



# Marie Landry Spy Shop: OSINT Report

## Weaponizing Identity: Russian Anti-Trans War Propaganda Targeting the West

### Defense of "Traditional Values" as a Core Justification for the War in Ukraine

**Author:** Marie-Soleil Seshat Landry, CEO, Independent Researcher, Citizen Scientist, OSINT/HUMINT/AI/BI and OA (Organic Intelligence) Spymaster (Legal and Ethical Espionage)  
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### Keywords (Optimized for SEO)

| # | Keyword                     | # | Keyword                             |
|---|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Anti-Trans War Propaganda   | 4 | Kremlin Traditional Values Doctrine |
| 2 | Russian Information Warfare | 5 | Gender Ideology Weaponization       |
| 3 | Ukraine War Justification   | 6 | Global Conservative Alliance        |



### Executive Summary & Key Judgments

**Key Judgment 1:** Russian state media and political leaders, led by President Vladimir Putin, have integrated extreme **anti-trans and anti-gender rhetoric** as a fundamental component of the war's justification, framing the conflict not just as geopolitical necessity, but as a **metaphysical defense** of Russian civilization against the perceived moral rot of the "undefined West" [1, 7, 8].

**Key Judgment 2:** The primary strategic function of this propaganda is **domestic mobilization and consolidation of conservative political support**. By simplifying the war into a culture conflict—pitting the "normal" Russian family against "parent one/parent two" Western constructs—the Kremlin successfully generates moral panic and solidifies the authoritarian identity of the state [7, 9, 11].

**Key Judgment 3:** This anti-gender rhetoric is a crucial tool for **global influence**, used to forge ideological alliances with right-wing, anti-liberal, and nationalist movements worldwide, positioning Russia as the global leader in the defense of "traditional values" [13, 16, 17].



### Scope & Intelligence Requirements

The scope of this report is to analyze the specific nature, deployment, and strategic function of

Russian anti-trans and anti-gender disinformation campaigns used to justify the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, identifying how this rhetoric targets the "West" (defined broadly as liberal democracies, EU, and NATO) to legitimize the war domestically and globally. The requirement is to demonstrate that this cultural narrative is a primary, not secondary, driver of the Kremlin's public justification.

## Background / Context

The Russian government's pivot toward "**traditional values**" accelerated after 2012, culminating in the 2013 "gay propaganda" law [2]. This doctrine became the ideological bedrock for distinguishing Russia from the West. Prior to the 2022 invasion, this campaign intensified, with the concept of LGBTQ+ rights—particularly trans visibility and "gender ideology"—being weaponized as the **ultimate symbol of Western cultural aggression** aimed at destabilizing Russian society from within [8, 14, 17]. The war in Ukraine is thus presented as a military manifestation of this long-standing culture war [13, 16].

## Methodology (Collection + Verification + Ethics)

Data was collected using Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) techniques, primarily through Google's advanced search functionalities, targeting official transcripts of Russian leadership speeches (Putin, Patriarch Kirill), state-controlled media analysis (RT, Sputnik), and academic research on Russian disinformation, gender politics, and the Ukraine conflict [1, 7, 13].

- **Verification:** Key quotes and claims regarding "traditional values" were cross-referenced with multiple academic and reputable news sources (RAND, Al Jazeera, PRX, established university research) to ensure fidelity to the official Russian narrative [5, 8, 10].
- **Ethics:** Collection adhered strictly to legal and ethical OSINT frameworks, using only publicly available information and avoiding the collection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) of non-target individuals. All laws must be followed at all times.

**AI Disclosure:** This report was generated with the assistance of the Gemini Flash 2.5 model, which aided in comprehensive sourcing, structuring the OSINT framework, and ensuring compliance with all user-defined constraints, including the mandatory 20-source bibliography.

## Target Profile (Identity, Motives, History)

The target, the "**Undefined West**," is constructed in Russian propaganda as a composite, existential foe whose identity is primarily defined by **moral and cultural decay** rather than military threat.

- **Identity:** A "globalist," "satanist," or LGBTQI+ "agenda" entity [1]. A system forcing "false values" that lead to "degradation and degeneration" [8].
- **Motive:** To destroy Russian "traditional values" and force their "gender ideology" upon the population to weaken the nation internally [8, 12, 14].
- **History:** The West's cultural liberalism is framed as a continuous, internal assault dating back to the dissolution of the USSR.

## Digital Footprint Assessment

The propaganda is disseminated aggressively across state-controlled media (RT, Sputnik), social media platforms, and via political proxy figures and conservative think tanks globally.

- **Narrative Centralization:** The primary message, "We don't want parent one or parent two" [7], is a clear, repeatable soundbite designed for quick dissemination on platforms like Telegram and X, framing gender-neutral language as an absurdity and a foreign threat [10].
- **"Contagion Narratives":** Disinformation campaigns claim being LGBTQ+ is a "contagious disease brought by the West" that is specifically targeting children [9, 10, 11].

## Network & Relationship Mapping

This propaganda aligns the Kremlin with two critical networks:

1. **Domestic Ultra-Conservatives:** The Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) is a key amplifier, framing the war as a "metaphysical struggle" against Western demands for gay parades [7, 8, 16]. This provides a moral and spiritual justification for the state's military actions.
2. **Global Anti-Gender Movement:** The rhetoric acts as a beacon for illiberal, nationalist, and religious-conservative political movements worldwide (Europe, Africa, Middle East, India), positioning Russia as the **spiritual and ideological leader** of an anti-Western cultural counter-revolution [13, 16, 17].

## Activity Timeline

- **2013:** Initial "gay propaganda" law passed, establishing the legal framework for "traditional values" defense [2].
- **2022 (Feb 24):** Putin's invasion speech dedicates a paragraph to the West's attempts to "destroy our traditional values and force on us their false values" [5, 8].
- **2022 (Nov):** Russia expands the anti-LGBTQ+ law to ban all public promotion to all age groups, solidifying the cultural war footing [10].
- **Ongoing (2022-Present):** State media (like *Detector Media* analysis) increases references and manipulations related to LGBTIQ+ topics, claiming that NATO is a "gay alliance" and that Ukrainian defeat is due to homosexuals in power [10, 11].

## Technical Indicators (IOC / Cyber)

- **Ideological Indicator:** The recurring use of the term "**gender ideology**" (a pejorative term originating in conservative religious circles) as a proxy for all LGBTQ+ and feminist movements [8, 12, 14].
- **Disinformation Pattern:** The use of **Manichean binaries** (e.g., "You are either Russian or Gay") to eliminate nuance and force allegiance [8, 10].

## GEOINT & Multimedia Analysis

The visual propaganda contrasts the "**macho**" **military masculinity** of the Russian forces with the supposed "effeminacy" or moral decay of Ukrainian leadership (often portrayed as homosexual or weak) [11, 13]. This narrative is used to reinforce the idea that a nation that accepts gender equality is physically and morally inferior, justifying Russian aggression as an

assertion of "manly" modernity [13].



## Threat / Risk Assessment

| Risk Category                     | Description                                                                                                                                                         | Severity           | Source Ref. |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <b>Domestic Mobilization</b>      | The propaganda successfully cultivates fear and anger, increasing domestic support for the war by defining it as a survivalist cultural battle [9, 11, 16].         | <b>High</b>        | [7, 9, 17]  |
| <b>International Polarization</b> | The rhetoric serves as a potent wedge issue in Western countries, aiding pro-Russian political factions and weakening NATO/EU cohesion [4, 10, 19].                 | <b>Medium-High</b> | [4, 10, 19] |
| <b>Human Rights Erosion</b>       | The propaganda directly justifies and necessitates the brutal enforcement of anti-LGBTQ+ laws in occupied territories and against dissenters in Russia [3, 13, 18]. | <b>Critical</b>    | [3, 13, 18] |



## Disinformation & Influence Analysis

This campaign uses **Contagion Narratives**—framing LGBTQ+ identity, especially trans identity, as a Western disease or virus that will destroy the Russian demographic structure and spirit [9]. This is classic dehumanization, which is proven to correlate with increased risk of violence against the targeted group [1]. By focusing on the protection of children, it generates maximum moral panic [9, 17].



## Legal & Policy Considerations

The legal expansion of the 2013 "gay propaganda" law into an absolute ban (2022) is used to legitimize the state's disinformation and ensure the complete **governmental censorship** of counter-narratives [2, 10]. This policy, applied to occupied Ukrainian territories, represents a form of cultural suppression and persecution [3, 18].



## Analytic Judgments (Confidence + Alternatives)

**Analytic Judgment:** The anti-trans/anti-gender rhetoric is a **core, non-negotiable component**

of the Kremlin's strategic war justification, designed for both domestic mobilization and foreign influence.

- **Confidence Level: High (95%).** This judgment is based on the consistent, high-level deployment of the rhetoric by Putin and the ROC over a decade, its codification into law, and its measured effect on galvanizing conservative support [1, 7, 8].
- **Alternative Hypothesis 1 (Dismissed):** The rhetoric is merely a secondary distraction from the primary geopolitical/security justification (NATO expansion). *Rebuttal: The rhetorical energy and legal efforts dedicated to this topic demonstrate its independent, foundational importance to the ideology of the current regime.*
- **Alternative Hypothesis 2 (Considered):** The rhetoric is only a domestic issue and has negligible foreign influence. *Rebuttal: The success in aligning with global anti-gender movements and creating polarization in Western democracies suggests a strong, active foreign policy goal tied to this cultural narrative.*



## Conclusions & Implications

The war in Ukraine is explicitly, and ideologically, a **"war on gender order"** [14, 12, 16]. The Kremlin has successfully externalized its internal cultural conflict onto the battlefield, presenting the invasion as a preemptive strike against the West's perceived moral collapse. The key implication is that any effective counter-propaganda or strategic negotiation must address and dismantle the legitimacy Russia assigns to this "traditional values" defense, as it is a far more powerful internal mobilizing force than historical land claims alone [7, 8].



## Recommendations / Mitigations

1. **Deconstruct the Narrative:** Western information operations must specifically and consistently expose the hypocritical reality of the "traditional values" doctrine (e.g., high Russian divorce rates, domestic violence) to undermine its moral authority [12].
2. **Support Counter-Narratives:** Increase direct funding and logistical support for exiled Russian and independent Ukrainian media, specifically those publishing in Russian, to provide factual, diverse voices against the state narrative [4].
3. **Targeted Sanctions:** Explore sanctioning key individuals within the Russian Orthodox Church and state media directly responsible for the propagation of the anti-gender rhetoric, framing them as agents of ideological warfare.



## Limitations & Intelligence Gaps

- **Gap 1:** Precise quantification of the *specific* public support generated solely by the anti-trans narrative versus other justifications (Nazism, NATO).
- **Gap 2:** Detailed access to non-public Russian polling data showing the demographic breakdown of which specific cultural issue (gay, trans, feminism) is most effective as a mobilizing trigger.
- **Limitation:** Reliance on translated speeches and academic analysis, which may lack the full, unfiltered *lingua franca* used in grassroots Russian social media.



## Appendices (Glossary, Raw Data Snippets)

- **Traditional Values (Russian Context):** A political term for a conservative ethos encompassing patriotism, spirituality, heteronormative family ideals, and the prioritization of the collective over the individual [7, 8].
- **Raw Quote (Putin):** "We don't want parent one or parent two." [7] (Used to characterize Western gender-neutral language as absurd).
- **Raw Quote (Patriarch Kirill):** Framed the war as a "metaphysical struggle" against a "test for loyalty" to the Western world, the test being the demand to hold **gay parades** [7].



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