



Landscape Analysis: Anti-Gender DEI Messaging

April 17, 2025

Prepared by:
Britt Bischoff Strategies & UltraViolet

NARRATIVE LANDSCAPE

Primary Thematic Frameworks

The last several weeks have been marked with a dramatic escalation in anti-DEI rhetoric and policy moves from the Trump administration and affiliated actors. However, a countermovement of legal action, civil rights defense, and coordinated public pushback is beginning to take shape. From federal court rulings to state attorney general lawsuits and cultural flashpoints surrounding corporate mergers, the discourse around DEI—especially concerning gender and women—remains highly polarized and increasingly weaponized.

The anti-DEI landscape has shifted from rhetorical attacks to full-scale governance strategy, punctuated by a sharp rise in the use of coded language such as "merit-based," "woke strangulation," and "discrimination against Americans." Legal setbacks for the administration's agenda, however, suggest a contested information environment rather than a one-sided shift.

Key Events and Talking Points in DEI Gender Discourse:

- White House executive orders restricting gender identity policies
- State-level legislation banning DEI practices (e.g., Mississippi)
- Pentagon's update to fitness standards
- Legal opposition from 500+ law firms against anti-DEI actions
- Viral social media debates on transgender inclusion in sports

Dominant Anti-DEI Narratives:

- DEI undermines merit-based systems and lowers standards
- DEI threatens women's rights and spaces
- DEI is ideological indoctrination rather than inclusion
- DEI creates reverse discrimination against men



- DEI is economically harmful and inefficient

Dominant Pro-DEI Narratives:

- DEI creates equal opportunity and addresses systemic barriers
- Inclusion benefits everyone, not just marginalized groups
- Anti-DEI rhetoric disguises discrimination as protection
- DEI drives innovation and economic growth
- Legal protections for equality must be defended

Key Narrative Frames to Monitor

Narrative Frame	Message Being Pushed	Strategy
Reverse Oppression	"DEI puts diversity over merit"	Creates zero-sum framing that positions gender equity as harmful to men
"Didn't Earn It" or "Unqualified"	"DEI promotes hiring of unqualified women, not based on merit"	Delegitimize women's accomplishments, reinforce stereotypes that women are less capable than men
DEI as Harmful to Men	"DEI programs hurt male opportunity, especially white men"	Encourages opposition to inclusive policies by framing them as discriminatory
DEI as Harmful to Women	"DEI discriminates against women, prioritizes others" "DEI pits women against women"	Framing DEI as discriminatory and anti-woman to divide support and weaken progressive coalitions, and support for trans inclusion
Gender Wage Gap Denial	"Women choose lower-paying jobs; the gap is natural"	Reframes structural inequality as personal choice to undermine support for equity measures
Media Manipulation Claims	"Mainstream media edits and deceives" (e.g., Rogan article)	Undermines trust in information sources that might challenge anti-DEI narratives
Anti-Trans Panic	"Biological men invading women's spaces"	Uses transgender issues as a wedge to divide women and feminist movements

Feminism Has Gone Too Far	"Feminists want special treatment, not equality" "Feminism = misandry"	Dismiss systemic inequality, recast feminism as extremist; deter younger feminists from identifying with
Erasure of Women/Gender Minorities (void)	Federal websites, colleges removing references to women, gender, LGBTQIA, and people of color	Reduces visibility, undermines legitimacy.

ANTICIPATED EVENTS

Early Warning of Emerging Narratives

Key opposition networks are proactively preparing content for the digital information environment around gender, DEI, and women’s rights. By dominating top search results and AI-generated overviews, they are embedding their narratives into moments of public curiosity—particularly when users are seeking neutral, informational content. Their approach targets foundational queries, reacts swiftly to political developments, and exploits knowledge gaps—positioning themselves to guide perception before mainstream coverage catches up.

While many of these topics aren’t yet dominating top trend lists, emerging amplification patterns suggest a coordinated strategy to escalate them. These narratives are being seeded through fringe platforms, lifestyle channels, and search queries aligned with potential flashpoints or breaking news. The goal is clear: influence early-stage understanding, inject emotionally charged framing, and establish opposition narratives before progressive voices can respond.

- **“Gender Wage/Pay Gap is a Myth”**: Framed as a false narrative pushed by feminists or DEI advocates. Often paired with arguments about meritocracy, how it’s calculated, or “women choosing lower-paying jobs.”
- **“Female Draft/Women in the Military”**: Framed as symbolic of the excesses of gender equality or “woke military.” Often used as a flashpoint for broader anti-gender narratives.
- **“Masculinity Under Attack”**: Suggests that men are being feminized, weakened, or excluded from leadership and society. Often appeals to young male audiences.
- **“DEI Is No Longer Needed”**: Aligns with some “reverse oppression” messaging that claim ‘women are doing better than men, feminism is outdated’. Claims gender equality has been achieved, so DEI is unnecessary.

Target Audience Profiles



The anti-DEI and anti-gendered messaging target several distinct audience segments of women:

- **Young Women (18–35):** Especially those without firmly established views on DEI, including women drawn to lifestyle, beauty, and relationship content.
- **Single, Child Free Women:** Targeted through cultural and lifestyle content that avoids overt politics, often appealing to personal autonomy, dating dynamics, or skepticism of feminist frameworks.
- **Moderate, Independent, and White Women:** Often targeted with wedge issues that frame DEI as unfair, divisive, or anti-meritocratic.
- **Liberal-Leaning, News Readers:** Reached through non-political entry points—such as wellness, workplace discourse, or women’s media—to introduce doubt or co-opt values.
- **Suburban Moms & “Moms of Boys”:** Framed as moral protectors, especially around school content, safety, or fairness narratives.
- **“Crunchy Mamas” / MAHA Pipeline:** Natural parenting and wellness communities exposed to soft-entry anti-DEI messaging through health and freedom frames.
- **Black & Latina Women:** Targeted with culturally specific appeals—often around economic opportunity, fairness, or skepticism of elite-driven institutions.
- **Working-Class & Rural Women:** Reached through populist, anti-elitist framing, often portraying DEI as out-of-touch or wasteful.
- **Right Leaning Christian Women:** Engaged through faith, tradition, and family-centered narratives opposing gender equity frameworks.
- **Young Men & Disillusioned Boys:** Included in gender backlash narratives, particularly around fairness, masculinity, and workplace competition.

Public Sentiment Toward DEI

While most Americans broadly support the underlying concepts, the term “DEI” is politically polarizing. Additionally women 18-49 broadly support protecting DEI initiatives.

- A 2025 study found that [80% of Americans supported DEI-related principles](#) (e.g., diverse workplaces, equitable power-sharing) when the term “DEI” wasn’t used.
- [Only 50% support “DEI” when explicitly labeled](#); 41% believe DEI is “brainwashing by the left”
- Since a [2023 Pew study](#), support for workplace DEI dropped significantly among Republicans, White respondents, and older adults, due to influence by narratives [framing DEI as divisive or discriminatory](#)

Geographic Concentration of Anti-DEI Narratives

As of April 2025, anti-DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) narratives are most prominent in conservative-led states, particularly in the South, Midwest, and Mountain West regions. These states have enacted or proposed legislation aimed at restricting or eliminating DEI initiatives in public institutions.



Additional surges in search strength are concentrated in the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions. Notable states with elevated search intensity (excluding D.C.) include Vermont, New Hampshire, Virginia, Connecticut, Minnesota, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, and California. These geographies are important to monitor for both audience targeting and narrative penetration.

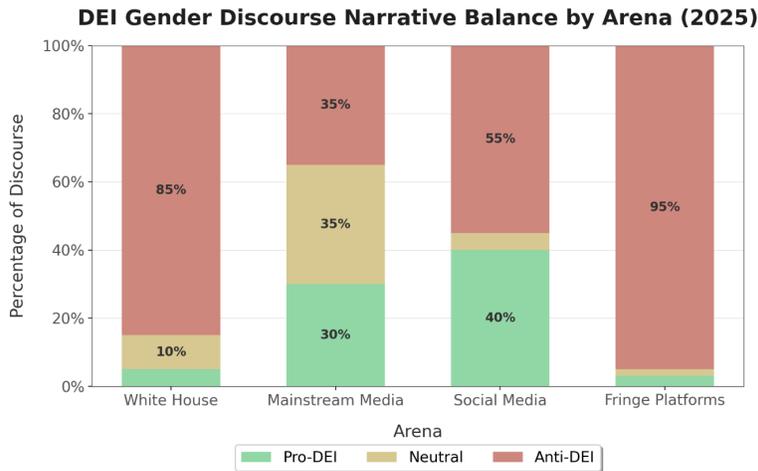
Note: This section originally included a state-by-state table of bills under consideration as of April 2025. Legislative details have since shifted. For the most accurate and updated tracking, see the current partner state by state legislative table on gender-related legislation.

Counter-Strategy Opportunities

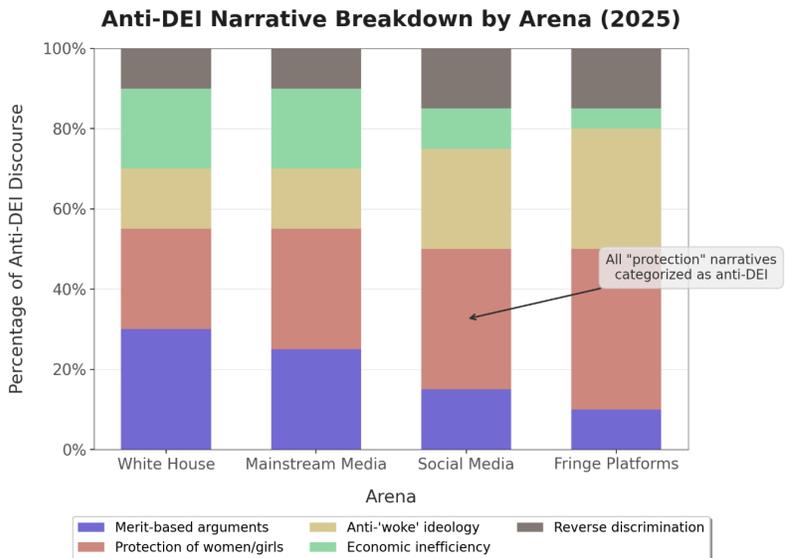
(Please contact for partnership opportunities; britt@brittbischoff.com)

APPENDIX

Narrative Balance by Arena



Primary Thematic Frameworks





Examples of Gendered Disinformation and Anti-DEI Backlash in 2025

Recent federal actions and cultural narratives reveal how coordinated disinformation is used to delegitimize gender equity efforts:

1. **Erasure of Women and Gender Minorities in Official Discourse**
 - Federal agencies have purged references to women, trans individuals, and people of color from historical archives and policy documents.
 - Example: The National Park Service removed mentions of trans individuals from Stonewall documentation, and the Department of Defense deleted bios of pioneering women and Black service members.
 - These erasures signal broader institutional rollbacks—e.g., the VA scrapping guidelines on gender-affirming care.
2. **Targeted Disinformation Against Women Leaders and DEI Advocates**
 - High-profile women, particularly in leadership or DEI-related roles, are targets of coordinated misinformation.
 - Example: LA Fire Chief Kristin Crowley was smeared in disinfo campaigns falsely blaming her DEI efforts for public safety failures, amplified by influencers like Elon Musk.
 - Vice President Kamala Harris received 78% of all gendered disinformation among women in politics, much of it sexualized and race-based.
3. **Weaponization of Civil Rights Law to Attack DEI**
 - The administration has opened investigations into law firms and institutions with DEI-forward hiring, claiming reverse discrimination.
 - Colleges are removing terms like “women” and “gender” from materials to comply with federal pressure—effectively silencing equity-focused research and education.
4. **Amplification of Sophisticated Gendered Disinformation Campaigns Online**
 - Online disinformation targeting women now uses coded language and memes to avoid moderation.
 - Tactics are intersectional—combining sexism, racism, and transphobia—and designed to demoralize women in public life.
 - Foreign actors have been observed amplifying this content to deepen U.S. polarization around gender and civil rights.

Project 2025 Progress to Goal, April 2025

Area of Focus	Completion Estimate	Notes
DEI Program Rollbacks	~75%	Injunction paused full enforcement
Gender Policy Council Dismantled	100%	Immediate executive revocation
Reproductive Rights Reversals	~90%	Near-total executive undoing of Biden-era protections
Title IX Redefinition	~50%	Enforcement started; rulemaking pending
USAID Gender Work Freeze	~70%	Staff furlough blocked; global aid frozen
Vocabulary and Framing Purge	~60%	Directives in place; implementation ongoing
Anti-LGBTQ+ Framing/Enforcement	~70%	Trans bans, care restrictions in effect

Targeting Techniques

Anti-feminist and anti-DEI sites are employing increasingly sophisticated and obscured targeting methods:

1. **Content Masking Strategy**
 - Sites like Evie Magazine, Heritage Foundation, and Independent Women's Forum (IWF) use seemingly non-political content as entry points
 - They leverage contextual, behavioral, and search-based targeting
 - Top searches from their followers include non-political topics like "women's hairstyles," "online dating," and "finding a husband"
2. **Strategic Audience Overlap**
 - Significant audience crossover with liberal/progressive sites
 - Their readers also visit fact-checking sites (Snopes), progressive outlets (The Cut), mainstream publications (The Economist), research sites (Pew Research), and relationship/self-help content



- This suggests deliberate targeting of women who don't fit the stereotypical conservative profile
 - 3. **Content Amplification Tactics**
 - Strategic resurrection of older articles (e.g., the 2023 "7 Ways Women Are Actually Doing Better Than Men")
 - Coordinated backlink campaigns to boost search visibility
 - Timing content amplification to coincide with cultural flashpoints (Title IX debates, DEI rollbacks)
 - 4. **Audience Conditioning Process**
 - Subtly normalizing backlash narratives over time
 - Building opposition to workplace equity initiatives
 - Creating sympathy for "masculinity under attack" rhetoric
 - Targeting specific search terms like "gender wage gap" to intercept information-seeking behavior
-

Amplification Ecosystem

Anti-DEI narratives are reinforced through a sophisticated network:

1. **High volume of coordinated amplification** from aligned networks & sites
 2. **Orchestrated messaging** across multiple platforms
 3. **Network of sympathetic affiliate sites** that don't appear overtly political
 4. **Strategic content amplification & search optimization** to capture search traffic on key terms
-



About This Report

This report may include analysis of language as they appear in public data. Please note:

- *We recognize that online discourse represents only one signal of user/voter interest and information needs.*
- *The inclusion of certain terms or phrases does not imply endorsement or accuracy. They are reported to reflect public behavior and discourse.*
- *We recognize that some language used in social media and online discourse may be considered offensive or insensitive. Our goal is to provide an accurate representation, not to promote the particular viewpoint.*

We strive to balance accurate reporting of our analysis with sensitivity to the complex nature of this topic. If you have any concerns or feedback, please contact britt@brittbischoff.com.

CONTACT

Britt Bischoff
Digital Strategist, Researcher
britt@brittbischoff.com