

## **The Freedom Convoy through a Rhetorical Lens: Material Rhetoric, Confrontation Rhetoric and Discourse**

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**Abstract :** During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada, protests and blockades erupted following the federal government's mandate on January 15, 2022, which required all Canadian cross-border truckers to be vaccinated against COVID-19. It was a uniquely large social movement, and this paper argues that it was so significant due to its use of material rhetoric, the rhetoric of confrontation and discourse. This paper first analyzed the Freedom Convoy's different acts and choices as direct examples of the use of each form of rhetoric. It ends by concluding that material rhetoric was used to gain early attention and public interest. The rhetoric of confrontation gave the movement its form, substance and identity while also pressuring the government and generating more attention, making it unignorable. Lastly, discourse played a crucial role in maintaining unity, empowerment, and inspiration among the protesters during a time when differing motives evolved due to external influences.

**Keywords :** rhetoric, social movement, confrontational rhetoric, material rhetoric, discourse

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