

CAPTURING HATE

Eyewitness videos provide new source of data on prevalence of transphobic violence

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ABOUT the WITNESS MEDIA LAB

This report is the result of the 2016 WITNESS Media Lab Curation Fellowship.

The WITNESS Media Lab, a WITNESS program in collaboration with Google News Lab, is dedicated to unleashing the potential of eyewitness video as a powerful tool to report, monitor, and advocate for human rights. We believe that the next stage of human rights documentation and advocacy will be powered by videos created and shared by eyewitnesses. Our work addresses the challenges of finding, verifying, and contextualizing those videos. In collaboration with peers from the fields of advocacy, technology, and journalism, we develop solutions to ensure that footage taken by average citizens can serve as an effective tool for justice.

ABOUT WITNESS

WITNESS trains and supports activists and citizens around the world to use video safely, ethically, and effectively to expose human rights abuse and fight for human rights change.



Share: copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Adapt: remix, transform, and build upon the material

Attribution: You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

NonCommercial: You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

ShareAlike: If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

TRIGGER WARNING

This report contains text and images that are racist, transphobic, homophobic, and portray acts of physical violence involving transgender and gender non-conforming people

If you have witnessed or experienced violence based on gender identity and/or sexual orientation, and need to talk with someone or want support, we've included some resources below:

Hotlines for Survivors of Violence

THE NEW YORK CITY ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP) 1-212-714-1141 English/Spanish | 24/7/365

SAFE HORIZON Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline 1-800-621-HOPE (4673) English/Spanish | 24/7/365

TRANS LIFELINE 1-877-565-8860 U.S. 1-877-330-6366 Canada

TREVOR PROJECT LIFELINE 1-866-488-7386

RISE 1-855-886-RISE (7443) | 24/7/365

THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE 1-800-799-7233

GLBT NATIONAL HOTLINE 1.866.86 BRAVO (7286)

THE NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE 1-800-656-4673

Direct Services Providers for Survivors of Violence

The New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP), New York City

AVP provides direct client services to LGBTQ & HIV-affected survivors of all forms of violence including hate violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, pick-up violence, and institutional violence in all five boroughs of New York City.

212.714.1184 | TTY: 212.714.1134 | avp.org

FORGE

FORGE is a national transgender anti-violence organization that provides direct services to transgender, gender non-conforming and gender non-binary survivors of sexual assault.

414-559-2123 | AskFORGE@forge-forward.org

Vicarious Trauma Resources for Journalists, Human Rights Workers and Direct Service Providers

Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma Evewitness Media Hub



Gay Activist Alliance, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. "Suffolk County police headquarters protest, Hauppauge, New York, 1971 Aug 22" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e4-2935-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99

The persistent lack of data on transgender people's lives from authoritative federal surveys is one of the greatest policy failures facing the trans movement today.

National Center for Transgender Equality



PREFACE

The WITNESS Media Lab incubates emerging technologies and practices dedicated to unleashing the potential of eyewitness video as a powerful tool to report, monitor, and advocate for human rights.

Our newest project, "Capturing Hate," studied viewer engagement with eyewitness videos that show acts of transphobic violence that were filmed, shared, and engaged with as entertainment. The videos and viewer engagement with them tell a powerful and disturbing story of the abusive and often life threatening environments that transgender and gender nonconforming people navigate daily.

The hard won legal victories that the LGBTQ community has achieved in the U.S. has triggered a backlash. There have been over 100 proposed anti-LGBTQ state laws since the passage of marriage equality in June 2015, many of them specifically targeting transgender people. Anti-LGBTQ violence, particularly against transgender people of color, has been called an "epidemic" by anti-violence groups, and, a majority of U.S. states can legally exclude transgender communities from public accommodation, employment, housing and healthcare.

Meeting the needs and understanding the issues facing transgender and gender nonconforming people is understudied because general population surveys that currently determine policy, social services and funding do not include questions about gender identity beyond the male and female binary. And, being uncounted means being overlooked.

This project explores the untapped potential of eyewitness video as a way to fill that gap. By collecting and analyzing viewer engagement with eyewitness videos, we've found an innovative way of unmasking patterns of discrimination and abuse. Further, it challenges the conventional notion that data affecting policy and funding is only valuable if gleaned from government, institutional or academic surveys.

In an effort to address the shortcomings of federal data and to supplement other research the WITNESS Media Lab looked to eyewitness videos of transphobic violence and the viewer engagement with them as a new and arguably more compelling source of data. We found hundreds of videos made not with the intention of exposing or prosecuting abuse, but rather, content that is captured, shared, and engaged with as entertainment.

Our analysis of the engagement with those videos -- including ratings, comments and how the videos are captured, titled and described -- proves that abuse and discrimination against transgender people is widespread and undercounted. And, the content condones, or even encourages, violent acts against them. The existence of these videos and the volume of hateful engagement pose a direct threat to gender nonconforming people and compromise a positive and empowered representation of these communities.

However, we think that there are ethical and effective ways that these videos, though they are intended to cause harm, can be used for advocacy. Balancing the tensions between re-victimization and exploitation and the potent way video exposes abuse is an ongoing challenge. But, there is no doubting the singular impact of eyewitness video in exposing human rights abuses and empowering marginalized communities.

PROJECT SCOPE

This report is the result of the 2016 WITNESS Media Lab Curation Fellowship.

To scope this project for a 15-week engagement, our study includes just a small sampling of the tens of thousands of videos we found that included transgender and gender nonconforming people as targets of assault, being threatened or intimidated, harassed, stalked, bullied, mocked, as targets in violent video games, portrayed as deviant on television shows and in film, and even murdered. We studied viewer

engagement only with videos that captured physical assault and we analyzed data from four very different sites. We included YouTube, where we found the most videos, but the content represents just a small segment of the platform's total offerings. World Star Hip Hop and Fly Height are "shock" sites that solicit and promote these videos to drive traffic and to monetize as part of their business models. And, Live Leak, a video aggregator that promotes itself as a cutting edge news outlet known for breaking particularly gruesome content (e.g., the execution of Saddam Hussein).

Significantly absent from this study is the viewer engagement data from eyewitness videos hosted on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Vine. In our URL harvests we found thousands of video links on these platforms matching the search criteria, and tens of thousands of Facebook "likes" from platforms we did analyze. In test studies we found that most videos were uploaded to a hosting platform then shared to social media platforms furthering viewer engagement. Capturing and analyzing that data exceeded project resources in both cost and capacity.

Even with this small sample size, LGBTQ advocacy organizations we consulted were surprised by the number of eyewitness videos of violence against transgender people and stunned by how widely viewed and favorably rated they were. Most alarming are the vitriolic comments that are ongoing. We found videos posted years ago that are still being engaged with today.

This study tells the story of abuse suffered by transgender and gender nonconforming people in a unique and compelling way. Just as eyewitness video of police brutality in communities of color in the U.S. removed plausible deniability and launched a worldwide movement demanding transparency and change, it is our hope that these findings raise greater awareness and spark discussion of the cultural and political climate that is fostering discrimination and encouraging violence against transgender communities. And, we hope it creates a sense of urgency in making laws and policies that protect them.

PARTNERS & ADVISORS



Kylar BroadusExecutive Director, Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC)

There's not been enough research on what the real trans experience is like. This report and its findings illustrate the violent reality of our lives in a way that's not been seen to date.



Beverly TilleryExecutive Director, New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP)

For many people, the existence of these videos is a secondary act of violence. We need to seriously consider policies that give control back to the survivors.



New York City Anti-Violence Project

AVP was founded in 1980 in Chelsea in reaction to neighborhood incidents of anti-gay violence. Today, AVP provides free and confidential assistance to thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected people each year from all five boroughs of New York City through direct client services and community organizing and public advocacy. AVP was named a White House Champion of Change for our work on intimate partner violence within LGBTQ & HIV-affected communities. In 2010, their Board of Directors received the Alan Morrow Prize for Board Excellence from the Stonewall Foundation.



Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC)

Founded in 2010, Trans People of Color was created as a response to people of color (POC) who felt unheard and underrepresented in the trans equality movement. TPOCC became an effort to organize trans people of color to assure that POC voices be at the center of the conversation and are included in making key decisions that impact the trans community at large.







Metropolitaninteractive

PROJECT ADVISORS

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M. Dru Levasseur, Transgender Rights Project National Director Lambda Legal

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TERMINOLOGY

Gender variance, or gender nonconformity, is behavior or gender expression by an individual that does not conform to prescribed social, cultural, religious and legal precepts. People who exhibit gender variance may be called gender variant, gender non-conforming, gender diverse, gender atypical or genderqueer, and may be transgender or otherwise variant in their gender identity.

GENDER BINARY

The gender binary is the classification of sex and gender into two distinct, opposite and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine.

GENDER NONCONFORMING

Gender nonconforming refers to people who do not follow other people's ideas or stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the female or male sex they were assigned at birth.

TRANSGENDER

Transgender is a general term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

TRANSFEMININE

Transfeminine is a term used to describe transgender people who were assigned male at birth, but identify with femininity to a greater extent than with masculinity.

TRANSMASCULINE

Transmasculine is a term used to describe transgender people who were assigned female at birth, but identify with masculinity to a greater extent than with femininity.



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Research Terms and Engagement Findings

To find videos of violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people that have been captured, shared and engaged with as entertainment, we searched with the most common* derogatory terms used by filmers and viewers to describe the content.

These search terms ("tranny fight" and "stud fight") located the most videos that were captured and shared not for advocacy purposes, but to disparage, mock and humiliate trans and gender non-conforming people. They are hateful and meant to cause harm.

Examples of the comments made by viewers are particularly disturbing.

Video Screen Shots

To illustrate the violent acts, and the vitriol of viewers' responses to them, we've included screen shots from four of the videos we found. They show transgender and gender non-conforming people being physically assaulted.

^{*} In preliminary searches we used over 90 other words and phrases; these phrases returned the most videos matching our research framework

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Engagement Data

Viewer engagement with videos of physical violence against transgender and gender nonconforming people that were captured, shared, and engaged with as entertainment. 89,233,760 VIEWS number of times videos were watched

project scope

videos of physical assaults found & analyzed

search terms used* tranny fight & stud fight

platforms / sites searched
YouTube, World Star Hip Hop, Live Leak, Fly Height

601,300 SHARES

554,143

number of times videos were rated favorably by viewers

230,262 comments

number of comments made by viewers

number of times videos were shared

^{*} derogatory terms used by filmers and viewers when describing, rating or commenting on violent acts involving transgender and gender nonconforming people

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Viewer Engagement by Platform





From the comments "I would've loved to see him throw the trannie onto the tracks!"



From the comments

"Am I the only one who feels physically sick when looking at trannys?"





From the comments
"LMFAO what did IT expect coming over there
talking smack & trying to push IT's lifestyle on
normal people they should have all took turns
shoving large objects up IT's vag and butt"



From the comments
"A man that's all. no woman and will never be.
don't care how many dicks he suck and fuck.
nasty gay bastard."



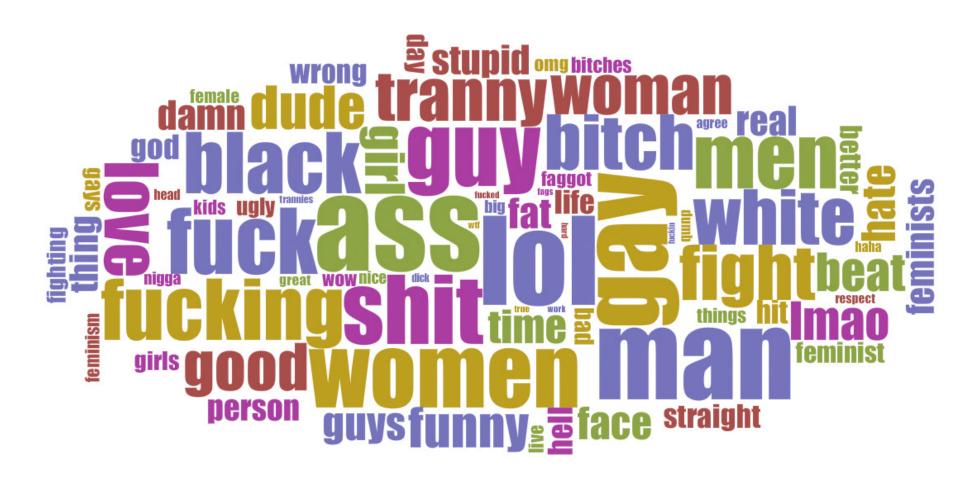
Live Leak

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Viewer Engagement by Search Phrase

tranny fight	stud fight	search phrase phrases used to find eyewitness videos
196	133	videos number of eyewitness videos of physical assaults
63,131,514	26,102,246	views number of times the eyewitness videos were watched
595,466	5,834	shares number of times the eyewitness videos were shared
292,642	261,501	likes number of times the eyewitness videos were liked by viewers
144,434	85,828	comments number of viewer comments about the eyewitness videos

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Comments Word Cloud, Tranny Fight

Visualization of comments from all videos found with the search phrase "tranny fight"



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Comments Word Cloud, Stud Fight

Visualization of comments from all videos found with the search phrase "stud fight"



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Observations

The search terms we used to source the greatest volume of video links almost exclusively captured incidents from urban environments involving people of color. We found the most videos on YouTube, which is not surprising given the platform's enormous inventory. The videos most engaged with were found on, or originated from, "shock" entertainment sites. We acknowledge that the observations and conclusions in this report cannot fully capture the attitudes toward trans and gender nonconforming people in urban communities of color.

64% of total videos were found on YouTube

Despite policies that explicitly prohibit content that incites hatred or promotes violence against individuals and groups based on race, sexual orientation and gender identity, we found more videos on YouTube than on all three other platforms combined. We do not, however, know how many videos of this kind have been removed for violating these terms.

39% of videos on YouTube were categorized as entertainment or comedy

The most popular category was the default "People & Blogs" at 42%.

99% of total ratings were "likes"

Viewers gave the content favorable ratings -- e.g., liked, LOL, thumbs up, hilarious, etc. -- overwhelmingly more than negative or critical responses.

71% of total views were on World Star Hip Hop

Shock sites World Star Hip Hop and Fly Height hosted fewer videos, but dominated viewer engagement. Several of the most brutal videos were viewed by millions on these platforms.

urban spaces, people of color

A majority of the transfeminine encounters occurred in crowded urban, public spaces.

A majority of the transmasculine encounters occurred in more private spaces, with fewer bystanders.

Nearly all encounters involved people of color as victim, perpetrator, or both.

brand advertising with content

Major brands have advertising inline and adjacent to the videos on YouTube and World Star Hip Hop, including State Farm insurance, Heineken, and Applebee's.

ongoing engagement

Videos continue to be viewed, shared and commented on years after they were originally posted.

questioning gender, characteristics of "real" men and women

Titles, descriptions and comments contain transphobic language that suggests viewers' rigid attachment to a gender binary, especially the presumptive appearance, mannerisms and dress associated with those roles. Behaviors in the videos as well as viewer engagement show open hostility to gender transgression.

conflating sexual orientation and gender identity

Transphobic and homophobic comments overwhelmingly show viewers assumption that a subject's sexual orientation is based on gender presentation.

My private life has been exposed to the world. I lost my job. I cannot go anywhere without the fear of getting hurt again. I want to go into a hole and hide.

Chrissy Polis, Survivor



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conclusions

These eyewitness videos document mistreatment of transgender and gender nonconforming people ranging from disrespect to murder. They show acts of violence against these communities that are not only tolerated, but encouraged and glorified.

The viewer engagement with these eyewitness videos reveal deeply held biases that intersect race, sex, class and gender identity. The attitudes expressed by viewers overwhelmingly blame gender nonconforming people for the violence and hatred perpetrated against them and expose a visceral rejection of people transgressing accepted notions of gender expression.

"I would have fucking killed that aids ridden little faggot with daddy issues that wants to call himself a girl." Viewer Comment

The ongoing engagement with these videos and the hostility expressed by viewers are compounding acts of discrimination that traumatize not only individual victims, but have broader consequences for gender nonconforming communities as a whole. They are a persistent reminder of the threat to the physical and emotional safety of all people who identify beyond the gender binary.

These eyewitness videos and their corresponding viewer engagement have real and sustained impact. A survivor's loss of privacy and control over their public image in the aftermath often compounds injury with the loss of employment, housing, and personal relationships. The circulation and replaying of these traumatic events not only denies survivors a safe space to heal, but has a chilling effect on all gender nonconforming people.

The majority of the videos found are on YouTube, the only platform we studied that specifically mentions protection from hate speech that encourages or incites violence based on race, sexual orientation and gender identity. These videos clearly violate those policies. Despite those policies, the videos continue to be viewed and engaged with underscoring the challenges of enforcing compliance and creating environments that encourage civil and non-discriminatory discourse.

"If you see a crazy tranny coming at you. Don't fight it. You might catch AIDS. Just shoot it."

Viewer Comment

These videos were captured, shared and engaged with as entertainment reflecting an accepted social and political environment that poses a real and imminent threat to transgender and gender nonconforming people. This report serves as a reminder that there is an urgent and ongoing need to document the abuse suffered by these communities so that laws and policies are instituted to protect them.

Finally, we think that these videos, and the viewer engagement data associated with them, show yet another way eyewitness video can be used for advocacy. Even though this content was intended to do harm, if used ethically, it documents discrimination and abuse in a way no other reports on transphobic violence has done to date. The study of eyewitness videos, coupled with an analysis of how viewers engage with them, is a powerful way to expose human rights abuses.

Recommendations

- Organizations and activists should use this data in their advocacy campaigns as a way of documenting abuse and discrimination against transgender and gender nonconforming people.
- Use the findings from this research to raise greater awareness and spark discussion of the cultural and political climate that is fostering discrimination and encouraging violence against these communities.
- The websites that host videos, brands that advertise on them, and news outlets and activists that distribute them should consider their harmful effect. Ethical guidelines and technical tools can help expose abuse while protecting the privacy and security of victims of abuse.
- Avoid the recirculation and descriptions of the videos that may can cause further and long-lasting harm to the survivors. If your intention is to expose or report on abuse, refer to the WITNESS Ethical Guidelines for the ethical use of eyewitness videos.
- Platforms and sites that host these videos should increase transparency around policy enforcement and decisions that allow for the sharing and engagement with violent content that is not shared to expose, challenge or prosecute abuse, but is captured shared and engaged with as entertainment.

It's a tranny so who cares.

Viewer comment on the video of Chrissy Polis being assaulted



INTRODUCTION

Callous indifference, unimaginable violence

It takes a moment to understand what's happening.

The video opens, panning from the lower left, blurring with movement as the filmer moves toward what looks like two women in a corner. Unintelligible shouts and screams echo in the room.

As the footage comes into focus, the two women are leaning forward, facing the wall. They are hovering over something.

Leg cocked, knee raised to chest level, one of the women stomps down on what is now clearly another person, cowering on the floor, arms wrapped around their head shielding it from the blows. The attacker recoils and stomps again. Then again and again. Only stopping when the other woman drags the supine figure by her hair out into the room. The two women continue punching, kicking, slapping and screaming insults until the victim has a seizure.

This was the scene on April 18, 2011, when a transgender woman, named Chrissy Polis was attacked by two teens in a Rosedale, Maryland McDonald's for using the women's restroom.

During the assault, a McDonald's employee, Vernon Hackett, filmed the attack with his smartphone and shortly thereafter posted it to his YouTube page. He then shared the link and swapped comments about the video with his followers on Twitter and Facebook.

The video, running for just over 3 minutes, has since been viewed 9,842,095 times and has over 112,000 Facebook "likes" on the shock site Worldstarhiphop.com alone. That single posting is accompanied by over 3,900 comments, mostly filled with transphobic and racist slurs.



Screenshot of video showing Chrissy Polis being assaulted. The video was cited in bringing federal hate crime charges against one of her assailants.

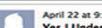
As reported in a 2011 Baltimore Sun article, the video was first posted on YouTube, then taken down by administrators who said it violated the site's policies. Within hours of the original posting, it appeared again on other sites and was ultimately linked from the popular Drudge Report, which gave it top billing for much of the day.

By early evening on the day of the attack, the video had gone viral, receiving more than 500,000 views on one site alone. The video then began appearing on Worldstarhiphop.com, LiveLeak and other sites, and, despite YouTube's vigilance, a version of the video is still streaming from that platform today.

In addition to the transphobia and homophobia that fueled the assault on Polis, we found hundreds of similar attacks that share one other disturbing trait: all were filmed by bystanders who captured and then shared the footage as a source of entertainment. Use the right search terms on the most popular video hosting sites and you'll find thousands of them.



Just Recorded It.... Everybody Sending me messages Because Of Tha Race And Everybody Thinks This Is A Female.....IT'S NOT....HE WAS A MALE IN THA BATHROOM WITH THOSE TWO CIRLS N WHEN TOLD TO GET OUT AND USE THA MALE BATHROOM HE GOT REAL SMART AT EVERYBODY Sent via Facebook Mobile



Yes I Understand That I Have No Hate For Anybody No Matter Tha Gender/Race Or Sexual Preference

Sent via Facebook Mobile



Charm Hackett 22 April at 14:47 Report

Tha Title Of That Video Is A Lie....That Was Not A Female That Was Getting Beat Up....That Was A Man....He Was Dressed Lik A Woman...And He Was In Tha Females Bathroom Knowing He Was A Man....And When Told To Get Out Tha ladies Bathroom He Got Smart With Everybody So Tha Two Girls Beat Him Up.....It Was Not A GIRL....AND THE SEIZURE WAS FAKE BECAUSE AS SOON AS THA POLICE CAME HE GOT RIGHT UP

Vernon Hackett's Facebook and Twitter comments after posting and sharing his video video of the assault on Chrissy Polis on YouTube.

OVERVIEW & PROJECT SCOPE

We began our research using dozens of queries and phrases across multiple platforms and sites, including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and many popular "shock" sites. Those searches returned tens of thousands of links to video content showing transgender and gender nonconforming people as targets of assault, being threatened or intimidated, harassed, stalked, bullied, mocked, as targets in violent video games, portrayed as deviant on television shows and in film, and even murdered.

To scope this project for a 15-week engagement, our study includes just a small sampling of the tens of thousands of videos we found in those initiatial searches. We studied viewer engagement only with videos that captured physical assaults and that were found using just two search terms -- one to find transfeminine encounters, the other to find assaults involving transmasculine people. We focused on platforms that returned the most videos from those search parameters:

- YouTube, where we found the most videos, was the only site we included that does not fall into the "shock" site category. While there are thousands of videos that included violence against transgender and gender nonconforming to be found there, and that are engaged with as entertainment, they account for just a small segment of the platform's total offerings.
- World Star Hip Hop and Fly Height are "shock" sites that actively solicit and promote these videos as entertainment. Further, they promote them as a means to drive traffic and monetize as part of their business models.
- Live Leak, a video aggregator that promotes itself as a cutting edge news outlet, is known for breaking particularly grusome content (e.g., the execution of Saddam Hussein) and is also considered a "shock" site.

Significantly absent from this study is the viewer engagement data from eyewitness videos hosted on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Vine. In our URL harvests we found thousands of video links on these platforms matching the search criteria, and tens of thousands of Facebook "likes" from platforms we did analyze. In test studies we found that most videos were uploaded to a hosting platform then shared to social media platforms furthering viewer engagement. Capturing and analyzing that data exceeded project resources in both cost and capacity.

Even with this small sample size, LGBTQ advocacy organizations we consulted were surprised by the number of eyewitness videos of violence against transgender people and stunned by how widely viewed and favorably rated they were. Most alarming are the vitriolic comments that are ongoing. We found videos posted years ago that are still being engaged with today.

"Walking while trans is often a contested act"

Laverne Cox, Actress and Transgender Rights Activist

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Total Viewer Engagement

A transwoman is beaten into a seizure inside a Maryland McDonald's.

Two transwomen are assaulted, one stripped naked, as they ride an Atlanta MARTA train.

A gay man in drag is beaten in a Washington, D.C. pizzeria as bystanders cheer on the assailants.

Videos of these encounters are shocking not only in their quantity, but in their popularity among viewers and the callousness of their responses. Homophobic, transphobic and racist remarks dominate the comments and videos posted over a decade ago are still being engaged with.

89,233,760_{VIEWS}

number of times videos were watched

601,300 SHARES

search terms used

"tranny fight"
"stud fight"

platforms / sites searched

YouTube
World Star Hip Hop
Live Leak
Fly Height

videos of physical assaults

found & analyzed

554,143

number of times videos were rated favorably by viewers

230,262 comments

number of comments made by viewers

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Viewer Engagement by Search Phrase

While the number of videos across the four sites were comparable -- despite finding no transmasculine videos on Fly Height -- the transfeminine encounters were watched nearly three times more than the transmasculine.

tranny fight	stud fight	search phrase phrases used to find eyewitness videos
196	133	videos number of eyewitness videos of physical assaults
63,131,514	26,102,246	Views number of times the eyewitness videos were watched
595,466	5,834	shares number of times the eyewitness videos were shared
292,642	261,501	likes number of times the eyewitness videos were liked by viewers
144,434	85,828	comments number of viewer comments about the eyewitness videos

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Comments Word Cloud, Tranny Fight

The mostly profane comments focused on defining gender in the binary and conflating gender identity with sexual orientation. Many of the comments were statements about what constitutes a "real" man or woman. Racist criticisms of black urban culture and disparaging remarks about black people in general were also prevalent.



VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Comments Word Cloud, Stud Fight

The comments on these videos were dominated by criticisms of both perpetrator's and victim's physical appearance and of viewers' amusement with the content.



VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Engagement by Platform

While YouTube hosted the most videos found in our study, shock sites World Star Hip Hop and Fly Height accounted for 86% of views.







VIDEOS FOUND VIEWS 13,969,116



COMMENTS 29,634



LIKES 22,978



SHARES 9,522







66





COMMENTS 10,225



12,025

SHARES 17,885













LIKES 530,253



76,633















497,260

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Platform Engagement Detail





of the people who posted these videos categorized them as Entertainment or Comedy

209 | Number of Videos Found

13,969,116 | Views

9,522 | Shares

29,634 | Total Comments

22,978 | Likes

6.062 Dislikes

209,060 | Subscribers¹

733 | Subscriptions Driven²

7:15:29 | Total Runtime

YOUTUBE CONTENT POLICY

YouTube's policies expressly forbid content that promotes violence or hatred against individuals or groups including sexual orientation/gender identity.

From the comments

"I would've loved to see him throw the trannie onto the tracks!"

A transfeminine person is assaulted on a New York City subway platform after a cisgender* male passenger believed she solicited him. Multiple bystanders record and upload the conflict.

^{*} cisgender: self-identity conforms with the gender that corresponds to their biological sex

Number of people subscribing to the channels that share this content

² Number of people that subscribed from a video's page

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Comments Word Cloud

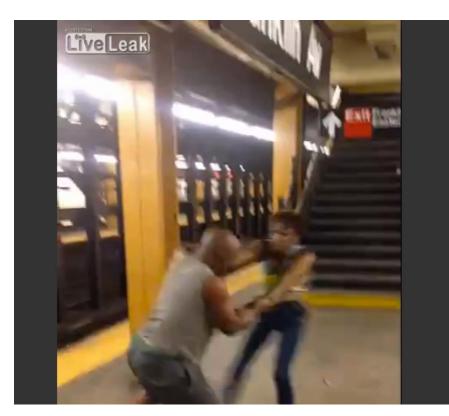


The majority of comments expressed amusement with the content as well as the prevalence of views regarding gender expression as binary. The comments are mostly laced with profanity and the word feminist(s) is used as an insult.



VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Platform Engagement Detail





66 | Number of Videos Found

2,163,981 | Views

17,885 | Shares

10,225 | Total Comments

912 | Likes

The same video we found on YouTube, of a transfeminine person fighting on a New York City subway platform, was captured by multiple filmers, and we found it streaming on all four platforms we researched. Re-posting videos is common with publishers who often add platform or personal branding to the footage.

LIVE LEAK CONTENT POLICY

Based in the UK, they voluntarily comply with the Notice and Takedown provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act

From the comments

"Am I the only one who feels physically sick when looking at tranny's?"

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Comments Word Cloud



Viewers on this platform specifically mentioned "tranny" and "trannies" in their overwhelmingly negative, racist, and profanity filled comments about the subjects in these videos. There was a large thread that expressed the opinion that transgender people are a threat to children.



VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Platform Engagement Detail





47 | Number of Videos Found

63,420,571 | Views

76,633 | Shares

188,809 | Total Comments

530,253 | Likes

This video captured several assailants attacking a gender nonconforming person outside an Atlanta skate shop.

WORLD STAR CONTENT POLICY

This platform's bread and butter are shocking videos of fights, abuse and exploitation. It is no surprise that its policies are concerned only with copyright infringement and relieving the companies of any liability. An upload transfers all content and usage rights to World Star.

From the comments

"LMFAO what did IT except coming over there talking smack and trying to push IT's lifestyle on normal people they should have all took turns shoving large objects up IT's vag and butt"

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Comments Word Cloud



World Star viewers focused on the physical features of the victims and debated the attributes of what constituted a "real" woman or man.



VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Platform Engagement Detail





7 | Number of Videos Found 9,680,092 | Views

497,260 | Shares

1,594 | Total Comments

One of the most brutal examples we found was an assault on two transwomen on a crowded MARTA train in Atlanta. During the assault, one of the victims was stripped naked. This platform has a rating system unique to the platform. User reaction to this video:

FOF		_			-	_	DISGUSTED	_	≻ رح MAD
24%	3%	4%	12%	0%	7%	13%	0%	0%	7%

FLY HEIGHT CONTENT POLICY

The link to "Policy" on this site resolves to a blank page.

From the comments

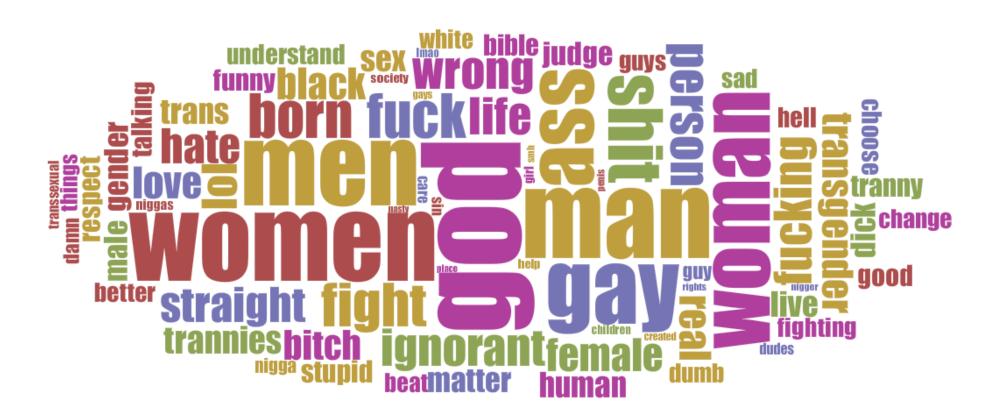
"A man that's all

no woman and will never be
don't care how many dicks he suck and fuck
nasty gay bastard"

VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Comments Word Cloud



The comments on this platform were dominated by the opinion regarding the "unnaturalness" of gender nonconformance on religious grounds.



VIEWER ENGAGEMENT DATA Observations

The search terms we used to source the greatest volume of video links almost exclusively captured incidents from urban environments involving people of color. We found the most videos on YouTube, which is not surprising given the platform's enormous inventory. The videos most engaged with were found on, or originated from, "shock" entertainment sites. We acknowledge that the observations and conclusions in this report cannot fully capture the attitudes toward trans and gender nonconforming people in urban communities of color.

64% of total videos were found on YouTube

Despite policies that explicitly prohibit content that incites hatred or promotes violence against individuals and groups based on race, sexual orientation and gender identity, we found more videos on YouTube than on all three other platforms combined. We do not, however, know how many videos of this kind have been removed for violating these terms.

of videos on YouTube were categorized as entertainment or comedy
The most popular category was the default "People & Blogs" at 42%.

99% of total ratings were "likes"

Viewers gave the content favorable ratings -- e.g., liked, LOL, thumbs up, hilarious, etc. -- overwhelmingly more than negative or critical responses.

71% of total views were on World Star Hip Hop

Shock sites World Star Hip Hop and Fly Height hosted fewer videos, but dominated viewer engagement. Several of the most brutal videos were viewed by millions on these platforms.

urban spaces, people of color

A majority of the transfeminine encounters occurred in crowded urban, public spaces.

A majority of the transmasculine encounters occurred in more private spaces, with fewer bystanders.

Nearly all encounters involved people of color as victim, perpetrator, or both.

brand advertising with content

Major brands have advertising inline and adjacent to the videos on YouTube and World Star Hip Hop, including State Farm insurance, Heineken, and Applebee's.

ongoing engagement

Videos continue to be viewed, shared and commented on years after they were originally posted.

questioning gender, characteristics of "real" men and women

Titles, descriptions and comments contain transphobic language that suggests viewers' rigid attachment to a gender binary, especially the presumptive appearance, mannerisms and dress associated with those roles. Behaviors in the videos as well as viewer engagement show open hostility to gender transgression.

conflating sexual orientation and gender identity

Transphobic and homophobic comments overwhelmingly show viewers assumption that a subject's sexual orientation is based on gender presentation.

CONCLUSIONS

These videos are hateful.

They are captured and shared with the singular objective of amusing viewers, driving traffic, and generating revenue for the "shock" sites that host and promote them.

These eyewitness videos document mistreatment of transgender and gender nonconforming people ranging from disrespect to murder. They show acts of violence against transgender and gender nonconforming people that are not only tolerated, but encouraged and glorified.

The videos of these encounters are shocking not only in their quantity, but in their popularity among viewers and the callousness of the comments and conversations about them. Homophobic, transphobic and racist remarks dominate the discussions, and positive responses to the content -- from a thumbs up to a "LOL" -- overwhelmingly outweigh unfavorable responses.

"Please kill all fags & niggers for a safer USA"

Viewer Comment

The viewer engagement with these eyewitness videos reveal deeply held biases that intersect race, sex, class and gender identity. The attitudes expressed by viewers overwhelmingly blame gender nonconforming people for the violence and hatred perpetrated against them and expose a visceral rejection of people transgressing accepted notions of gender expression.

Comments by viewers reveal a widespread sentiment of transphobia that not only condones violence against those who are perceived as outside the gender binary, but also actively encourages violent attacks. In many of the videos, bystanders can be heard cheering on the fights and shouting hate-filled epithets. This kind of engagement serves only to instill fear and to further marginalize transgender and gender nonconforming people who are fighting discrimination on multiple fronts.

Our goal with this report is to raise awareness of not only the videos, but to expose the social conditions that encourage these violent acts and bring accolades to filmers and commenters. Many of the videos include audio shout outs for "World Star" and "going viral" suggesting an accepted practice of bystander disregard and the presumed esteem in which capturing and sharing videos is held.

It is important to note, that our findings are from a small subset of the transphobic videos we found. While the filmed assaults show acts of violence that may otherwise go unreported, they are a small sampling from hate-filled videos that did not include the phrase "tranny fight" or "stud fight" in the title, description, and comments or captured acts of violence other than physical assault. There are also hundreds of videos posted of recorded gamers role-playing virtual violence against transgender people in popular games like Grand Theft Auto, Dragon Age, and LEGO: Lord of the Rings.

The majority of the videos found are on YouTube, the only platform we studied that specifically mentions protection from hate speech that encourages or incites violence based on race, sexual orientation and gender identity; these videos clearly violate those policies. That they continue to be viewed and engaged with on YouTube despite those policies underscores the challenges of enforcing compliance and creating environments that encourage civil and non-discriminatory discourse. Further, we have no data on how many of these kinds of videos have been removed from the platform for violating YouTube's Terms of Service.

These eyewitness videos and their corresponding viewer engagement have real and sustained impact. A survivor's loss of privacy and control over their public image in the aftermath often compounds injury with the loss of employment, housing, and personal relationships. The circulation and replaying of these traumatic events not only denies survivors a safe space to heal, but has a chilling effect on all gender nonconforming people.

In our research, we heard from the victims who describe not only the physical and psychological impact of being assaulted, but the continued abuse directed at them when the events are filmed and shared. The loss of privacy and control over their public image in the aftermath often compounds injury with the loss of employment, housing, and personal relationships. The recirculation and replaying of these traumatic events not only denies victims a safe space to heal, but has a chilling effect on all gender nonconforming people.

"My private life has been exposed to the world. I lost my job. I cannot go anywhere without the fear of getting hurt again. I want to go into a hole and hide" Chrissy Polis, Survivor

These videos are both terrifying and sad. As we learned from watching them and reading the comments, they represent emerging cultural norms that shift bystanders from witnesses to content creators. The people filming and sharing these videos are exploiting and encouraging violence against vulnerable and marginalized people for praise from the anonymous digital masses. In all of these videos, the filmer's first impulse is to capture, share and promote rather than consider the welfare of other human beings.

Even with this small sample size, LGBTQ advocacy organizations we consulted were surprised by the number of eyewitness videos of violence against transgender people and stunned by how widely viewed

and favorably rated they were. Most alarming are the vitriolic comments that are ongoing. We found videos posted years ago that are still being engaged with today.

This study tells the story of abuse suffered by transgender and gender nonconforming people in a unique and compelling way. It is our hope that these findings raise greater awareness and spark discussion of the cultural and political climate that is fostering discrimination and encouraging violence against transgender communities. And, we hope it creates a sense of urgency in making laws and policies that protect them.

Finally, we think that these videos, and the viewer engagement data associated with them, show yet another way eyewitness video can be used for advocacy. Even though this content was intended to do harm, if used ethically, it documents discrimination and abuse in a way no other reports on transphobic violence have done to date. The study of eyewitness videos, coupled with an analysis of how viewers engage with them, is a powerful way to expose human rights abuses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW

It's imperative that all parties recognize the harm done by these videos and the mostly hateful engagement that accompanies them. These videos not only condone an intolerance of transgender and gender nonconforming people, but foster a climate that encourages acts of violence against them. Further, they re-victimize the survivors of these attacks and instill fear into communities that are already enduring institutional and cultural oppressions on multiple axes.

To avoid narrow stereotyping and retraumatizing victims, we propose the following to help advocates, attorneys, brand managers, journalists and technology companies manage these videos ethically and with compassion:

FOR ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS, ACTIVISTS and ALLIES

The existence of these videos and the volume of hateful engagement pose a direct threat to gender nonconforming people and compromise a positive and empowered representation of the community.

However, we think that there are ethical and effective ways that these eyewitness videos, that are intended to cause harm, can be used for advocacy.

- 1. Follow WITNESS guidelines for the safe and ethical use of eyewitness videos <u>Video As Evidence Ethical Guidelines</u>.
- 2. Develop materials and trainings that educate the transgender and gender nonconforming communities (and their allies) about personal safety and the ethical use of these eyewitness videos for advocacy, including:
 - What to do if you discover an eyewitness video capturing your likeness that has been posted without your permission
 - How to respond when you believe someone is filming you without your permission
 - · What to do if you are a witness to an assault
 - · How to safely record a video when you are threatened
- 3. Understand the policies of the platforms and websites that host these videos and create recommendations that address the human rights impact of this content as well as suggestions for disrupting these conversations and empowering survivors.
- 4. Use this report in your advocacy campaigns as a way of documenting abuse and discrimination against transgender and gender nonconforming people.

- Use the findings from this research to raise greater awareness and spark discussion of the cultural and political climate that is fostering discrimination and encouraging violence against these communities.
- 6. Reference these findings in your research and reporting
- 7. Use this report's companion website to share findings to your social networks.
- 8. Refer to WITNESS resources on finding, verifying, preserving, and sharing footage for advocacy:
 - Verifying Eyewitness Video
 - Video as Evidence: Ethical Guidelines
 - Video As Evidence Field Guide

FOR ATTORNEYS and LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS

A thorough study of the possible evidentiary value of these videos was beyond the scope of this project. However, some of the videos we found were were used in legal investigations and proceedings. In the Chrissy Polis case, the video of her assault and the audible slurs yelled by her assailants, led to federal hate crimes charges against one of her attackers. These findings may serve to provide context, if not direct evidence, for legal proceedings.

- 1. Consider how these videos might be used to:
 - be evidence of hate crimes
 - support documentation in asylum cases
 - expose life threatening environments endured by transgender and gender nonconforming people.

- 2. Refer to WITNESS <u>Video As Evidence Field Guide</u> guide to establish protocols and best practices for providing access to accessing and archiving eyewitness videos for use in legal proceeding.
- 3. Videos may be removed without notice. Download and archive the video and viewer engagement to preserve it for documentation purposes.
- 4. Refer to WITNESS Activist Guide for Archiving Video

FOR JOURNALISTS and MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

The filmers and viewers are engaging in an activity that is rewarded with attention and feedback. The shouting of "World Star Hip Hop" by bystanders during filming bears this out. Comments that include bragging about being the first to post responses, the amount of engagement with the content, and, comments that praise the filmer and publisher, all encourage the violence.

- 1. Recognize that these videos may re-victimize survivors of attacks and may serve to foster a climate that encourages physical violence based on gender identity.
- 2. Create practices and review processes that assure reporting that refrains from promoting the platforms and content viewers, and considers first the impact on victims and their communities.
- 3. Avoid the recirculation and descriptions of the videos that may cause further and long-lasting harm to the survivors. If your intention is to expose or report on abuse, refer to the WITNESS guidelines for the ethical use of eyewitness videos.
- 4. Protect the privacy and dignity of survivors by using face blurring, audio distortion and other tools that provide anonymity.

- 5. Add context to your coverage of the transgender and gender nonconforming communities by referencing the findings in this report.
- Avoid promoting or glorifying the platforms that host these videos as well as the filmers that capture, share and encourage others to engage.
- 7. Add trigger warnings to all reports containing any footage, text descriptions or still images from these videos.
- 8. Avoid using the video without the consent of the person in the footage, unless you ensure their anonymity.
- Use the video engagement data from eyewitness videos as an alternative way to create stories that expose and document abuses against transgender and gender nonconforming people.
- 10. Raise public awareness of the platforms with business models that monetize this kind of content (e.g., World Star Hip Hop) and expose how they promote violence as entertainment.

FOR BRAND MANAGERS

We found many examples of advertising by major brands as bumper video, inline pop-up ads and adjacent display ads. They present products and services next to, or inline with, content that shows transgender and gender nonconforming people being mocked, threatened, stalked and assaulted.

Brands that choose to advertise on platforms like World Star, Fly Height and Live Leak, know what they are getting into. The business models for these platforms intentionally source and promote videos of violence and exploitation to monetize their operations. From bashing transgender people and toddlers getting hit by cars, to a cop brutalizing a man in a

wheelchair, they use content like this to drive traffic by the millions.

Third-party distribution of your advertising assets may mean your brand is adjacent to this kind of content, giving the impression to consumers that your company supports and condones these videos. To avoid this perception:

- 1. Create brand guidelines and practices for managing advertising inventory on these platforms that includes:
 - · How to monitor your brand's association with this content
 - How to notify sites and platforms when your brand is associated with eyewitness videos of violent acts against gender nonconforming people
 - What to do if services continue to place your advertising assets adjacent to this content
 - How to filter your keywords to avoid brand affiliation with hateful content
- Consider the buying power, loyalty and media savvy of consumers that are supportive of LGBTQ communities and place advertising with content that promotes positive and empowered representations of transgender and gender nonconforming people

FOR TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

We expected to find these violent, transphobic and racist videos on sites like World Star Hip Hop and Fly Height, -- but most of the videos we found were hosted on YouTube, the platform with the most rigorous terms of use.

For anyone filming and sharing videos, maximizing viewer engagement is their goal. In this context, the content is shared to encourage ongoing

abuse and to foment an environment that accepts and encourages violence against transgender and gender nonconforming people.

To address the negative impact as well as the potential value of those videos to the LGBTQ community:

- 1. Recognize that these videos are of violent acts against transgender and gender nonconforming people that are captured, shared and engaged with as entertainment, suggesting a need to review the role of the platforms in encouraging anti-LGBTQ violence.
- 2. Recognize that this content re-victimizes survivors of attacks.
- Re-evaluate current policy in partnership with LGBTQ anti-violence and advocacy organizations that considers the human rights impact of these videos and the ongoing viewer engagement with them.
- 4. Increase transparency regarding policies and decisions that allow for the sharing and engagement with violent content that is not shared to expose, challenge or prosecute abuse, but is captured shared and engaged with as entertainment.
- Recognize the widespread violation of existing policies that prohibit videos encouraging violence that are not shared for educational purposes, and identify policies to reduce or eliminate these videos.
- 6. Create tools that alert LGBTQ advocacy organizations when this kind of content is posted; collaborate on practices that enable review and archiving for use in advocacy and legal proceedings.
- 7. Engage in user education around the capturing and sharing of content (such as these videos) can be powerful evidence of violations of human and civil rights under certain circumstances, but can also be victimizing, as well.

- 8. Re-evaluate informed consent policies to protect the victims in these videos, most of whom are unaware they are being filmed.
- 9. Create guidelines that discourage the creation and promotion of channels and collections of exploitive and violent content.
- 10. Partner with LGBTQ organizations and research institutions to create awareness of this content and provide ongoing engagement data for research and advocacy.

METHODOLOGY

We searched and aggregated eyewitness videos of violence against transgender and gender nonconforming people that were captured and shared as a source of entertainment. From those videos we collected and analyzed the titles and descriptions given each video by the person who published it along with viewer engagement data -- ratings, shares, and comments -- to better understand the context in which they appear and the attitudes of viewers.

SCOPING and FRAMING THE PROJECT

First we needed to define which events constituted an "act of violence." Referencing the categories defined by the National Coalition of Anti-violence Projects (NCAVP) in their annual Hate Violence report, we used the following categories of discrimination:

- · Physical violence
- · Verbal harassment in person
- Sexual harassment
- · Threats or intimidation
- Bullying
- Sexual violence
- Attempted violence

Next, we needed guidelines for how to determine whether the subjects of the videos identified as transgender or gender nonconforming.

The subjects of these videos mostly did not declare their gender identity during an altercation. We instead determined that it was how they were perceived by assailants, filmers and bystanders that informed engagement and expressed viewers attitudes and sentiments.

Through an analysis of a sample of video titles, descriptions and comments, we created the following guidelines:

How to determine whether the video is transphobic or homophobic

Determining whether the assault is motivated by transphobia or homophobia is a judgment call by the reviewer. But, there are many clues within the video as well as the context of how and where it is shared and described that can guide your decision. Specifically, look for:

- transphobic / homophobic title of the video
- transphobic / homophobic description of the video
- transphobic / homophobic remarks by filmer
- transphobic / homophobic remarks by bystanders
- transphobic / homophobic remarks by assailants
- transphobic / homophobic remarks in comments

For guidelines on what language would be considered transphobic / homophobic, refer to:

GLAAD Media Reference Issues - Transgender Issues

NLGJA Stylebook

We then needed to determine whether or not the video was filmed, posted and shared as entertainment. To do so, we created the following guidelines:

How to determine if a video was created and interacted with for "entertainment" rather than advocacy

Assessing whether or not someone has taken, shared or engaged with these videos as entertainment is also a judgment call. But, there are some behaviors that we think are indicative of a filmer and viewer's intentions and expectations.

Those behaviors include:

- laughter from bystanders
- · cheering and encouraging the filmer
- · cheering and encouraging the assailants
- reference to shock sites (e.g., "world star hip hop") by bystanders or filmer as the altercation is being filmed
- comments or ratings that suggest that viewers are amused by the video
- comments or ratings that suggest that viewers approve of the content
- how the video is titled and described by whomever publishes it
- comments, titles and descriptions that describe Trans/GNC with negative, disparaging terms

Often, we found identical videos posted to many platforms, by multiple uploaders. Some were identified or watermarked with branding from some of the larger shock sites indicating that they had appeared on and may also be streaming on those channels. Others were branded by individual publishers that declared copyright ownership. Many were just reposted. Because we were interested in the the larger scope of viewer engagement, we documented each instance and collected the unique viewer engagement data from each.

Originally we thought we should limit the data set by including only those incidents that occurred in the U.S. and had been published within the last 5 years. What we discovered was that despite the publication date, viewer engagement was ongoing. We found videos that were published as early as 2006 that are still being commented on today.

We dropped the geopolitical requirements of where the assaults occured. Although our English language search terms and searches originating from U.S.-based domains found videos captured outside the U.S. were being engaged with by English speaking people. Many of the comments were xenophobic and included declarations of nationality, often with nationalistic pride.

Determining race and gender identity of people in eyewitness videos

Like gender identity, racial identity is complex and personal. For guidance in logging racial identifiers, we referred to guidelines created for journalists, including:

Online News Association, Ethics Code

Radio Television Digital News Association: Guidelines for Racial Identification

The Poynter Insitutue, Guidelines for Racial Identification

For this project we searched for videos that appear on public web and social media platforms. Private channels and deep web finds are not included in this study.

Finally, we sought advice from and partnered with LGBTQ thought leaders and leading advocacy organizations to inform the project framework, help us in determining the intended use and audience for the data, and to guide us in interpreting the findings and framing the conversations about the results. Our partners and advisors:

- The Trans People of Color Coalition
- The New York City Anti-violence Project (AVP)
- Lambda Legal
- National LGBTQ Task Force
- · Human Rights Campaign
- Immigration Equality
- The Center for LGBTQ Studies at CUNY Graduate Center

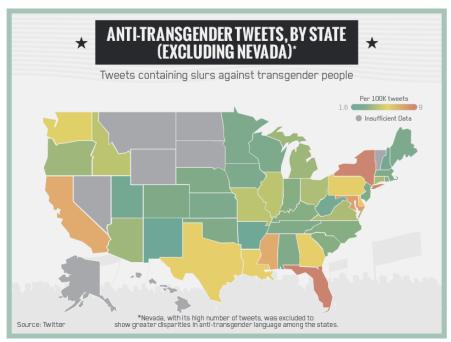
DATA COLLECTION and ANALYSIS

Harvesting URLs and Scraping Metatdata

To find video links we searched Google, Yahoo, and Bing using 90 terms and phrases (see *Search Phrase: All*). The words and phrases are transphobic and homophobic as those terms dominated the descriptions and discussions of the videos we'd found in our exploratory searches.

We referred to GLAAD's Media Reference Guide as well as a report¹ that reviewed 12 million tweets to better understand the language Americans use when tweeting about different races, ethnicities, genders, religions, and sexual orientation.

¹The Vital Voice, "Tolerance in American Tweets., http://www.thevitalvoice.com/tolerance-in-american-tweets



Las Vegas (99 per 100,000) is responsible for nearly all recorded anti-transgender tweets in Nevada, further suggesting a link to increased usage by the adult industry. Interestingly, no cities in New York stood out for their usage of negative language in tweets, suggesting that such tweets may be more diffuse.

Searching multiple platforms and sites with those terms returned tens of thousands of links to videos that included transgender and gender nonconforming people as targets of assault, being threatened or intimidated, harassed, stalked, bullied, mocked, as targets in violent video games, portrayed as deviant on television shows, and thousands of pornographic videos.

Further research revealed that seven of the search words we used were created by the porn industry which explains why so many pornographic links were included in the search results. We searched again filtering out the porn words which eliminated thousands of videos, but we still had tens of thousands of videos to sort, scrape and analyze.

First URL Search

Search Engines	Platforms	Sites
Google	YouTube	World Star Hip Hop
Yahoo	Facebook	Fly Height
Bing	Twitter	Live Leak
	Tumblr	The YNC
	Snapchat	Dailymotion
	Periscope	Twitch
	Vimeo	Break
	Vine	MetaCafe

In order to scope the work for a 15-week fellowship, we focused on videos that captured physical violence and used just two search phrases: "tranny fight" for transfeminine encounters, "stud fight" for transmasculine.

And, to assure we'd have a data sample we could thoughtfully analyze within the timeframe, we focused on the platforms and sites that hosted the most content matching our framework.

Refined URL Search

Search Engines	Platforms	Sites
Google	YouTube	World Star Hip Hop
Yahoo	Facebook	Fly Height
Bing	Twitter	Live Leak

By narrowing the search terms and reducing the number of platforms and sites surveyed, we were left with just under 12,000 video links for data collection.

We then ran this URL list to collect information that would expedite a manual review of links to confirm they fit project framework before scraping for more extensive data. That data included the video title, description, and a video thumbnail image.

Scraping Data

After review of a sampling of the video links, we determined that the following metadata would provide the viewer engagement data we thought would best indicate viewer sentiment and the motivations of publishers, including:

- number of views
- · number of shares
- number of embeds
- number of comments
- · number of subscribers
- number of followers
- number of friends
- URL
- owner
- time watched (YouTube)
- duration
- subscriptions driven (YouTube)
- · category type
- · channel creation date

- · license type
- channel ID
- publication date
- location
- votes
- marked as a repost
- user rating data (e.g., likes, dislikes, etc)
- text in the comments

Viewer engagement data is not consistent across platform and site, which required that scrapers be customized to access data for each target. We found that a combination of various tools along with custom scripts would be required to get the most data possible within the timeframe. Using these tools we ran a batch find to source URLs, scrape viewer engagement data, and purge duplications and invalid URLs. See the Tools section for details.

Initial test scrapes presented us with big challenges when attempting to access engagement data from Facebook, Twitter and Vine. Despite harvesting thousands of URLs that lead to content on those platforms, and, manual tests that confirmed content and engagement that met our project framework requirements, our limited technical resources prevented us from collecting and analyzing that data. The engagement on these platforms seemed to match data found elsewhere in both quantity and tone.

Scrub, Analyze and Visualize

Each scraper tool, and the platforms and sites we targeted, returned data in varied formats, requiring that each set be scrubbed individually. The data for most recent comment, comment text from all sources (except YouTube), duration, hours watched, adjacent advertising (if any), as well as descriptors of the subjects (e.g., determining gender identity, race, and location) were manually sourced. We watched each video, manually scraped content as needed, and logged the findings.

We then scrubbed the data using Microsoft Excel, first aggregating and reviewing data by site or platform. Basic functions like sorting, search and replace were done with features native to Excel as well as the add-in Kutools. We found most useful the features that facilitated:

- · Transforming columns to rows
- Transforming data by range (e.g., converting a range of data to a single column or row)
- · Converting text to numbers or dates
- Splitting cells
- · Splitting text
- · Deleting blank rows
- · Removing content by character or position

We then used VBA macros as needed to:

- Insert images from scraped thumbnail image URL (show picture), to assist manual review
- · Split every other row
- · Convert text to hyperlinks
- · Combine duplicate rows and summing totals
- · Remove HTML tags from data
- · Scrub hidden data from blank cells
- · Split columns into two rows, every other row

In the course of scrubbing the data, we decided to limit the types of data we'd analyze to those values that were most consistent across platform, including:

- · Number of Videos
- Views
- Shares
- Likes
- Number of comments
- Publication date

- Comment Text
- Date of most recent comment
- Video title (assigned by publisher)
- Video description (assigned by publisher)

YouTube afforded the most accessible and detailed metadata information. That platform was the source of most of the videos, so we did further analysis on that data, including: category (as assigned by publisher), subscribers, dislikes, video runtime, and hours watched.

For visualization, we determined that the numbers alone told a compelling story about the prevalence of this content. We formatted the findings first in Powerpoint to leverage native chart features and design the charts. We used Voyant for creating comments word clouds.

Limitations of the Findings

The biggest shortcoming of this study is the absence of viewer engagement data for videos streaming natively from social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. We found hundreds of links to videos on those platforms when searching, but with our time constraints, the dynamic nature of the content, and the technical structure of the platforms, we were unable to scrape metadata without buying it from commercial services or buying cost-prohibitive applications.

Another challenge was managing variable data across, and within, platforms. Some categories of viewer engagement data are available only at the discretion of the publisher. Further, the ratings categories across platforms varied in value. While all platforms captured some format for rating sentiment with a numeric value, sites like Fly Height have a proprietary system that has 11 ratings categories and is displayed as percentages, without a sum total of responses. We also found no transmasculine videos on Fly Height.

Our original intent was to execute data capture and analysis using only open sources tools. During testing, we found significant gaps in efficacy of those tools and our capacity for custom programming, so, we bought an application (Scrapebox) that expedited mass URL harvests and some features to scrape data.

Finally, it is important to note that the search terms we used to source the greatest volume of video links almost exclusively captured incidents from urban environments. More specifically, videos posted, featured and engaged with were found on, or originated from, hip hop entertainment sites. These findings in no way represent the extent of the frequency of violence against transgender and gender nonconforming people, nor is it representative of the wider range of locations where these attacks occur. Finally, these findings in no way suggest that the observations and conclusions fully represent urban communities of color.

SEARCH PHRASE: All

Search terms and phrases discovered and used to find videos of transphobic violence that was captured and shared as entertainment.

Used in the context of (a) fighting, attacking, punching, etc., and, (b) intended as a verbal insult

Always Negative

tranny attack transie tranny tranny bath tranny clit transvestite tranny-be tranny cock ladyboy trannyblock tranny dog he-she tranny block trannydyke tranny fanny tranny dyke tranny-hawk tranny fat battyman trannie tranny fluid batty boy tranny fag tranny flush tranny granny girlyboy trannies fighting tranny get your gun tranny bomb gay female tranny banger tranny boy ratchet tranny annie tranny chaser transgenders tranny angle transie chaser

Always Negative continued

transgendered transgenderism bio-girl biogirl bio-guy bioguy dragzilla bennie man kathoey bayot man in a dress transfan bulldagger genderfuck genderfuck berdache

trannyformer

lesbian stud

tranny former

tranny fucker

a trans

Mostly negative* sex change

trans

drag queen

butch

female impersonator male impersonator

Mary Kay girl

dyke faggot fag

hermaphrodite

bulldyke fairy queen queer transphile transophile transsexual

Terms created by porn industry

she/male chicks with dicks sluts with nuts dolls with balls dudes with boobs shim boychick

^{*}context or identity of commenter may change meaning and/or acceptance

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Tools We Used

Data Miner

Data Miner is a Google Chrome extension that extracts data from web pages and exports it into spreadsheets. The ability to mass scrape data is still in beta and we were constrained by our skill set, timeframe and resources so we abandoned the tool. That said, its publicly available library of pre-existing searches ("recipes") and the direct opportunities for users with good javascript skills and are familiar with xPath syntax, make it highly customizable.

Scrapebox

As commercial mass harvesting and data scraping applications go, Scrapebox is cheap. Priced at under \$100, its native YouTube scraping features and available plugins expedited our YouTube URL harvest and mass data collection. It also enables the use of both public and private proxies to prevent IP addresses from being banned by platforms and sites who interpret the scrape as an invasive activity.

Import.io

The elegant interface of this product makes it attractive to non-technical users and belies the power of its functionality. It includes a URL generator, as well as the ability to create custom scrapers via point-and-click WYSIWYG interface or data view sites. For researchers working with large data sets, the free version has limited scale.

Voyant Tools

Voyant is a free online application of text analysis functions, including word counts, word cloud creation, concordancing (the context of a given word or set of words), and word trending. It enables the reader to extract characteristics of a corpus (a large structured set of texts) quickly.

Tableau Public

Tableau is a very powerful business intelligence tool with a large collection of data connectors, visualizations, and sample projects. There is a learning curve to understand the power of the features. Large-scale, and enterprise projects require a commercial licenses that can be expensive.

Microsoft Office Applications: Excel, Powerpoint, Word

Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Forms

Adobe Creative Suite 2015
Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign

Adobe Acrobat

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

There were a number of issues that emerged in this project that were beyond scope of this project that we believe have potential for further research, including:

- 1. Research and analysis of videos and viewer engagement data from content uploaded and shared on/to Facebook, Twitter and Vine.
- 2. Expand research to include international content, especially Russia, Brazil and other South American countries where advocacy groups are reporting high incidents of transphobic violence.
- 3. Research how these videos have been or could be used used in legal proceedings.
- 4. Prevalence of videos of transgender people as spectacle (possibly harassment, intimidation, and stalking).
- 5. Prevalence of videos mocking transgender and gender nonconforming people in person or online.
- 6. Prevalence and effect of homophobic violence encouraged in video games.

As our focus was on engagement data associated with video, we did not seek to corroborate the content of each video beyond the data from user engagement.

During the project design phase we explored corroboration best practices with Storyful -- a commercial video syndication service that sources and secures publishing rights for their clients -- and determined that this project did not require that rigor.

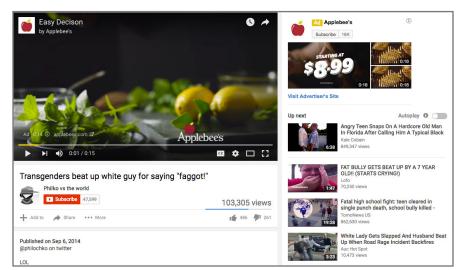
However, for advocates and attorneys who may want to use these videos as evidence in legal proceedings, WITNESS has created a <u>Video As Evidence</u> guide for enhancing the evidentiary value of video captured in the field.

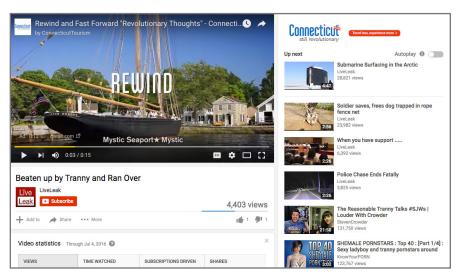
There is opportunity to build on the understanding of the role of eyewitness video in documenting and encouraging violence by exploring how many of the incidents documented on video were reported to the police, if and how the video was used by law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and the long-term impact of these videos on survivors of violence.

REFERENCE Advertising Examples



Advertising includes inline video and display ads.







This platform has the most advertising opportunities per page of all the platforms we reviewed and include adjacent banner and inline banner ads, as well as inline video.







Live Leak advertising are sponsored links presented as "recommended" content.



Ads are presented as sponsored links; a horizontal row at the top of the page, and a vertical column with ads that are presented as "You May Also Like".

