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"I Wanna Be a Toy": Self-sexualisation in gender-variant *Twitter* users' biographies

The paradigmatic transgender woman is often negatively oversexualised, pornographised and fetishized in mainstream conceptualisations and discourses, whilst self-sexualisation by transgender individuals is often portrayed as a (sex-)positive social phenomenon. However, little research has been conducted that analyses the self-sexualisation strategies of the multiple instantiations of gender-variant identity, including transmasculine and nonbinary social actors. This paper uses a corpus-informed socio-cognitive approach to critical discourse studies to identify differences between the self-sexualisation strategies and underpinning cognitive models of different gender-variant user-groups on Twitter. 2,565 users are coded into five categories: 1) transfeminine; 2) transmasculine; 3) transsexual; 4) transvestite; 5) nonbinary. Findings show that transvestite- and transsexual-identifying users most closely fit the pornographised and fetishized conceptualisation, whilst nonbinary users are the least self-sexualising user-group.

Keywords: transgender, gender-variant, sexualisation, Twitter, socio-cognitive, corpus linguistics

1. Introduction

Transgender bodies are persistently oversexualised in mainstream discourses. Specifically, the transgender woman is fetishized, pornographised and '[associated] with prostitution' (Espineira, 2016: 326). Given that biological males are more likely than biological females to engage in socio-psychological and physical transition (Meier & Labuski, 2013), it is no surprise that the transgender woman figures predominantly in research on the sexualisation of transgender bodies than other non-cisgender identities. A notable exception to the rule is somewhat recent work on representations of genitals by transmasculine individuals (Edelman & Zimman, 2014; Zimman, 2014). Still, there remains a long-standing tendency in various contexts to conceptualise *transgender* as a collectivisation encompassing all non-cisgender identities and bodies (e.g. medicine – Glynn & van den Berg, 2017; pedagogy – Riggs & Bartholomaeus, 2017; psychometry – Scandurra, Amodeo, Bochicchio, Valerio & Frost, 2017). Similarly, there is a tendency to promote and/or denigrate specific discourses 'about' gender-variance (e.g. problematizing narratives of genital reconfiguration and oversimplified references to sexed physiology [GLAAD, ©2017]; the de-medicalisation of transsexual identity in favour of 'transgender' as an identifier [e.g. Zimman, 2009]). Both tendencies lead to the conflation of identities and worldviews: the first quite overtly, and the second more covertly via the delegitimation of discourses alternative to the authorised zeitgeist. The

conflation of identities can at worst lead to the incorrect assignation of normative characteristics (sexual or otherwise) to various identities in a larger, reductive, social categorisation that falsely determines commonality between evidently differing social groups.[1] At the very least, the conflation of identities ignores the experiences and worldviews of minority social categories subsumed under the reductive *transgender* umbrella. The outcome of both such conditions is an inevitable reduction of individuals' agency (in both identity and behaviour) – an issue I seek to challenge in this paper.

Agency is a key issue in research on sexualisation, whether researchers are extolling the benefits or detriments of sexualised behaviours and contexts. Critics claim sexualisation constrains the agency of those subject to it (Coy, 2009: 372) and that sexualised contexts are conducive for sexual harassment and sex-based violence (see Coy & Garner, 2012; Kelly, 2007). Conversely, proponents deem it a technology for emancipation (Coy & Garner, 2010) and advocate its centrality in the movement towards equal rights for women (Gill, 2012; McNair, 2002). Such pluralistic interpretations of sexualisation extend to self-sexualisation more specifically, with some researchers contending that women can choose to self-sexualise (Thompson & Donaghue, 2014) as a means of exercising agency (Kehily, 2012) and others questioning the role of women's agency over self-sexualisation in a patriarchal social structure (Gill & Donaghue, 2013). It is evident that much research on self-sexualisation is devoted to the debate on the social implications, positive and negative, of sexualisation as a social phenomenon. Research on transgender self-sexualisation, more specifically, often has a highly sex-positive and emancipatory perspective on sexualisation strategies (see Lloyd & Finn, 2017: 159). This paper also focuses on the interface of gender-variance and self-sexualisation. However, I do not attempt to engage in a dialectic discussion vis-à-vis the positive or negative implications of (self-)sexualisation, per se. Rather, I seek to problematise and challenge the essentialist collectivisation of gender-variant social categories in an effort towards promoting agency in identity and behaviour for gender-variant individuals.

Before explaining my methodological choices and their intended effects, it is first prudent to explain my choices of terminology. I use *gender-variance* as synonymous with 'gender incongruence' (Beek, Cohen-Kettenis, Bouman, de Vries, Steensma, Witcomb, Arcelus, Richards, De Cuypere & Kreukels, 2017), thus denotive of gender-sex behaviours incongruent with physiological sex at birth. Understanding gender-variance in this way facilitates the separation of ontology and epistemology qua critical realism (e.g. Archer,

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[1] See Turner ([1982] 2010) on normative attributes of social identity groups.

1998), where physiological sex can be considered ontological (i.e. an objective condition of biological reality) and gender epistemological (i.e. a personal, primarily sociopsychological, knowledge or understanding of the self). Gender-variance, then, is also ontological insofar as it refers to the 'state of the matter' (Archer, 1998: 195) that is a gendered presentation and/or identity incongruent with physiological sex at birth. The codification of sex-as-ontology and gender-as-epistemology is by no means an attempt to erase or undermine individual identities and worldviews; rather, it is a necessary step in extricating heterogeneous identities and behaviours from such essentialist labels as *transgender* insofar as *gender-variance* refers to a Durkheimian social fact. Clarifying the difference between epistemic gender identity (i.e. masculinity; femininity) from ontic sexed physiology (i.e. maleness; femaleness) also facilitates a more nuanced understanding of identity: lexical choice in self- and other-representation is based in ideology, which in turn 'mentally [represents] the basic social characteristics of a group, such as their identity' (van Dijk, 1995). That is, reference to physiology in lieu of gender (and vice versa) is significant in the analysis of individuals' cognitive models, or the subjective organisation of personal experience (Lakoff, 1987).

Using a sociocognitive approach to discourse analysis, this paper explores the relationship between discourse and society, as mediated by cognition (van Dijk, 2009; 2015; 2017). Specifically, I aim to illuminate differences between the cognitive and ideological models underpinning the linguistic self-sexualisation strategies of various groups of gender-variant individuals in an effort towards reinforcing a claim for the recognition of difference between categories currently subsumed under reductive and homogenising collectivisations (i.e. *transgender*). Sexualisation is said to be 'connected to an ongoing breakdown or renegotiation of the boundary between public and private' (Gill, 2012: 484) insofar as Western society has become 'pre-occupied with confession, revelation and exposure' (McNair, 2002). Hence, Twitter provides an ideal context for studying the complex phenomenon of sexualisation in an Internet age due to its blurring of the boundaries between public and private (Walton & Rice, 2013). Given that biographies are reserved for the most salient identity features of users (Volkova, Backrach, Armstrong & Sharma, 2015), I have chosen to analyse biographies in an effort towards gleaning the self-sexualisation strategies that can be assumed as being at the core of users' (online) identities. In order to produce generalisable results, I analyse the biographies of 2,565 users. The users are codified into the following categories: 1) transfeminine, indexing natal maleness and sociopsychological feminine identity; 2) transmasculine, indexing natal femaleness and sociopsychological masculine identity; 3) transsexual, an identity category formed on the basis of (intended)

genital reconfiguration; 4) transvestite, or identities based solely on cross-dressing; and 5) nonbinary, indexing gender identities diverging from a binary conceptualisation of gender (including agender). After using corpus linguistic techniques to identify salient linguistic features for further analysis (Baker, Gabrielatos, Khosravinik, Krzyzanowksi, McEnery, & Wodak, 2008), I primarily use van Leeuwen's social action (1995) and actor (1996) taxonomies as a means of identifying (non-)sexualised identities and behaviours.

2. Sexualisation strategies – a brief overview

In order to accurately identify language use in strategies for self-sexualisation in Twitter users' biographies, it is first prudent to determine how sexualisation is performed in cultural settings and by social actors. The American Psychological Association (APA) define sexualisation as occurring when 'a person's value is determined primarily by sexual appeal or behaviour' (APA, 2007: 4), which is reflected in Attwood's definition of sexualisation as a 'pre-occupation with sexual values, practices and identities' (2006: 77). Hence, in this paper I consider two primary contexts for sexualisation: 1) sex/physiology, or the sexualised body; and 2) sexuality, including both sexual behaviour and sexual identities.

Sexualisation of bodies includes the assumption that individuals are prized for their sexed physiology and that both sexes 'are under pressure to emulate polarised gender stereotypes' (Papadopoulos, 2010: 22). This Foucauldian understanding of sexualisation, or the overdetermination of sex differences (see Gill, 2007; Jordan & Aitchison, 2008), is exemplified in the emphasis of secondary sex characteristics (e.g. breasts [Graff, Murnen, & Krause, 2013]) and in non-sexual, albeit arguably gendered, physical characteristics (e.g. men's biceps [Smith, 2017]). Gender and sex are inextricable in sexualisation strategies, given that sexualisation strategies often rely simultaneously on (a comparison between) gender roles – for example, social expectations of female passivity and male dominance/aggression. Hegemonized sex differences therefore also constitute the representation of 'hegemonic templates' of gendered identity linked to a sexed body type (see Coy, 2009; Coy & Garner, 2012). For gender-variant bodies, physical sexualisation pertains primarily to 'invasive and obscene questions in regards to their sexual organs' (Chang & Chung, 2015: 228), which may linguistically manifest in a pre-occupation with medico-surgical body modification (see Webster, *in press*), including genital reconfiguration, augmentation of secondary sexual characteristics (i.e. breast augmentation; mastectomy), or hormonal intervention.

In addition to such values as sex appeal (i.e. values on or about physiology), Attwood's definition claims that a fixation on practices and identities constitutes sexualisation (2006: 77); thus, users representing sexual identities and behaviours as their most salient characteristics in biographies are also engaging in self-sexualisation to some extent. However, the conflation of sexual behaviours and identities (Sears, 1999: 5) and the heteronormative condition of social structures that makes non-heterosexuality '[seem] excessive' (DePalma & Atkinson, 2008: 341) entails that sexual identities and behaviours are incorrectly assumed to be equally as sexualising. Instead, it seems prudent to distinguish between identity and behaviour when considering the role of sexuality in (self-)sexualisation – that is, sexual identities and sexual behaviours might be considered distinct sexualisation strategies. However, much like gender and sex, sexual identities and behaviours can frequently be inextricable (e.g. identification with sexual positioning, indicating sexual behaviour in men who have sex with men – 'top', 'bottom', 'versatile' [see Dangerfield, Smith, Williams, Unger, & Bluthenthal, 2017]). Hence, it would be more apt to consider that the two constitute differing degrees of the same strategy. For the purpose of this paper, I consider a fixation on sexual behaviour (and/or on sexed physiology) more sexualising than a fixation on social identity in accordance with the APA's definition of sexualisation as primarily pertaining to sex appeal – that is, physiology – and behaviour (APA, 2007); of course, these may in turn manifest in sexualised identities.

Exploring the contexts and extent of gender-variant Twitter users' self-sexualisation, as either fixated on physiological sex or sexuality, will facilitate the aim of demonstrating differences between the cognitive models of differing gender-variant identity categories. I argue that users of each distinct identity category self-sexualise in differing ways, using a varied combination of sexualised contexts (i.e. physiology, identity, and behaviour). It is prudent to note that self-sexualisation strategies will be either mitigated or amplified by their immediate linguistic context and co-text (e.g. mitigated – sexual identity labels appearing in a list of other salient identity characteristic labels; amplified – compounded sexual identities and behaviours). The following section will detail the methodology with which I accounted for context and the extent of sexualisation in users' biographies.

3. Data contextualisation and analytical framework

Twitter biographies index users' 'demographic traits like gender … or self-reported preferences' (see Volkova, *et al*., 2015: 4296) and 'reflect the users' background, interests and beliefs' (Ding & Jiang, 2014: 268). The restricted character limit of biographies (160

characters) and their purpose as self-introductions entail an assumption that the most salient features of users' identity will be represented in users' biographies (see Example 1 for examples). Hence, users' biographies are likely to index self-sexualisation if the sexualised self is of salience to individuals' identity.

Username	Biography
@AmelleHutchison	23, Transgender Scottish woman.
@RaeRaenicorrrn	Queer, Genderqueer, Crazy, Multiply-DisAbled, Vegetarian, (A)narcho-Communist Activist who is a student, a trained birth doula, and a blogger. Also, CATS!!
@alexrkid96	17|Student|Huddersfield|Transgender FTM| Past caring whether you accept me for who i am or you dont...its reality deal with it

Example 1 - Sample Twitter users' biographies

In order to collect the data, I mined gender-variant micro-celebrities' follower lists[2]; the application programme interface retrieves the data and corresponding metadata from followers, including users' biographies. In order that the specialised corpus of users' biographies comprised relevant data and was collected systematically, I included only users whose profile is publicly accessible to non-users of Twitter and whose biographies included

User-group category	Gender-indexical lexical items*
Transfeminine	*transwoman*, *transgirl*, *tgirl*, *mtf*, *m2f*
Transmasculine	*transman*, *transdude*, *ftm*, *f2m*
Transsexual	*transsexual*, *transexual* [sic], *TS*
Tranvestite	*transvestite*, *TV*, *crossdresser*, *CD*, *XD*
Non-binary	*non-binary*, *nb*, *enby*, *agender*
* lists not exhaustive	

Table 1 - Lexical items used for categorising users

at least one lexical item denoting the users' gender-sex incongruence (see Table 1). Given that the aim of this paper is to demonstrate heterogeneity between gender-variant identities, I

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[2] Micro-celebrities are defined as individuals who have attained celebrity status primarily via social media (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2016); gender-variant micro-celebrities were identified via personal experience as a user and consumer of social media.

chose not to analyse gender-variance as the smallest unit of analysis and instead chose to group users by gender-similarity based on gendered/sexed identifiers in users' biographies. The five categories users were coded into were: 1) transfeminine – 1,134 biographies (19,126 word tokens); 2) transmasculine – 563 biographies (8,994 tokens); 3) transsexual – 202 biographies (3,520 tokens); 4) transvestite – 238 biographies (3,669 tokens; 5) nonbinary – 526 biographies (8,663 tokens).[3] Each of the categories constitutes a sub-corpus, which was compared against the remaining four sub-corpora in order to identify differences in self-sexualisation strategies.

Comparing corpora yields evidence of salient linguistic features for further analysis (Baker, *et al.*, 2008) including 'patterns of meaning … and attitude' (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008: 6), offering quantitative measures that guard against accusations of 'cherry-picking' data to fit a priori expectations (Baker & Levon, 2015). Of the many techniques used in corpus linguistics, this paper primarily relies on keywords and their collocates. As the first stage of analysis, a keyword list from each sub-corpus was compiled using the remaining four sub-corpora as a reference corpus. To strike a balance between capturing frequent linguistic phenomena and restricting the scale of analysis to a feasible number of phenomena, only statistically significant keywords (log-likelihood ratio of +3.84) with a frequency greater than 10 were analysed in the study. A similar compromise was made in the analysis of keywords' collocates; only lexical items with more than five co-occurrences within a ±5 word span from the node keyword were analysed in the study. I used both mutual information (MI) score and *t*-score to determine the true collocates of keywords. Given that MI is often criticised for disproportionately assigning strength to low-frequency collocates (Baker, 2005), researchers often attempt to maximise the reliability of measurements by utilising more than one measure (see Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008; Salama, 2011); true collocates are considered so if they 'score highly on two collocation measures' (Baker, 2014: 136). Hence, collocates in this study must yield results higher than both the conventional significance thresholds of MI ≥ 3 and $t \geq 2$.

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[3] Users were coded into multiple categories (e.g. transfeminine and transsexual) if the identifiers used in their biography contained reference to multiple identity-types (e.g. *transwoman* and *transsexual)*. 98 of 2,663 users were coded into multiple categories (96 were coded into 2 categories, and 2 users were coded into 3 categories). The only sub-corpus significantly affected by the multiple categorisation of users was the *transsexual* sub-corpus; 33% of *transsexual* users also signified an alternative gender-variant identity in their biography. The remaining sub-corpora had between 2% and 10% of its users categorised into multiple categories. However, it is not within my remit to decide a users' most salient identity categorisation if more than one is signified. I consider the multiple self-categorisation of gender-variant identity a facet of gender-variant discourse on Twitter and do not attempt to problematise multiple self-categorisation in my analysis.

After gaining a quantitative insight into the data by measuring keywords and collocates, I performed a more in-depth qualitative analysis using a sociocognitive approach to discourse analysis, which relies on semantic macrostructures and local meanings of specific lexical items to identify and explore shared cognitive models (van Dijk, 2009; 2015; 2017). As the first stage of the qualitative analysis, keywords and their collocates were categorised into semantic macrostructures in order to identify 'global meanings, topics or themes' (van Dijk, 2009: 68) in each sub-corpus. According to van Dijk, categorisation by theme should be constrained by the local discourse context (1977). In this case, the context is both gender-variant discourse on Twitter and the sociocognitive approach to analysing it; hence, the categorisation of keywords and collocates in the gender-variant Twitter corpus should account for meanings of lexical items in the local context (see van Dijk, 2009). I group keywords and collocates by *pragma-discursive* macrostructures (rather than simply semantic macrostructures). The identified macrostructures are pragmatic insofar as they consider the effect of contextual factors on meaning (see Thomas, [1995] 2013), and discursive insofar as they '[construct] individuals' subjectivities' in line with those individuals' social position (Raddon, 2002: 388). Manual concordance analysis, or the analysis of 'instances of a word or cluster in its immediate co-text' (Baker, *et al*., 2008: 279), provided further qualitative evidence of the pragma-discursive context of keywords and their collocates.

4. Analysis

4.1. Transfeminine users

There are 1,134 users whose biographies index (trans)femininity (e.g. *transwoman*, *mtf*, *tgirl*); these users were categorised as 'transfeminine'. The transfeminine sub-corpus comprises 19,126 word tokens.

4.1.1. Keywords

Macrostructure	Keywords (Log-likelihood)
Gender	*woman* (+398.27), *girl* (+243.05), *transwoman* (+161.219), *transgender* (+108.90), *trans* (+93.73), *girlslikeus* (+90.15), *tgirl* (+75.47), *she* (+73.84), *transgirl* (+51.58), *lady* (+29.69), *femme* (+23.57), *chick* (+15.57), *transgendered* (+13.37), *transitioning* (+11.17), *lesbian* (+10.54), *women* (+6.73), *mom* (+6.02), *mother* (+6.02),
Sex and physicality	*mtf* (+88.14), *female* (+43.79), *femme* (+23.57), *f* (+20.86), *transition* (+16.06), *transitioning* (+11.17), *hormones* (+11.08), *lesbian* (+10.54), *op* (+6.47), *hrt* (+5.47),
Geekdom	*nerdy* (+19.96), *gamer* (+16.60), *games* (+12.14), *tech* (+10.88), *geeky* (+9.42)

Table 2 - Macrostructures of keywords in the transfeminine sub-corpus

Within the 69 significant keywords in the transfeminine sub-corpus, there are three key semantic macrostructures at work (see Table 2): 1) gender; 2) sex and physicality; 3) geekdom. I will focus on the macrostructure that most obviously indexes strategies of self-sexualisation – that is, sex/physicality, though there are other implicit self-sexualisation strategies in specific gender-indexical lexical items (i.e. *girl*, *lady*).

Lexical items indexing physicality are primarily identified from their meanings within the local context of gender-variant discourse. *Transition* and *transitioning* are both *abstracted distillations* (*see* van Leeuwen, 1995) of the multiplex processes involved in socio-psychological and physiological gender-sex modification. *HRT*, *hormones*, and *op* all also have local context-specific meaning; *HRT* and *hormones* refer to anti-androgen and oestrogen supplements taken by some individuals undergoing medico-surgical transition, whilst *op* refers to the surgical reconfiguration of genitalia. *Transition*, *transitioning*, and *hormones* are statistically significant to $p < 0.001$ (99.9th percentile), each with log-likelihood (LL) of greater than 10.83. *Op* and *HRT* are also statistically significant, this time to $p < 0.05$ (95th percentile) with LL > 3.84. The significance of keywords indexing physicality implies a cognitive model shared by transfeminine users that transfeminine identities are reliant/dependent on physicality; specifically, that such identities are reliant on medico-surgical body modification.

Femme and *lesbian* are also statistically significant keywords in the *transfeminine* corpus to at least the 95th percentile ($p < 0.05$). *Femme* is a term specific to lesbian discourses that indexes a feminised appearance; the semantic connotations of *lesbian* as sex-indexing are

more apparent upon analysis of its collocates and use in context. Hence, references to sexual identity in *transfeminine* discourse can also index physicality, reinforcing assumptions that *transfeminine* identities are rooted in physical appearance.

4.1.2. Collocates

Macrostructure	Collocates of *transition* (MI)
Time and sequence	*pre* (5.81), *year* (5.43)
Gender	*woman* (3.96), *trans* (3.35), *girl* (3.10)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *op* (MI)
Time and sequence	*post* (8.53), *pre* (8.47), *to* (3.31)
Sex and physicality	*f* (6.37), *transsexual* (6.13), *female* (5.32), *m* (4.66)
Gender	*transwoman* (5.29), *transgender* (4.34)

Table 3 - Macrostructures in *op*'s and *transition*'s collocates

Collocates of both *op* and *transition* contain semantic macrostructures of time and sequence (*see* Table 3), indicating that socio-psychological gender-sex modification for transfeminine-identifying individuals is not an instantaneous process whereby gender is acquired. Rather, *op* and *transition* are arguably constructed as necessary experiences within a transfeminine context model; *op* is pre-modified by *pre* and *post* (both with mutual information [MI] scores greater than 8), whilst *transition* is modified by *pre* and *year* (MI > 5). Modification by time deixis (e.g. *pre*, *post*, *year*) indicates that both *op* and *transition* are at the origo of transfeminine identity, or at least at the origo of what constitutes a sufficiently transfeminine identity (Example 2) – that is, transfemininity is metaphorically conceptualised as a place.[4] Space deixis is also present as a pragma-discursive strategy in the collocates of *op* and *transition*, more specifically in relation to the collocating social actor *classifications* (*see* van Leeuwen, 1996), *transsexual*, *transwoman*, and *transgender* (*female*); a directionality is indexed via constructions such as *m to f*. The use of space deixis to indicate directionality between sexed physicality implies a shared cognitive model of femaleness as the intended physicality-location of transfeminine identity. This implication is also indexed in the collocates of *lesbian* – *mtf* and *to*.

The majority of collocates of both *lesbian* and *femme* are social actor classifications (see Table 4). The collocates of *femme* index sexual identity and gender; the most significant collocate is genderqueer (MI > 7). Similarly, the majority of *lesbian*'s collocates (four of six

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[4] The deictic nature of some collocates can only be gleaned from their use in context – that is, by manually analysing concordances.

Username	Biography
@jackie_jacker	I am a **pre op** packing 9.5 t-girl PSO. Cheap Phone SEX Call me at 1-619-364-PISS or http://t.co/cWlwtKgi
@lisajanelees	**Pre-op** transgendered forging the path to the woman inside me
@crissyred	Funny and fun **post-op** Transgender Lady. Trained Actor & Model. We Transgender people have a sense of humor too!! - Dream Big!
@transsolace	I'm a **pre-op** TransWoman looking for friends and possible work in the adult industry please help me if you have
@NicolaSpeaks	I am a **post op** Transwoman, identifying as female. I work full time in Aged Care in Melbourne and some time mid
@gigijones12131	University of Colorado. Philosophy and literature. Runner, cyclist, cinephile. **Post op** TransWoman.'
@Rhea_bc	Christian, Married 50 years, **Post-Op** Transwoman 70+ & Retired.'
@valeryjean	60 plus **post -op** transwoman looking for a female partner for life and as a lifestyle play partner
@CrystalSopen	I am a **pre-op**, hung, physically fit, versatile, tgirl.'
@OliviaR75853930	Hello my name is Olivia, I am a **Pre-Op** Transgender Girl, I have a variety of interest if you have some of the same just follow
@Willowtreefaery	**Post-op** transgender woman. Survivor. A lazy Buddha who likes trees and animals...sometimes people too..
@jenjas602	Post-modern, **pre-transition** trans feminine type person. Cyber-forensicist, occasional gamer, geek, film buff, eventual writer, ex-mormon scholar (yes, really)
@Kathy92T	**Pre-transition** trans woman - Being afraid isn't the problem. It's the paralysis that results from the fear you should worry about. So keep moving!
@MsCordeila	20 year old queer pre-transition trans woman, new to twitter.'
@RocChloeTg	**Pre-transition** transgirl interested in the outdoors, water, education, travel, foreign policy, fashion, photography, writing, and meeting new people.
@SaoirsedT	A still closeted **pre-transition** trans woman living publicly under her male birth name who just wants to be herself
@angellight78	Hi I'm Bibi. I am a transgender woman. I am in my first **year of transition.** 20 Months on HRT. I want other people like me to feel that they are not alone.
@debbytg2	I am a lesbian trans* woman who is a **year into transition** and a LGBTI advocate. I am disabled due to schizoaffective disorder. Environment, animal rights.'
@tammi_cusson	Arkansas Transwoman, just over a **year in transition**. I restore industrial floor cleaning machines, mostly cosmetics some repair.

Example 2 - *Pre* and *post* in collocation with *op*; *pre* and *year* in collocation with *transition*

– 67%) index gender, though its most significant collocate is *femme* (MI > 6), which indexes both physicality and sexual identity. Such findings imply an interrelatedness of gender and sexual identity in the shared transfeminine cognitive model, suggesting that sexual identity is a salient element of transfeminine identity. *Femme*'s local lexical meaning indicates a

Macrostructure	Collocates of *lesbian* (MI)
Gender	*femme* (6.29), *trans* (4.38), *woman* (4.28), *transgender* (4.1)
Sex and physicality	*femme* (6.29), *mtf* (4.86)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *femme* (MI)
Gender	*genderqueer* (7.82), *lesbian* (6.29), *queer* (6.09), *trans* (4.46)
Sexual identity	*lesbian* (6.29), *queer* (6.09)

Table 4 - Macrostructures in *lesbian*'s and *femme*'s collocates

Username	Biography
@*ceadaoinw*	Xtian, lowish-dose-estro. **Trans demi-lesbian** sort-of femme, disabled x-journo, Enviro/Peace/LGBTQIA+/Life/Feminist/Indigenist politics, chocoholic, mead fan'
@*clodevious*	That Leet Trans Girl-**Femme Lesbian**- https://t.co/EZQPnSaVnr Streamer & Game Dev- Part Time Activist #girlslikeus-#TransProud-#TransWomen #Feminist #WomensRights
@*DebbieCannon7t3*	LGBTQ Expert, Trans inclusive policy advisor, author, founder LGBTQ Support Network,Trans-female, **feminist lesbian**. ESTP.In love with https://t.co/GMm9IugkfV'
@*JanelleIsFunny*	**Trans-lesbian**, motorcycle-riding, gun-toting coder chick. US Marine veteran. #girlslikeus'
@*KiteGirl_Lucy*	The random tweetings of a **MTF transgender lesbian**. Life is what you make of it don't be too serious! #girlslikeus
@*meknowhu*	I am a pre-SRS, PRE-HRT **mtf transgender lesbian**. That, and I love to tinker with electronics, pyrography (art form), read up on astrophysics & genetics, etc'
@*Pink_Cine_Gal*	**Hard Femme Trans Lesbian** Woman. Inclusive Insurrectionary Feminist. Cinema Obsessed. Shoot pics @Sofie_Mullan Pronouns: She/Her #girlslikeus
@*PolyCement*	24 y/o **trans lesbian**, computer scientist and video game hater'
@*PrincessNodak*	33/Male-to-Female submissive **Transgender Lesbian**
@*saraashleytrans*	Update: Started HRT April 22, 2015, Oh Happy Day!!! **MTF Pre Op Transsexual Lesbian** who is seeking to transition ASAP and looking to start my HRT around sometime'
@*SianSinead*	I am a **transgendered lesbian** woman, but through so many medical problems i cannot become what i want! So i seem to find myself as a religious martyr!
@*tlezfemme*	**Femme Lesbian** Transwoman Poetess, Activist, Mom, Computer Geek, Crone, Amazon Warrior who fights to create change through my words & actions.
@*Trishgigi*	Just your average **butch lipstick lesbian** transgender girl from Kentucky.

Example 3 - Pre-modification of *lesbian* by socio-psychological identification

gynophilic sexual identity, but is modified by other terms denoting non-normative gender(ed)

identities, arguably constituting what I call *socio-psychological identification* – an adaptation of van Leeuwen's *physical identification*, which is an introductory strategy that indexes divergence from socio-cultural norms when modifying general classifications (1996: 56). Socio-psychological identification also modifies the classification *lesbian* (Example 3), indicating that the *trans/mtf/transgender* lesbian is a non-normative conceptualisation of lesbianism due to sex assigned at birth. The oblique connotations of overdetermined identification operating as modifier for general classifications (van Leeuwen, 1996: 57–8) constitutes a reconstruction of the social categorisation of lesbianism as not specific to biological females. However, the focalisation of sex differences between normative *lesbian* and non-normative *trans/mtf/transgender lesbian* indexes a self-sexualisation strategy based on sexed physicality (at birth).

4.2. Transmasculine users

Of the 2,565 users whose data comprises the specialised gender-variant Twitter corpus, 563 were identified as transmasculine by their use of masculinity-indexing identifiers (e.g. *transman*, *transguy*, *ftm*). The transmasculine sub-corpus comprises 8,994 word tokens.

4.2.1. Keywords

The keywords in the transmasculine sub-corpus indicates two key semantic macrostructures, 1) gender, and 2) sex and physicality (see Table 5).

Macrostructure	**Keywords (Log-likelihood)**
Gender	*transman* (+304.76), *man* (+204.42), *transguy* (+146.11), *he* (+92.85), *him* (+78.93), *guy* (+53.10), *boy* (+50.12), *transboy* (+44.42), *his* (+38.01), *dude* (+35.56), *transmasculine* (+34.90), *gay* (+5.90), *trans* (+5.48)
Sex and physicality	*ftm* (+590.72), *male* (+8.96)

Table 5 - Macrostructures of keywords in the transmasculine sub-corpus

The most significant and frequently occurring keyword arguably denotes directionality between sexed physicality; *ftm*, an initialism referring to the phrase 'female to male', arguably constitutes the pragma-discursive strategy of space deixis, where the intended physicality-location is maleness. There is also additional reference to physicality via the keyword *male*. However, most keywords in the semantic macrostructure of gender-sex index masculinity – that is, socio-psychological gender (masculinity), rather than physiological sex (maleness). The predominance of gender-indexicality, rather than sex-

indexicality, suggests that sexed physicality is not the primarily salient identity characteristic in the shared cognitive model of transmasculine users.

Categorisations indexing sexual identity are near absent; only one keyword in the transmasculine sub-corpus, *gay*, indexes sexual identity. The absence of sexual identities implies that sexual identity is not a salient characteristic in the shared transmasculine cognitive model.

4.2.2. Collocates

Macrostructure	Collocates of *ftm* (MI)
Time and sequence	*pre* (4.82), *years* (3.92)
Gender	*transgender* (4.62), *queer* (3.25)
Sexual identity	*pansexual* (4.34), *lgbt* (4.23), *queer* (3.25)
Sex and physicality	*t* (4.20), *old* (3.54), *m* (3.17)
Self-functionalisation	*feminist* (4.29), *blogger* (4.18), *artist* (3.57)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *male* (MI)
Time and sequence	*to* (4.54)
Gender	*transgender* (5.14), *trans* (4.17)
Sex and physicality	*female* (7.56), *year* (5.56), *old* (5.54), *m* (4.26)

Table 6 - Macrostructures in collocates of *ftm* and *male*

The collocates of physicality-indexing social actor classifications *ftm* and *male* index some overdetermined physical identification of social actor classifications (see Table 6) – *ftm* collocates with *pre* and *t*, and *male* collocates with *female*, *to*, *m* and *old*. The local lexical meaning of *t* is testosterone, an androgen-enhancing hormone supplement often used by transmasculine-identifying gender-variant individuals during medico-surgical physiological transition. *Pre* and *t* often co-occur together with *ftm*, indexing that the origo of sufficiently male gender-variant identity involves taking androgens as hormone supplements in the process of directional transition. The directionality of transition between binary sexed physicalities is also indexed in the collocates of *male*. However, *ftm*'s collocates also includes other, non-physical, strategies for representing the self as social actor (Example 4), including socio-psychological identification in terms of sexual identity (*pansexual*; *queer*), and self-functionalisation (*feminist*; *blogger*; *artist*). Similarly, *male*'s collocates contain reference to social actor self-classification via age. Hence, the medico-surgical physiological intervention element of *ftm* and *male* identities are not the sole feature of the physicality-indexing transmasculine users' shared cognitive model of sexualisation.

Username	Biography
@_ButAGoodMan	Multiships/Multifandoms. Feminist. 19. Professional dumbass. Christian. **FTM Transgender. Pansexual.**
@queerasNick	**#FtM** #transman **#queer** #liberal #prochoice **#feminist** kid into puns,
@RemiQueer	**Queer, FTM,** Cat Moppa, Psychology Nerd, Feminist'
@RotSterne	Daryl Dixon is my spirit animal. My heart's claimed by @blgreen1969. Norman Reedus fan; **FTM** (trans), **QUEER, Feminist**, anti-Kyriarchy. #Destiel #TWDFamily #VHEMT'
@WestonEzrah	**FtM.** Married. Seeker. Thinker. **Feminist.** Budding Trans* activist.
@BiNecromancer	Wiccan. Eclectic. Egalitarian. Blogger. Pacifist. Humanist. **Pansexual.** Genderqueer **ftm.** Fabulous.
@Jaint_Winston	I'm Winston. I'm a Transgender **(FtM)** and **Pansexual**. My Kik/Instagram : yuginunu Wild Leo
@kylerreid	21FTM. Pre-T. **Pansexual. Artist.**
@mico98_	**Pansexual, ftm**... Pre-T and out to basically everyone...'
@xxjudasdeathxx	**Pansexual FTM** Transgender. Fabulous Bitch. Taken. Artist. Juggalo. Lady
@yael_I_guess	**FtM Pansexual**. I only use twitter to stalk people.
@AndyWoobster	**ftm** transgender. Im an established **artist** in the central IL area.
@Money_mo305	24 |Graphic Designer| Visual **artist|FTM|** Connecticut raised Miami living
@MrPhalanx13	hiphop **artist/artist/poet/activist**/transgendered **ftm**/mixed american.young,dumb and fun.
@shane_ish	I am a **writer, artist,** and video game addict. **FtM** (he/him) & happier than ever #TransPride #TransIsBeautiful'
@SLouisell2	/frida kahlo/polymer clay/ beads/decoupage/jewelry/**Queer FTM**//SF bay area/multimedia artist/day of the dead/recovery/spirituality/Myelin Project
@tatsrhot	**FTM** Trans Tattoo **Artist/**Owner @ CaTS TaTS in small mountain town in western Canada
@TheMaddoxPrice	**Artist**.Journalist.Photographer.**FTM**
@DsCoyote	**Queer. FtM. Blogger**, writer, school addict. LGBTQ+, anti-bullying.
@genimmax	Maxx: **queer,** cultural mutt. **FTM**. Asshole . Forever exhausted. English/Portuguese/German. The dad friend.'
@lcssmth	keen drinker of tea || snapchat: moxfulder **queer//ftm**//he/him/they/them o k
@MrGunnerScott	Fire Eating **FTM/Trans/Queer**/Lion **Activist**/Philanthrogeek Person to 2 independent cats & Maltese Rescue Dog thriving in Seattle - views my own
@NRyanF2M	Pre-op,poly,kinky,**queer FTM Blogger**,lover of casual mayhem,porn stars, rock stars & all stars. sometimes shy, sometimes aggressive, but always honest.'

Example 4 - Collocation of *ftm* with self-functionalisation and socio-psychological identification

Although a similar inference can be made from the collocates of *transman*, (i.e. *activist*; *writer*; *old*), the collocates of general gendered social actor classifications (i.e. *guy*,

boy, *dude*) indicate that general classifications are modified by overdetermined socio-psychological identifications indexing gender-variance; the collocates of each include some combination of *queer*, *trans*, and *transgender* with a complete absence of any other semantic field. Transmasculine users' location in the social categorisation of masculinity is represented as divergent from the norm due to their sex assigned at birth (i.e. gender-variance, or transgender status); hence, sex differences are focalised in gendered self-classifications of transmasculine users. Hence, transmasculine users engage in self-sexualisation via the overdetermination of sex differences.

4.3. Transsexual users

Users were categorised as transsexual if their biographies included specific reference to transsexualism (e.g. *transsexual*, *TS*); there are 202 users whose biographies indexed a transsexual identity, and the corpus comprises 3,520 word tokens.

4.3.1. Keywords

The primary macrostructure present in the significant keywords of the *transsexual* sub-corpus is sex and physicality; six collocates – or 46%– index sex and physicality (see Table 7).

Macrostructure	Keywords (Log-likelihood)
Time and sequence	*pre* (+19.33)
Person deixis	*I'm* (+23.55), *am* (+10.83), *I* (+10.73), *me* (+7.57)
Self-functionalisation	*model* (+19.09)
Sex and physicality	*transsexual* (+362.83), *transexual* (+160.38), *ts* (+154.58), *op* (+32.20), *female* (+3.91)
Miscellaneous	*com* (+17.53), *one* (+4.58)

Table 7 - Macrostructures of keywords in the *transsexual* sub-corpus

Three of the five lexical items indexing sex specifically denote transsexualism (i.e. *transsexual*, *transexual* [sic], *ts*), accounting for 201 occurrences and the three most significant keywords (each significant to at least $p < 0.0001$ [99.99th percentile]); a fourth collocate is *female* (with 16 occurrences, though producing the least significant log-likelihood score of 3.91 [significant to $p < 0.05$]). The social actor physical identification categories indexed by *transsexualism* and *female* implies a prevalence of identification in terms of physicality, rather than socio-psychological identity. This is further reinforced by the local lexical meaning of *op*, again specifically referencing the surgical reconfiguration of genitalia sometimes undertaken by gender-variant individuals during socio-psychological/-physiological transition.

The absence of linguistic phenomena is equally as noteworthy as their presence; time-indexing modification *pre* is a keyword and its antonym, *post*, is not (in the local context, *pre* and *post* modifies *op*, in reference to genital reconfiguration). This potentially implies that the shared cognitive model in the transsexual sub-corpus is that the categorisation of transsexual identity is reliant on individuals having not already undergone surgical genital reconfiguration – that is, transsexualism is a state of desiring or moving toward surgical genital reconfiguration. Such a reading also implies that individuals' transsexual identity ends, or at least changes, *after* genital reconfiguration.

4.3.2. Collocates

Macrostructure	Collocates of *transsexual* (MI)
Time and sequence	*pre* (4.15)
Person deixis	*who* (3.64), *I* (3.46), *I'm* (3.41)
Self-functionalisation	*activist* (4.00), *model* (3.62)
Sex and physicality	*mtf* (4.58), *male* (4.48), *female* (4.32), *transgender* (4.11), *op* (3.93), *m* (3.86), *year* (3.83), *old* (3.83)
Gender	*girlslikeus* (4.51), *transgender* (4.11), *woman* (4.07), *girl*, (3.42)

Table 8 - Macrostructures in collocates of *transsexual*

Twelve of the 18 non-grammatical collocates of *transsexual* index either gender or sex (Table 8). There is an indication that transsexualism in the gender-variant Twitter corpus is primarily the domain of those moving towards femaleness-indexing bodies and identities; using space deixis in relation to social actor classifications (e.g. *mtf*; *male* (to) *female*), femaleness is represented as the sexed physicality-goal in the shared transsexual cognitive structure. This is somewhat reinforced by the collocation of *pre* and *op* with each *transsexual*, *transexual* (sic), and *ts*.

General social actor classifications are modified by *transsexual* (e.g. *female*, *woman*, *girl*), indicating a pragma-discursive strategy of overdetermined socio-psychological classification that constructs the transsexual individual's location in the general social categorisations of gender as diverging from normative understandings of such gender categories (Example 5). Further reinforcing this implication of non-normativity is the use of *#girlslikeus*. Despite referencing girls, which arguably includes all gender-variant individuals and those with gender-sex congruence, the hashtag has a meaning local to gender-variant Twitter discourse that is inclusive of only gender-variant (specifically transfeminine and biologically male transsexual) users; the semantic connotations of *#girls**likeus*** constructs a

Username	Biography
@CapellaVanessa	I am a **transsexual woman** and attend Rutgers University majoring in sexuality studies. I just started a non profit, Transsters Foundation to award surgery grant
@ErinSjoholm	Nice **transsexual girl** slowly on her way to her dreams!
@Felix130910	Hi Im a 49 year old PO **Transsexual male**. Im Pagan and im Married to Helen Laws Fenlon :)
@HadaChaiKiKi	[Anti-Transmisogyny, Intactivist, Pro-Israel, Anti-'GunControl']. cisheteroflexible **Transsexual Woman**, Jewish, Artist. @HadaSadah @HadassahG_Life'
@HollyMarieSpks	i'm a 23 year old **transsexual girl**, i have to confess thats not me in the picture but i'm too shy to share. i intend to use this account to share my life.
@InsideMyTSmind	About me... I'm a 19 year old **transsexual female**, who has yet to undergo transition. I created this blog as a way to empty my real thoughts.
@jaclynmhager	Hello to everyone I am a **transsexual woman** with two wonderful children that accept me as I am. I have served in the US Navy on Boomer submarines
@JazzRoddam	Geology student, fencing coach, hyperactive optimist, **Transsexual dude**, music and photography lover. (Avery Holderness-Roddam)'
@KristyPandora	Proud **transsexual girl**: Fearless & Driven. TransEvolution Fashion Entrepreneur / Trans Host on Rock N Horror Picture Variety Show LGBT segment / Activist
@LexiFoxxy86	Hi, I'm a 29 Years old **Transsexual Girly** from Germany '
@LillyBells931	22, **transsexual woman** #girlslikeus, intersectional feminist, nursing student, photography, wine, gaming, cycling, sleep.
@lustylaws	Hi I am Helen Laws. . I am a Post - Op **Transsexual woman**. It is 8 years, since I had GRS I now support others.
@mazraymaker	**Transsexual lady** enjoying a brand new life.
@MellaniD	Hey Every One I'M **Transsexual Girl** Model , Fashion artist'
@michell75155392	53year old **transsexual female** married with 2 children who totaly support me
@MITKAAO	I'm a complex **Transsexual woman**, and on my third transition;If u don't know what Transsexual or Transgender is I'll be happy to explain it.
@MyTransInLife	Inspirational MTF **Transsexual woman,** who loves to reach out and help others.'
@princess69695	Hello I am a **transsexual female** new to this Twitter
@Transfofa	**Transsexual woman,** activist, with strong beliefs, shy at first, human...'
@tsgabby88	**Transsexual girl** from the midwest just looking to meet new people
@VelvetSteele	Vancouver's **#Transsexual** #Fetish **Lady,** Model, Hairdresser & #Sexual advocate, on my own site!

Example 5 - Pre-modification of general social actor classifications by *transsexual*

dichotomy within the social categorisation of girlhood between those assigned female at birth

and those not. It is arguably inferable that the modification of general classifications by overdetermined socio-psychological identification indicates that sex/physicality differences are salient in the shared transsexual cognitive model.

Strategies for self-sexualisation are also found in collocates of less obviously sexualised keywords. Whilst *model* does not explicitly index self-sexualisation, the local lexical meaning of *model* in the context of transsexualism usually indicates a specific form of adult entertainment (i.e. pornographised modelling; sex work). However, in combination with other strategies of self-sexualisation via fixation on physicality, the practical significance of *model* as a keyword in the transsexual sub-corpus becomes more apparent; self-representing as a model *functionalises* (*see* van Leeuwen, 1996) the self as engaged in a profession that prizes physicality, thus self-functionalisation via *model* is a strategy for self-sexualisation (or, at least, their profession relies upon sexualisation). Additionally, six of the 13 (46%) biographies including *model* also reference adult entertainment, indicating some agreement between the shared cognitive structure of some transsexual-identifying individuals and the

Username	Biography
@*anaissa2014*	I'm a sensual, party-loving pre-op transsexual with an insatiable sexual appetite and a wicked imagination. **anaissa2014@yahoo.com'**
@*AnnTslesleyann*	TS Entertainer Model Dancer Always looking for gigs to work.New friends too.Hit me up at **Tslesleyann@gmail.com**
@*aprolhazel*	TS full time love sex,porn and being a slut if you like girly cock sucking then start sucking me **patsykay21@gmail.com'**
@*CronaCookie*	18+ #NSFW Multi-Award Nominated #Thai / #Black #Transsexual Model, Musician and Actress. Adult Entertainment Star. Magazine girl. **CronaValentine@live.com'**
@*EYECANDYALEXIS*	TS Adult Entertainer/ Business Inquires **alexisanderson2009@gmail.com/** IG eyecandyalexis1 And Check Out My Site Below For My Videos
@*JadeParissXXX*	Pariss	#Writer	#Blogger	#Actress	#GirlsLikeUs	#TransIsBeautiful	#WebcamModel.	Enquiries: **JadeParissxxx@Gmail.com**
@*Jennaraneexxx*	NO UNDER 21 HOTTEST TS~Girl IN LAS VEGAS ESCORT . Sexy playful naughty mature #BadAssBlonde https://t.co/eOgaXQyyx8 **Jennaranee1@Gmail.com**
@*MsHooverthroat*	TS FAMOUS SASSY WEB THOT KIK-misshooverthroat PAYPAL DONATIONS - **asiahooverthroat@aol.com** (support a thot)
@*NikkiJadeTaylor*	TS, adult/cam performer, REQUEST: **nikkijadetaylor@gmail.com** WEBSITE: http://t.co/K80GwixDVk Spoil me here: http://t.co/q5PbCb8qAe

Example 6 - Uses of *com* to facilitate communication for sexual behaviours and exchanges

pornified/fetishized 'transgender' sex worker. This is reinforced by the even less obvious keyword *com*, which has no significant collocates but whose concordances reveal their use as strategies for facilitating external email communication to pay for adult entertainment services (Example 6).

4.4. Transvestite users

Biographies containing reference to transvestism or cross-dressing (e.g. *transvestite*, *TV*, *crossdresser*, *CD*, *XD*)[5] were coded into the transvestite category. 238 users' biographies met this criterion; the transvestite sub-corpus contains 3,669 word tokens.

4.4.1. Keywords

Keywords in the transvestite sub-corpus comprise the macrostructures of gender, sex and physicality, sexual identity, and sexual behaviour (among others – see Table 9).

Transvestism-indexing identifiers arguably work as social actor functionalisation (at least, more obviously than do identifiers indexing transfemininity, transmasculinity, or transsexualism), rather than physical or socio-psychological identification, insofar as transvestism is often a temporary identifier within the spatio-temporal context of the individual's engagement in the process of cross-dressing/transvestism. Whilst the four most significant keywords of the transvestite sub-corpus (i.e. *crossdresser*; *cd*; *cross*; *dresser*)

Macrostructure	Keywords (Log-likelihood)
Gender	*girls* (+40.44), *tranny* (+36.70)
Sex and physicality	*crossdresser* (+552.65), *cd* (+330.74), *cross* (+110.34), *dresser* (+87.62), *dressing* (+42.29), *transvestite* (+27.84), *mature* (+22.51), *sexy* (+15.24), *male* (+9.83)
Sexual identity	*sissy* (+84.59), *bi* (+46.90), *closet* (+44.16), *slut* (+31.02), *bisexual* (+15.08)
Sexual behaviour	*sissy* (+84.59), *dressing* (+42.29), *chat* (+38.04), *fun* (+36.41), *slut* (+31.02), *meet* (+28.80), *more* (+14.59), *up** (+12.72)
Person deixis	*friends* (+24.51), *me* (+12.79), *other* (+11.11), *who* (+6.29)
Appraisal	*love* (+53.97), *like* (+35.00), *loves* (+29.20)
Internet	*kik* (+29.54), *http* (+6.69)
*context: refs primarily to "dressing up"	

Table 9 - Macrostructures of keywords in the transvestite sub-corpus

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[5] *TV* is a common initialism for the identifier *transvestite*; *CD* and *XD* are both common initialisms referring to the identifier *crossdresser*.

require no further elucidation regarding their contextual meaning, the fifth, *sissy*, is a term

Username	Biography
@*camgurlzz*	**kik** cindycd33 - Skype CindyCD69 - I Love Hard Cock!! Send me your Dick PICS! Let's cum together!
@*crossdress36*	crossdresser who loves ladies underware, slim body like to have fun,**kik** isobelcd'
@*KCSissyLover*	24/ Crossdresser. Looking for a way to experience my fantasies. Cross your fingers for me. ;) 18+ Only Please. KCSissyLover@gmail, **KIK,** and Snapchat'
@*mehotforyou*	Hot crossdress love my panties like 69 and men in panties and minishirt and tgirls hit on me on **kik** mesohotone
@*red_sissy*	Crossdresser into sissy things maids satin panties n stockings also on skype reddazzle1968 or **kik** reddazzle1 also http://t.co/CFb1HJqk78
@*sissy_danielle*	I'm a 5ft10 sissy that loves to be naughty whenever I can. I do use **kik** and skype just ask for it. Id love to meet anyone dominant woman and men and other CDs
@*SubhoRedWolf*	CD daughter of bitchy mommy.luv to wear lingerie.wanna hv fun wth aged mature bbw real milfs. **Kik:** deydollzy Snapchat: subho48
@*gillianherts*	Mature bi seuxal cross dresser looking to **meet** like minded girls for safe adult fun +18 to follow
@*latinacdlisa*	I'm an amateur latin cd girl hoping to **meet** others to share my feminine side with. Looking forward to your tweets! :) Kisses...Lisa
@*MKAndiCD*	40-something, bi, occasional crossdresser. hoping to chat/**meet** F/M/CD/TS. Enjoy porn, poppers, cruising/dogging'
@*subtvslut*	mature CD. london. cant accomodate. would like to **meet** a dom for a proper relationship. no marrieds. not just a meet
@*Tammilovespanty*	Chicago area CD that loves CD's, Shemales and Tranny's. I can't get enough of wearing lingerie. Would love to chat and **meet** others.'
@*10Ossie*	CD Who loves all things girlie looking to **meet** and dress with other like minded girls xxxx:-)
@*Sian79335303*	Sexy CD Looking for Friends and maybe **More......**
@*sissboymichelle*	. I'm on my own path to happiness and pretty panties i want to kiss a boy, maybe **more.'**
@*Sissyfreq*	Over 18 only. NSFW. Im a freak into the dirtiest things. Love pussy,cock,ass,tits,cum and **more** ;-) Married Closet CD. likes being Dommed. Hungry for Tgirl cock'
@*SweeCD*	31 years old Male, Crossdresser married bisexual.. Looking for female, TS, Shemale or crossdressers to be friends or maybe **more.'**
@*Ts_Lover83*	30 year old crossdresser looking to make lots of gorgeous new Ts/tv/cd friends and hopefully leading to **more.** XxX

Example 7 - *Kik*, *meet*, and *more* in context: sexualised behaviours

specific to the local discourse context of transvestism that is used near-synonymously with *crossdresser*/*transvestite*, but further indexes a submissive sexual role. Interestingly, the derogatory identifier *tranny* occurs 16 times in the sub-corpus, and is statistically significant at $p < 0.0001$ (99.99th percentile; log-likelihood 36.70); the negative semantic connotations of the identifier arguably invites sex-based derogation from others.

Lexical items indexing sexual identity are also present in the significant keywords of the transvestite sub-corpus: *bi* and *bisexual*. The absence of other terms denoting plurisexual identity indexes a shared cognitive model within the transvestite sub-corpus of the structure of gender. Specifically, *bi*(*sexual*) assumes only two genders/sexes. Contrastively, the semantic macrostructure of sexual behaviour contains a greater number of lexical items. The more obvious lexical items indexing sexual behaviour are: *sissy*; *fun*; *slut*; *sexy*. *Fun*, in the local context, is an abstracted distillation of sexualised processes. The remaining three are explicitly sexualised representations of the self as a social actor: *sissy* and *slut* arguably constitute sexualised self-functionalisation, whilst *sexy* is a physical identification of the self. Other lexical items are less obviously strategies for self-sexualisation (i.e. *kik*, *meet*, *more*), but their pragma-discursive meanings become more apparent when analysing their use in context (see Example 7).

4.4.2. Collocates

The collocates of *crossdresser* and *cd* do not yield any further semantic macrostructures. However, analysing collocates in their immediate co-text shows that such users' biographies function as quasi-personals and often index sexual behaviour. The most obvious of inferences

Macrostructure	Collocates of *sissy* (MI)
Sex and physicality	*cd* (3.80), *crossdresser* (3.33)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *fun* (MI)
Processes	*looking* (5.23), *for** (5.58)
Sex and physicality	*crossdresser* (3.40)

*context: *looking … for fun* is the sole construction in which *for* is used

Macrostructure	Collocates of *slut* (MI)
Sex and physicality	*cd* (4.31), *crossdresser* (3.65)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *sexy* (MI)
Appraisal	*love* (5.04)
Sex and physicality	*crossdresser* (4.04)

Table 10 - Macrostructures in collocates of *sissy*, *slut*, *fun*, and *sexy*

to be made from such a finding is that the shared cognitive model of transvestite users gives sexual behaviour primacy when detailing their most salient self-reported preferences.

The implication of the prevalence of sexual behaviour in the shared cognitive structure of transvestite-identifying users is reinforced by the collocates of the explicitly sexualised keywords, *sissy*, *fun*, *slut*, and *sexy* (*see* Table 10). Each has less than four collocates, at least one of which is either *cd* or *crossdresser*. *Fun*'s remaining two collocates are *looking* and *for*; together, the three collocates form the construction 'looking for fun', which in the quasi-local context of personals refers to sexual encounters. The consistent collocation of lexical items indexing sexual behaviour and transvestism-indexing identifiers entails a shared cognitive model in which sexual behaviour and transvestism are explicitly linked; that is, transvestism/cross-dressing is a specifically sexualised identity.

4.5. Non-binary users

Non-binary users were identified by their biographies' inclusion of reference to non-binary gender (e.g. *non-binary*, *NB*, *enby*) or lack of reference to binary gender (e.g. *agender*, *transgender*). The non-binary sub-corpus contains 8,633 word tokens from 526 users.

4.5.1. Keywords

The non-binary sub-corpus produced statistically significant keywords, comprising multiple macrostructures; the most of any of the five sub-corpora (*see* Table 11). I will focus on the semantic macrostructures of gender and sexual identity in my analysis of the non-binary sub-corpus' keywords.

Keywords indexing non-binary gender are expected; they are multiple, but have vastly differing connotations (unlike the multiple realisations of, for example, identifiers in the other four sub-corpora): *non-binary*/*nb* indicates a gender identity outside of the conventionalised binary gender structure; *agender* specifically denotes the individuals' lack of socio-psychological gender identity; (*gender*)*fluid* describes a gender identity that is not fixed; *androgynous* refers to a gender identity that includes elements of both masculine and feminine gender characteristics; and (*gender*)*queer* indexes a non-normative relationship between an individual's physiology and socio-psychological identity. Again, introductory self-representation via socio-psychological identification, much like van Leeuwen's physical identification (1996), specifically represents the divergence of social actor's identity from social norms. This is potentially reinforced by the significant overuse of third-person pronouns – that is, informing potential followers/interlocutors how to refer to the user arguably implies a shared cognitive structure that recognises the non-normativity of non-

binary identities. Non-binary identifiers are also present in references to sexual identity (i.e.

Macrostructure	Keywords (Log-likelihood)
Gender	*they* (+410.55), *them* (+423.00), *genderqueer* (+222.87), *binary* (+188.78), *non** (+162.58), *genderfluid* (+108.43), *nonbinary* (+97.32), *their* (+96.22), *gender* (+95.35), *queer* (+94.33), *agender* (+85.95), *theirs* (+51.18), *fluid* (+49.07), *androgynous* (+44.90), *spirit* (+12.57), *nb* (+21.89), *lgbtq* (+8.02)
Sexual identity	*queer* (+94.33), *poly* (+21.74), *asexual* (+21.24), *pan* (+9.19), *lgbtq* (+8.02), *pansexual* (+6.59)
Physicality	*androgynous* (+44.90), *white* (+18.39), *disabled* (+18.21),
Appraisal	*anti* (+19.67), *pro* (+14.92), *enthusiast* (+13.48), *justice* (+10.84), *opinions* (+10.12), *social** (+5.45), *rights* (+4.26)
Self-classification	*feminist* (+46.25), *student* (+22.08), *activist* (+19.15), *disabled* (+18.21), *anarchist* (+15.64), *vegan* (+13.48), *intersectional* (+13.11), *poet* (+9.97), *writer* (+9.28), *worker* (+8.52), *member* (+7.63), *performer* (+7.63), *educator* (+6.55), *lover* (+5.73), *autistic* (+5.46), *survivor* (+4.90), *artist* (+4.51), *sex** (+4.29)
*non - context: *non binary*	
*social - context: *social justice*	
*sex - context[1]: *sex worker*	
*sex - context[2]: *sex educator*	

Table 11 - Macrostructures of keywords in the nonbinary sub-corpus

queer, *poly*, *asexual*, *pan*, *pansexual*). This is representative of the notion that sexual identity and gender are interrelated, indeed even complementary.

The keyword *sex* is used in both the constructions *sex educator* and *sex worker*; whilst the latter can be considered a sexual behaviour, it is more akin to self-functionalisation insofar as it is a reference to employment, as opposed to enjoyment.

4.5.2. Collocates

The collocates of keywords indexing gendered social categorisations comprise other social categorisations, including those indexing sexual identities and gender identities, and self-classifications (Table 12). Two keywords' (*nonbinary* and *genderqueer*) collocate lists also include *activist* and *feminist*; hence, at least the shared cognitive model indicated in the non-binary corpus includes a politicised gendered identity (rather than a sexualised gender identity).

Macrostructure	Collocates of *genderqueer* (MI)
Gender	*lgbtq* (4.93), *queer* (3.81), *trans* (3.62)
Sexual identity	*lgbtq* (4.93), *poly* (4.64), *pansexual* (4.31), *queer* (4.18)
Self-classification	*vegan* (4.72), *writer* (4.36), *lover* (4.18), *student* (3.95), *activist* (3.77), *feminist* (3.62), *artist* (3.58)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *nb* (MI)
Gender	*trans* (5.10), *them* (4.49), *they* (4.47)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *nonbinary* (MI)
Gender	*trans* (4.58), *queer* (4.19)
Sexual identity	*queer* (4.19)
Self-classification	*feminist* (4.37), *activist* (4.37)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *agender* (MI)
Gender	*queer* (4.06), *trans* (3.78), *they* (3.47), *them* (3.17)
Sexual identity	*asexual* (7.05), *queer* (4.06)
Self-classification	*feminist* (4.67

Table 12 - Macrostructures in collocates of *genderqueer*, *nonbinary*, *nb*, and *agender*

Keywords indexing sexual identity have very few collocates; *pansexual* and *asexual* only have one collocate each, whilst *poly* has only four (Table 13). Each of the collocates are gender-indexing social categorisations (e.g. *genderqueer*, *trans*, *agender*), whilst *queer* can index both gender and sexual identity. The most obvious inference to be made from such findings is that gender and sexual identity are interrelated. However, given that gender-

indexical categories also collocate significantly with categorisations not indexical of sexual identity, it is evident that non-normative sexual identifiers are only salient in relation to non-normative gender identifiers. Hence, non-normative sexual identity categorisations complement non-normative gender categorisations. It is prudent to note, also, that such combinations of sexual identity and gender-indexing categorisations also occur within strings of other salient identity characteristics, further reinforcing that neither gender nor sexual identity are solely salient in the shared non-binary cognitive structure.

Macrostructure	Collocates of *poly* (MI)
Gender	*queer* (5.40), *trans* (4.66), *genderqueer* (4.64)
Sexual identity	*queer* (5.40)

Macrostructure	Collocates of *pansexual* (MI)
Gender	*genderqueer* (4.31)

Macrostructure	Collocates of a*sexual* (MI)
Gender	*agender* (7.05)

Table 13 - Macrostructures in collocates of *poly*, *pansexual*, and *asexual*

5. Discussion

Self-sexualisation occurs to some extent in each user-groups' sub-corpus, indicating that there is at least some commonality of self-sexualisation between the shared cognitive models of gender-variant Twitter users; however, the extent to which users self-sexualise and the strategies for self-sexualisation differ between user-groups.

Each user-group categorisation, except for non-binary users, self-sexualise via reference to sexed physicality. Transvestite-identifying users' identity is bound specifically to the spatiotemporal context in which the process of cross-dressing occurs; hence, physicality-indexing self-sexualisation is inherent in the use of such an identifier. Conversely, transfeminine, transmasculine, and transsexual users' sub-corpora index a pre-occupation specifically with the medico-surgical modification of sex characteristics, whether primary (genital configuration) or secondary (sex hormones). There is a prevailing implication gleaned from the qualitative analysis of keywords and collocates in their user-biography context that identities are bound by the users' relativity to medico-surgical intervention (either pre- or post-intervention); hence, there is a representation of the shared cognitive model of each of the three user-groups containing a hegemonic template that requires medico-surgical physiological modification. Despite this similarity between cognitive

models, there are differences in the extent to which the user-groups' self-sexualise via constructions of physicality: 1) transmasculine users' physicality-indexing self-sexualisation relies solely on sex hormones (i.e. *t*, or testosterone); 2) transsexual users' shared cognitive model implies a focus solely on genital reconfiguration (e.g. [*pre*] *op*); 3) transfeminine users index self-sexualisation via both sex hormones (e.g. *HRT*, *hormones*) and genital reconfiguration (e.g. [*pre/post*] *op*). Hence, transfeminine users self-sexualised based on physicality to a greater extent than do transsexual users and transmasculine users.

Transsexual, transfeminine, and transmasculine users also self-sexualise via physicality in their use of social actor socio-psychological and physical identification (*see* van Leeuwen 1996) to modify general classifications of gender-sex (e.g. *male*, *man*, *woman*, *girl*), which indicates a location in the social categorisations of gender despite their physical sex contrasting from conventional conceptualisations of gender. This strategy of self-sexualisation via physicality is also present in collocation with inherently gendered sexual identity categorisations in the transfeminine sub-corpus (e.g. *femme*, *lesbian*), again implying that transfeminine users self-sexualise to a greater extent than do other user-groups. Again, the non-binary sub-corpus does not self-sexualise via physicality, even in reference to sexual identity (this is largely due to the lack of indexicality of physiology in non-binary identifiers). Rather, sexual and gender identifiers in the non-binary sub-corpus are primarily used in strings including various other identity categorisations (e.g. race/ethnicity, occupation, hobbies, and [dis]ability), indicating that gender and sexual identities are not more salient than other categorisations in the shared non-binary cognitive model.

The only sub-corpus in which users self-sexualise via sexual behaviour and values is the transvestite sub-corpus, whose keywords and their collocates are made almost entirely of lexical items indexing self-sexualisation strategies (e.g. *fun*, *slut*); though some nonbinary users identified as *sex workers*, this is arguably more akin to self-functionalisation than sexual behaviour. The analysis of user-biographies in context also indicate that transvestite-identifying users' biographies function as quasi-personals via which the user seeks to engage in sexual encounters. This self-sexualisation strategy is evidently different from sexualisation via the fixation on physicality; instead of constructing a hegemonic template of how specific gender-variant bodies should be configured, it instead implies a shared cognitive model that contains a hegemonic template of what those with specific gender-variant identities should *do*. This shared cognitive model of self-sexualisation based on fetishistic sexual behaviour is consistent with the oversexualised and fetishized paradigmatic transgender woman. Similarly consistent with such external conceptualisations of the pornographised transfeminine sex

worker is the less obvious self-sexualisation strategies found within the transsexual sub-corpus (e.g. *com*); some transsexual users engage in sex work, and those who do utilise the same strategies for attracting custom (i.e. email addresses). However, the percentage of transsexual users engaging in sex work is far less than the percentage of transvestite users seeking sex acts as quasi-hobbyists. Still, self-sexualisation via sex work is arguably constitutive of using the (gender-variant) body for 'profit-power' (*see* Gill, 2007).

6 – Conclusion

This paper was by no means an effort to conduct an exhaustive analysis of self-sexualisation strategies by gender-variant Twitter users, nor was it an attempt to extol the virtues or vices of (self-)sexualisation as a social phenomenon. Rather, I sought to provide preliminary evidence of heterogeneity between shared gender-variant cognitive models and demonstrate the reductive nature of the collectivistic conceptualisation of *transgender*. The findings do just that. While there are similarities where expected (physicality-indexing self-sexualisation in physiologically grounded identities of transmasculinity, transfemininity, and transsexualism), there are primarily findings which illuminate inconsistencies between mainstream discourses' conceptualisations of the fetishistic and pornographised transgender woman. Instead, such oversexualised conceptualisations more accurately represent the transvestite population (at least on Twitter).

The lack of similarities found between user-groups' self-sexualisation strategies can partly be attributed to the comparison of each sub-corpus against its four counterparts, rather than comparing the whole corpus against a generic reference corpus. However, the primary aim of the study was to provide preliminary evidence of differences between user-groups' sexualisation strategies in order to challenge the hegemony of the fetishized transgender woman and reduction of agency inherent in the *transgender* umbrella. Similarly, given the differences in size between the sub-corpora, any general results found when comparing the larger corpus against a generic reference corpus would be skewed towards the larger sub-corpora (i.e. the transfeminine user-group). Although measures of dispersion would aid this analysis, the scope and scale of the paper does not allow for such an exercise in addition to effecting its primary aims. Despite the aforementioned shortcomings, the use of corpus linguistics also facilitated the emancipatory aims of refining the units of analysis. By analysing user-groups' biographies as sub-corpora, using the larger corpus as a reference corpus, keywords characteristic of each user-groups' language use could be easily identified and differences between cognitive models identified. The scope and scale of the paper disallowed for more nuanced analyses of infrequent discursive phenomena in each sub-

corpus, which would have more successfully demonstrated the heterogeneity of gender-variant identities subsumed under the *transgender* umbrella.

Although the findings are neither conclusive nor entirely generalisable due to the scope and scale of this paper, there is preliminary evidence that mainstream conceptualisations of gender-variant categorisations are reductive and lacking in nuance. Future research aiming to emancipate gender-variant individuals from the binds of such reductive conceptualisations would do well to further refine the units of analysis; whilst grouping social actors facilitates analysis, it also makes all too easy the failure to identify nuanced linguistic phenomena that set individuals apart from one another and the collective. However, grouping users by gender-similarity has gone some way in facilitating the emancipatory aims of the research and enables future researchers to conceptualise the gender-similar user-groups as reductively collectivist, further refining the units of analysis until the individual is the key unit (at which point individual liberty in identification can truly be considered successful).

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