

Spotlighting Hidden Histories: Archiving Transgender Usenet, 1994-2013

**Avery Dame | University of Maryland,
Women's Studies
@adame | averydame.net**

Slides: bit.ly/DDSlides



1994 - Defosse posts
to alt.transgendered



1994 - Defosse posts
to alt.transgendered



1995 - Buijs posts to
alt.transgendered

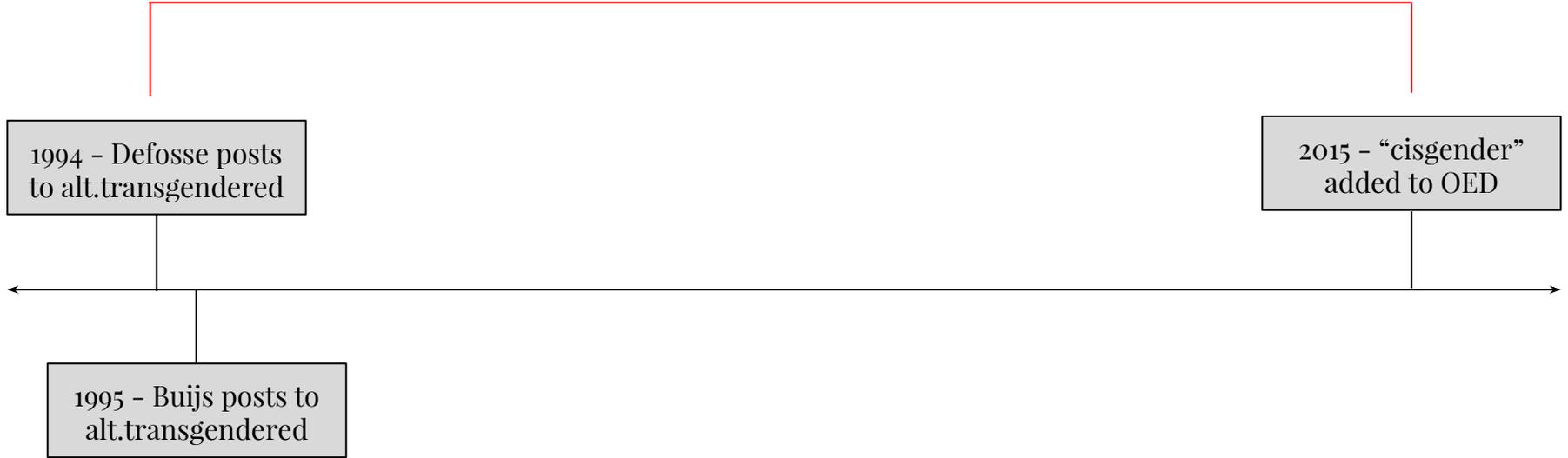
1994 - Defosse posts
to alt.transgendered

2015 - "cisgender"
added to OED

1995 - Buijs posts to
alt.transgendered



?



How might we have gotten here?



ASPECTS OF GENDER
SHOWDOWN WITH A SON
GENDER, IDENTITY POLITICS
AND EATING OUR OWN

GENDER TRANSCENDENT PRIESTS
IN SOUTH SULAWESI INDONESIA
MAKING PEACE WITH THE PAST
TRANSWOMAN IN HEAVY METAL





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presents

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Visit the Crossing Borders World Wide Web site for updated information:
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Proceedings

FROM

The Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy

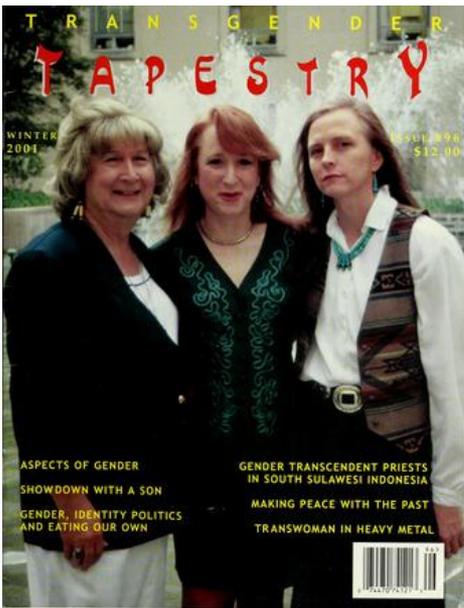
TRANSGEN '95
JUNE 1995
HOUSTON, TEXAS, U.S.A.
First Printing Edition

Published and available from:
Phyllis Randolph Frye, Attorney
Executive Director, ICTLEP, Inc.
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Renaissance

News & views

Values • Integrity • Quality
Vol. 6, No. 18 • October 1994

A Report from S.P.I.C.E. '94

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter and Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter of Renaissance united funds to send Phyllis K. to the 1994 S.P.I.C.E. conference in Chicago. Sponsored by Partners International Conference for Education, sponsored by Tri-Era and other community organizations. Here are comments on the event by Linda Williams and her S.O. Phyllis.

Linda's Comments

I would like to thank the GPC and LSV chapters for sponsoring my with Phyllis attendance at S.P.I.C.E. '94. I also would like to share a few of the major things I learned about myself and other transwomen.

I was surprised that some transwomen did not meet their wives to attend, while others encouraged it with the hope that their partners would find solutions to their problems (because, the transwomen are usually here alone).

Among the issues discussed at the conference was the problem of self-harm. The transwomen met in a very useful process. Her ideas produce the partner's behavior to the last because he believes he has been spending good money on his partner should care to be saved. This portion of the conference was conducted by Debra Tyler Byn, a licensed social worker.

In Dr. Sandra Cole's discussion she made the observation that if we could tap into femininity we could use this unique ability to calm our partners better.

Robert From, M.D. mentioned that we should take care of ourselves and men should be aware of the possibility of problems, with a prostate cancer issue. I must congratulate the gentlemen who coordinated all of the 2001 activities, Gil Frazier and Debra Tyler Byn. They did a fantastic job.

Well, there may be working along with co-ordinating but speaking for myself, there are certainly things going on with the transwomen. Things that I had the opportunity to look ahead to depth at S.P.I.C.E. '94. As some of you know, I've had a struggle relating my religious beliefs and co-ordinating. As S.P.I.C.E. I found my answer. The spirit of sharing and helping one another's experiences there cannot be told.

Also, some of you know that I am presently in counseling for post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) and am a member of a "Veterans Veterans" support group, as well as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. I've found this type of therapy, sharing with people who have similar problems, very helpful and feel it would be great if we would have more at Renaissance meetings for group sharing.

In summary, if I could not effectively realize my femininity side to help control my male ego, I feel

continued on page 6

DSM IV: A Step In The Right Direction?

By James Roberts

Transsexuals' Confusion. The fourth edition addresses these issues in two distinctly different ways, but both reach the same result:

Let's start at the beginning which is always the best place to start. It is extremely important in any discussion of the DSM and sexual disorders to understand that the APA means by the term sexual disorder people, most of which should be welcomed.

Over the past several years, some transsexual people complained that the old volume, DSM III-R, caused them to be oppressed and isolated due to the inclusion of transsexual people because the text contained the term "transsexualism" and

continued on page 6

Judith Storm on trans newsgroups (1995):

“There is very little of help in [newsgroups] - mainly they seem to be a couple of individuals scoring points off each other.”



News & views

Views • Integrity • Quality

Vol. 9, No. 10 • October 1995

Renaissance

It's No Blamey. Irish TV Scene Lacking

by Judith Storm

The Dublin metropolitan area has nearly 1 million people, yet there is only one gay bar and disco. There used to be two gay bars, one of which admitted CEOs, TVs, etc., and the other didn't even let lesbians! The friendly one changed hands about 18 months ago. It supposed as a "gay friendly" but straight bar. Most of the gay parties occurred and had no problem. After I had been there a few times I was refused entry. When I asked why, I was told, "We don't want your type here." Now, I took this personally and asked the manager what I had done. She admitted I'd done nothing but repeated, "We don't want your type here." I assumed she was objecting to crossdressing which didn't make sense because she likes to hang out! Anyway, I got my own back and told all the gay community - most of whom frequented the place. The bar is now closed again and reopening, very hope, as a straight bar. They'll be lucky.

In the meantime, we had a strike of luck. Two things happened. First, a gay friend approached the owner of the George (the second bar, and made a very strong case that I and my friends should be allowed to use the premises. He agreed. Secondly, later, the manager, who was the one with the anti-gay attitude, was sacked and the new manager is more than glad to have us.

Crossdressers in Ireland fall into two broad categories - those who are simply crossdressers and those who are transsexuals. This is a definition I use in one of the "20" newsgroups where a crossdresser is defined as somebody whose dressing sense comes from the clothes and not from her inner femininity. I apologise to anyone offended by this remark. It is intended simply to define someone of liberal attitude in an Irish context and not to discuss sex beds.

The majority of the crossdressers here belong to a group called the Friends of Eve which is an offshoot of the English Boudance Society, as runs an offshoot of Virginia Prince's old PUP/Polka. The "Friends" are completely homophobic and this has generated considerable friction between them and the transsexual population. There is no corresponding organisation for transsexuals as it has been found that they are either in the closet, in which

case they won't join an organisation, or out, in which case they don't need an organisation.

The only place we have to socialise in Dublin is the George bar, unless you are really posh, then there are plenty of places to go because nobody reads you anyway.

Because of this lack of social locations, a number of people have jumped in to provide what they call "dressing facilities." Fine, for a long time, one can be dressed for a period of time. Unfortunately, with our exception, these places are always down where the management is only interested in taking your money. I have researched them all. Some are simply barbers or men's parlours while others are a step above, but have a course of sexual silliness including discipline and infantilism. Not what the regular crossdresser wants.

I am involved in running a help line for crossdressers of all sorts. This operates one night a week and, while most of its business is done by phone, we are always willing to meet a distressed crossdresser for a one to one meeting. In addition, we will talk to relatives of a crossdresser in a non-judgmental way. Our advice is always non-directive so we have gained a degree of respect among health care workers and the media. The problem with this line, as with all others of its kind, is staffing. It is hard to open your heart to others when your own heart may be breaking.

I'm afraid that the scene in a small country such as Ireland gets incredibly, so we need feedback from the world. I find the best thing that ever happened to me was getting onto the Internet. I've been reading the soc support transgendered and all transgendered newsgroups, but there is very little of help in them so rarely they seem to be a couple of individuals scoring points off each other.

We are trying to make some progress changes and recently had a meeting to organize something more than the normal setup we have at the moment. I had been getting bounce as a result of trying to run the help line singlehanded. There's a lot of bounce, but the problem was even more of us couldn't message. We need some sort of organisation, and obviously some

continued on page 6

Groups

CREATE GROUP

My groups

Home

Starred

▾ Favorites

Woods.

▸ Recently viewed

▸ Recent searches

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My groups

All of your discussions in one place

Organize with favorites and folders, choose to follow along via email, and quickly find unread posts.

Express yourself

Use rich-text editing to customize your posts with fonts, colors, and images.

People power discussions

Use photos, nicknames, and automatic translations to share your thoughts with the world.

Speed matters

Keyboard shortcuts and a streamlined design mean you won't spend time waiting to read and get involved. Press "?" to see the full list of shortcuts.

Mobile friendly

Access Groups from anywhere using your mobile device with our optimized [site](#).

Groups

NEW TOPIC



Mark all as read

Filters ▾



My groups

Home

Starred

Favorites

Woods.

Recently viewed

Recent searches

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alt.transgendered Shared publicly

60 of 29040 topics (99+ unread) ★ G-1

About ▾

★	Tranny Activists Upset Over "White Cis Women March" (5)	5 posts	2 views	Barb May +3	Mar 2
★	Trump administration scraps Obama's tranny directive (2)	2	0	Barb May +1	Feb 25
★	Lisa Marie Presley's Daughters in Protective Care as Husband Investigated for 'Indecent' Child Photos (1)	1	0	Left Wing News	Feb 18
★	LAPD officers fatally shoot man after homosexual stabbing rampage near CNN Hollywood (3)	3	0	California Has Gun Laws! Slice! Stab! Gut cut! +2	Feb 3
★	FATAL STABBING One butt pirate killed and three injured in Hollywood stabbing that ended in police shoo...	1	0	California Has Gun Laws! Slice! Stab! Gut cut!	Feb 3
★	Suspect Shot Dead by Police After Stabbing 3 Fags, Leaving 2 Critical, in Hollywood: LAPD (Warning: Grap...	1	1	California Has Gun Laws! Slice! Stab! Gut cut!	Feb 3
★	One queer dead and three injured after knifeman goes on Hollywood stabbing spree (1)	1	0	California Has Gun Laws! Slice! Stab! Gut cut!	Feb 3
★	Cross-dressing CNN knob gobbler stabbed several times on Hollywood sidewalk (1)	1	0	California Has Gun Laws! Slice! Stab! Gut cut!	Feb 3
★	Police kill man whose stabbing rampage injured 3 fags on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood (1)	1	0	California Has Gun Laws! Slice! Stab! Gut cut!	Feb 3
★	Tranny Surgery Under Obamacare Blocked Nationwide (5)	5	1	Barb May +3	Jan 15
★	Sodomites on the Hudson, New York's Highest Court Expands Definition of Parenthood (1)	1	0	Bill Cockburn	Jan 14
★	This homosexuality crap still isn't settled. (1)	1	1	Mr. Gridley	Jan 13
★	Eight-year-old girl ousted from New Jersey Cub Scout group since 'only boys are allowed' (3)	3	0	No Such Thing As 'transgender' +1	12/30/16
★	Sudden rise in sea levels explained by disproportionately large tears shed by climate scientists in the after...	2	0	Loob +1	12/30/16
★	Obama Accomplishments - Obama to pardon Stalin, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Castro (2)	2	0	Free Heroin @ 1600 PA Ave +1	12/30/16
★	Afraid of "dangerous" Trump presidency, protesters pre-emptively burn America down to the ground (1)	1	0	Loob	12/30/16
★	Hillary suggests to counter "fake news" with government newspaper called "Truth" ("Pravda" for Russian s...	1	0	Loob	12/30/16
★	Children in Venezuela cook and eat their Christmas toys (1)	1	0	Loob	12/30/16
★	Obama's reckless attacks on Russia serve as recruitment tool to create more Russian hackers (1)	1	0	Loob	12/30/16
★	Democrats blame Hillary's criminal e-mail server for her loss, demand it face prison (1)	1	0	Loob	12/30/16

UTZOO Tapes

From Internet Archive:
“This is a collection of
.TGZ files of very early
USENET posted data
provided by a number of
driven and brave
individuals, including
David Wiseman, Henry
Spencer, Lance Bailey,
Bruce Jones, Bob
Webber, Brewster Kahle,
and Sue Thielen.”





Bookworm Project

Giving shape to massive digital libraries through metadata

<http://bookworm.culturomics.org>

 Repositories

 People **4**

Search repositories...

Type: **All** ▾

Language: **All** ▾

BookwormDB

Tools for text tokenization and encoding

 Python  67  7 Updated 12 days ago



Top languages

 Python  Jupyter Notebook
 Makefile  HTML

Bookworm-MARC

Parsing MARC records for Bookworm ingest

 Jupyter Notebook  2 Updated on Feb 8



People

4 >



FreshInstallationScript

Script for installing prerequisites for bookworm

Updated on Oct 28, 2016



Hathitrust-Bookworm

A full text Bookworm on Public Domain Hathitrust works

 Jupyter Notebook  2 Updated on Sep 23, 2016



BookwormGUI

ABOUT

COLLECTION

1,019 RESULTS 

Search this Collection

PART OF

[Usenet Archive](#)

Media Type

data 1,019

Collection

Data Collection 1,019

Usenet Archive 1,019

Usenet Historical Collection 1,019

 SORT BY [VIEWS](#) · [TITLE](#) · [DATE ARCHIVED](#) · [CREATOR](#)



usenet-ait

  2,438  0  0



usenet-comp

  747  0  0



usenet-powersoft

  562  0  0



usenet-openwatcom

  530  0  0



usenet-bit

  485  0  0



usenet-rec

  473  0  0



usenet-sci

  371  0  0



usenet-it

  370  0  0



usenet-soc

  343  0  0



usenet-linux

  302  0  0



usenet-net

  279  0  0



usenet-z-netz

  244  0  0



usenet-free

  240  0  0



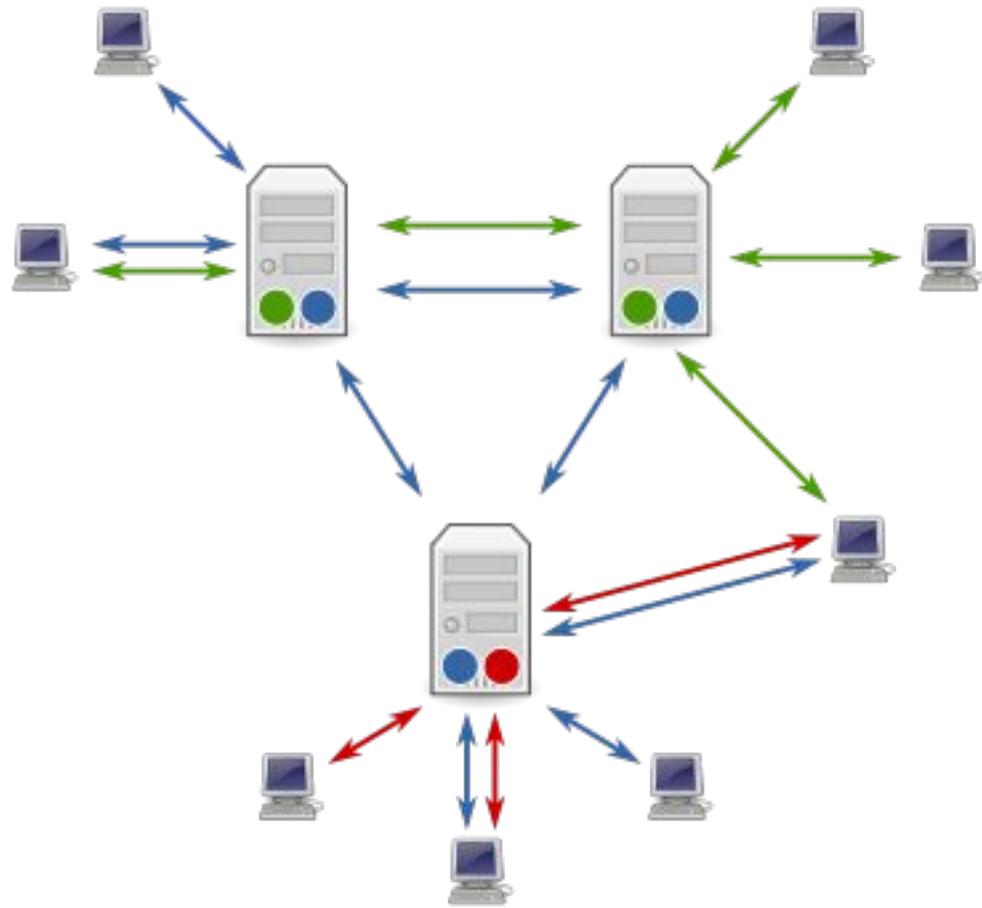
usenet-geometry

  184  0  0



usenet-fido7

  182  0  0



Usenet Distribution Structure Diagram (left) (Image Credit: Wikipedia)

From: Otten@worldcity.nl (Colleen Otten)
Subject: Re: Hello again
Date: 1997/05/10
Message-ID: <19970510165048671963@dyna11.worldcity.nl>#1/1
X-Deja-AN: 240585557
References: <3372B6FF.5470@mindspring.com>
X-XS4ALL-Date: Sat, 10 May 1997 16:51:30 CEST
Organization: The mirror of her dreams
Newsgroups: soc.support.transgendered

Tiffany Evelynnn <evelynn@mindspring.com> wrote:

> Tomorrow I check on a higher paying job that i applied for. Tomorrow i
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Sample Usenet Post (with headers)



rec.gambling.poker

Usenet Distribution Structure Diagram (left) and Newsgroup Hierarchies (right)
(Image Credit: Wikipedia)



rec.gambling.poker

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(Image Credit: Wikipedia)

alt.swedish.chef.
bork.bork.bork



Newsgroups in project

- alt.transgendered (1992)
- soc.support.transgendered (1994)
- alt.support.crossdressing (1996)
- alt.fashion.crossdressing (1996)
- alt.support.srs (1997)

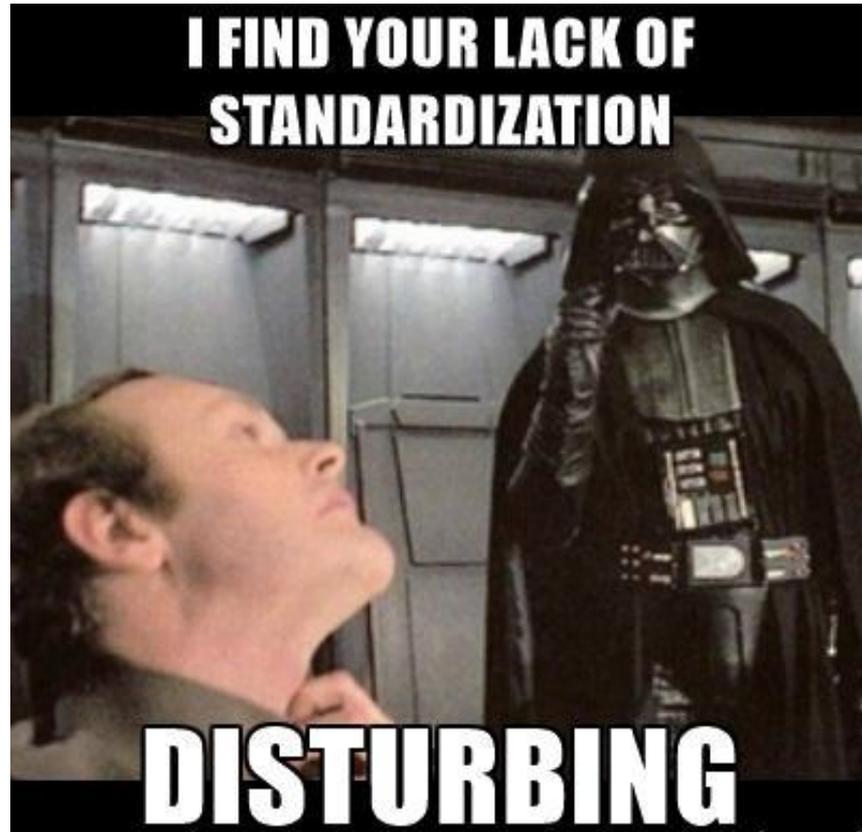
Newsgroup	Upper and Lower Poster Rankings
soc.support.transgendered	Upper (over 100 posts): 211/11750 (2%) <u>Lower (1 post): 6306/11750 (54%)</u>
alt.transgendered	Upper (over 100 posts): 41/19775 (0.2%) <u>Lower (1 post): 12577/19775 (63%)</u>
alt.fashion.crossdressing	Upper (over 100 posts): 86/12428 (0.7%) <u>Lower (1 post): 7117/12428 (57%)</u>
alt.support.crossdressing	Upper (over 100 posts): 91/8473 (1%) <u>Lower (1 post): 4738/8473 (56%)</u>
alt.support.srs	Upper (over 100 posts): 216/6586 (3%) <u>Lower (1 post): 3367/6586 (51%)</u>

Upper and Lower post counts per unique email (all percentages rounded up to the nearest whole number). Email addresses are not aggregated in instances when poster changed their primary Usenet address.

Technical Challenges: Spam



Technical Challenges: Header Non-Standardization



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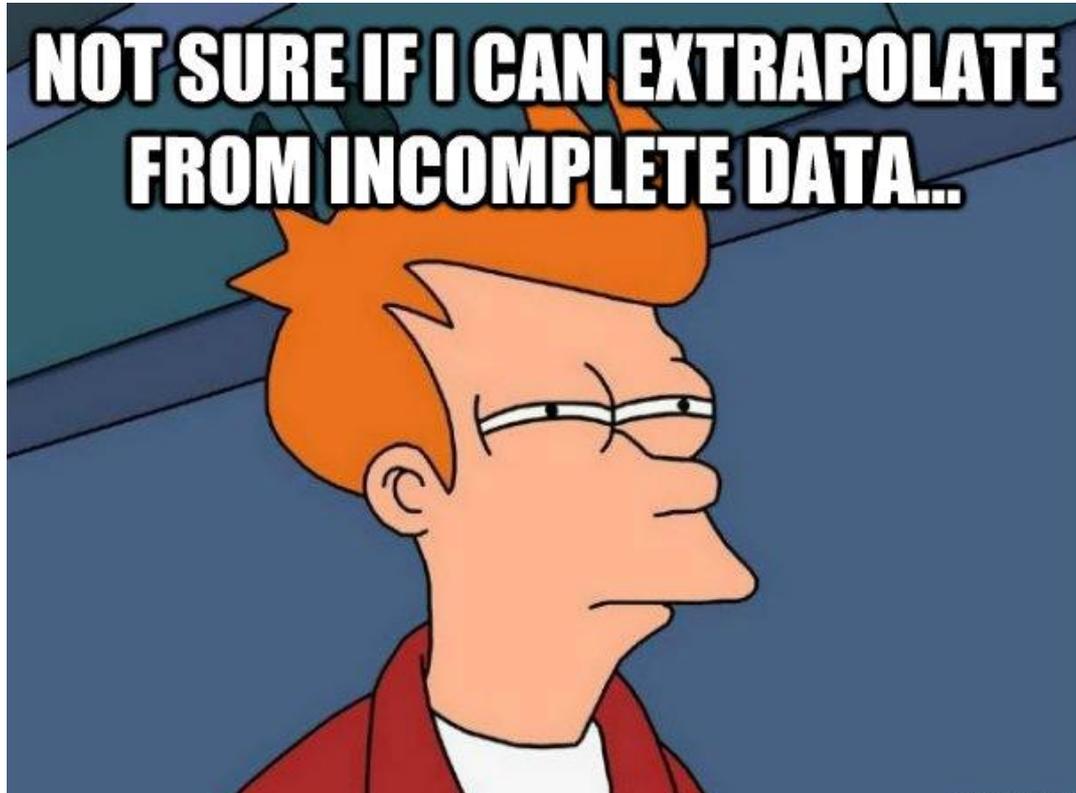
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Colleen

Required Headers highlighted

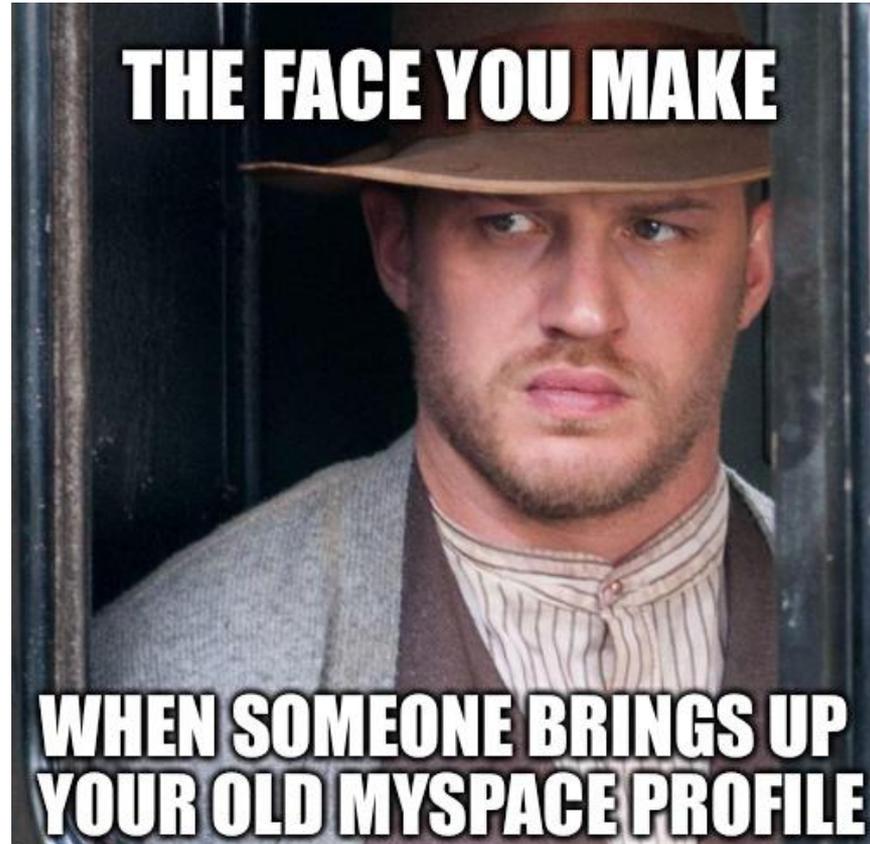
Design Challenges: Incompleteness



“X-No-Archive” header

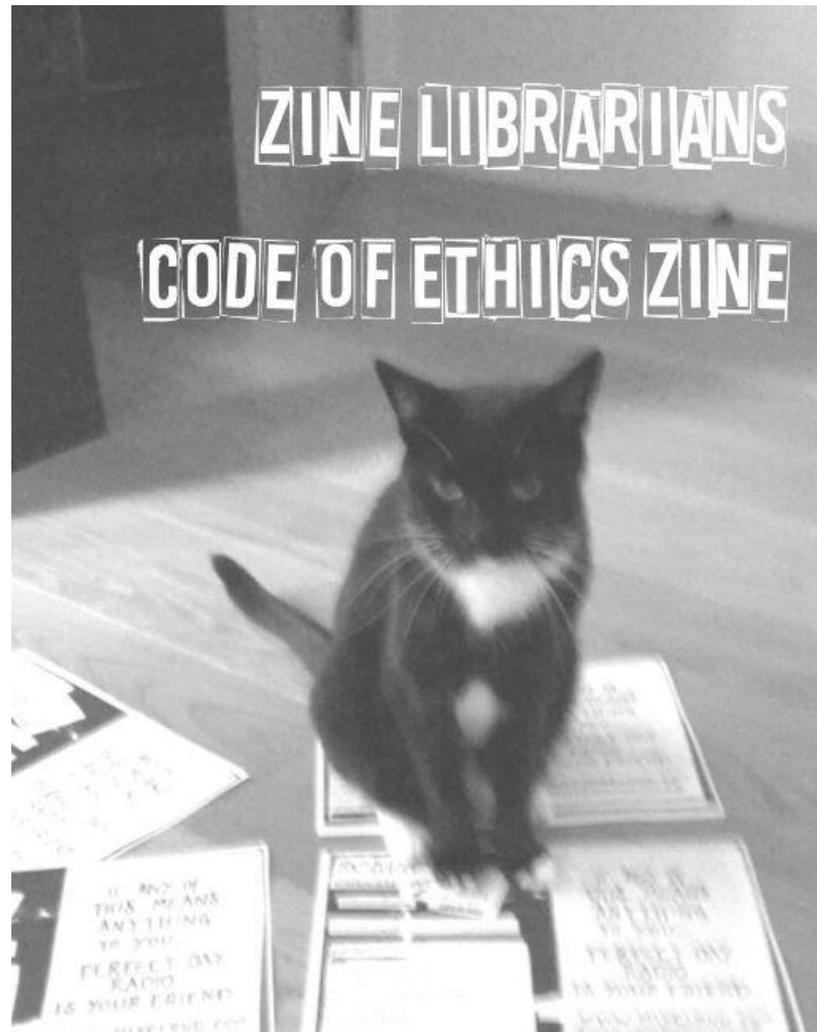
XNAY: X-No-Archive: yes

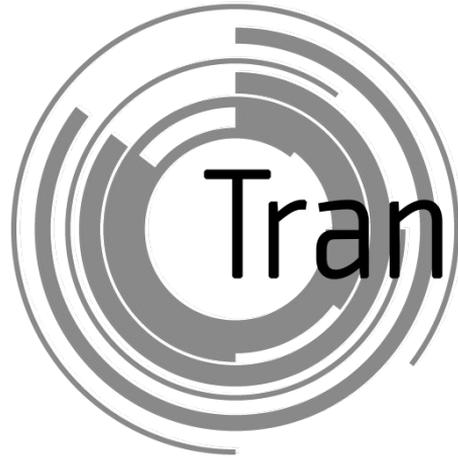
Ethical Challenges: Personal Histories Online



Zine Librarian's Code of Ethics

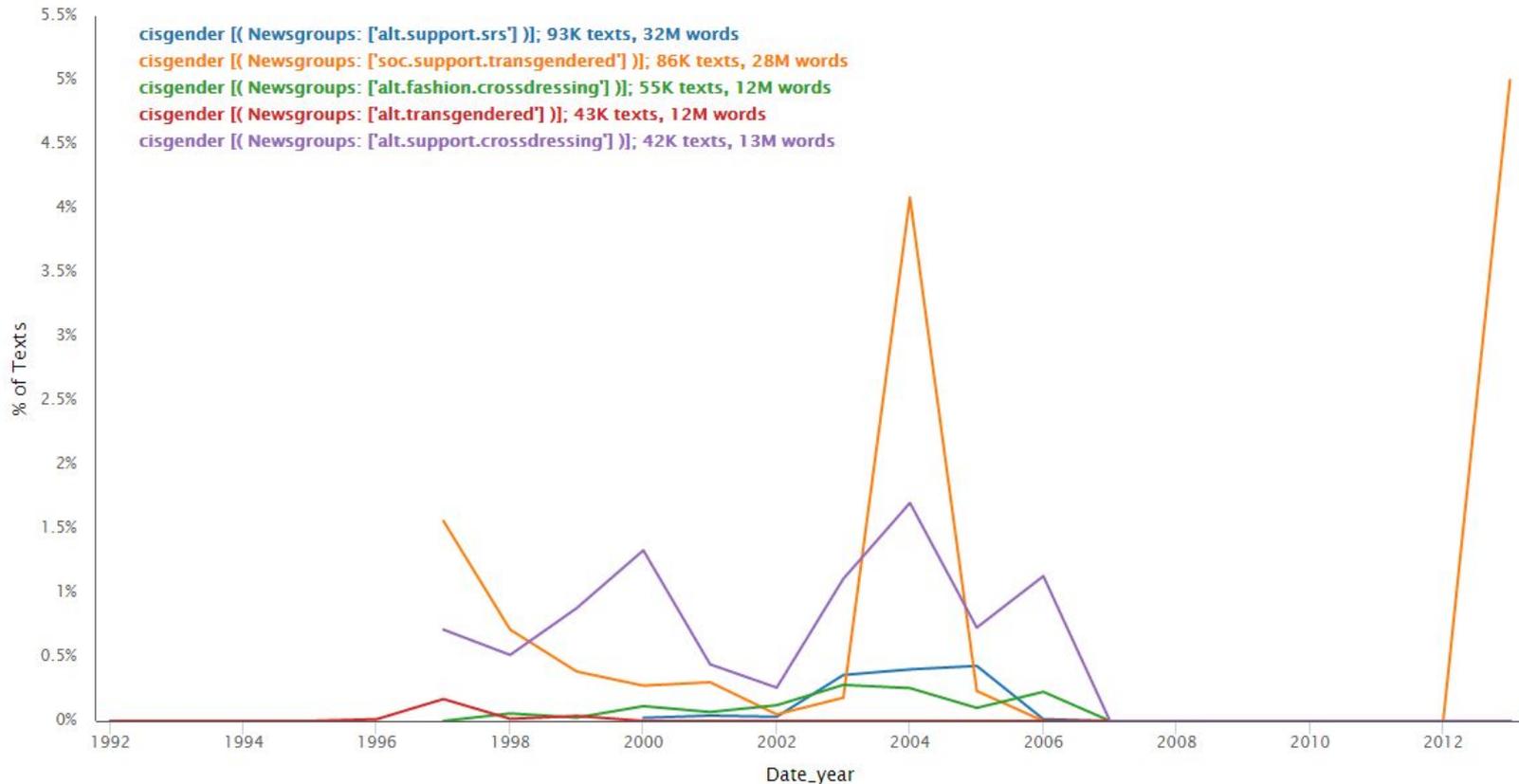
- Acquisition and Collection Development
- Access
- Preservation
- Use
- Organization



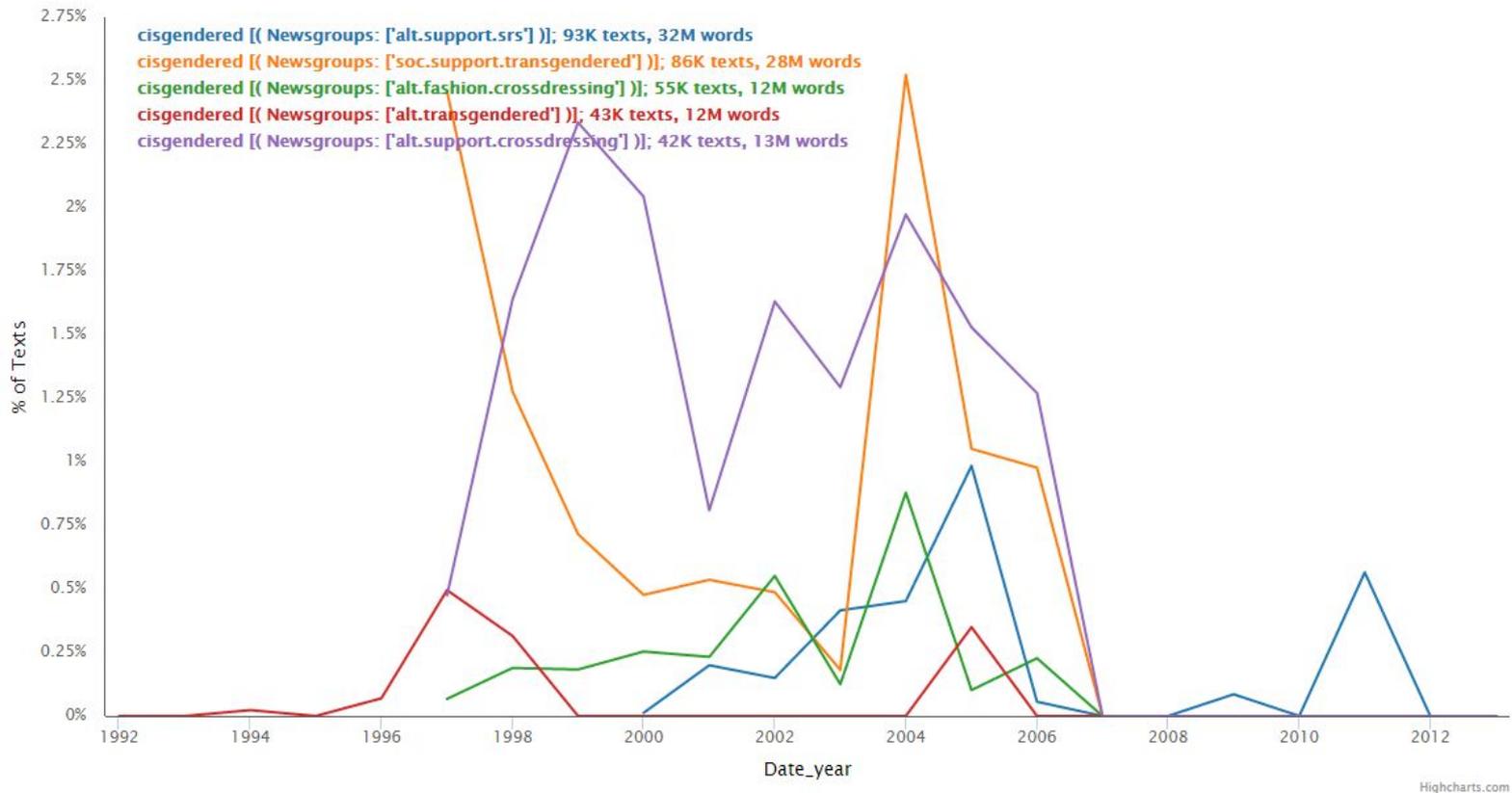


Transgender Usenet Archive

<http://transusenet.averydame.net/>



Percent of posts using “cisgender”



Highcharts.com

Percent of posts using “cisgendered”

I am trying to assess campus climates for the transgender community, both at my own institution and at other campuses. Any information regarding this subject would be tremendously helpful to this effort. Personal testimony, activism, organizations, experience of providers and human service workers, etc. Issues of interest are **transphobia, hostility, general knowledge and understanding, attitudes of the queer community and cisgendered people**, etc. I am interested in building coalitions and will share any info with others.

Excerpt from Defosse's post (May 25, 1994)

I admit that I was worried about what others thought. It turns out that it didn't really matter. As long as I was expressing femmeside. That's what it's about. We shouldn't judge each other on appearances. That's what the **cis-gendered, narrow-minded people do**. They see a guy in a dress and go ballistic. Just try to enjoy yourself, and as long as you are feminine and attractive in your own mind, that's all that matters. Please hook up with a support group! You won't regret it!

Excerpt from Jennileigh's post (Oct 25, 1994)

Division of Users

Transsexual

Transgender

Division of Users

Transsexual

Transgender

Legal and Civil Recognition

Resist Sex/Gender Link

Division of Users

Transsexual

Transgender

Legal and Civil Recognition

Resist Sex/Gender Link

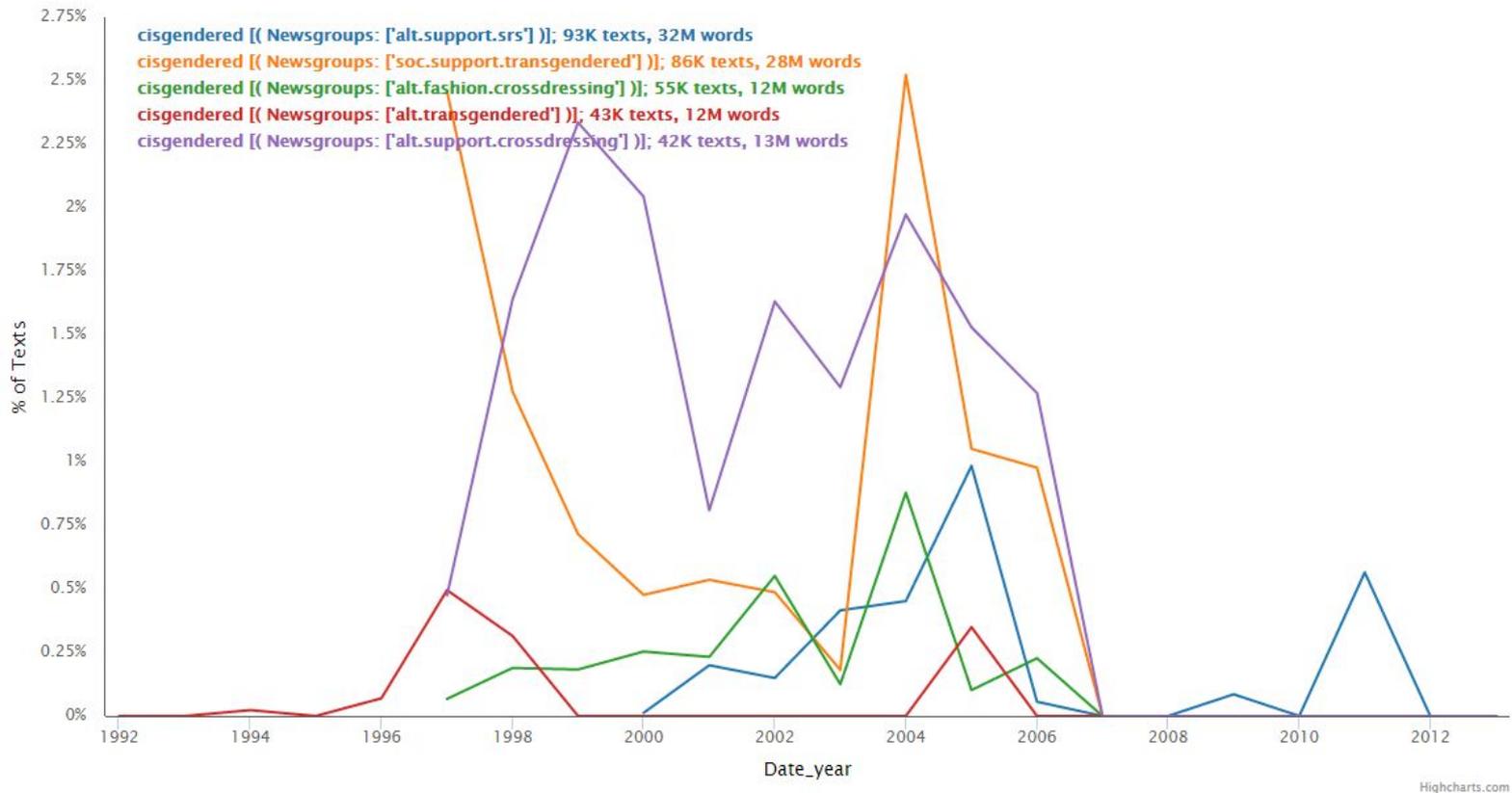
Division of Users

Transsexual

Transgender

Legal and Civil Recognition

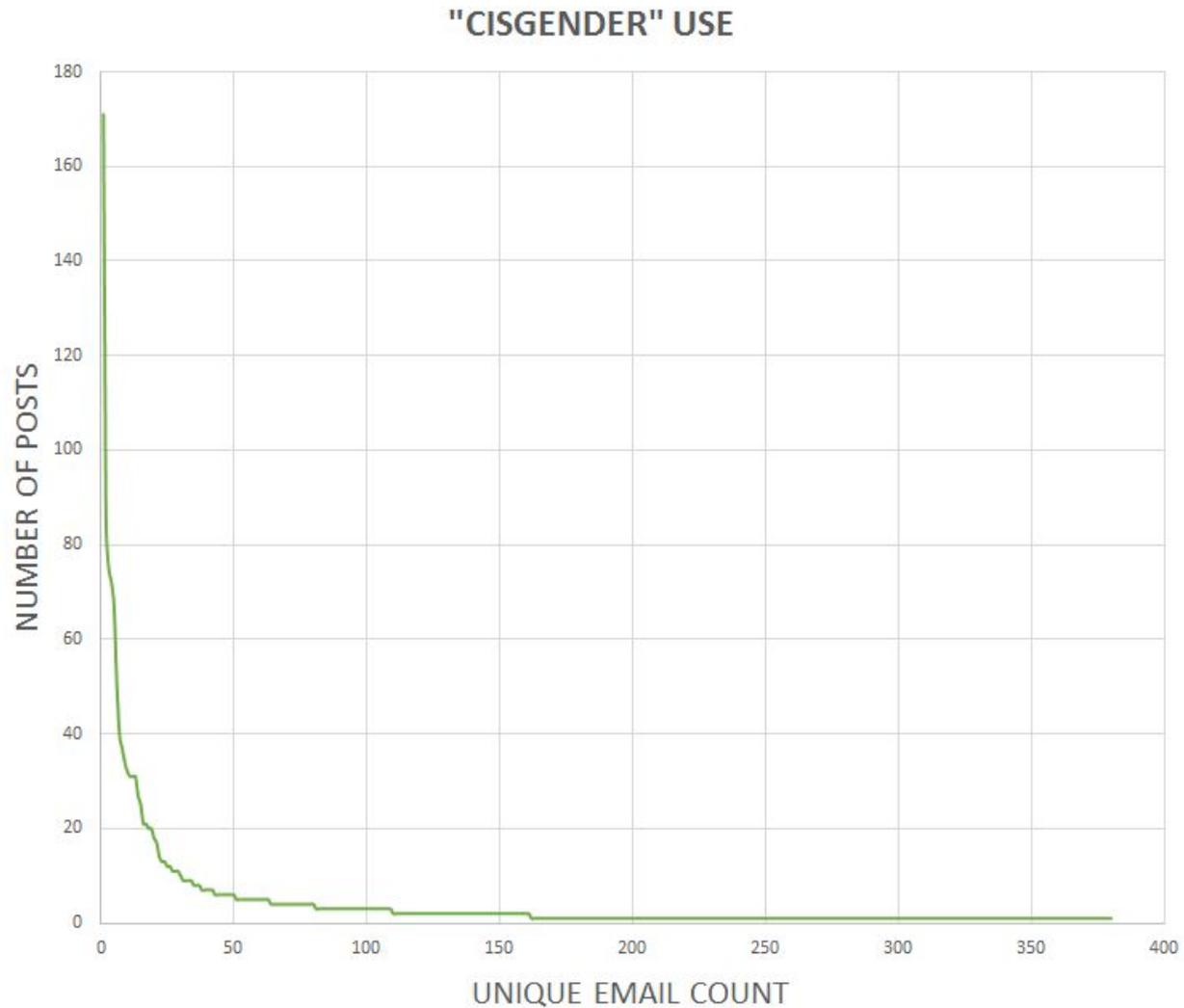
Resist Sex/Gender Link



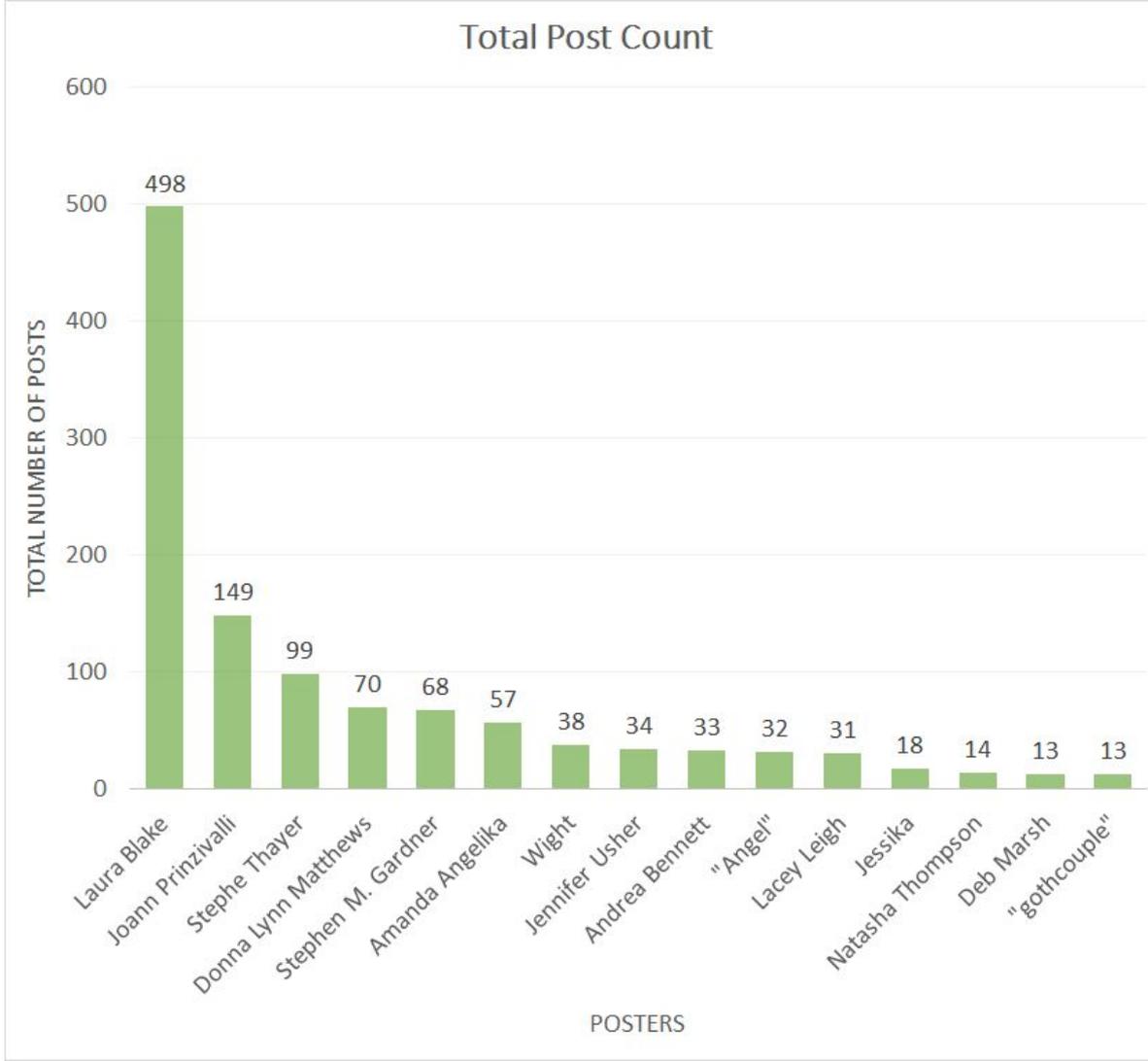
Highcharts.com

Percent of posts using “cisgendered”

Scatter plot tracking the number of posts using “cisgender” and variants per unique email address.



Bar chart ranking all posters who had **over 10 posts** in the corpus which used (not counting quoting) the term “cisgender” or “cisgendered” at least once. Email addresses aggregated under poster name.



"Usenet is like a herd of performing elephants with diarrhea. Massive, difficult to redirect, awe-inspiring, entertaining, and a source of mind-boggling amounts of excrement when you least expect it."

Gene Spafford on Usenet (1992)

Of the TG newsgroups that exist, (not including Trans-porn groups), only one has not been overrun with **petty bickering and feuds**, and that one group is slowly becoming a porn group. on alt.support.srs and soc.support.transgendered especially, **honest advice and support has become difficult to find**, because **a group of about 5 people spam the groups with constant disparaging remarks and flames, and will not cease doing so**. alt.support.transpeople would hopefully be an escape from such petty useless bickering, and be the supportive environment the others used to be.

Proposal for alt.support.transpeople newsgroup (2000)

From: Otten@worldcity.nl (Colleen Otten)
Subject: Re: Hello again
Date: 1997/05/10
Message-ID: <19970510165048671963@dyna11.worldcity.nl>#1/1
X-Deja-AN: 240585557
References: <3372B6FF.5470@mindspring.com>
X-XS4ALL-Date: Sat, 10 May 1997 16:51:30 CEST
Organization: The mirror of her dreams
Newsgroups: soc.support.transgendered

Tiffany Evelynn <evelynn@mindspring.com> wrote:

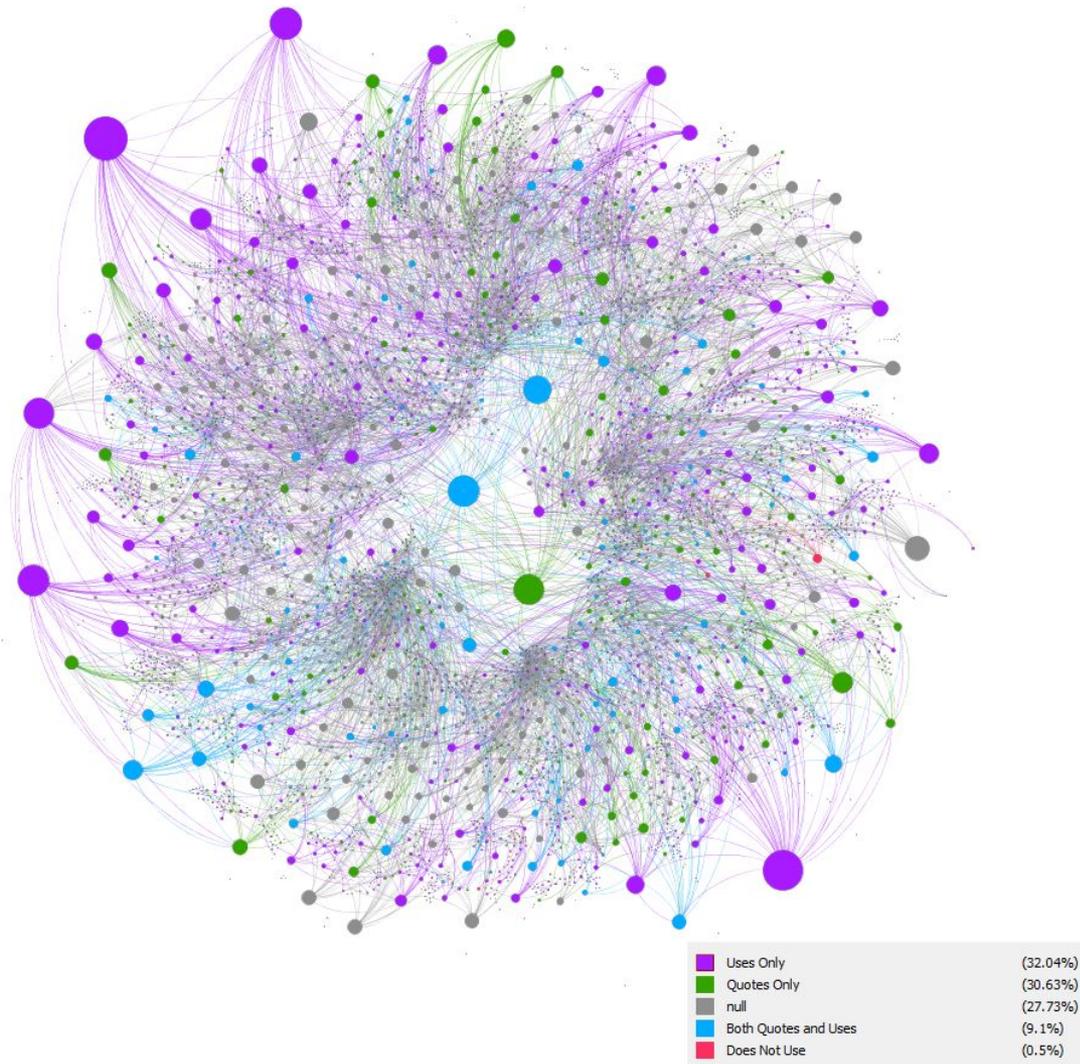
> Tomorrow I check on a higher paying job that i applied for. Tomorrow i
> sell my stocks to help pay the bills. Tomorrow I agonise over going out
> en femme for the first time ever. Tomorrow may be the first day that
> Eve truly gets to live. I have a lot of tomorrows and I have just now
> realised it.

Well Eve, today it's tomorrow and please tell us how things did go by the time tomorrow is yesterday.

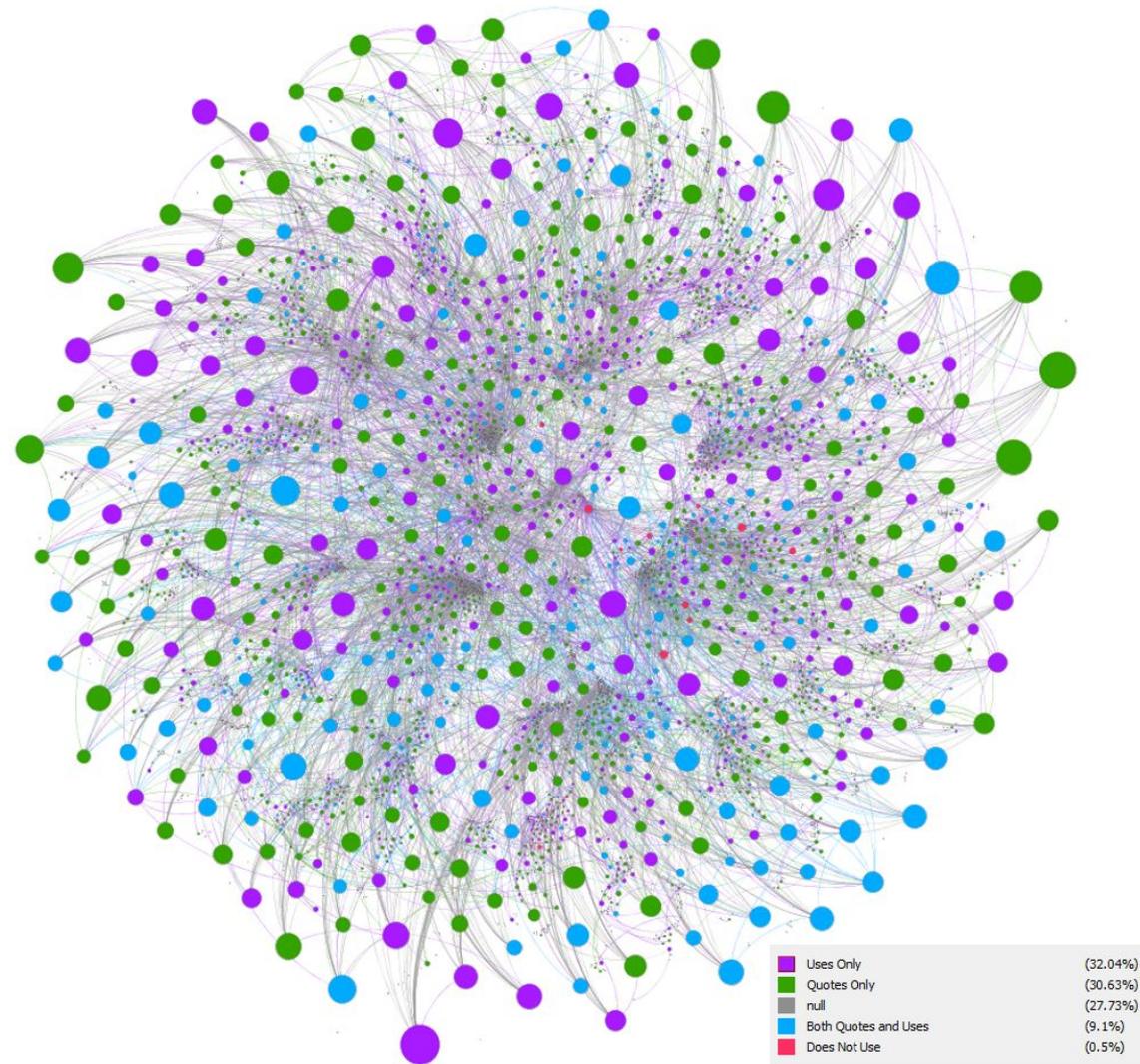
Colleen

Sample Usenet Post (with headers)

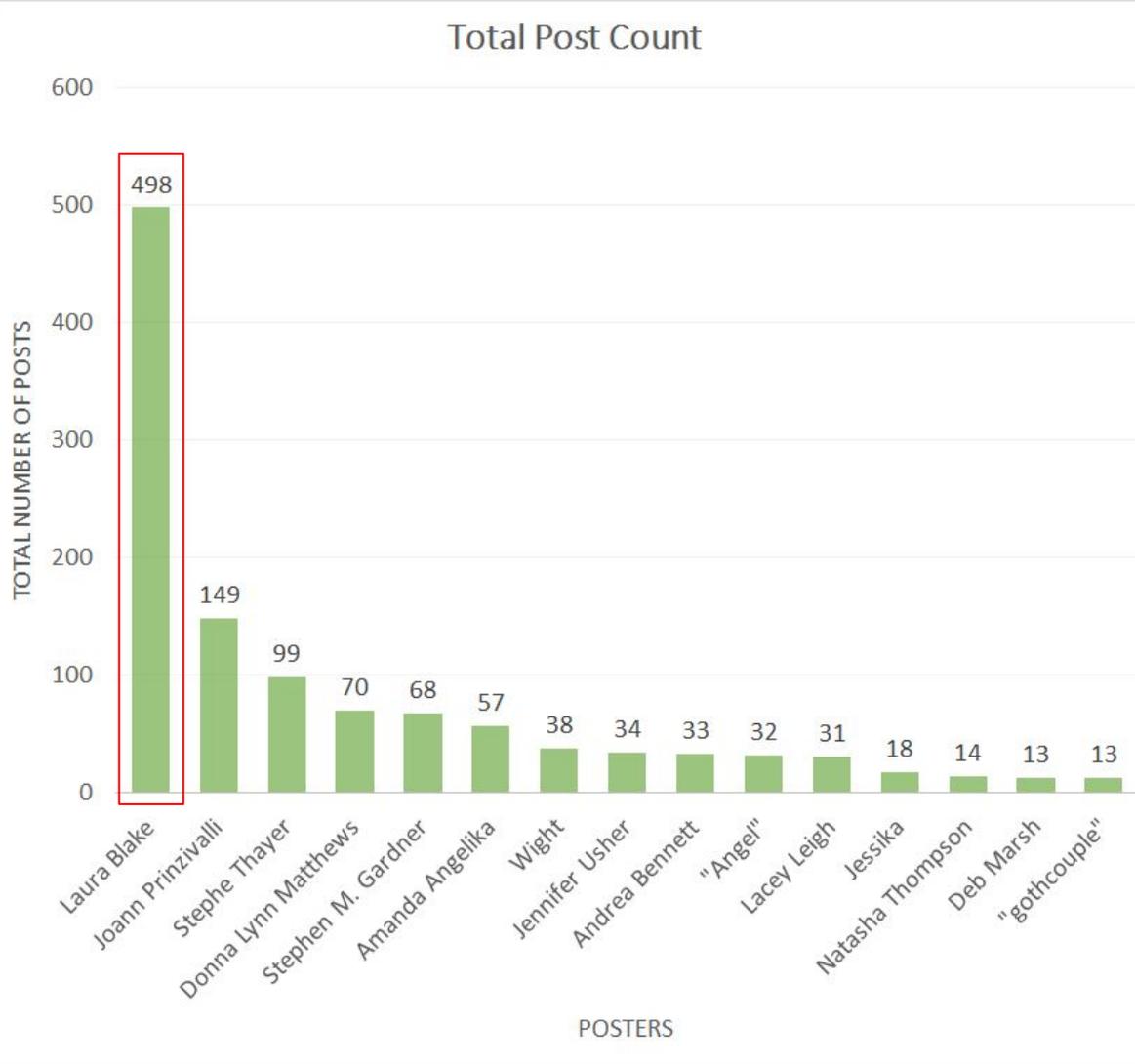
Network of posts with
“cisgender” and variants.
Nodes sized by in-degree of
connections, or number of
posts that are responding to
this post.



Network of posts with
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Nodes sized by out-degree of
connections, or number of
References the post has.



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“If people would stop attacking, I'd be more than happy to stop retaliating.”

Laura Blake on arguing with other Usenet posters

“Carl Buijs once made a simple comment ‘How come there's no name for people who are not transgendered?’ and offered us the word ‘Cisgendered’... this **profoundly clarified our relationship to the rest of the world** and resulted in a change in my thinking that has allowed me to tackle **many previously unfathomable problems.**”

Laura Blake on Buijs's creation of “cisgender” (2000)

This is the widely held notion that everyone is Cisgendered and those who are not should be. It is [the] mistaken belief that Transgender is an invalid state --one created by failure or disorder-- that needs to be fixed. The Cisgender Ideal can most easily be summarized by 4 simple rules.

The Cisgender Rules:

Everyone is Cisgendered by default.

It is wrong to be anything but Cisgendered.

Those who are not Cisgendered must appear Cisgendered.

Those who do not appear Cisgendered are beneath consideration.

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out how much trouble the Cisgender Ideal has caused transgendered people, over the last couple of centuries. These rules actually describe transphobia.

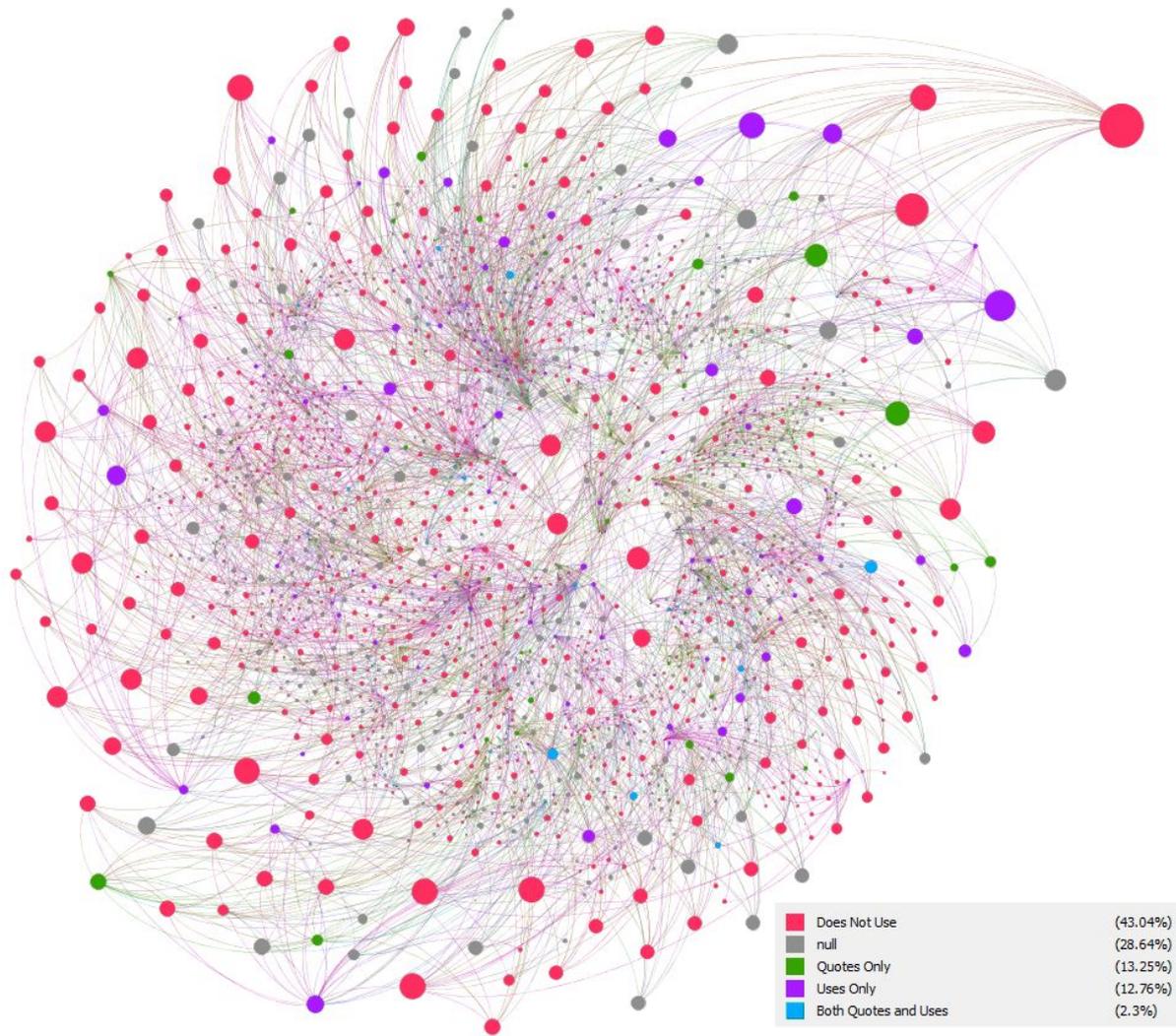
Laura Blake's definition of "Cisgender Ideal"

I am fascinated by Laura Blake. She is the most inspirational person I've ever read in any newsgroup. I've done a lot of thinking about the things she says. **Her four rules of the cisgendered ideal make me slap my forehead and say, "darn, why didn't I think of that?"**

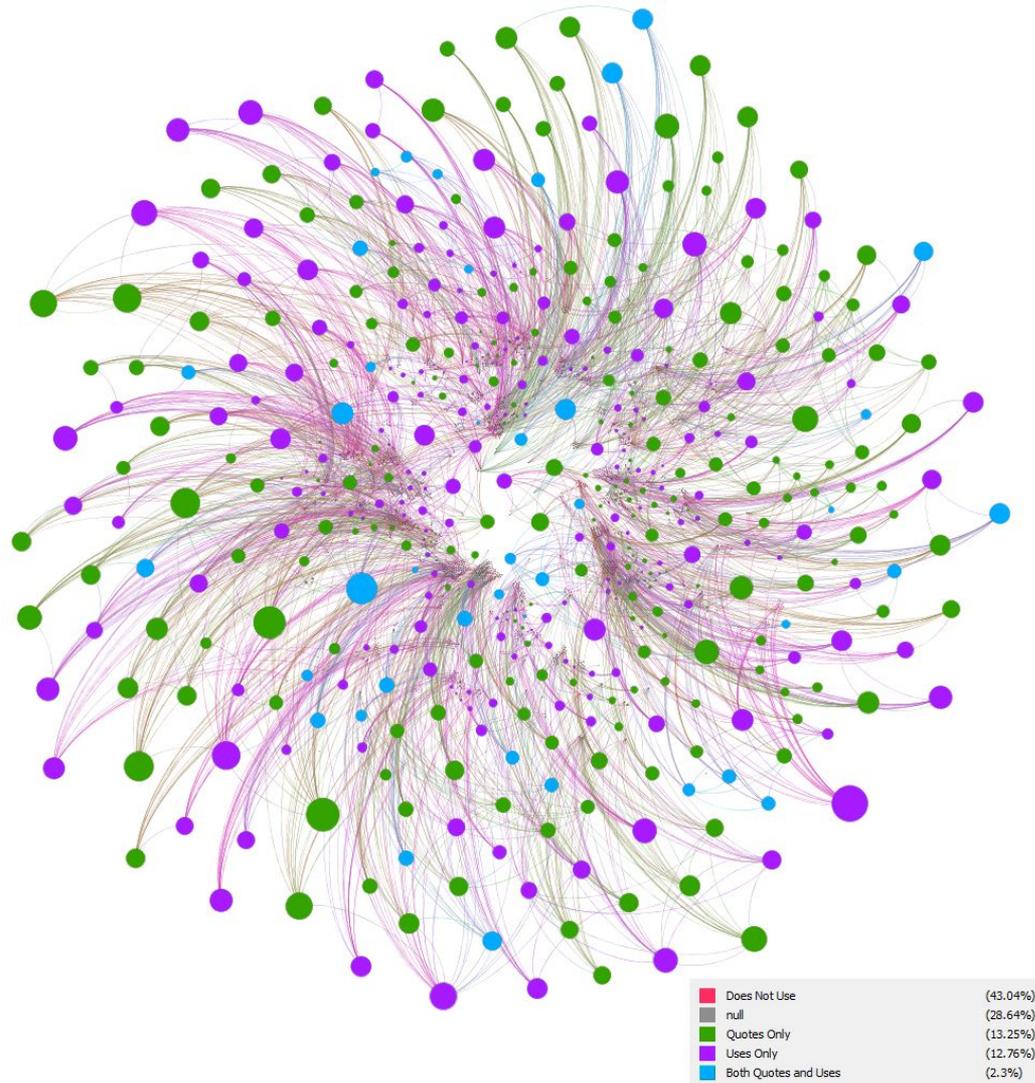
Laura, you've made me feel so much better about myself, and you've given me courage to try to be myself. I would hate to see you leave, although it does seem like you often take quite a beating--I think I can understand how you might feel. **I don't for a minute, however, believe that I am the only lurker or newbie that owes you sincere thanks.**

Toni on the impact of Laura Blake's "Cisgender Ideal"

Network of posts with “cisgender ideal,” “cisgendered ideal,” and “cisgender rules.” Nodes sized by in-degree of connections, or number of posts that are responding to this post.



Network of posts with “cisgender ideal,” “cisgendered ideal,” and “cisgender rules.” Nodes sized by out-degree of connections, or number of References the post has.



If I want to shave my head, grow a ZZ-Top beard, wear pink tights and a burgandy mini-skirt with a yellow sport coat and orange tie... Acceptance means that's just fine. Anything short of that, anything that prevents it, or causes me to hesitate about doing it, is not freedom... it's **a state of oppression**. But, notice how many of our so called activists get all bent out of shape over "passing" issues... they want freedom, but can't define it outside the cisgender ideal. They **don't understand what it means to be free as a transie... they just want permission to be one.**

Laura Blake on mainstream activism and the “cisgender ideal”

*"The best book I have ever read on crossdressing...
written by a crossdresser."*

Jane Ellen Fairfax
President, Tri-Ess International

“The only thing emancipated crossdressers are ‘afflicted’ with is abundant self acceptance, a lack of narrow mindedness, and a disturbing tendency to express our true selves. If this is a problem, then let’s define it as *Gender Identity Euphoria*, the treatment for which is MasterCard Therapy.”

Lacey Leigh”

Did you know:

- ✓ Perhaps as many as 5% of men crossdress;
- ✓ Most crossdressers are heterosexual, not gay;
- ✓ It’s about gender, not sex (there is a difference);
- ✓ Crossdressing is not a psychological disorder;
- ✓ You can finally enjoy guiltless crossdressing?

What would be on your private wish list if you wanted to **enjoy yourself** as a crossdresser? Perhaps you would develop a **positive self image**; discover for yourself the simple secret for **shameless shopping**; or determine the very best way to learn **how to explain crossdressing to others**, including your spouse, to **achieve full acceptance**; find out how emancipated crossdressers **go out and about in safety**; learn priceless tips to help with your **hair, makeup, jewelry, and foundations**.

The first item on your agenda might be learning how to **buy this book** without getting hassled. Page 65 tells you how.

Out & About is Ms. Lacey Leigh’s personal story of emancipation, told in a fresh, intelligent, and humorous style. It is intended to enlighten and encourage closeted crossdressers ultimately to dump the guilt, shame, and denial so they may finally and fully express themselves in a manner consistent with their inner gender.



Out & About - The Emancipated Crossdresser Lacey Leigh

Out & About

The Emancipated Crossdresser

A survival
guide for
men
who enjoy
looking and
dressing like
women

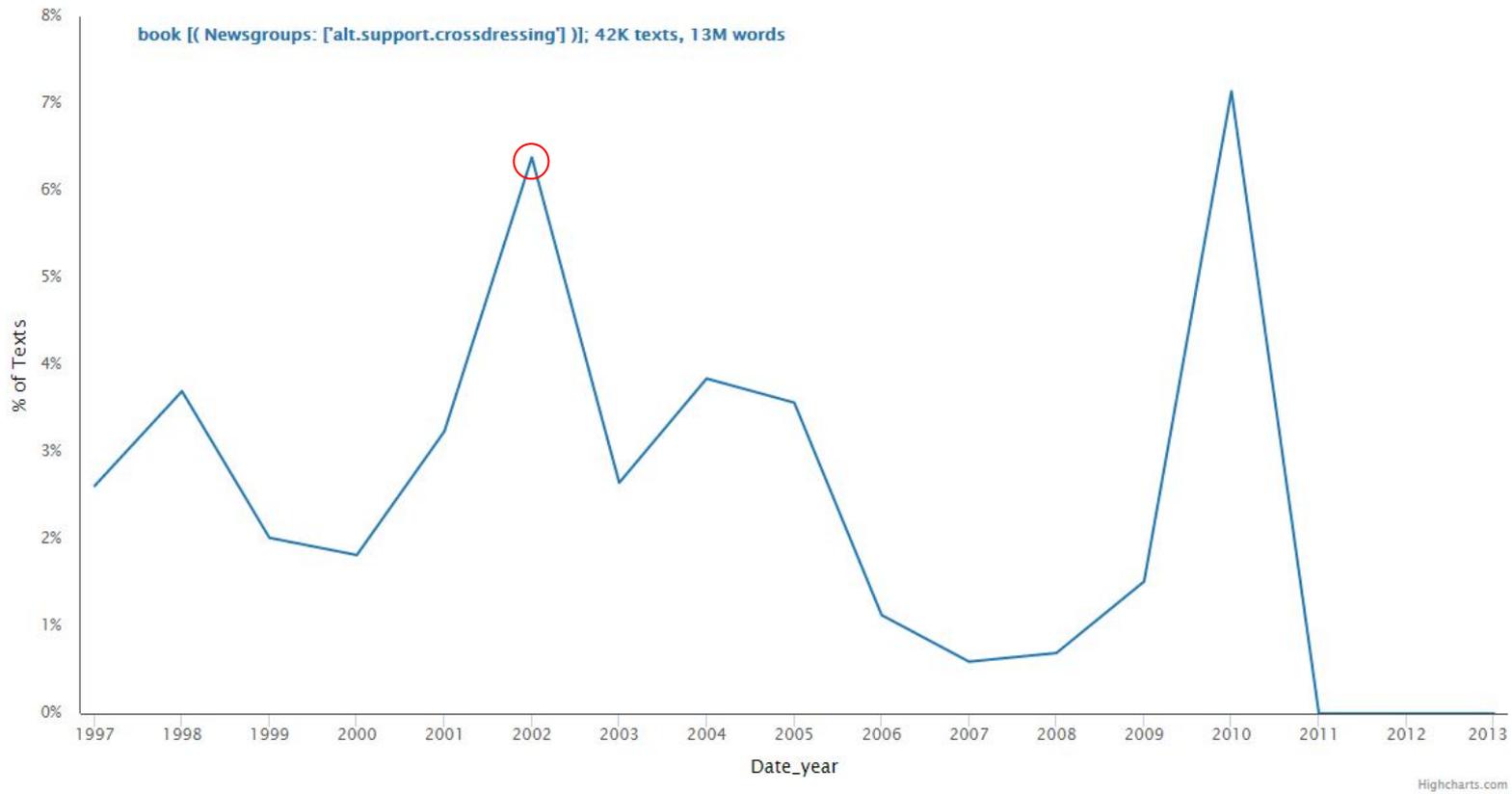
Ms. Lacey
Leigh



Includes a 9-
page chapter,
"Street Smart
& Safe"

“One of the ‘regulars’ who held court in that cyber community,” a “curmudgeonly Canadian activist whose mission seemed to be one of rubbing us raw with **the revolutionary idea of self acceptance and then picking at the scabs of those wounds so they wouldn't scar**; sort of a 'tough love' approach.” Blake’s approach “worked,” as “she, and countless supportive others, led, pushed, cajoled, bullied, and harassed me into thinking clearly about all this for the first time.”

Leigh on Laura Blake in *Out & About*



Percentage of archived posts to alt.support.crossdressing including the word “book”

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Includes a 9-
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Jeffrey Tambor at 2016 Emmys



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View source

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Cisgender

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Cisgender (often abbreviated to simply **cis**) is a term for people whose **gender identity** matches the **sex** that they were assigned at birth. *Cisgender* may also be defined as those who have "a gender identity or perform a gender role society considers appropriate for one's sex".^[1] It is the opposite of the term *transgender*.^[2]

Related terms include **cissexism** and **cisnormativity**.

Contents [hide]

- Etymology and terminology
- Critiques
 - From feminism and gender studies
 - From intersex organizations
- See also
- References
- Further reading
- External links

Etymology and terminology

German sexologist Volkmar Sigusch used the neologism *cissexual* (*zissexuell* in German) in a peer-reviewed publication. In his 1998 essay "The Neosexual Revolution", he cites his two-part 1991 article "Die Transsexuellen und unser nosomorpher Blick" ("Transsexuals and our nosomorphic view") as the origin of the term.^[3] He also used the term in the title of a 1995 article, "Transsexueller Wunsch und zissexuelle Abwehr" (or: "Transsexual desire and cissexual defense").^[4]

Cisgender has its origin in the Latin-derived prefix *cis-*, meaning "on this side of", which means the opposite of *trans-*, meaning "across from" or "on the other side of". This usage can be seen in the **cis–trans distinction** in chemistry, the **cis–trans or complementation test** in genetics, in **Ciscaucasia** (from the Russian perspective), and in the ancient Roman term **Cisalpine Gaul** (i.e., "Gaul on this side of the Alps"). In the case of gender, *cis-* describes the alignment of gender identity with assigned sex.^[5]

Sociologists Kristen Schilt and Laurel Westbrook define *cisgender* as a label for "individuals who have a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity".^[2] A number of derivatives of the terms *cisgender* and *cissexual* include *cis male* for "male assigned male at birth", *cis female* for "female assigned female at birth", colloquially *cis man*

Part of a series on

Transgender topics



Gender identities

- Agender / genderless · Androgyne · Bigender · Genderqueer / non-binary · Gender bender · Hijra · Pangender · Queer heterosexuality · Third gender · Trans man · Trans woman · Transmasculine · Transfeminine · Trigender · Two-Spirit

Health care and medicine

- Gender dysphoria (in children) · Health care · Pregnancy · Sex reassignment (therapy · surgery · to female · to male) · Transsexual

Legal and rights issues

- Discrimination (Inequality · Non-binary · Transmisogyny · Transphobia) · Gender recognition (Non-binary/third gender) · Rights movement (organizations) · Toilets (Bathroom bills · Unisex) · Violence (Trans bashing · Unlawful killings) · Yogyakarta Principles

Society and culture

- Characters (fictional · film and television · LGBT-related films) · Events (Awareness Week · Day of Remembrance · Day of Visibility · March · LGBT) · Flags · History · People (non-binary) · Publications

WHIPPING GIRL

2ND
EDITION

a transsexual woman on sexism
and the scapegoating of femininity

JULIA SERANO

Cissexual/Cisgender

decentralizing the dominant group

Format: [HTML](#)

Date: 06/17/2002

Since several people emailed me to inquire about the words "cissexual" and "cissexism," I thought I'd make a public clarification.

"Cis" is a prefix for "on this side of" rooted in Latin. Common words that use this prefix include:

- cisular (situated between the earth and the moon)
- cisatlantic (situated on this side of the Atlantic Ocean)
- cismontane (situated on this side of the mountains)

There are also many scientific words that use the prefix "cis" in its second definition, which is "having a pair of identical atoms or groups on the same side of a plane that passes through two carbon atoms linked by a double bond." (all definitions are taken from American Heritage Dictionary on my computer):

According to Donna Lynn Matthews, the term "cisgender" was first coined by Carl Buch, a transsexual man, in 1995 (source: http://cydathra.com/mis_donna/ig_def.html). "Cissexual" probably came from that, in reference to "transgender vs. transsexual." You might want to search for the terms "cissexual" and "cisgender" on the web to find their actual usage.

I learned the words "cissexual," "cissexist," and "cisgender" from trans activists who wanted to turn the table and define the words that describe non-transsexuals and non-transgenders rather than always being defined and described by them. By using the term "cissexual" and "cisgender," they decentralize the dominant group, exposing it as merely one possible alternative rather than the "norm" against which trans people are defined. I don't expect the word to come into common usage anytime soon, but I feel it was an interesting concept - a feminist one, in fact - which is why I am using it.

In Cisgender (borrowing from cis),

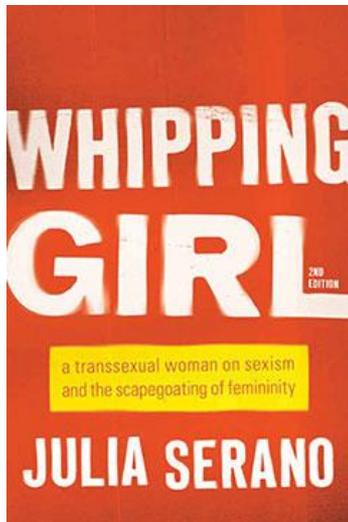
Emi Kiyama <emi@eminism.org>

...
<http://eminism.org/> - putting the emi back in feminism since 1975.

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In Cisgender (borrowing from 18c.).

Emi Kiyama <emi@eminism.org>

<http://eminism.org/> - Putting the Kimi back in Feminism since 1975.

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Definitions

By: Donna Lynn Matthews, May 1999

Lord Polonius: What do you read, my lord?
Hamlet: Words, words, words.
Hamlet - Act II, Scene II

We use a lot of different words (labels, terms, descriptors, etc.) to describe ourselves. Some seem self evident while others take on different meanings depending upon to whom you speak. Below are some of the terms used by the transgendered community and my take on what they mean.

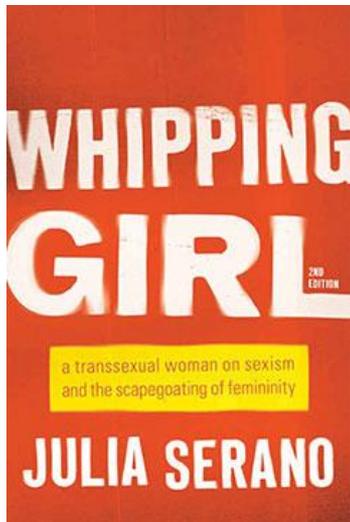
Note: All dictionary definitions are taken from The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary located at <http://www.m-w.com>

- Sex
- Gender
- Cisgender
- Transgender
- Bigender
- Intergender
- Cisgender Ideal
- Binary Gender
- Gender Coordination

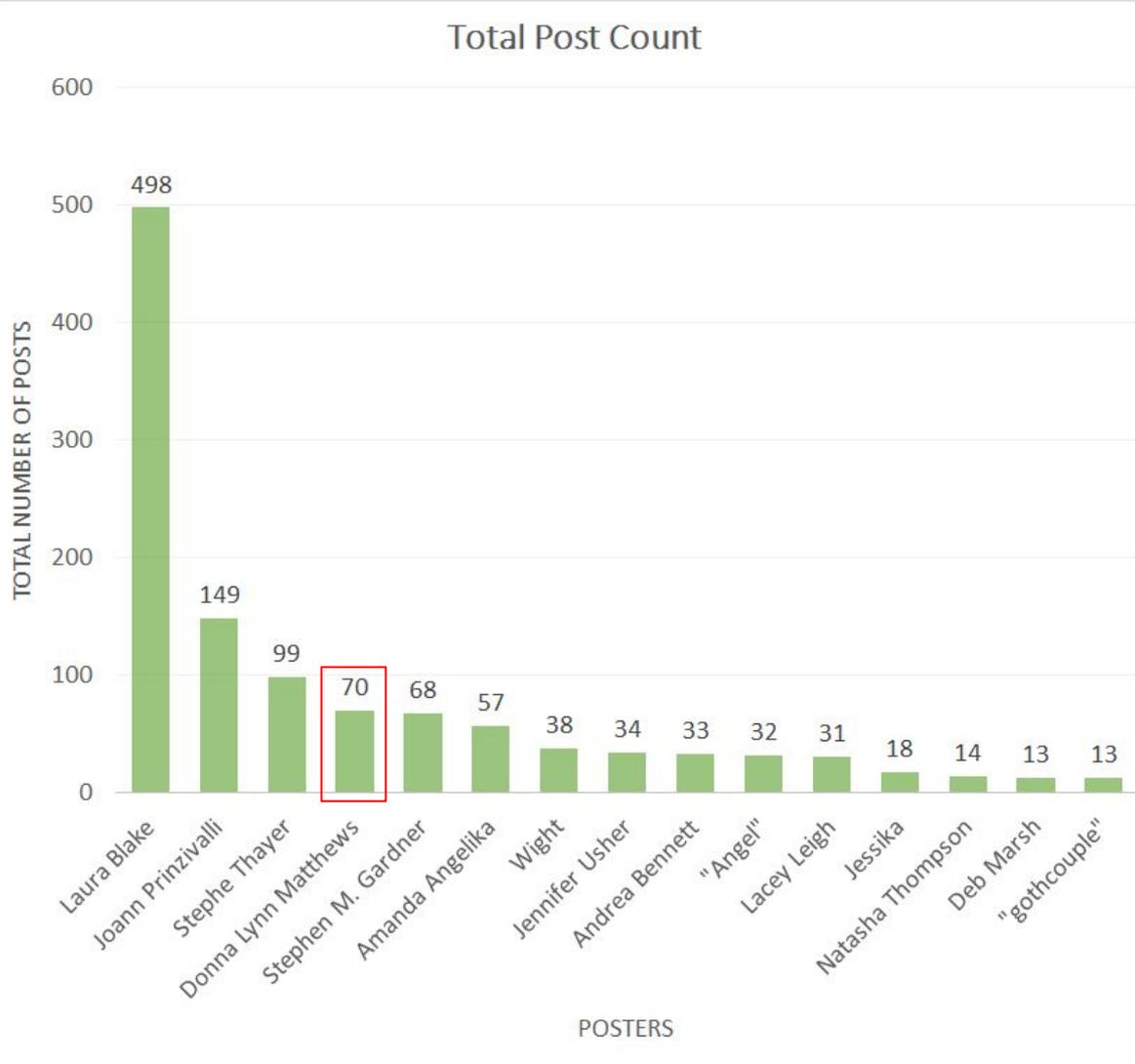
Sex

Main Entry: sex
Function: noun
Etymology: Middle English, from Latin *sexus*
Date: 14th century
Meaning: 1: either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male
2: the sum of the structural, functional, and behavioral characteristics of living things that are involved in reproduction by two interacting partners and that distinguish males and females
3: a: sexually oriented phenomena or behavior
b: SEXUAL INTERCOURSE
4: GENTILIA

Definition 4 is the most common interpretation. When we talk about our sex, we almost always are talking about our genitalia. In common daily usage, sex is about parts: penises and vaginas.



Bar chart ranking all posters who had **over 10 posts** in the corpus which used (not counting quoting) the term “cisgender” or “cisgendered” at least once. Email addresses aggregated under poster name.



Cissexual/Cisgender
decentralizing the dominant group

Forum: 03/25/12
Date: 06/17/2012
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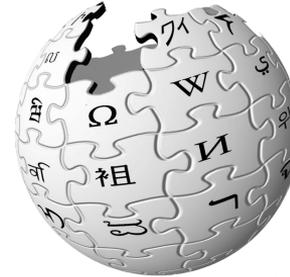
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WHIPPING GIRL
2ND EDITION

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and the scapegoating of femininity

JULIA SERANO

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decentralizing the dominant group

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Date: 06/17/2002
Since several people emailed me to inquire about the words "cissexual" and "cissexim," I thought I'd make a public clarification.
"cis" is a prefix for "on this side of" rooted in Latin. Common words that use this prefix include:

- **cisular** (situated between the earth and the moon)
- **cisatlantic** (situated on this side of the Atlantic Ocean)
- **cismontane** (situated on this side of the mountains)

There are also many scientific words that use the prefix "cis-" in its second definition, which is "having a pair of identical atoms or groups on the same side of a plane that passes through two carbon atoms linked by a double bond." (all definitions are taken from American Heritage Dictionary on my computer).

According to Donna Lynn Matthews, the term "cisgender" was first coined by Carl Bunyk, a transsexual man, in 1995 (source: http://cyberlife.com/mis_donna/03_dof.html). "Cissexual" probably came from that, in reference to "transgender" vs. "transsexual." You might want to search for the terms "cissexual" and "cisgender" on the web to find their social usage.

I learned the words "cissexual," "cissexist," and "cisgender" from trans activists who wanted to turn the table and define the words that describe non-transsexual and non-transgender rather than always being defined and described by them. By using the term "cissexual" and "cisgender," they decentralize the dominant group, exposing it as merely one possible alternative rather than the "norm" against which trans people are defined. I don't expect the word to come into common usage anytime soon, but I feel it was an interesting concept - a feminist one, in fact - which is why I am using it.

In Cisgender (borrowing from 18c.).
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Definitions

By: Donna Lynn Matthews, May 1999

Lord Polonius: What do you read, my lord?
Hamlet: Words, words, words.
 Hamlet - Act II, Scene II

We use a lot of different words (labels, terms, descriptors, etc.) to describe ourselves. Some seem self evident while others take on different meanings depending upon to whom you speak. Below are some of the terms used by the transgendered community and my take on what they mean.

Note: All dictionary definitions are taken from The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary located at <http://www.m-w.com>

- Sex
- Gender
- Cisgender
- Transgender
- Bigender
- Intergender
- Cisgender Ideal
- Binary Gender
- Gender Coordination

Sex

Main Entry: sex
 Function: noun
 Etymology: Middle English, from Latin *sexus*
 Date: 14th century
 Meaning: 1: either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male
 2: the sum of the structural, functional, and behavioral characteristics of living things that are involved in reproduction by two interacting parents and that distinguish males and females
 3: a: sexually associated phenomena or behavior
 b: SEXUAL INTERCOURSE
 4: GENITALIA

Definition 4 is the most common interpretation. When we talk about our sex, we almost always are talking about our genitalia. In common daily usage, sex is about pants, penises and vaginas.

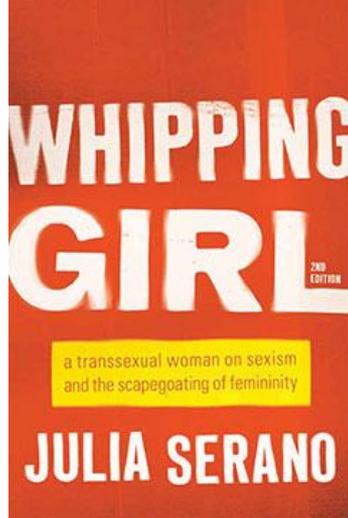
T-VOX



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia



Susan's Place
Transgender Resources
We Stand at the Crossroads of Gender, Balanced on the Sharp Edge of a Knife



The term Cisgender was coined in 1995 by Carl Buijs, a *female-to-male* transsexual from the Netherlands.

Main Entry: cis-

Function: prefix

Etymology: Latin, from cis

Meaning: 1: on this side <cislunar>

2: usually ital : cis <cis-dichloroethylene> -- compare [TRANS- 2b](#)

As we are not talking about chemistry, it is definition 1 that we want.

As we defined [gender](#) above to mean "the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex", Cisgendered literally means: on this side of the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex.

Stated simply, **it means that one's identity and presentation *matches* their physical morphology.**

Matthews' definition of "cisgender" (1999)

cisgender, *adj.* and *n.*

Text size: A AView as: [Outline](#) | [Full entry](#)Quotations: [Show all](#) | [Hide all](#) **Keywords:** [On](#) | [Off](#)

Pronunciation: Brit.  /sɪsˈdʒɛndə/, U.S.  /sɪsˈdʒɛndər/

Frequency (in current use): ●●●●●●●●

Origin: Formed within English, by derivation. **Etymons:** *CIS-* prefix, *GENDER n.*

Etymology: < *CIS-* prefix + *GENDER n.*, after *TRANSGENDER adj.*

A. *adj.*

Designating a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds to his or her sex at birth; of or relating to such persons. Contrasted with *transgender*.

1997 *Seeking TS Woman in alt.transgendered* (Usenet newsgroup) 15 June The cisgender world treats us all the same, to them we are just a bunch of drag-fags.

2007 J. SERANO *Whipping Girl* 91 The transgender movement has taken a similar approach to confronting transphobia, by encouraging cisgender people to become comfortable with their own expressions of femininity and/or masculinity in order to be respectful of those expressions in others.

2013 *New Yorker* 25 Mar. 42/3 A drama instructor in her first year of teaching..described herself as a cisgender woman.

(Hide quotations)

B. *n.*

A cisgender person.

2007 *Other Mag.* No. 12. 17/2 Cisgenders better be scared of trannies, cuz we're all huddled up at the edge ready to lose it!

2013 S. EISNER *Bi* 107 Even in regard to cisgenders, research shows that it's 'easier' for people to identify male than female features, meaning that the default 'visible' person in our culture is male 'unless proven otherwise.'

(Hide quotations)