The Transgender Media Portal in the World

Maddie Murakami, Jada Gannon-Day, Orvis Starkweather, Constance Crompton and Laura Horak

Moving Trans History Forward, March 28, 2025

Acknowledging territories

Carleton University and the Transgender Media Lab offices are located on the unceded and unsurrendered territory of the Algonquin nation. Members of our lab also live on many different territories across Turtle Island (North America). Today, this conference is located on the unceded territory of theLəkʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples.

Settler colonialism is a structure based on the forceful elimination of Indigenous peoples. In the Canadian context, this has expressed itself in the form of cultural genocide, land theft, and investing in settler colonial projects here and abroad.

Universities have long contributed to colonial harms, including:

- stealing Indigenous lands and resources
- treating colonized and enslaved people as things
- pathologizing trans and Two Spirit lives and bodies
- maintaining Western colonial and sexist concepts of gender and sexuality
- censoring the works of Palestinians and their supporters.

Acknowledging territories

Colonialist research has often denied Indigenous peoples the right to make their own decisions. We strive to break this pattern. We aim to uphold the ways Indigenous artists, communities, and nations continue to define themselves and their rights.

Being on Anishinaabe Aki or Algonquin territory comes with responsibilities. Throughout our work, we strive to understand the obligations this creates for us here and now. Further, we carry a duty to be in solidarity with global anti-colonial struggles in recognition of the connection between colonialisms. We, therefore, voice our support for the Palestinian and Sudanese struggles.

We want to uplift Indigenous-led initiatives on unceded Algonquin territory. One example is the amazing [Assembly of Seven Generations](#) (A7G), an Indigenous-owned and youth-led non-profit focused on cultural support. You can check out their [current initiatives](#) and [donate](#) online.

From Turtle Island to Palestine, all occupation is a crime. Chi miigwech.

Our *2023* MTHF Presentation

- How we articulate and enact our values in the lab
- How we created the vocabularies for describing filmmakers' intersecting identities

- Our consultations with Indigenous people about Indigenous genders and how to be in good relations to the territory we're on

- Our planned technical approach (that was not yet implemented!)

- Visualizing the gaps in our research processes

Today's Agenda

Now we have actually built and launched the Portal! (Launched on June 16, 2024!!)

- Our goals

- What's in the Portal?: Visualizations of Portal Data

- How we did it *(in case you want to do something similar!)*

  - Choice of tech stack

  - Novel features of our approach

  - How we work with filmmakers and users of the site

- How we keep ourselves and our communities safe

- Looking to the future

MENU

TRANSGENDER
MEDIA PORTAL

Search the Portal

Browse the Portal   Support Trans Artists

Featured film:

Lingua Franca

2019 • Isabel Sandoval

A trans woman without legal documentation who is
looking to establish residency in the US, develops a
romantic relationship with the grandson of the elderly
woman she provides care for.

View Lingua Franca in the Portal >

Welcome to the Transgender Media Portal.

Discover films, videos made by trans, Two Spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and gender-nonconforming artists.

Browse the Portal >   **Join our mailing list**

Filmmaker Highlights

View more filmmakers >

Black Trans Filmmakers

Indigenous Trans & Two Spirit Filmmakers

BIPOC Trans Filmmakers

Deaf & Disabled Trans Filmmakers
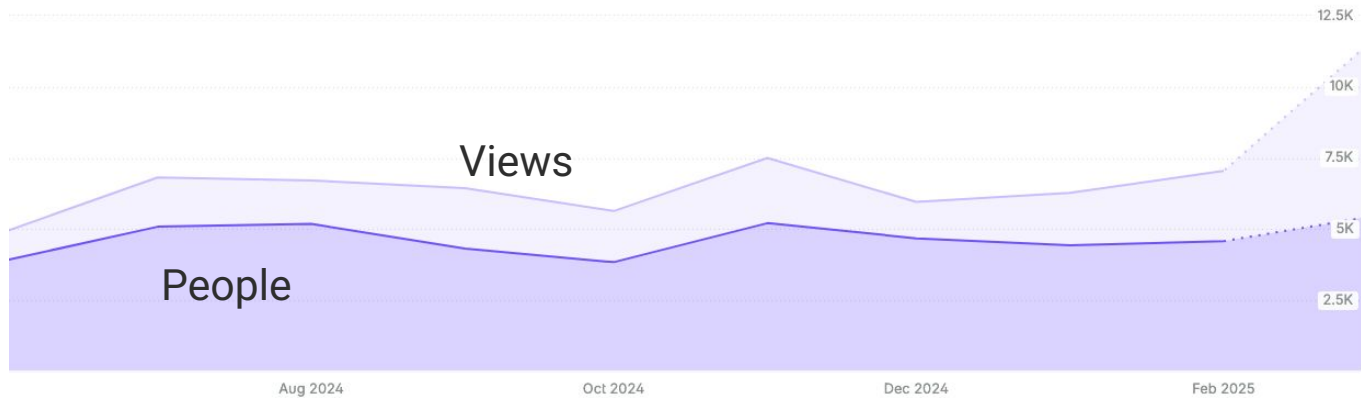
Intersex Filmmakers

Our Goals

1. A tool to make trans+ made films more available to educators, festival programmers, trans+ filmmakers, and trans+ organizers

2. A tool that enables new kinds of research questions about trans+ filmmaking in Canada and the United States
    a. What kinds of aesthetic, generic, and narrative strategies have trans+ filmmakers used?
    b. How has trans+ made cinema changed over time?
    c. Are there geographic trends in trans+ filmmaking?

Trans+ = Transgender, Two Spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and gender nonconforming

Visitors & Views Since Launch

Jun 16, 2024 to Mar 25, 2025

46.7k People

68.7k Views

Views

People

Aug 2024   Oct 2024   Dec 2024   Feb 2025

12.5K
10K
7.5K
5K
2.5K

Countries	Visitors
United States of America	26.1k
Canada	5.3k
United Kingdom	3k
Germany	2.3k
Australia	838
India	623
France	609
Italy	498
Netherlands	496
Brazil	425
Spain	393
Poland	344
Sweden	263
Russian Federation	227
China	208
Turkey	195
Switzerland	193
Mexico	193
Ireland	184
Philippines	179

What's in the Portal?

Orvis Starkweather (they/them)

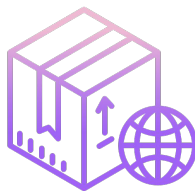# Overview
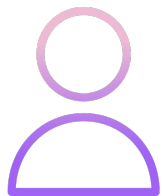
1,116
People (Filmmakers)
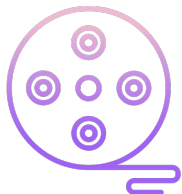
1,072
Media Works
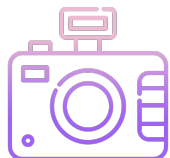
662
Images

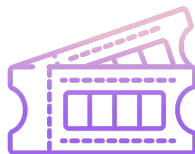**258**
Screenings

141
Distributors

61
Funding Bodies

45
Festivals
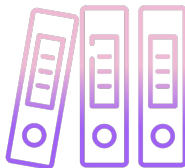
22
Archives

How do we identify films and filmmakers to be added?

- Trans Film festivals (going back to the 90s)
- Targeted research to fill in gaps in creative lead roles (a lot of films from the 2010s & 2020s)
- Filmmakers ask to be added (2020s)

Number of Media Works in the Portal By Release Year
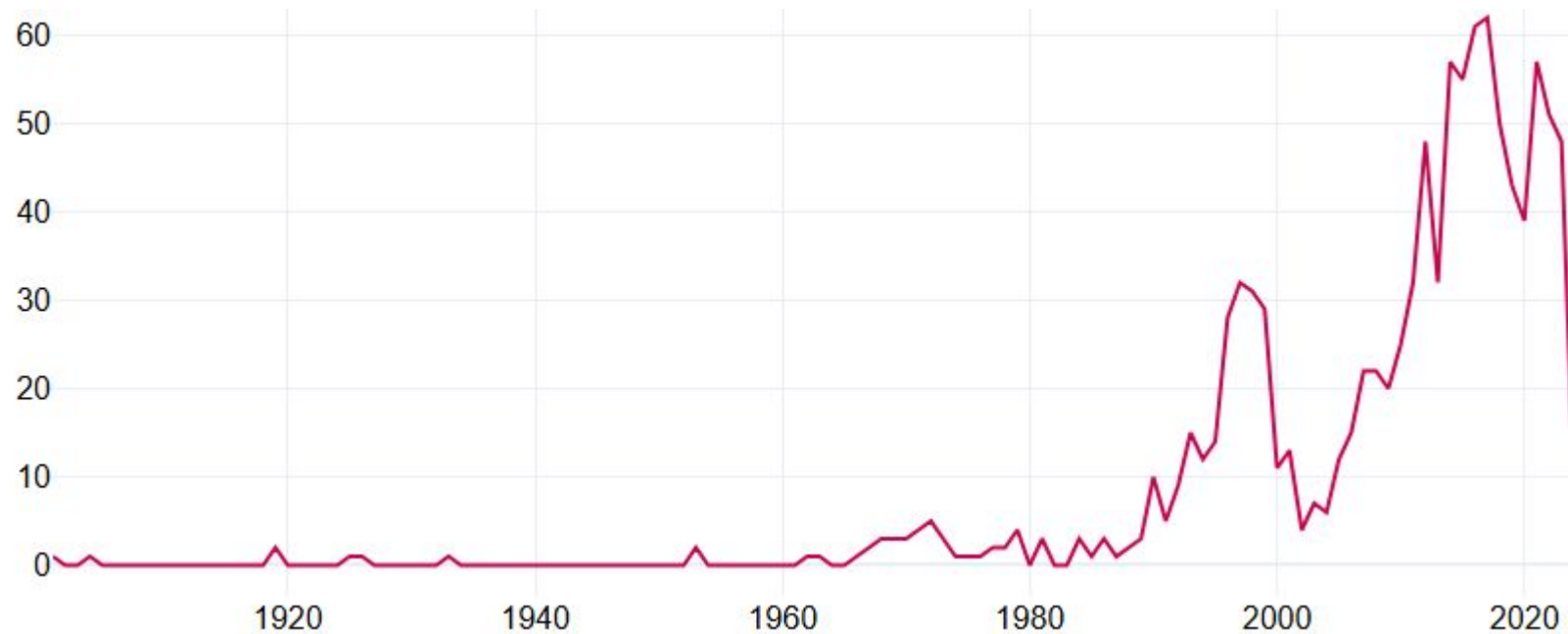
Trans+ Filmmakers with Creative Leadership by Priority Group

Filmmakers by Priority Group Membership
(Trans+: Trans+, Leadership: Leadership)
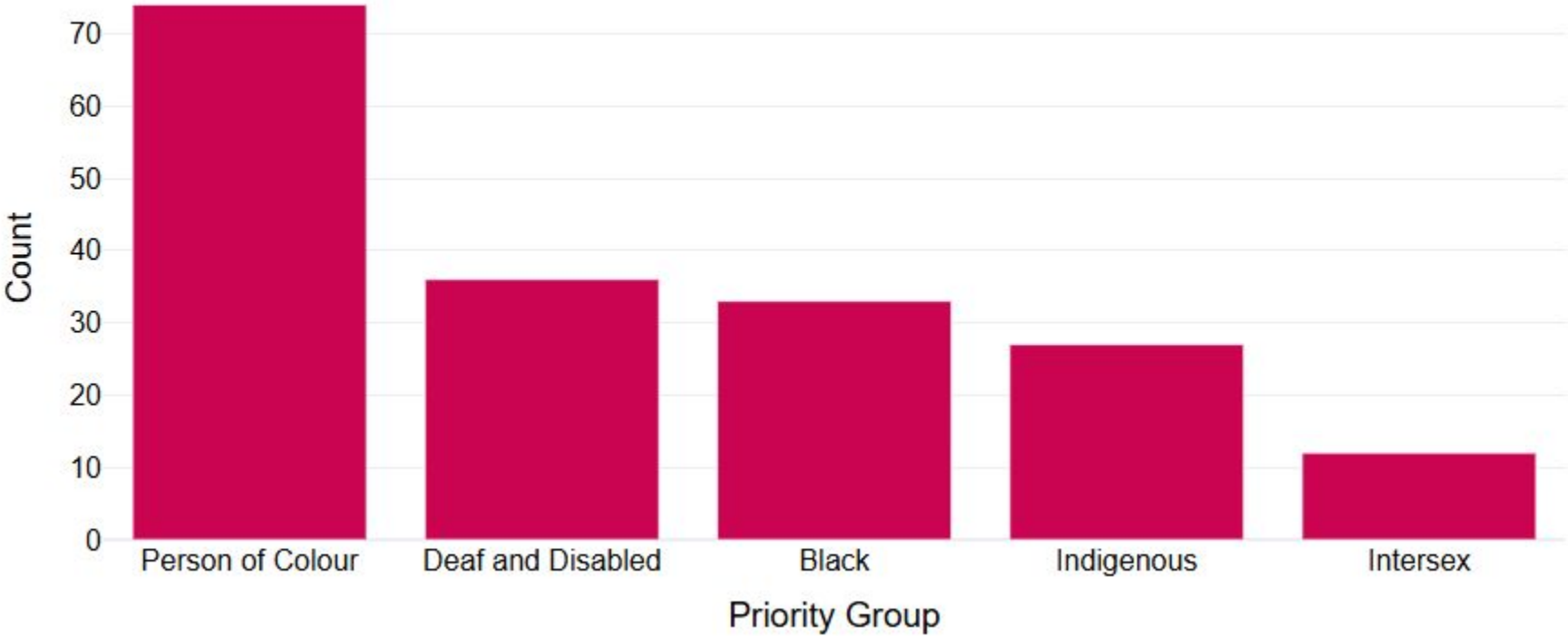
Media Works by Type
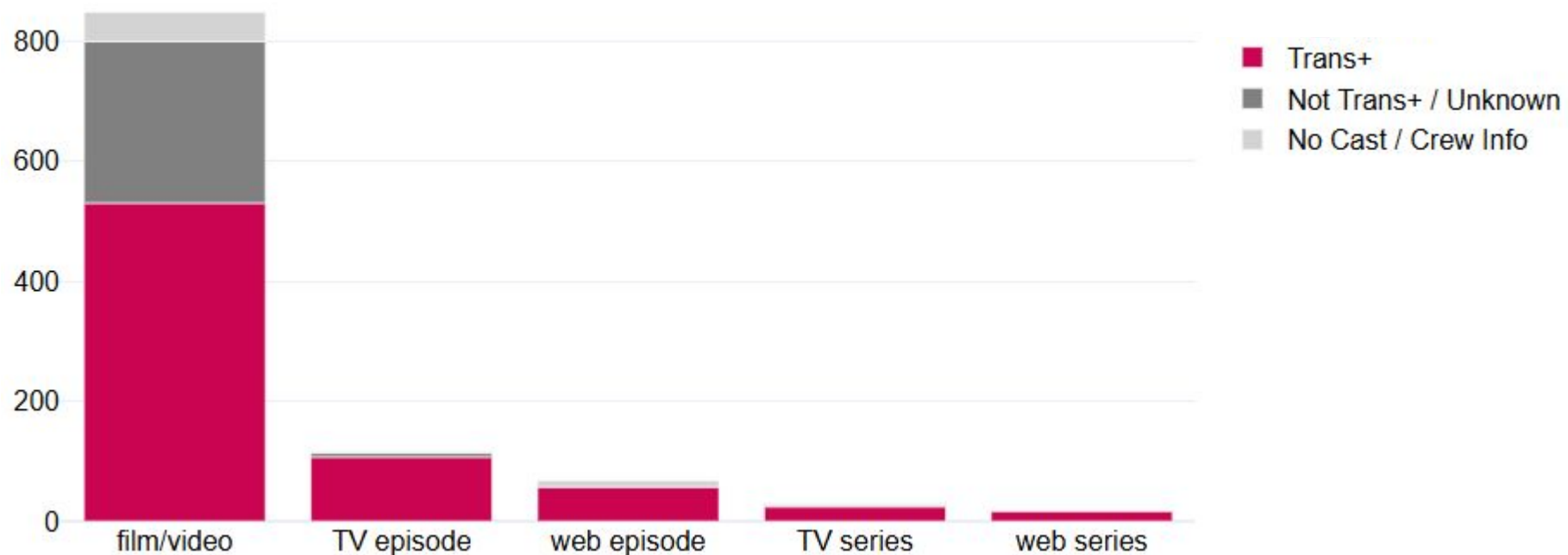
Top 10 Genres
Films, TV Series and Web Series only

Legend:
- Trans+
- Not Trans+ / Unknown
- No Cast / Crew Info
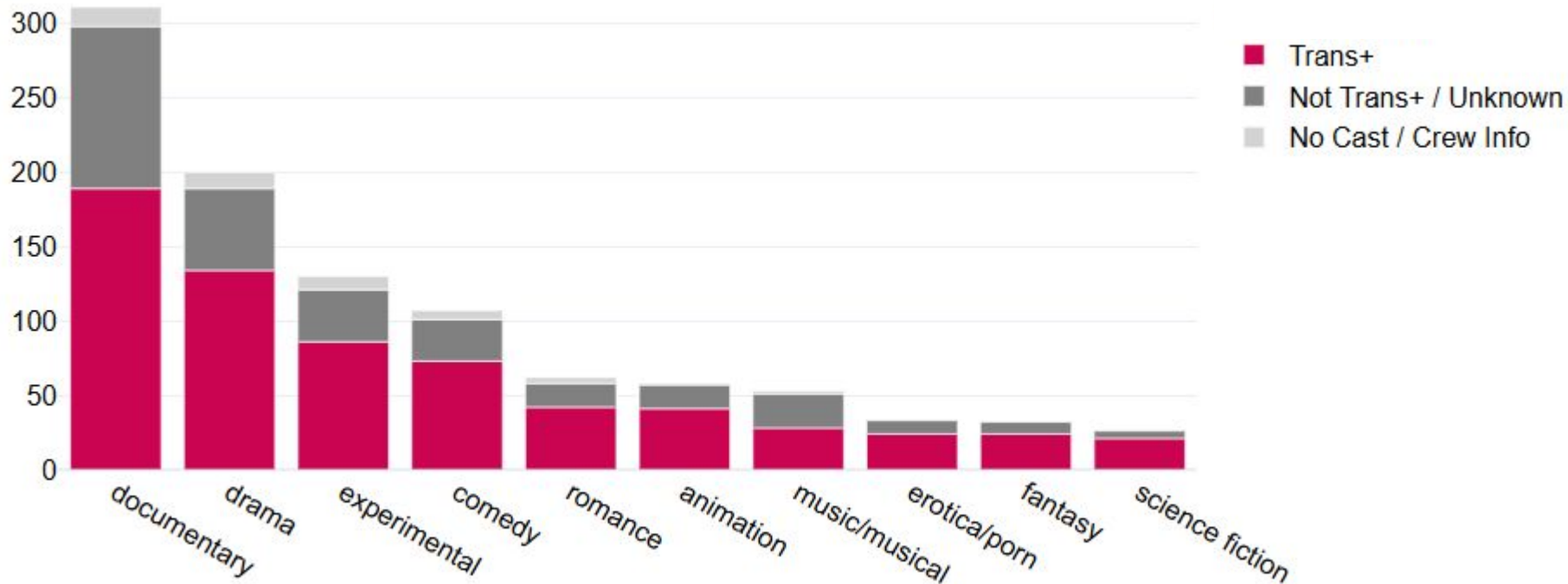
Top 5 Genres by Release Year (5 year increments)
Films, TV Series and Web Series only

Genre
- comedy
- drama
- experimental
- documentary
- romance
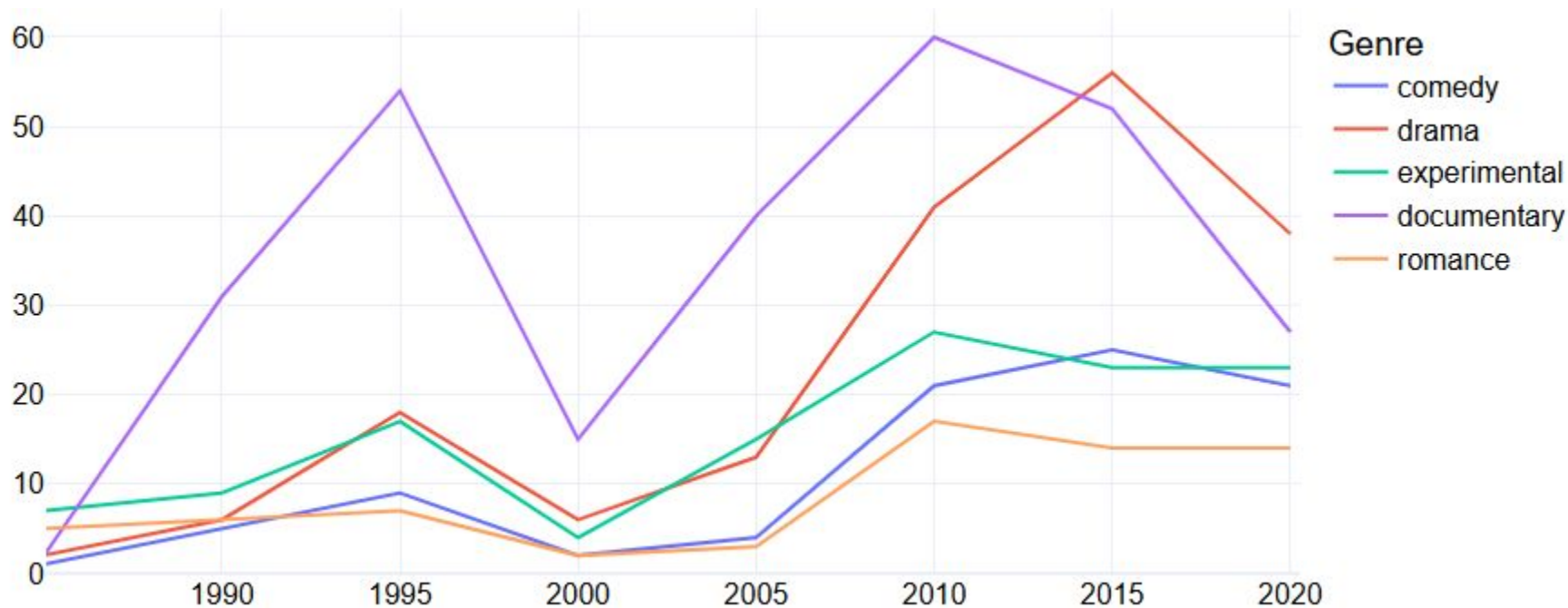
How We Did It: Choice of Tech Stack

Constance Crompton (she/they)

Which Platform to Use?

In consultation with Carleton University librarians we considered several platforms, with the initial goal of finding a one that was easy to edit, secure, and easy to maintain:

- Drupal
- WordPress
- Hyku + Samvera
- MediaWiki
- *Homemade static HTML* and *Endings Project StaticSearch*

How our site differs from a database-backed site (and why it matters)

HTML files generated by a database search

Database that lives on the server

Durable pre-existing HTML files

JSON index on the server that tells the site which HTML pages to bring back in response to search for text or keywords

CSV files not on the server
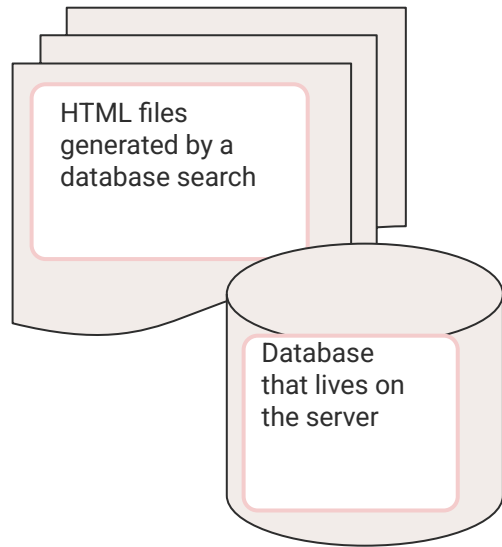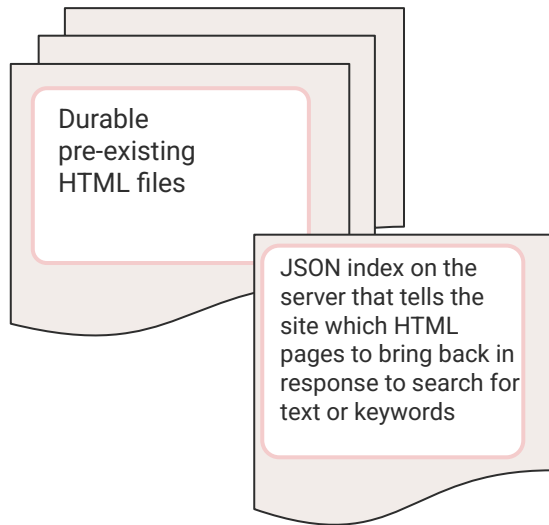
Database-backed site   vs   Static HTML site

/e Endings Project

CSV & XML files

processed by

XSLT & Python scripts

creates

No database, just 2500+ HTML pages, search page & an index file

In CSVs (spreadsheets)

In GitHub

creates

endings.uvic.ca
EP was first developed by the HCMC at uVic

230

Scripts to convert CSVs & XML into web pages and json index-backed search

On the Web
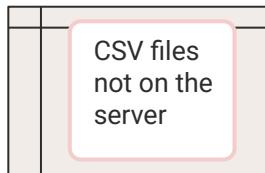
How We Did It: Novel Features of Our Approach

Maddie Murakami (he/him)

Why CSV, XML, and XSLT?

- No reliance on tools or libraries which need updating or which may be deprecated in the future (*without* sacrificing security)

- CSVs (Comma Separated Value) files and XMLs (HTML is a type of XML!) are "universal"

Spreadsheet

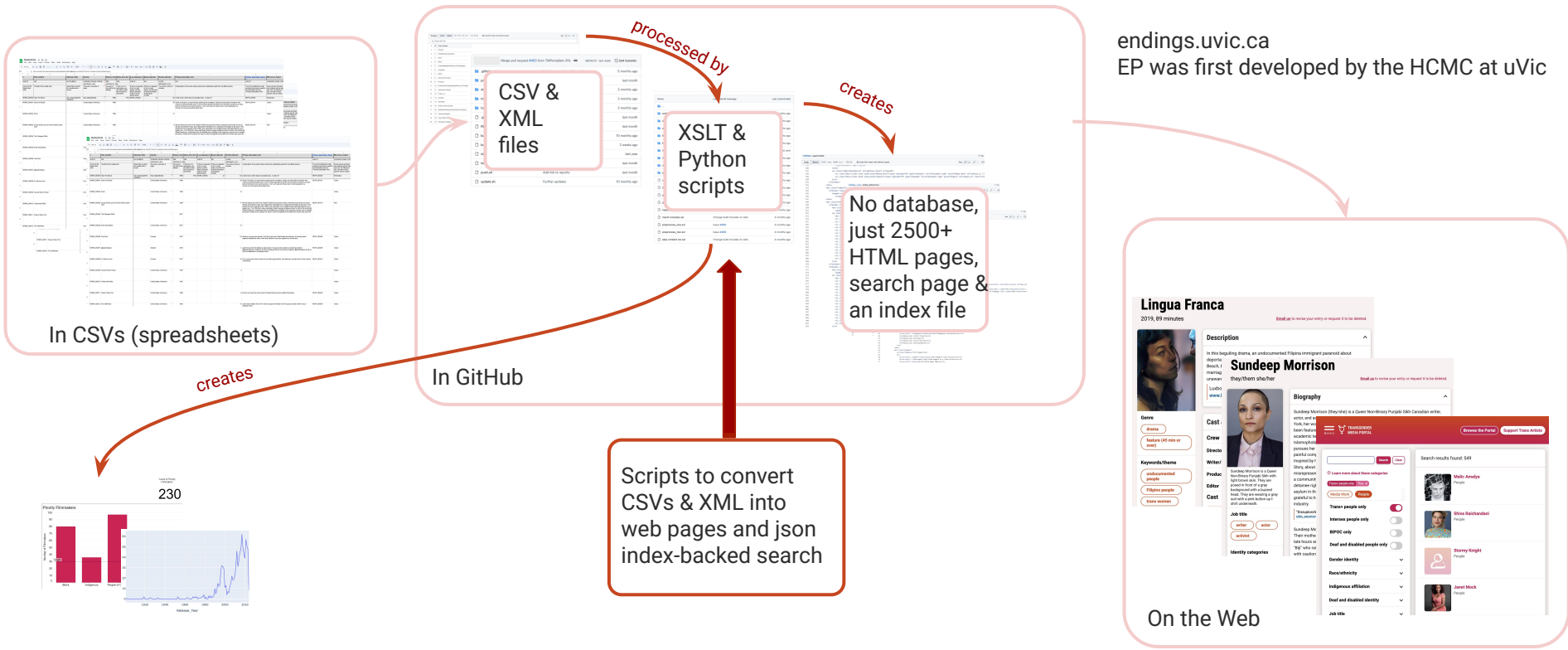|	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
1	¢	Title_of_Work	Alternate_Titles	Country	Release_Year	Series_End_Year	Is_an_Episode_of	Season.Episode	Runt
2	node ID	text	text (multiple)	vocabulary (closed, multiple)	date	date	node ID	text	numb
3				staticSearch_desc	staticSearch_date				static
4	The ID of this Media Work node	The title of this media work	Other titles by which this media work is known.	The work's countries of origin	The year of the work's first release	If this is a tv or web series, use this field to store the end year of that series	If this is an episode of a tv or web series, use this field to store the node ID of the parent series	If this is an episode of a tv or web series, use this field to store the season and episode number	The v minut
5	WORK_000000	Test: The Movie	Test, Interrupted|The Testfather	New Zealand|Chad	1969	1972	WORK_000000	2.7	
6	WORK_000001	Scent uVa Butch		United States of America	1998				
7	WORK_000002	Strait		United States of America	1996				
8	WORK_000003	we got moves you ain't even heard of (part one)		United States of America	1999				
9	WORK_000004	The Changes Within			2001				
10	WORK_000005	Butch Body Blues		United States of America	2001				
	WORK_000006	Pre-Drink		Canada	2017				

CSVs

```
ID,Title_of_Work,Alternate_Titles,Country,Release_Year,Series_End_Year,Is_an_Episode_of,Season.Episode,Runtime_Minutes,Pr
node ID,text,text (multiple),"vocabulary (closed, multiple)",date,date,node ID,text,number,text,node ID,"vocabulary (clos
,,,staticSearch_desc,staticSearch_date,,,,staticSearch_num,,,,staticSearch_desc,staticSearch_desc,staticSearch_desc,stati
The ID of this Media Work node,The title of this media work,Other titles by which this media work is known.,The work's co
WORK_000000,Test: The Movie,"Test, Interrupted|The Testfather",New Zealand|Chad,1969,1972,WORK_000000,2.7,92,"A test movi
WORK_000001,Scent uVa Butch,,United States of America,1998,,,,35,"Scent uVa Butch is a documentary exploring the complexi
WORK_000002,Strait,,United States of America,1996,,,,12,,,Colour,film/video,short (less than 45 min),,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,16
WORK_000003,we got moves you ain't even heard of (part one),,United States of America,1999,,,,11,"We Got Moves You Ain't
WORK_000004,The Changes Within,,,2001,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,ITEM_000008,,,,,,,,,,,
WORK_000005,Butch Body Blues,,United States of America,2001,,,,12,,,,film/video,short (less than 45 min),butch|lesbian|ma
WORK_000006,Pre-Drink,,Canada,2017,,,,23,"Alexe is a young trans woman, and Carl a gay man. Best friends since forever, a
",DIST_000015,https://www.h264distribution.com/en/films/distribution/pre-drink/,,https://vimeo.com/341631029,,https://www
WORK_000007,@janabringlove,,Sweden,2016,,,,5,Josef tries to flee the feeling of a bad dream. He goes online where he meet
WORK_000008,For Nonna Anna,,Canada,2017,,,,14,"As a young trans woman cares for her Italian grandmother, she discovers a
WORK_000009,Ground Bloom Flower,,United States of America,1997,,,,2,,,Colour,film/video,experimental|short (less than 45
WORK_000010,Chicks with Dicks,,United States of America,1997,,,,1,,,Colour,film/video,erotica/porn|short (less than 45 mi
WORK_000011,Kings of New York,,United States of America,1996,,,,6,"Escorts us inside the secret world of breast-binding,
WORK_000012,The Salt Mines,,United States of America,1990,,,,47,Latino transvestites of the NYC streets support their dai
WORK_000013,P(l)ain Truth,Plain Truth,Finland,1993,,,,15,P(l)ain Truth tells the story of the emotional and physical tran
WORK_000014,Gendertroublemakers,Gender Trouble Makers|Gender Troublemakers,Canada,1993,,,,26,"""We are two gender queens,
WORK_000015,"Hey, Fox",,,2009,,,,11,Hey Fox follows a group of fox/people as they perform rituals on the wishbones of Chi
WORK_000016,Happy Toilet,,United States of America,2013,,,,3,"Music video for ALABASTER CHOAD
Song: ""Godass"" from Crash of the Limburger on Bebusland   ",REFR_000758,Colour,film/video,animation|experimental|music/
WORK_000017,Jim,,United States of America,2017,,,,8,Jim an exploration-based portrait of a found object. Jim assembled th
WORK_000018,fragments,,United States of America,2014,,,,5,fragments is an experimental animation short film project rende
WORK_000019,Revise/Disguise,,United States of America,2011,,,,4,"Revised Disguise is an experimental short animation that
WORK_000020,Item Falls,,United States of America,2013,,,,25,Constructed sets give way to virtual environments where chara

The driving force of our trip is a producer named TK (played by Allison Powell) who seems to be coordinating auditions, w

Since we're having a peak experience, the big questions show up. Do we have free will? Is what we're seeing real? What do
```

XML format

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    <Primary_Description_Source order="100" displayName="Primary description source" type="node ID">REFR_001451</Primary_Description_Source>
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    <Media_Type order="35" displayName="Media type" type="vocabulary (closed, single)" search="staticSearch_desc">film/video</Media_Type>
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    <Themes_and_Keywords order="25" displayName="Keywords/theme" type="vocabulary (open, multiple)" search="staticSearch_desc">dyke</Themes_and_Keywords>
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    <Made_By_BIPOC order="3" displayName="Made by BIPOC creators only" type="binary" search="staticSearch_bool">0</Made_By_BIPOC>
    <Made_By_Intersex order="2" displayName="Made by intersex creators only" type="binary" search="staticSearch_bool">0</Made_By_Intersex>
    <Made_By_Deaf_and_Disabled order="4" displayName="Made by Deaf and disabled creators only" type="binary" search="staticSearch_bool">0</Made_By_Deaf_and_Disabled>
    <Is_Not_Episode order="6" displayName="Exclude TV episodes" type="binary" search="staticSearch_bool">1</Is_Not_Episode>
  </row>
  <row>
```

Searchable meta tags in HTML files

```html
<!DOCTYPE html><html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" lang="en" xml:lang="en">
  <head>
    <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8"/>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="../css/style.css?build-cache=20250317-2000"/>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="../css/static.css?build-cache=20250317-2000"/>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="../css/media.css?build-cache=20250317-2000"/>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="../css/people.css?build-cache=20250317-2000"/>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="../css/header.css?build-cache=20250317-2000"/>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="../css/footer.css?build-cache=20250317-2000"/>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="../css/slideout-menu.css?build-cache=20250317-2000"/>
    <link rel="icon" type="image/x-icon" href="../img/favicon.png"/>
    <title>Scent uVa Butch</title>
    <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1"/>
    <meta name="Document type" class="staticSearch_desc" content="Media Work"/>
    <meta name="docSortKey" class="staticSearch_docSortKey" content="ccc"/>
    <meta name="Country of origin" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="8" content="United States of America"/>
    <meta name="Release year" class="staticSearch_date" filterOrder="5" content="1998"/>
    <meta name="Duration (in minutes)" class="staticSearch_num" filterOrder="10" content="35"/>
    <meta name="Media type" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="35" content="film/video"/>
    <meta name="Genre" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="20" content="documentary"/>
    <meta name="Genre" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="20" content="short (less than 45 min)"/>
    <meta name="Keywords/theme" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="25" content="butch"/>
    <meta name="Keywords/theme" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="25" content="queer"/>
    <meta name="Keywords/theme" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="25" content="lesbian"/>
    <meta name="Keywords/theme" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="25" content="dyke"/>
    <meta name="Keywords/theme" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="25" content="portait"/>
    <meta name="Creator race/ethnicity" class="staticSearch_desc" filterOrder="5" content="South Asian"/>
    <meta name="Viewable online" class="staticSearch_bool" filterOrder="5" content="0"/>
    <meta name="Made by trans+ creators only" class="staticSearch_bool" filterOrder="1" content="0"/>
    <meta name="Made by BIPOC creators only" class="staticSearch_bool" filterOrder="3" content="0"/>
    <meta name="Made by intersex creators only" class="staticSearch_bool" filterOrder="2" content="0"/>
    <meta name="Made by Deaf and disabled creators only" class="staticSearch_bool" filterOrder="4" content="0"/>
    <meta name="Exclude TV episodes" class="staticSearch_bool" filterOrder="6" content="1"/>
    <meta name="docImage" class="staticSearch_docImage" content="../img/content_mediaworks.svg"/>
  </head>
  <body><a id="skip-to-content" href="#main">Skip to main content</a><a id="skip-to-content" href="#main">Skip to main c
```

Search | Clear

Made by trans+ creators only True ✕
Exclude TV episodes True ✕

Media Work | People

Made by trans+ creators only ⬤◯

Made by intersex creators only ◯

Made by BIPOC creators only ◯

Made by Deaf and disabled creators only ◯

Viewable online ◯

Exclude TV episodes ⬤◯

Creator gender identity ⌄

Creator race/ethnicity ⌄

Search results found: 536

Reviving the Roost
Media Work • Animation

Binding Chests, Mending Hearts
Media Work • Experimental

P4W: Prison for Women
Media Work • Documentary

Xanh
Media Work • Short (Less Than 45 Min)

How We Did It: Working with Filmmakers and Users

Laura Horak (she/her)

Making a tool that serves the community

- Surveyed trans filmmakers, archivists, activists, and scholars about their wants and needs before embarking on the project

- Established a Community Advisory Board (100% trans, >50% BIPOC)

- Hired trans filmmakers and students to work on the project

- Regularly consulted with Black, Indigenous, and disabled trans and queer experts

- First usability test: Spring 2020, in person, 6 testers, age range 15-65, 2 BIPOC, no screen reader users

Usability Test Report
2020
by Kit Chokly, Jay Cooper, Oliver Debney, & Laura Horak

TRANSGENDER MEDIA PORTAL

How We Navigated Filmmaker Consent

Top priorities = to treat trans people ethically & to build a site that is easy to use

Tension:
If we **only** included filmmakers in the Portal from who we received **explicit** consent there would be far fewer entries and it could not be used for research on trends.

However, if we just put every trans filmmaker we found into the Portal and left it at that, it may **expose** some trans filmmakers to **unwanted visibility**.

How We Navigated Filmmaker Consent

Our approach:

- Only add data that is already public

- Prioritize information created by the filmmaker

- Contact everyone for whom we can find contact info and ask permission to include them

How We Navigated Filmmaker Consent

- Researched email addresses and social media accounts

- Sent message to everyone informing them that they were on the site, with instructions on how to update their info, and asking if they wanted to be removed

- As of today, we have 1116 filmmakers, of which 51 are known to be deceased. We have not been able to find contact info for 324 of them.

- We have prioritized contacting trans filmmakers, and thus have contacted around 350 filmmakers.

- Up until today, 74 filmmakers have requested edits to their profiles and 16 have requested to be removed (not surprisingly, several of these requests came in after Trump was re-elected).

User Testing before Launch

Why?

We wanted the site be intuitive and easy to use, not only for university-educated people like our team, but for the broad trans community

How?

- Ran new round of user testing online

- This time, majority BIPOC and disabled trans user testers

  - 15 testers, including 10 BIPOC, 11 disabled people, including 5 who use screen readers; also 3 intersex people, and the age range was from "16-24" to "65+"

  - Each one received C$75 gift certificate for a Canadian or US company of their choice

Results of April 2024 Usability Test

Things to work on:
- Some screen reader issues
- Increase font size on mobile
- A way to search for films that are free to watch
- I would suggest making this paragraph: "*The Portal uses the filmmakers' own words from their bios and websites to describe their identities on their display pages. We do not censor or edit filmmakers' self-descriptions.*" more visible, maybe even on the homepage

Positive comments:
- "It is such a wonderful display of T4T care. This resource will be such a beacon for folks working to do media research and community educational events."
- "The fact that you can further narrow your search criteria fairly easily to search for trans-creators with intersectional identities is very nice."
- "I really didn't think anything would show up for 'horror' + 'trans creator' + 'Deaf/disabled creator' but HEYO!"
- "Alt text / description of images is common now, but I was surprised and felt welcomed by the consistency and bits of creative character in the alt text – really nice!"
- "I've never even seen a filter for audio description before, let alone one that let you search for subtitle and closed caption language as individual elements, so I'm a little stuck on that (positively!). "
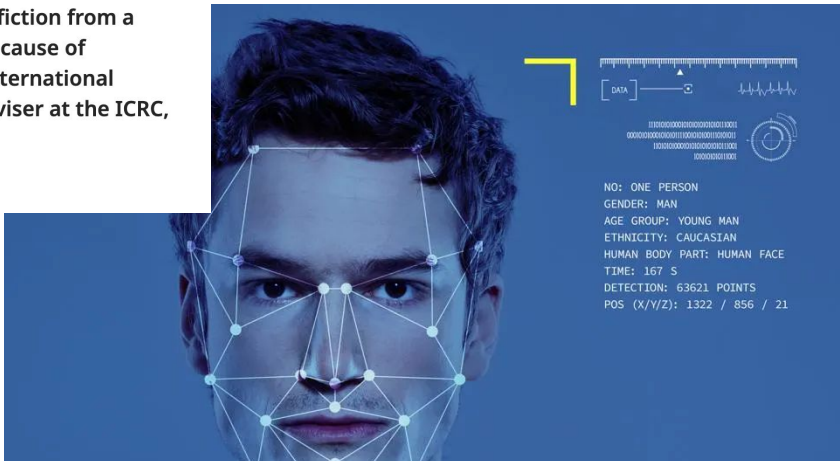
Background

- While the Transgender Media Portal is itself not a profit-generating project, it still exists within the underlying assumptions and structures of global capitalist accumulation.
  - Many of the tools we use and norms we assume are created to extract data as a commodity.
    - Flowing in a global structure from targeted advertising to overt state violence.

Autonomous weapons are not a work of science fiction from a distant dystopian future. They are an immediate cause of humanitarian concern and demand an urgent, international political response. Senior scientific and policy adviser at the ICRC, Neil Davison, explains.

Google DROP PROJECT NIMBUS

NO: ONE PERSON
GENDER: MAN
AGE GROUP: YOUNG MAN
ETHNICITY: CAUCASIAN
HUMAN BODY PART: HUMAN FACE
TIME: 167 S
DETECTION: 63621 POINTS
POS (X/Y/Z): 1322 / 856 / 21

DNA from genealogy site used to catch suspected Golden State Killer

Israel/OPT: Israeli authorities are using facial recognition technology to entrench apartheid

LILY HAY NEWMAN　SECURITY　DEC 4, 2024 12:00 PM

A New Phone Scanner That Detects Spyware Has Already Found 7 Pegasus Infections

The mobile device security firm iVerify has been offering a tool since May that makes spyware scanning accessible to anyone—and it's already turning up victims.

POLITICS · DEPORTATION

Trump deportation push largely ignores major tool —E-Verify system that employers can use to check workers

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WORKERS DEMAND Google DROP PROJECT

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Commodified data is an imperialist weapon

o catch suspected

Israel/OPT: Israel recognition technology to entrench apartheid

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Relevant Frameworks and Concepts

- Cybernetic capitalism
  - Commodification/extraction
- Accumulation by dispossession
- The platform
- Hegemonic security/securitization
- Ideology and scapegoating

How is this relevant to trans filmmaking?

1. **Sorting**: to modify productive processes, commodification demands the rapid sorting of a massive amount of human data into conclusive information
2. Clearing
3. Scapegoating

1. Sorting
2. **Clearing**: this form of capitalist accumulation demands dispossession – eradicating existing community to make way for new (profit-making) practices.
3. Scapegoating

1. Sorting
2. Clearing
3. **Scapegoating**: the creation of an Other – a threat to joy and that which is tied to it – to rationalize accumulation by dispossession; i.e., the production of a bourgeois consciousness.

Therefore, trans people are often inaccurately **sorted** into broad yet restrictive categories that are fueled by commodity production and subsequently **cleared** from public spaces because of their status as a permanent **scapegoat** in modern capitalism.

The body is made into a malleable form of "evidence" in a situation that criminalizes transness.

When everything is subsumed into accumulation, actual human life is displaced.

We are reduced to sets of values – to potential producers and consumers, obstacles or advantages to the generation of power and profit.

What does this have to do with trans people?

- **Media is a significant part of colonial capitalist hegemony**: it has been used to **justify imperialist intervention** with orientalist tropes, to position the preservation of the heterosexist family as a moral **imperative**, and to make capitalist exploitation appear **natural** and **correct**.

- These structures position trans+ people, **specifically trans+ racialized people**, on the other end: as **threats** to the white, heterosexual happy family.

  - Anti-trans, colonial institutions cyclically use and justify surveillance by invoking these justifications.

  - As late capitalism commodifies our identities, free time, relationships, and more, it creates precarity that hits oppressed people hardest.

Anti-transness in tech

- Platform owners and other "big tech" executives are making a rapid, aggressive, and overt rightward turn.
    - Move away from the performance of progressivism into an outwardly far right reactionary ideology.
    - Intensification of anti-trans scapegoating
        - "Cis is a slur"
        - Vilification of trans people
        - Wildly exaggerated or fabricated stories
   - AI "slop" and clickbait

The drive

- Creating content that is attractive, clickable – keeps people active and motivated to keep using the platform.
- Reinforcement of the capitalist family and the extraction of reproductive labour.
- Displacement of alienation, economic fears, and frustrations onto a "foreign" other.

A double bind

Trans+ people are unevenly subjected to violences associated with their scapegoating and vilification.

Supposedly protective mechanisms of security pose a threat to trans+ people individually and trans existence.
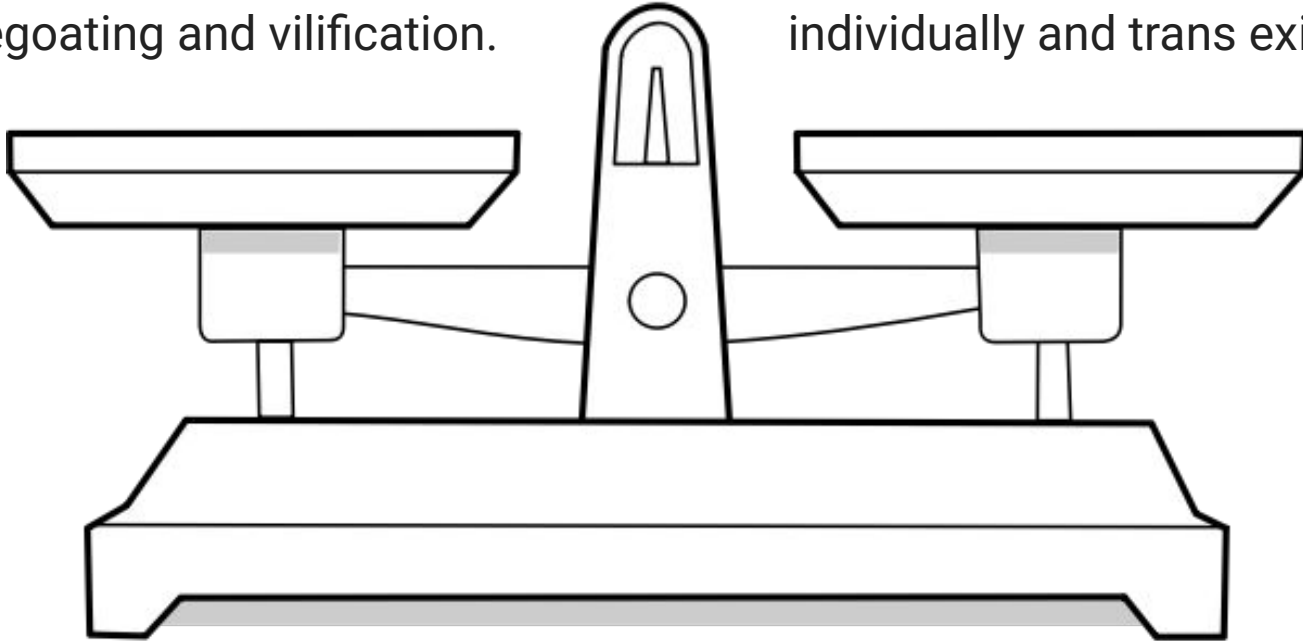
"Security is hegemony"

- Critical security scholars Rigakos and Neocleous argue that security **is** hegemony – it reproduces itself and is capable of bypassing consensus.

- They argue, therefore, that security does not actually protect us. Rather, securitization is a bordering practice that generates profit and (re)produces precarity.

- With the contemporary anti-trans landscape, security is weaponized against trans people rather than being employed to protect trans lives (eg. bathroom bills).

Pinkwashing and homonationalism

We are also conscious of pinkwashing, homonationalism, and other abuses of queer and trans struggle to promote imperialism and reproduce carceral structures.

The same colonial-imperialist states that scapegoat trans people for their economic crises also consistently use the "tolerance" of queer and trans existence in Orientalist propaganda.

What other options do we have?

Safety and security

- Whilst criticizing the carceral security state, we also refuse to throw up our hands and accept that trans+ people will forever be subject to harm without resistance.

- We orient our methods around safety and not security: how to we prevent the Portal from becoming a tool of extractive surveillance, tracking, harassment, and violence toward trans people without hiding in the face of anti-trans aggression?

A starting point

We are not starting from the ground up nor are we trying to reinvent security. We can draw on existing and historical movements to understand threat and reframe safety.

Safety Planning

The Transgender Media Portal has taken this on in concrete and abstract ways, including the creation of a set of cohesive safety plans that span across digital spaces, events, personal safety, and the complex decision-making processes that require care and support.

Often, safety is limited to existing apparatuses of institutional security (police, campus security, etc.). While we recognize that these mechanisms are dominant and cannot be entirely ignored, nor do we discourage people from using these options, we aim to present a more holistic image of safety that extends from before to beyond an incident.

Care in a time of dispossession?

Archiving and storing data in times of crisis

Do you know your privacy settings on Facebook or Instagram? Do you know the settings of the groups that you are in? Do you have old, sometimes embarrassing, posts on the internet that you cannot remove?

When I search my name online, one of the results is an old Soundcloud link from my middle school class! Do I want this preserved forever? Do I want my name to be permanently associated with this and for it to be used to mine information about my life or to represent me in the face of politico-legal threats?

This situation demands that we look beyond conventional private/public binaries through which we file information
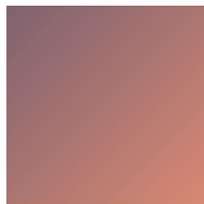
Gannon-Day, Jada TIJ1O
Morning Announcement - Philosophy Club (TIJ1O)

9 years ago
#TIJ1O

0:18

Write a comment

The public and the private

Lines between public and private are blurred in digital spaces.

- **Do people know what their public information will be used for?**

- Did they consent to having their information made public?

- **Can we foresee risks and benefits to increasing visibility to already public information?**

- Can services be used without making information public?

- **Are we accurately representing this information? Are we equipped to do so?**

Public doesn't always mean it is ethical to access and share information.
Ethics boards aren't always prepared to address these new challenges.

Withdrawal, removal, and informed consent

Emphasizing the right to be forgotten, we are going through multiple processes of edits, removals, and layered conversations with filmmakers to determine what is best and safest for them at this time.

This pushes us to think about what consent means on the internet: what it means when our careers, access to information, communication, and even our relationships are withheld with our data as a "key."

To use or not to use: the platform

We are now reckoning with our use of dominant and popular platforms like Facebook, Google, and X/Twitter.

- Google/Amazon's role in apartheid and ethnic cleansing in Palestine,
- Google's complicity with the far right turn in the US,
- Poor and exploitative labour practices in the tech sector (mass firings, union busting, exploitation of low-wage workers),
- Funneling money and data into big corporations.

At the same time, they provide reach and (due to their data extractive practices) minimize upfront costs.

What might life look like without reliance on these platforms?

Runaway change: confronting and sitting with the unknown.

Looking to the Future

Laura Horak (she/her)

Improving the Site

- Adding nodes for Images, Festivals, Festival Editions, Funders, Distributors, and Archives

- Creating more info-rich search results

- Adding filmmakers and films from all known trans film festivals

- Incorporating linked data

Building the Ecosystem for Trans Media Making

- Help build a robust ecosystem for the complete lifecycle of trans filmmaking in Canada, from funding to production, exhibition, distribution, and preservation

- Research questions:
  - What can we learn from the successes and failures of trans funding, production, exhibition, distribution, and preservation in Canada in 1990-2009 to strengthen these activities today?
  - How can we best preserve Canadian trans-made films, describe them in metadata in library and archive databases, and make them accessible to today's students, educators, and filmgoers?
  - What kinds of support do trans filmmakers, curators, and archivists need today to cultivate a rich, diverse film culture in Canada?

Finding a Partner

In the long run, we'd like to be off the 3-5-year cycle of research grant applications.

Once the Portal is fully built, **we'd love to find an organization** with a stable base budget (e.g. a film festival, trans community organization, archive, etc.) that might want to **take over the Portal** and keep it updated with new films and filmmakers.

It shouldn't need much maintenance otherwise because of our minimal computing approach. And we're happy to stay on as collaborators.

If you know any organizations that might be interested, let us know!

Thank you. Keep in Touch!

transgendermediaportal.org | Insta, Bsky & FB: @TransMediaPortl | TransgenderMediaPortal@gmail.com

Special thanks to Aliisa Qureshi, Rina Khan, Kate Higginson, & Adam Milling!

Icons courtesy of: **Icongeek26**,

Bonus Slides

In case these come up in the Q&A

Trans+ Filmmakers by Priority Group Membership
(without being filtered by leadership crew role)

Filmmakers by Priority Group Membership
(Trans+: Trans+, Leadership: all)