

IS GENDER AFFIRMING CARE ALWAYS AFFIRMING? A CROSS-PLATFORM ANALYSIS OF PATIENT REGRETS

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Background

- The LGBTQ community has a strong social media presence with many discussions on sexuality and medical care.
- Gender affirming care has been shown to reduce gender incongruence and related mental health conditions.
- There is a growing community of those disappointed in their gender affirmation surgeries, often attributed to societal factors.

Aim

To analyze reasons for and expression of dissatisfaction after gender affirmation surgeries expressed on social media.

Methods

- Analyzed 3 popular social media platforms: Reddit, YouTube, and TikTok with key words “Transition regret”, “disappointment”, “detrans”, and “detransition”.
- Chi-square test & ANOVA analyzed transition information and reasons for dissatisfaction and satisfaction

Results

Table 1. Transition information and status

N = 237		YouTube (n = 66)	Reddit (n = 125)	TikTok (n = 46)	P-Value
Age of Transition (years)		20.6 ± 9.9	18.0 ± 4.6	16.0 ± 5.4	0.004*
Facial Surgery (%)		25.8	18.0	10.9	0.138
Chest Surgery (%)		53.0	62.4	56.5	0.434
Genital Surgery (%)		34.8	18.0	19.6	0.031*
Gender Transition (%)	FTM	56.1	65.6	87.0	<0.001
	MTF	43.9	34.4	13.0	
Detransition (%)	Yes	80.3	64.5	78.3	<0.001*
	Considering	0.0	24.2	2.2	
	No	19.7	11.3	19.6	

Table 2. Reasons for dissatisfaction

N = 237			YouTube (n = 66)	Reddit (n = 125)	TikTok (n = 46)	Total (%)
Medical & Surgical (%)	Cosmetic	Improved	0.0	4.0	2.2	2.5
		Worsened	15.2	51.2	10.9	33.3
	Functional Deficits		15.2	20.0	0.0	14.8
	Pain / Sensory Changes		15.2	21.6	13.0	18.1
	Adverse Health Effects		62.1	13.6	26.1	29.5
	Unrealistic Expectations		12.1	32.0	15.2	23.2
Psychological (%)	Mood	Improved	3.0	5.6	6.5	5.1
		Worsened	45.5	81.6	24.4	60.3
	Dysphoria	Improved	19.7	13.6	15.2	15.6
		Worsened	30.3	43.2	24.4	35.9
	Gender Identity Change		75.8	45.6	67.4	58.2
Social Impact (%)	Social	Improved	51.5	21.6	52.2	35.9
	Integration	Worsened	6.1	21.6	8.7	14.8
	Religious Conflict		7.6	0.8	24.4	7.2

- Reddit is the most popular platform to discuss transition regrets.
- Most creators were FTM & detransitioners.
- The most cited positive was improved **social integration** after care.
- Worsening **mood, gender identity change, dysphoria, cosmetics, adverse health effects, & unrealistic expectations** were the most cited reasons for dissatisfaction.

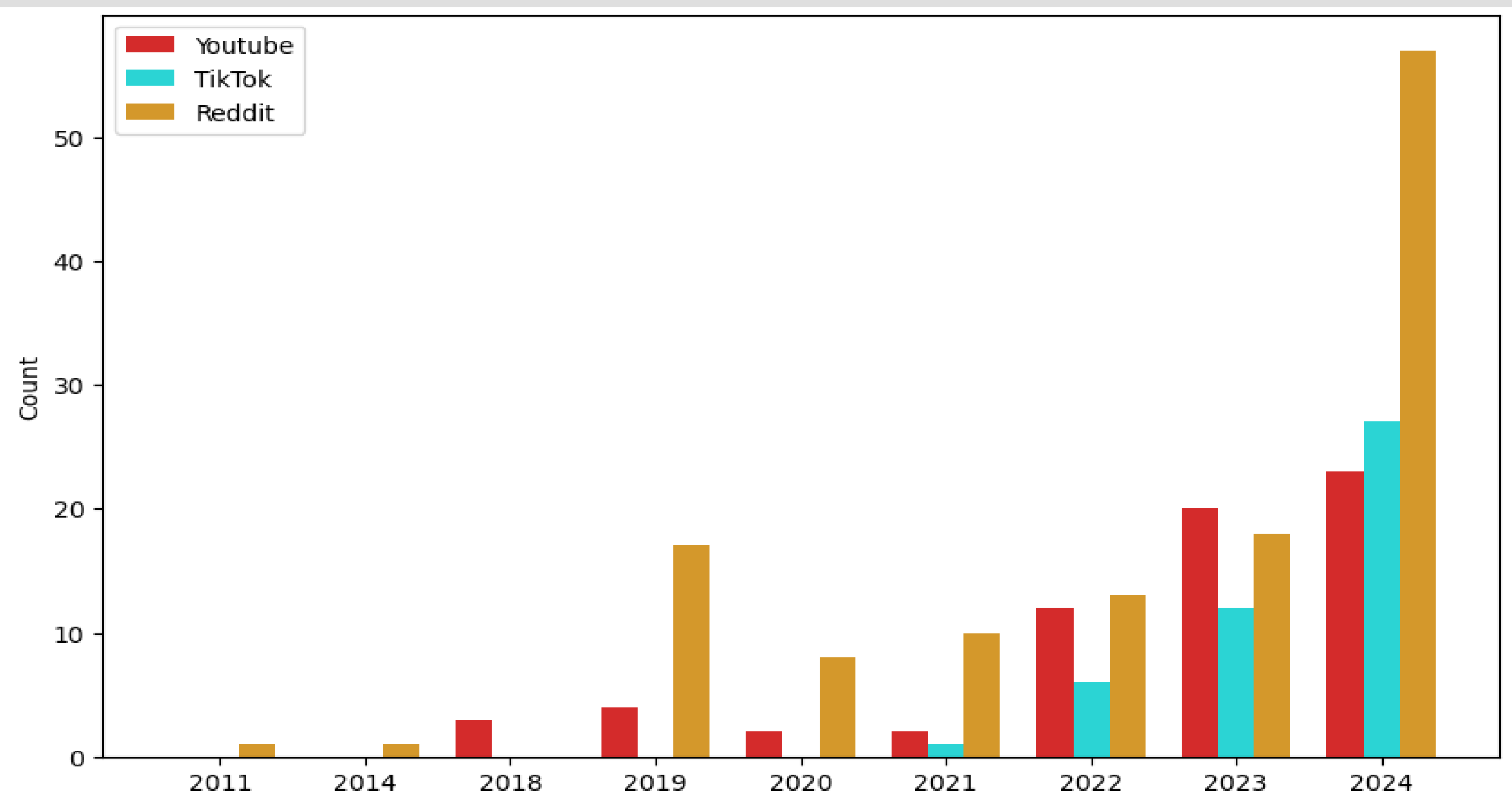


Figure 1. Posts about transition dissatisfaction by platform year by year.

Conclusion

- While gender affirming care **improves social integration** among dissatisfied subjects, it **fails in mood, dysphoria, and cosmesis** with many citing **gender identity change** and **unrealistic expectations**.
- Posts were most prevalent on Reddit with more psychological and cosmetic reasons cited, likely due to its anonymous nature.
- **Patient selection & counseling are important in gender affirmation surgery.**

References

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2. Bruce L, Khouri AN, Bolze A, et al. Long-Term Regret and Satisfaction With Decision Following Gender-Affirming Mastectomy. JAMA Surg. 2023;158(10):1070-1077. doi:10.1001/jamasurg.2023.3352