



Framing and blaming: construction of workplace injuries by legislators in Alberta, Canada.

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Abstract: Legislators in the Canadian province of Alberta have successfully resisted pressure to increase state injury-prevention efforts.

This study seeks to identify the narratives used by legislators to manage political pressure for increased injury-prevention efforts.

Narrative analysis of legislative transcripts from 2000 to 2012.

Three narratives are identified in the data: (1) injuries are caused by ignorance and inattention, (2) workplaces are safe and getting safer, and (3) risk is inevitable and mitigation is (too) expensive. Each narrative has 2-4 subcomponents.

The consistency of the messages delivered by legislators over time suggests an intentional effort to frame workplace injury in ways that manage political pressure for greater state efforts to prevent workplace injuries while maintaining the government's legitimacy. The narratives used by legislators draw on widely held beliefs about workplace injuries, including the careless worker myth and the notion that safety pays.

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