



The University of
Nottingham

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#WontBeErased. Trans rights are human rights! A discourse analysis of a Twitter hashtag

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Social Media can be seen as a new paradigm of communication because of the communicative affordance they provide at the intersection of mass and interpersonal communication.

KhosraviNik 2017: 752

The very global, immediate and participatory nature of social media communication paradigm has made the cybersphere a breeding ground for the expression and dissemination of a range of exclusionary, intolerant, and extremist discourses, practices and beliefs

Kopytowska 2017

Social media is the latest fascination of political communication strategists [...] social media has become an increasingly important source for political news

Enli, 2017



Donald J. Trump ✓
@realDonaldTrump

Following



After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow.....

8:55 AM - 26 Jul 2017



Donald J. Trump ✓
@realDonaldTrump

Following



....Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military. Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming.....

9:04 AM - 26 Jul 2017



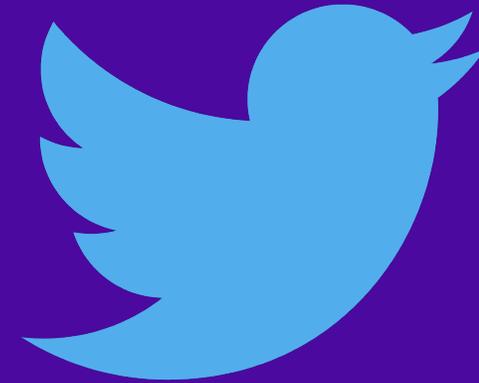
Donald J. Trump ✓
@realDonaldTrump

Following



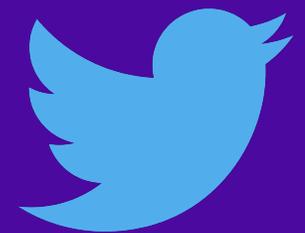
....victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail.
Thank you

9:08 AM - 26 Jul 2017



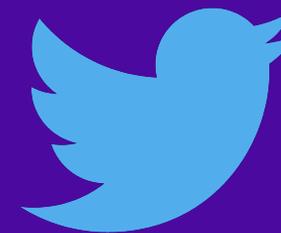
- February 2017 ban for trans students to use toilets in public school
- July 2017 Justice Department: the 1964 Civil Rights Act does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or GI
- August 2017 trans people are officially banned from military service
- December 2017 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are instructed not to use the words *transgender*, *vulnerable*, *entitlement*, *diversity*, *fetus*, *evidence-based*, and *science-based* in official documents
- October 2018 define gender as a biological and immutable condition

#WontBeErased



#wontbeerased CORPUS

SIZE: 379.214 words
TWEETS: 15423
SEARCH TERMS: #wontebeerased
#WONTEBEERASED
#WontBeErased
DOWNLOAD: Python



METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Media Discourse Analysis

KhosraviNik 2017

KhosraviNik & Esposito 2018

Zappavigna & Martin 2017

Zappavigna 2015, 2012

*[...] people use hashtags as a resource to
'convoke' communities of feeling around values*

Zappavigna & Martin 2017

Corpus-assisted Discourse Analysis

Taylor & Marchi 2018

Partington, Duguid & Taylor 2013

King 2009

Rayson, P. (2009) Wmatrix: a web-based corpus processing environment, Computing Department, Lancaster University. <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/>

The logo for Wmatrix, featuring the word "Wmatrix" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. The letter "W" is significantly larger than the other letters, and the "i" has a dot. The logo is set against a white rectangular background.

KEY SEMANTIC DOMAINS

The logo for Wmatrix, featuring the word "Wmatrix" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. The text is centered within a white rectangular box that has a subtle drop shadow, giving it a three-dimensional appearance against the dark blue background.

Rayson, P. (2009) Wmatrix: a web-based corpus processing environment, Computing Department, Lancaster University. <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/>

KEY SEMANTIC DOMAINS

Alive **Allowed** Being **Belonging_to_a_group** **Content** Damaging_and_destroying Danger Darkness **Degree**
Deserving **Discourse_Bin** Dislike Entire;_maximum **Evaluation:_Accurate** **Evaluation:_True**
Evaluation:_Inaccurate **Exclusivizers/particularizers** **Existing** Failure Fear/shock Foolish Frequent **Games** Giving Health_and_disease
Helping **Hindering** If Inability/unintelligence Inattentive Informal/Friendly **Knowledgeable** Lawful Learning **Light** **Like**
Likely **Location_and_direction** Measurement:_Area Mental_actions_and_processes
Money_generally **Negative** No_knowledge No_respect No_obligation_or_necessity
Paper_documents_and_writing **People** People:_Female Personal_relationship:_General Personality_traits
Polite **Politics** **Pronouns** **Relationship:_Intimacy_and_sex**
Respected Safe Selfish Sound:_Loud Speech_acts **Time:_General** **Time:_Future** **Time:_Present;_simultaneous** **Time:_New_and_young**
Tough/strong Tough/strong **Trying_hard** Trying_hard **Unmatched** **Violent/Angry**

KEY SEMANTIC DOMAINS

		Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio		
1	List1	Concordance	Z99	31582	21.54	22165	2.29 +	61544.11	3.23	Unmatched
2	List1	Concordance	S2	3256	2.22	2896	0.30 +	5520.50	2.89	People
3	List1	Concordance	Z8	14190	9.68	72023	7.44 +	774.57	0.38	Pronouns
4	List1	Concordance	S7.4+	760	0.52	1270	0.13 +	757.16	1.98	Allowed
5	List1	Concordance	S8-	500	0.34	885	0.09 +	466.74	1.90	Hindering
6	List1	Concordance	L1+	185	0.13	93	0.01 +	422.50	3.72	Alive
7	List1	Concordance	S1.1.4+	144	0.10	54	0.01 +	367.47	4.14	Deserving
8	List1	Concordance	S3.2	307	0.21	508	0.05 +	309.16	2.00	Relationship: Intimacy and sex
9	List1	Concordance	M6	2238	1.53	9859	1.02 +	274.24	0.58	Location and direction
10	List1	Concordance	I1	994	0.68	3515	0.36 +	267.55	0.90	Money generally
11	List1	Concordance	E3-	574	0.39	1647	0.17 +	255.17	1.20	Violent/Angry
12	List1	Concordance	A3+	4751	3.24	24177	2.50 +	254.49	0.38	Existing
13	List1	Concordance	Q1.2	1011	0.69	3691	0.38 +	247.89	0.86	Paper documents and writing
14	List1	Concordance	W2	55	0.04	0	0.00 +	223.16	9.50	Light
15	List1	Concordance	S8+	1082	0.74	4225	0.44 +	213.68	0.76	Helping
16	List1	Concordance	Z6	1797	1.23	8052	0.83 +	203.37	0.56	Negative
17	List1	Concordance	T1.1	87	0.06	47	0.00 +	192.62	3.61	Time: General
18	List1	Concordance	Z4	1072	0.73	4344	0.45 +	185.39	0.70	Discourse Bin
19	List1	Concordance	X8+	398	0.27	1179	0.12 +	165.54	1.16	Trying hard
20	List1	Concordance	A13	40	0.03	0	0.00 +	162.30	9.05	Degree
21	List1	Concordance	G1.2	981	0.67	4064	0.42 +	155.91	0.67	Politics
22	List1	Concordance	X2.2+	605	0.41	2302	0.24 +	130.31	0.80	Knowledgeable
23	List1	Concordance	T1.1.3	1075	0.73	4846	0.50 +	118.17	0.55	Time: Future
24	List1	Concordance	A14	664	0.45	2674	0.28 +	117.51	0.71	Exclusivizers/particularizers
25	List1	Concordance	G2.1+	91	0.06	117	0.01 +	117.14	2.36	Lawful
26	List1	Concordance	S5+	1234	0.84	5811	0.60 +	108.13	0.49	Belonging to a group
27	List1	Concordance	S1.2.4+	91	0.06	130	0.01 +	106.44	2.21	Polite
28	List1	Concordance	E4.2+	155	0.11	352	0.04 +	103.92	1.54	Content
29	List1	Concordance	K5.2	63	0.04	68	0.01 +	93.38	2.61	Games
30	List1	Concordance	A5.3+	194	0.13	544	0.06 +	90.32	1.24	Evaluation: Accurate

UNMATCHED: hashtagging

#transisbeautiful

#transrights

#translivesmatter

#thisisme

#justbeyou

#loveislove

#stopthehate

@realdonaldtrump

@aclu

@govholcom

Word	Semtag	Frequency	Relative Frequency
#wontbeerased	Z99	6067	4.14
https	Z99	2022	1.38
transgender	Z99	877	0.60
#transgender	Z99	350	0.24
#transisbeautiful	Z99	300	0.20
#trans	Z99	282	0.19
#lgbtq	Z99	233	0.16
utmsource=igtwittershare	Z99	223	0.15
#transrights	Z99	170	0.12
#pride	Z99	153	0.10
#wontbeerased.	Z99	149	0.10
@realdonaldtrump	Z99	137	0.09
#girlslikeus	Z99	127	0.09
im	Z99	117	0.08
non-binary	Z99	111	0.08
#lgbt	Z99	108	0.07
LGBTQ	Z99	105	0.07
#resist	Z99	94	0.06
#translivesmatter	Z99	92	0.06
#loveislove	Z99	91	0.06
#mondaymotivation	Z99	86	0.06
intersex	Z99	83	0.06
#nonbinary	Z99	81	0.06
#lovewins	Z99	78	0.05
#gendertag	Z99	71	0.05
#thisisme	Z99	71	0.05
#simplerthanwords	Z99	71	0.05
#justbeyou	Z99	71	0.05
#itgetsbetter	Z99	70	0.05
#stopthehate	Z99	67	0.05
hashtag	Z99	67	0.05
#nationalnutday	Z99	67	0.05
#voteblue	Z99	66	0.05
#monoishere	Z99	64	0.04

UNMATCHED: hashtagging

#transisbeautiful
#transrights
#translivesmatter
#thisisme
#justbeyou
#loveislove
#stopthehate

@realdonaldtrump
@aclu
@govholcom

Twitter “enable[s] direct interaction and dialogue between politicians and members of the public. [...] Twitter users, although they do not necessarily know each other, may share common interests and get involved in communal performance, such as hashtagging.”

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#translivesmatter	Z99	92	0.06
#loveislove	Z99	91	0.06
#mondaymotivation	Z99	86	0.06
intersex	Z99	83	0.06
#nonbinary	Z99	81	0.06
#lovewins	Z99	78	0.05
#gendertag	Z99	71	0.05
#thisisme	Z99	71	0.05
#simplerthanwords	Z99	71	0.05
#justbeyou	Z99	71	0.05
#itgetsbetter	Z99	70	0.05
#stopthehate	Z99	67	0.05
hashtag	Z99	67	0.05
#nationalnutday	Z99	67	0.05
#voteblue	Z99	66	0.05
#monoishere	Z99	64	0.04

(Zappavigna 2012)

PEOPLE, PRONOUNS

PEOPLE, PRONOUNS

❖ people

❖ kids

❖ folks

❖ humans

❖ children

❖ gender

❖ population

❖ I

❖ me

❖ she

❖ we

❖ us

❖ myself

PEOPLE, PRONOUNS

 **[REDACTED]** · 5 nov 2018

#MyTransIs just trying to peacefully live my life as myself and enjoying it as much as I can.
#WontBeErased

Transition: December 16, 2016
Age: 25
Pronouns: she/her/hers
Name: **[REDACTED]**

 Traduci il Tweet

 **[REDACTED]** · 22 gen

I refuse to be erased. I am no less than any other human. **#girlslikeus**
#TransMilitaryBan #WontBeErased

 Traduci il Tweet



 **[REDACTED]** · 13 mar

 **Allowing people to serve, but only as their birth gender. Complete insult to trans soldiers. You can't erase who they are no matter how hard you try. Trans people are here, denying us doesn't make us exist any less.**
#transrightsarehumanrights #WontBeErased

ALLOWED: right*, allow*, validate*

HINDERING: fight*, resist*, prevent*

ALIVE: live, alive, life

DESERVING: deserv*, worthy

RELATIONSHIP: love, gay, lesbian, sexual assault

VIOLENT /ANGRY

Recent research has shown that social media users frequently post aggressive or insulting comments (Papacharissi 2004; Upadhyay 2010; Hutchens *et al.* 2015).

VIOLENT /ANGRY



Rep Ayanna Pressley  @RepPressley · 27 mar

As a member of the @LGBTEqCaucus, I will do everything to make sure transgender people **#WontBeErased** by **violence**, fear, or prejudice. This flag is a symbol of my commitment to preserve the right of every person to dignity & pride. **#TransVisibilityWeek**



[REDACTED] 22 ott 2018



When this administration spews hate, we will speak out louder. When they commit injustice against one of us, we will come together to stand stronger. When they **attack** our basic human rights, we will fight back harder. Transgender Americans **#WontBeErased**. We won't stand for it.

ONLINE HATE

[...] within a widely unregulated, free cyber sphere, the Internet has become “the new frontier for spreading hate”

Banks 2010: 234

ONLINE HATE VS. ONLINE LOVE

26 nov 2018

It's a beautiful day to educate yourselves, friends! 🌈❤️👉 #TransIsBeautiful 🇺🇸

#Transgender #Trans #WontBeErased #LGBTQbaes
#ThisIsWhatTransLooksLike #TransAwareness #TransAwarenessMonth
#TransDayOfRemembrance #TransRightsAreHumanRights #YouMatter
#Positivity #LoveIsLove #FtM #MtF

Traduci il Tweet

any gender identity that doesn't fit within the gender binary. The label may also be used by individuals wishing to identify as falling outside of the gender binary without being any more specific about the nature of their gender.

one's gender, through a combination of dress, demeanour, social behaviour, and other factors, generally measured on scales of masculinity and femininity.

describe people, usually trans, who were "assigned male at birth"

AFAB
Acronym used to describe people, usually trans, who were "assigned female at birth"

Gender Identity
The internal perception of an one's gender, and how they label themselves, based on how much they align or don't align with what they understand their options for gender to be.

Know Your Trans Friends

Cisgender
An adjective used to describe a person who identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth based on their physical sex.

Genderqueer
Refers to individuals who "queer" or problematise the hegemonic notions of sex, gender and desire within society.

Trans/Transgender
Used as an umbrella term to refer to all people who do not identify with their assigned gender at birth or the binary gender system.
(Note: Transgender is correctly used as an adjective, not a noun, thus

🗨️ 2 ❤️ 4 ✉️

[...] within a widely unregulated, free cyber sphere, the Internet has become “the new frontier for spreading hate

Banks 2010: 234

ONLINE HATE VS. ONLINE LOVE

- anonymity
- physical separation
- de-individuation

KoshraviNik & Esposito 2018

ONLINE HATE VS. ONLINE LOVE

- anonymity
- physical separation
- de-individuation
- hashtagging
- affirmation
- physical aggregation
- affiliative individuality

KoshraviNik & Esposito 2018

CONCLUSION

Social Media communicative paradigm has indeed challenged the traditional static understanding of media power. Social Media can and have provided new spaces of power for citizenry engagement, grass-root access, and use of symbolic resources

KhosraviNik 2017: 754

FURTHER STEPS

- Enlarge dataset
- Compare to other trending #s



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THANK YOU

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12th BAAL LGaS SIG, Birmingham City University, May 2019