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Impact of gender transition on sexuality and diversity of practices

A qualitative analysis of Reddit discussions

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INTRODUCTION

- Transgender population
 - Heterogeneous
 - Growing in visibility
 - Growing in numbers (up to 4.5% of adults & 8.4% of children and adolescents)
 - Transition (recognized in ICD-11)
 - Implies modifying some characteristics of sex and gender
 - Should be conceptualized as an ongoing process and not a delimited period
 - Is multifaceted
 - Because it modifies bodies, gender expression, gender expression,... it impacts SEXUALITY
-

LACK OF ACADEMIC DATA

- Existing medical research
 - Confirm that transition impacts sexuality
 - But mostly exist in a heteronormative and binary framework
 - Thus sexuality is understood as part of rehabilitation following medical interventions
 - And is measured with the average cisgender sexuality as a norm
 - Leading to projections of academics' views of normal sexuality as a measure
- Few humanities studies
 - Some participative or survivor studies as part of Queer Studies & Transgender Studies
 - But most are based on projections from a heteronormative and binary norm
 - Leading to epistemic incoherences and knowledge gaps
 - For example, the first analysis of transmen's sexuality was published in 2016
- In day-to-day practice
 - Huge variations between countries
 - Knowledge is gated behind contact lists managed by the community
 - Heterosexuality is still a widespread standard

RESULTS

- Corpus
 - 39,583,763 words
 - 524,325 comments
 - 45,688 posts
- Sexual adjectives
 - All exist in corpus data
 - Are mainly used to qualify IDENTITY, GENDER & RELATIONSHIP
- Sexual categories
 - Mainly IDENTITY (n=3,694) & GENDER (n=5,182)
 - Rarely PARTNER (n=6) & DESIRE (n=74)
 - 2 data-driven: ACADEMIA (n=61) & POLITICS (n=307)

RISE OF COMMUNITY-DRIVEN KNOWLEDGE

- Information
 - Internet = main source of information
 - Driven by the community
- Global perspective
 - Opposed to the national or regional organization of care
 - Impact of language on access
 - Epistemic injustice
- Emerging new knowledge
 - Building on top of information transfer
 - Communities conceptualize themselves
 - Leading to a new paradigm
 - With better ecological validity
- Naming the body
 - As a part of transition
 - New body definitions leads to new ways to approach sexuality

Mouthfeel

The way a **feminine penis** (a penis belonging to a woman, non-binary femme, or **transfeminine** individual) tastes and feels, especially after starting hormone replacement therapy. Coined by **ContraPoints** on YouTube.

Wow, I love the mouthfeel of my girlfriend's penis when I go down on her.

Girl dick is like fine wine. You have to take your time and really savor the mouthfeel.

Can we please talk about the mouthfeel? Why is nobody talking about the mouthfeel?

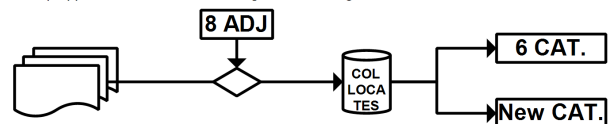
by **venusdemon** May 13, 2020

Source: UrbanDictionary

QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

METHODS

- Population
 - Comments from the subReddit /asktransgender
 - From 01-01-2021 to 31-12-2021
- Participatory approach
 - Inclusion of transgender researchers from the design of the study to the interpretation
 - Bottom-up approach driven from data
 - Part of an ongoing efforts to include queer linguistics into corpus linguistics approaches
- Corpus Linguistics
 - Collocation analysis of nominal collocations of 8 adjectives commonly used to talk about sexuality
 - Categorization of 30 most frequent collocates into 6 basic usage categories
 - Bottom-up approach allows for new categories to emerge from data



CONCLUSIONS

These preliminary results illustrate that:

- There is a lack of evidence, data & interest in transgender persons' sexuality
- There is a need to develop new knowledge and conceptualizations of sexuality regarding transgender individuals
- Most knowledge emerges from self-conceptualizations both inside the communities and in humanities
- Developing a new knowledge pool requires to work with communities rather than building exclusively on past cisgender-centric conceptualizations
- The sexuality of transgender and gender diverse individuals cannot only be thought in a heteronormative framework
- Treating gender as a continuous rather than discrete variable allows for the development of new and specific forms of sexuality

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