analysis is the presence in all of the policies of systems coordination. As I discussed in section 4.2 systems coordination, or coordinated access systems, involves the integration of various relevant sectors such as those responsible for social services, housing agencies, mental health providers, healthcare institutions, justice systems, child welfare, and other relevant stakeholders. Systems coordination is specifically addressed in both the EHSJ and HVGB plan, I coded each policy for the presence of this concept or related concepts in completing my discourse analysis. The EHSJ plan lists this as their first priority area, outlining actions to prevent system discharge into homelessness, namely from justice, healthcare, and child welfare systems. The HVGB plan also designated systems coordination as one of their top priorities, to be achieved through the development of a specific job whose role would be to assist in the coordination of services and housing for people who potentially could experience homelessness after discharging from systems. This plan identified that people often travel from other regions of Labrador to HVGB for health or justice services and often do not have resources to return to home communities. An example given is people travelling to HVGB for court dates or exiting from the Labrador Correctional Center being released with no housing plan and no way back to their home community.

My interview with Katie highlighted this issue in rural regions stating how "mostly when males get released from the . . . correctional center, they come out homeless and there's nothing

available to them." When individuals are released from correctional facilities, they often face immediate challenges related to housing. Without a robust support network or post-release programs tailored to assist with reintegration into society, many find themselves without a place to go. A lack of employment opportunities due to criminal records, combined with potential stigmatization, can further exacerbate the difficulty of securing stable housing. As a result, many individuals discharged from the justice system find themselves in a precarious position, leading directly to homelessness or housing insecurity (Cesaroni, et al., 2019, p. 112; Gaetz & O'Grady, 2009, p. 1; Hughes, 2013, p. 15). The healthcare system is another significant player in this narrative. Patients, especially those dealing with mental health issues or chronic illnesses, are sometimes discharged from hospitals and healthcare facilities without proper aftercare plans (Hughes, 2013, p. 15).

Lastly, the child welfare system can inadvertently become a pathway to homelessness. Griffin, in interview three, discussed this further, "Of the youth experiencing homelessness that we could identify very high rates of like 80 percent. 75 to 80% were chronically homeless. . . . And you know that's a symptom of many things, but typically a broken child welfare system". These statistics that Griffin references are not publicly available at this time, but in my own experience working at youth shelters I can confirm that an extremely large portion of the clients serviced continually experience homelessness. I knew of many people who had anywhere from five to 20+ stays in emergency shelters, with many of these stays being months long. There were multiple clients who entered the shelter system at 16, when they could legally leave the child welfare system, and remained staying on and off in emergency shelters until they aged out of youth shelters at 30. When youth age out of foster care or group homes, they often do so without the necessary life skills, resources, or support networks to navigate adulthood independently. In

NL, once these individuals reach a certain age, they no longer qualify for the support provided by the child welfare system. Without adequate transition plans or supports for housing, education, or employment, many of these young adults find themselves without stable housing, pushing them into the cycle of experiencing homelessness (Anderson & Collins, 2014; Gaetz, 2014; Hughes, 2013).

In my own experience, I have noted the extraordinarily high rates of people discharging from these various systems into homelessness. I have seen people come straight from prison to an emergency shelter with no belongings, still wearing their prison-provided clothing. In these instances, I have had to rummage through donation bins to find clothing so that this person could have other options to wear instead of recognizable prison clothing. As I have previously discussed, in Canada 43% of youth who have experienced homelessness grew up involved in the child welfare system (Gaetz, 2014, p. 14). In my own work, I cannot begin to estimate the number of people I knew who had been involved with the child welfare system who then experienced homelessness. It seemed as though the majority of the people I worked with had in some way been involved in the child welfare system. In NL, there are no available statistics regarding the prevalence of people exiting these systems into homelessness. Without this data it is difficult to understand the scope and vastness of this issue, but in my anecdotal experience there is an overwhelming number of people who exit these systems directly into homelessness or experience homelessness in the future after exiting these systems.

It is also noteworthy that while policies give some description of the housing and economic state of NL, none touched on historical and political factors (aside from colonization, which is briefly discussed in the EHSJ policy) that may contribute to this. There are no

discussions of how structural inequities such as patriarchy, heteronormativity, transphobia, and ableism influence and underline experiences of homelessness.

In this section I began by presenting data from my frequency analysis which uncovered the frequency that each interest group was mentioned in each policy document. Figure 2 demonstrated that the EHSJ plan discussed chronic homelessness significantly more than the HVGB plan. The NLHC plan did not mention chronic homelessness at all. The NLHC plan discussed seniors' experiences of homelessness significantly more than the HVGB plan, the EHSJ plan did not discuss seniors' experiences of homelessness at all. The HVGB plan also discussed women's, youth, and rural homelessness more frequently than other plans. Notably, no policies discussed 2SLGBTQIA+, refugee, or racialized experiences of homelessness. Figure 4 showed that the vast majority of policy outcomes were not associated with a specific group. A one-size-fits-all approach can overlook distinct challenges faced by different populations. I have explored the ways that homelessness can be experienced differently in section 2.1, highlighting the importance of targeted outcomes to create effective policy solutions. Next, I discussed the presence of systems coordination in both the EHSJ and HVGB policies. This concept was highlighted in my interviews conducted with both Katie and Griffin, as both interviewees noted the prevalence of people exiting correctional institutions and the child welfare system into homelessness. The NLHC plan, despite addressing the entire province, does not address the issue of systems coordination or systems discharge into homelessness.

4.7 Objectivity in Homelessness Policies

A fundamental aspect of my analysis is in examining the role of affect and objectivity in each of the examined policies. This portion of my examination includes a twofold analysis to

show both the presence of emotionally charged language and what groups are of particular focus within the examined policies through the use of frequency and discourse analyses. Within this analysis, I draw heavily on concepts I explored in Section 2.3 namely that of affect theory, which seeks to explore the valuation of emotional knowledge. In Ahmed's (2004) conceptualization of an affective economy, affective language has the capacity to 'stick' to groups of people. This, in turn, forms an economy which determines how people are valued in society. In beginning this analysis, I first coded policies for the words 'risk', 'at-risk', and 'vulnerable'[10]. These are terms that are prevalent throughout literature and policies regarding people experiencing homelessness, yet despite their prevalence these words lack a concrete definition. This can leave significant room for subjective judgement and often can be associated with negative assumptions.

Social work scholar Sarah MacDonald (2016) and sociologist Frank Furedi explore assumptions surrounding the term 'risk' and 'vulnerability' within homelessness and popular discourse. Macdonald (2016) specifically explores the ways in which homelessness policies focus on the identification of risky behaviours and risk factors. In her examination, people experiencing homelessness are constructed as 'at-risk' due to their marginal status, often with underlying connotations of danger and fear: "To be at risk is no longer only about what you do, or the probability of some hazard impacting on your life—it is also about who you are. It becomes a fixed attribute of the individual" (Furedi, 2006, p. 5). This notion of risk becoming fixed to an individual echoes Ahmed's (2004) concept of sticky affective language, highlighting the importance of evaluating the prevalence of these terms.

At the same time, vulnerability is seen as something that is a threat to society and as something to which policy must respond (Furedi, 2008, p. 649). Furthermore, when a person is

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[10] I also searched for related terms such as 'susceptible' and 'threat' but these terms were only found once each in the EHSJ plan and were insignificant to my overall analysis.

constructed as vulnerable it works to generate a duty or responsibility of society to prevent harm from falling on the person (Wrigley & Dawson, 2016, p. 204). In homelessness discourse there is no singular definition of who is considered to be a vulnerable person. As previously discussed, the lack of clear definitions within homelessness policies allows for inaction of governments and service providers.
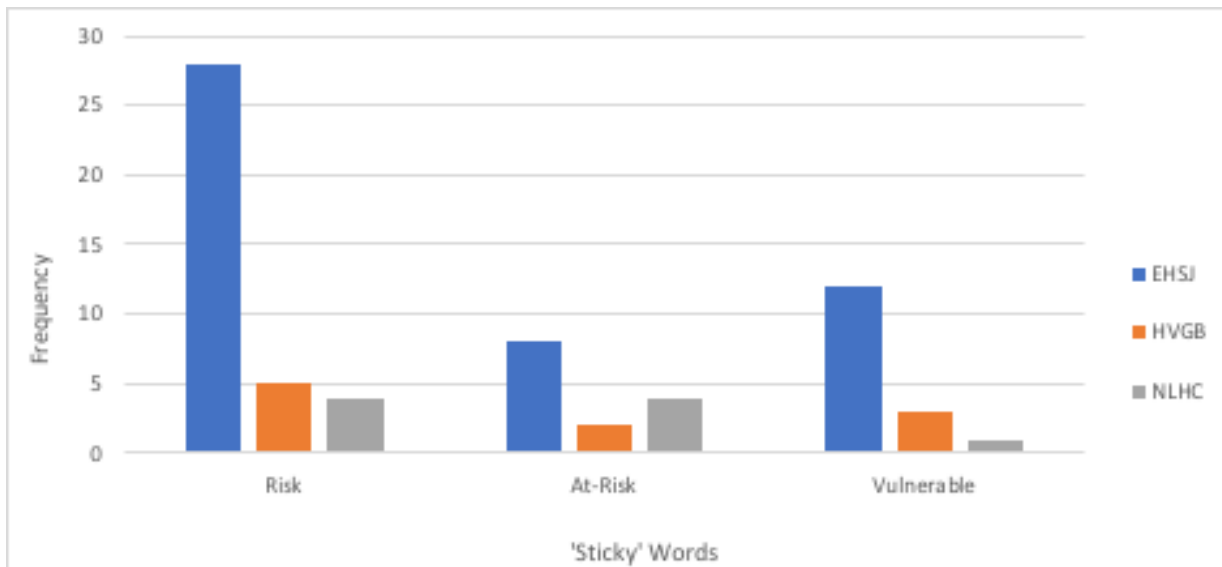

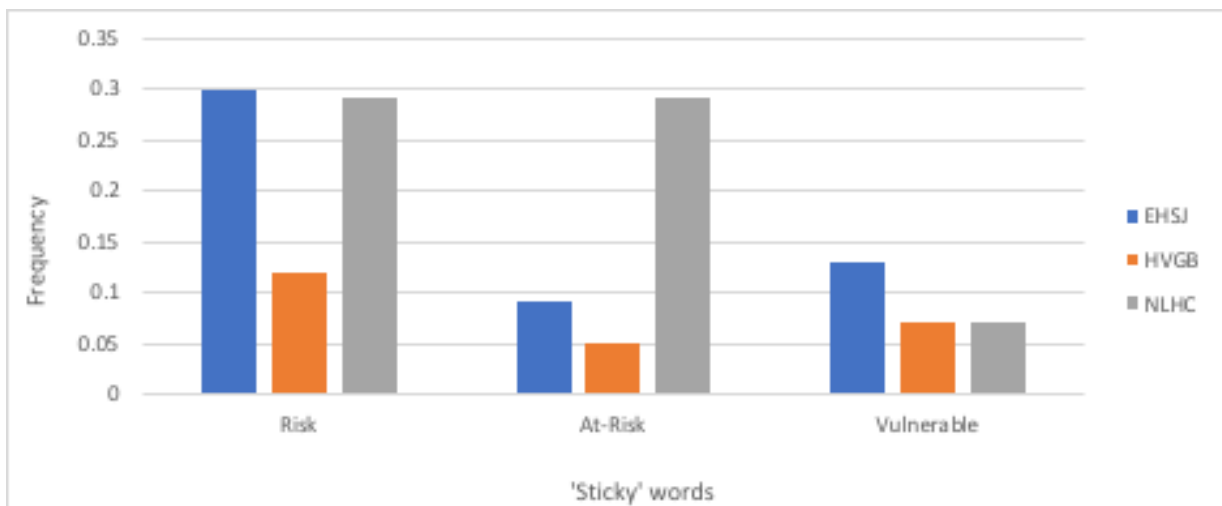*Figure 5: Frequency of key 'sticky' words per policy document*

Figure 6: Frequency of key 'sticky' words per page in policy document

Figure 5 displays the frequency of each affective term within the entirety of each of the examined policies. It demonstrates the presence of each term in all examined policies, to varying degrees. Due to the vast difference in length of each of the policies, Figure 6 accounts for the frequency of 'sticky' words per page. While in Figure 5 it may appear as though the EHSJ plan has a significantly higher frequency of these 'sticky' words, in Figure 6, when length of policy is considered, this is less clear. For two of the three examined terms, 'risk' and 'vulnerable', the EHSJ plan has a higher frequency of each term, though marginally more for 'risk'. The NLHC policy has a comparable frequency with EHSJ for the term 'risk' and the same frequency as the HVGB plan for the term 'vulnerable'. Interestingly, the NLHC plan has a significantly higher frequency of the term 'at-risk'. As I have discussed previously, terminology such as 'at-risk' can reinforce stereotypes and stigmatize people experiencing homelessness based on their housing status. When individuals are consistently labeled as 'at-risk', it can perpetuate harmful narratives that portray experiencing homelessness as a personal failing or character flaw rather than a result of systemic issues such as housing unaffordability, economic inequality, or lack of social support systems. Finally, the HVGB plan had the lowest frequency of the term's 'risk', 'at-risk', and while still being the lowest frequency, the same as the NLHC plan for 'vulnerable'.

The presence of these terms calls into question the assumed objectivity within policies and the ways in which hegemonic stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness are perpetuated in policy. Further, understanding the capacity of these emotive terms to stick to people experiencing homelessness is essential in evaluating the impact of the prevalence of these terms within policies. The use of terms such as 'risk' and 'at-risk' can perpetuate perceptions of fear or danger surrounding people experiencing homelessness. An example of this is found in the HVGB plan: "Participants in this project were concerned about the housing needs of those

individuals at highest risk" (p. 23). The risks identified after this quote are complex needs such

as addiction and mental health issues. I do not intend to negate the importance of understanding

and acknowledging the way in which these factors can impact experiences of homelessness. But,

as I have discussed above, presenting these factors as 'risks' can perpetuate notions of fear or

danger regarding experiences of homelessness, instead of implicating larger societal factors such

as the ways in which income inequality and housing insecurity affects people with complex

mental health and addiction issues at disproportionate rates.

 As I have stated above, MacDonald (2016) has expanded on the notions of 'risk' and 'at-

risk' in her research on youth homelessness in Canada. She has acknowledged the prevalence of

these terms within homelessness policies in other areas of Canada and problematizes the use of

the term as it carries the potential to stigmatize and marginalize populations. MacDonald argues

that labeling individuals as 'at-risk' can oversimplify complex social issues and perpetuate

negative stereotypes about homelessness, ultimately shaping policy responses that prioritize risk

mitigation over addressing the underlying structural factors that contribute to experiences of

homelessness. By focusing solely on individual behaviors or characteristics, policies may

overlook the systemic inequalities and structural barriers that drive experiences of homelessness,

such as poverty, lack of affordable housing, and systemic discrimination. This narrow framing of

homelessness as a 'risk' to be managed can lead to ineffective and inadequate policy responses

that fail to address the root causes of homelessness and perpetuate cycles of poverty and

marginalization.

 The above results emphasize the importance of exploring these concepts as these terms

are prevalent within homelessness policy in Newfoundland and Labrador. As I have discussed in

Section 3.1.1, Hankivsky et al. (2014) emphasize how the creation of 'risk' groups works to

individualize social problems. The authors argue that traditional approaches to policy making often categorize individuals into homogeneous risk groups based on single dimensions such as age, gender, or socioeconomic status, overlooking the intersecting factors that shape individuals' experiences. This individualized framing of social problems, including experiences of homelessness, can perpetuate stereotypes and stigmatization, as well as obscure the broader structural factors that contribute to inequality and marginalization. Furthermore, as Furedi (2006) discusses, being 'at-risk' becomes a fixed trait of an individual only to be mediated by expert intervention. His arguments can be applied to the portrayal of homelessness as a 'risk' which contributes to a culture of fear, where individuals and policy makers perceive homelessness as a threat to social order and stability.

The next term examined is vulnerable. Some authors, such as geographers Susan Cutter and Christopher Emrich (2006), ascertain that social vulnerability is a complex and dynamic concept influenced by a multitude of factors, including social and economic conditions (p. 104). The authors emphasize that vulnerability is not inherent to individuals or groups but is instead shaped by structural inequalities and systemic factors. Applying this perspective to my analysis of the examined policies, the persistent use of the term 'vulnerable' or 'vulnerability' can disenfranchise people experiencing homelessness by oversimplifying their experiences and attributing their housing instability solely to individual characteristics or behaviors. Similarly to the arguments presented above, this narrow framing of vulnerability overlooks the structural inequalities and systemic barriers that contribute to homelessness, such as lack of affordable housing, income inequality, and systemic discrimination. Furthermore, by labeling people experiencing homelessness as 'vulnerable', policy makers may inadvertently reinforce negative

stereotypes and stigmatization, further marginalizing and disempowering people experiencing homelessness.

In short, these terms help to create the 'frame' by which people experiencing homelessness are viewed through within these policies. The construction of a person experiencing homelessness as vulnerable, engaged in risky behaviours, or at-risk can imply that a person lacks agency to make decisions over their own housing situation. It can result in paternalistic policy structures which can remove the autonomy of a person experiencing homelessness. This framing of risk can also emphasize what individuals lack or focus on their potential to fall into negative patterns. For example, the EHSJ plan states, "Collecting data about the most vulnerable people in our population is a privilege that comes with immense responsibility" and "we can invest in programming and resources that support housing stability for our vulnerable neighbours" (p. 40; p. 45). Statements such as this suggest that people experiencing homelessness are passive recipients of aid rather than active agents capable of making decisions about their own housing situations. They also imply that people experiencing homelessness are inherently vulnerable and in need of external intervention. This works to reinforce the notion that people experiencing homelessness lack agency and autonomy in determining their own housing needs.

I believe that while the use of these terms is often not with ill intent, understanding the nuanced ways in which language affects the frame by which people experiencing homelessness are seen is an essential component of my analysis. People experiencing homelessness are often found within various dimensions and intersections of structural inequalities. While all of the examined policies to various degrees acknowledge underlying factors such as a lack of affordable housing or income inequality, all fail to adequately address the underlying causes of

these issues. My goal in analyzing the terms such as 'risk', 'at-risk', and 'vulnerable' is not to deny that groups such as the 2SLGBTQIA+, women, and Indigenous people are at increased 'risk' of experiencing homelessness. Instead, I am to portray that these groups **are** experiencing homelessness at increased rates due to larger societal structures such as colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, or patriarchal forces. I think that reframing experiences of homelessness as something that can happen to anyone but happens to people with multiple intersecting identities at increased rates, is essential to creating effective policies.

4.9 Conclusion

In the first section of this chapter, I outlined summaries of each of the examined policies, highlighting the main priority areas of each. I then discussed the types of materials and data used within the creation of policies, specifically acknowledging the ways policies do, or do not, allow the participation of people with lived or living experiences of homelessness. Next, I presented the definitions of homelessness used within each policy. This begins to show the 'frame' created by each policy to view people experiencing homelessness through.

I then moved into the main themes uncovered by my discourse analysis, interviews, and frequency analyses. Beginning with urban-rural divides in the examined policies, this portion of my analysis examined the ways in which resources and policy focus were distributed between locations and the ways that rural homelessness is experienced differently than urban. Next, I explored the ways in which policies address individual vs. structural factors contributing to experiences of homelessness. This section analyzed the interplay between these two approaches and how neoliberal policy making structures can work to individualize social issues, in this case individualizing the issue of people experiencing homelessness. The subsequent section examined the ways that gender, sexuality, race, Indigeneity, and other compounding factors are considered

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in the examined policies. This section showcased the extent to which examined groups, 2SLGBTQIA+, rural, chronic, Indigenous, and women are considered, or not, in each policy. Overall, this portion of my analysis determined that 2SLGBTQIA+, refugee, and racialized people experiencing homelessness are not given any consideration in any of the examined policies. The other examined groups are given a varying degree of consideration in each policy. Finally, I discussed objectivity in homelessness policies, specifically, the ways in which policies use emotionally laden terms such as 'risk', 'at-risk', and 'vulnerable' in relation to people experiencing homelessness. The use of these terms can 'stick' to certain groups of people which can oversimplify their experience of homelessness, potentially attributing their housing instability to individual characteristics or behaviors. In my final conclusion, I present the overall scope of my research, my final thoughts, and lingering questions that remain unanswered.

5.0 Conclusion

This research began by demonstrating how, despite its growing presence, the vast majority of people experiencing homelessness are largely invisible to the greater public in Newfoundland and Labrador. Through the investigation of my research questions, I aimed to uncover attitudes and assumptions regarding people experiencing homelessness in each of the examined policies. Specifically, I aimed to highlight the potential consequences of these attitudes and assumptions, especially for marginalized groups including but not limited to Indigenous people, women, and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

In completing this research, I have uncovered the overall lack of policy consideration for marginalized groups such as the 2SLGBTQIA+ refugee, and racialized peoples. These groups were not considered at all in any of the examined policies. This research also demonstrated how the vast majority of all policy outcomes in the examined policies were not directed at a specific target group. This means that these outcomes are supposed to be ubiquitously applied across all people experiencing homelessness. As I have exhibited throughout this study, without adequately accounting for the specific needs of marginalized people, those belonging to these groups who are experiencing homelessness often are left without adequate services. This study has also shown the presence of 'sticky', emotional language regarding people experiencing homelessness throughout all of the examined policies. The presence of language such as 'risk', 'at-risk', and 'vulnerable' can disenfranchise people experiencing homelessness. This framing can elicit notions of danger, fear, or that people experiencing homelessness are just passive recipients who lack agency to make decisions about their own housing situations. Throughout this research, I have demonstrated the importance of challenging these notions and assumptions by implicating larger societal structures like patriarchy, racism, homophobia, transphobia and colonialism, and

economic inequalities, such as housing affordability and inadequate income, rather than individualizing experiences of homelessness. To conclude, I present my overall findings in the form of a report card to compare the ways each of the examined policies addressed, or not, the fundamental questions of my study. I then will present key findings from my research and lingering questions that remain.

Examined Policies	Overall Grade	Inclusion of Marginalized Groups	Inclusion of Rural Homelessness	Individualization of Homelessness	Presence of 'Sticky' Language
NLHC	C-	B-	D+	C	D+
EHSJ	C-	B-	F	B	C
HVGB	B	B	B-	B-	B+

Table 1: Report card for examined policies

Grading Scheme				
A+ 94-100%	B+ 74-79%	C+ 54-59%	D+ 34-39%	F 0-19%
A 87-93%	B 67-73%	C 47-53%	D 27-33%	
A- 80-86%	B- 60-66%	C- 40-46%	D- 20-26%	

Table 2: Grading Scheme

To calculate these grades, I used data from my frequency analysis plus additional data from my discourse analysis. For example, to calculate the grade for the inclusion of marginalized groups for the EHSJ policy I took the results of my frequency analysis which identified that this plan acknowledged 4/10 groups. I then drew on my discourse analysis which highlighted that this policy gave significantly more consideration to Indigenous experiences of homelessness than

all other examined policies. For this reason, I gave the overall grade of 60%, equating to a B-. I continued this process for all of the designated criteria and policies.

Key findings of my research:

⌂ Inclusion of marginalized groups and rural homelessness

- All policies specifically mention, though to varying degrees, Indigenous, youth, and women as populations experiencing homelessness.

- The EHSJ plan discusses both Indigenous and chronic homelessness more frequently than the other two policies. The NLHC plan did not discuss chronic homelessness.

- The HVGB plan mentions women, youth, and rural homelessness more frequently than the other policies. Rural homelessness is not discussed in the EHSJ policy.

- Seniors experiencing homelessness are discussed in the NLHC plan more frequently than the HVGB. Seniors experiencing homelessness are not mentioned at all in the EHSJ plan.

- 2SLGBTQIA+, refugee, and racialized experiences of homelessness are not mentioned in any of the examined policy documents.

- People with disabilities experiencing homelessness are not discussed in the EHSJ plan.

⌂ Individualization of homelessness

- Both the EHSJ and NLHC definitions of homelessness state that people may experience homelessness due to their own physical, mental, cognitive, behavioral, or financial challenges

- All policies acknowledge the impact of systemic barriers on experiences of homelessness but fall short of incorporating how barriers beyond that of racism, or in the case of the

EHSJ plan colonialism, continue to contribute to certain groups of people experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates.

- No policies acknowledge the impacts of patriarchy, homophobia, or transphobia as a systemic barrier.
- All 3 policies acknowledge the impact of housing affordability, availability, and suitability on experiences of homelessness.

Presence of 'Sticky' Language

- All policies contained 'sticky' language.
- All three terms ('risk', 'at-risk', and 'vulnerable') were used significantly more in the EHSJ and NLHC policies.
- The HVGB policy used the least amount of 'sticky' language.
- The presence of these terms is important to question as they carry the potential to stigmatize and marginalize populations.

In completing this research, I have struggled with the tension of both requiring empirical data in order to quantify the issue of people experiencing homelessness and challenging the emphasis of policy makers on this form of data. I have both called for more data to be collected regarding the prevalence of people experiencing homelessness within marginalized groups, such as the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and criticized policy structures overemphasizing empirical data in order to 'frame' a policy issue. Empirical forms of data are useful in validating the existence and severity of a policy problem but can be insufficient in fully articulating the scope of an issue. Quantitative data can overlook intersecting factors such as discrimination and systemic barriers that marginalized peoples face if not paired with qualitative data about the lived experiences of those affected by homelessness. I believe that empirical data has an important role

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in the creation of homelessness policies but that its use must be questioned to ensure that this

data does not overlook, or invisibilize, groups of people experiencing homelessness just because

data regarding the prevalence of an issue does not exist.

Overall, I believe that the lack of a provincial-wide policy to address the varying needs of

people experiencing homelessness throughout the province is a major issue. The NLHC plan

stated that within the timeframe of this plan, 2020-2023, a provincial policy addressing

homelessness would be released. This did not happen. The reliance on municipalities who,

outside of St. John's, lack the capacity to engage in substantive efforts to effectively address root

causes of homelessness creates an environment where experiences of homelessness in these

communities are rendered invisible and overlooked. The province's response of transporting

people experiencing homelessness from rural communities to St. John's to receive services is

also a problematic solution to the lack of community resources. As I have previously discussed,

removing people from their home communities and transporting them to a city where they often

lack personal resources is not an effective way of addressing housing insecurity and

homelessness. Communities, even rural ones, require some degree of local resources so that even

if people have to travel to a larger centre, they can still remain in the same vicinity of their home

community.

Another issue that I feel is largely unaddressed is the lack of oversight and the deplorable

conditions in private shelters. I believe that all shelters require improved standards of staffing

and regulation to ensure safe living conditions for the residents. I also think that the presence of

for-profit shelters for people experiencing homelessness creates an incentive for landlords to cut

costs, often jeopardizing the living conditions for the clients accessing those services. Without

policies that actively demand that these facilities raise living conditions, monitor safety, and not

incentivise landlord profit it is very difficult for people experiencing homelessness to access adequate services to change their living conditions.

I also continue to question the lack of consideration of 2SLGBTQIA+ people experiencing homelessness in all of the examined policies and the failure to address the ongoing effects of settler colonialism impacting experiences of Indigenous homelessness. As I have previously discussed, at points in time working in shelters and transitional living facilities, I observed that the majority of clients have been members of the queer community. I cannot overstate the need for specific resources that acknowledge the impact of homophobia and transphobia on the lives of queer people experiencing homelessness. Many shelters in St. John's are segregated by sex and while they may try to be inclusive to those with diverse gender orientations, there are still cisgendered norms and expectations present. Even shelters or transitional housing options that are not sex segregated are not always inclusive options for queer people if staff are not educated on queer issues and experiences. The examined policies all, outside of the EHSJ plan, fail to define Indigenous homelessness. They also fail to address the breadth of experiences of homelessness outside of just a lack of physical shelter which impact Indigenous people and communities differently. Without addressing the impacts of homophobia, transphobia, and colonialism which often underlie queer and Indigenous experiences of homelessness, resources are not tackling root causes of this issue.

This leads me to my next point of consideration, as all of the policies examined focus, to some degree, on managing the current population of people experiencing homelessness instead of addressing prevention and root causes. The cyclical nature of experiencing homelessness is something I have discussed throughout my research, specifically regarding chronic experiences of homelessness. Both the HVGB and EHSJ policy calls for a 'Housing First' approach to begin

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to tackle issues of housing instability but the NLHC plan makes no mention of this. This plan instead calls for more low-barrier shelter options to be created. While this is important, it does not address underlying root causes of homelessness and instead continues to manage the current issue. Without addressing the underlying factors, such as colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, and patriarchal forces, that cause some people to experience homelessness at increased rates, policies will never be preventative of this issue, instead just continually managing the current population.

The rapidly increasing cost of living throughout the province combined with the current rental housing shortage has left me wondering how the provincial government will respond to this issue. If they have been unable to adequately address this issue in previous years, how will they respond to a growing crisis that remains largely invisible to the policy eye? It feels as though this is a compounding issue, which the government has largely left non-profit organizations and private landlords to deal with. The lack of tangible solutions to protests such as the tent encampment I described in my introduction leads me to wonder what it will take for substantial action to address root causes of people experiencing homelessness, not just merely managing the issue through the creation of more shelter beds.

As I have discussed in my methodology section, I initially aimed to also explore the impacts of homelessness policies on disabled, refugee, senior, youth, and racialized populations. However, I determined that this broader scope exceeded the limitations of my research methodology and master's thesis constraints. Nonetheless, I included these groups in my frequency analysis to highlight the need for further research. My analysis revealed that the EHSJ plan did not address seniors or individuals with disabilities experiencing homelessness, while the HVGB plan was the only one with specific outcomes for people with disabilities. Additionally,

none of the examined policies addressed the homelessness experiences of refugees or racialized individuals. These gaps underscore the importance of future research, as existing studies indicate a growing presence of homelessness among these populations, yet they remain largely unaddressed in current policies. In completing this research, I have been left with many unanswered questions regarding the future of homelessness policy throughout the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. But this research has aimed to be an entry point to discussing the ways in which homelessness can be experienced differently and acknowledging the necessity of tailored resources in accounting for the differing needs of diverse populations.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Recruitment Script

My name is Laura Cadigan, and I am a student in the Department of Gender Studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting a research project called *A Feminist Policy Analysis of Newfoundland and Labrador's Provincial and Municipal Homelessness Policies* for my master's degree under the supervision of Dr. Carol Lynne D'Arcangelis and Dr. Christina Doonan. The purpose of the study is to examine current provincial and municipal homelessness policies to determine what attitudes and assumptions about people experiencing homelessness can be gathered from policy documents, what experiences of homelessness fall outside of these attitudes and assumptions, and the potential consequences for groups not included in homelessness policies.

I am contacting you to invite you to participate in an interview in which you will be asked to answer questions regarding the role of policy makers in the creation of policy, such as in the selection and interpretation of data and research, and how particular groups are considered for specialized focus within homelessness policies. I estimate that the interview will require 30-45 minutes of your time and will be held over telephone or via video call at your discretion and at a time of your choosing.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me via email to arrange an interview time.

If you have any questions about me or my project, please contact me by email at ljcadigan@mun.ca or by phone at (709) 685-9316.

Thank-you in advance for considering my request,

Laura Cadigan

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Appendix B: Semi-structured Interview Questions

Policies being examined:
- *Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporations Strategic Plan (2020-2023)*

- *St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness 2019-2024*

- *Happy Valley-Goose Bay Community Plan for Addressing Homelessness and Transitional Housing* (2007)

Interview Questions for Policymakers:
1. How did you become involved in the creation of homelessness policies?

2. Can you tell me about what goes into the process of developing a policy—in this case, homelessness policy?

3. What kind of documents, data, or literature are used in the creation of homelessness policies? What role do policy makers play in interpreting these documents?

4. In addition to the interpretation of these documents, what other roles do policy makers play in shaping homelessness policies?

5. How are specific groups considered (or not) to be of specialized focus in homelessness policies?

6. In your opinion, what groups do homelessness policy serve or impact?

7. Are there any groups that you feel have not been adequately accounted for in current homelessness policies? Please explain.

8. What do you feel are some potential consequences for groups who are not specifically considered in homelessness policies?

9. Are there any new policies being developed related to homelessness, and/ or is the existing policy under review? If not, are there any plans to address homelessness policy in the near future? If so, can you tell me more about that?