

But somehow what's left of them keeps spreading.

Personalization and data

unsubscribe

Delete Account

A Digital Ghost Story

data haunting

I keep telling people to let them go,

I'm being haunted.

And they just won't leave me



alone.

# DIY DIGITAL EXORCISMS:

A "Don't Forget" guide for trans people trying to move on.

- **Metadata:** **update the default author** of docs you write on your computer (Word, etc) different on diff computers / programs. Outing this way happens to pretty much every trans person at least once.
- **Google:** It's really easy to permanently transfer data (+ fwd mail) from an old acct to a new one. Don't bother trying to manage multiple accounts forever (I tried). Also true for Android stuff. But also, if you temporarily need to manage multiple sets of accounts: use Chrome user profiles! Really easy to switch back and forth.
- **LinkedIn:** Just rename your account. LI doesn't have a registry of changes to accounts or limits/alerts on name changes, and you'll keep connections. (I'd recommend it: trans people have a hard enough time with jobs as-is, and most people won't remember.) No need to remake from scratch.
- Getting dysphoria-inducing ads anywhere online? You can remove personalization (also helps you not be tempted to unnecessary consumption), or many platforms let you manually change your gender in Ad settings.

## Facebook:

- Prevent Facebook from suggesting to tag your old account in photos: Settings > Facial Recognition. It can suggest you even if you're not friends with the person, so make sure to do this ASAP, especially if you have 2 accounts.
  - If your account gets deleted: Obnoxiously common, happened to me 3x. You have a chance to appeal the decision: even if you don't have papers yet, I had success (+ no further problems) by just submitting a PDF explaining the situation in the form where it asks for legal documentation. Unsure if they're being not-shitty about it or just set to auto-approve anyone who submits "papers."
- **Deleting vs. Deactivation:** You can download all the data from an old account before deleting. That said, if you want to be able to go back and reminisce, but don't want other people to see the account, you can de-activate it and go back and look at any time. (Just remember to de-active again after.)

ends have been tied up.  
and the last


Oh... he... a couple years ago...  
you still keep in touch with ~~me~~

They're long gone in the physical world

but they live on in databases

1312	<del>1312</del>	<del>1312</del>	00	<del>1312</del>
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Mailing lists

Desire Consumer Goods™  
Hi ~~name~~,  
Take 1% off! 

algorithms



by @soph-iest  
c. June 2020.  
Many thanks for reading.  
Unfold for more!

A part but living on in cyberspace and our memories.

Dedicated to Sage, in living memory.



They just want to be forgotten.

# GHOST-PROOFING:

tips for designers and developers of poltergeist-free  
(and trans-friendly) spaces and user experiences

- **Make names freely alterable.** Not allowing people to change their names on their own is inaccessible. Requiring legal docs for this shuts out many trans people who don't have the money or safety to do so. Unless you really, really, *legally* have to require documents, don't do so. And if you do require it, it's a **necessity** to allow people to have an alternate name that is what's displayed to other people. (I'm looking at you, Facebook, Venmo, etc.)
- **Allow space for personal pronouns + normalize sharing them.** Whether it's a name-tag sticker, in email signatures, as a field in a profile: please do this. If pronouns aren't baked into a system, it puts the burden on trans people to be the only one sharing or correcting people, and invites misgendering. (These should also be alterable.)
- **Asking for users' genders?** (*Or worse, trying to assume / measure them somehow?*) **Make them alterable too.**  
**Even better:** think about why you're asking. Are you planning on treating people differently because of their gender? Why? Can be relevant (resource groups, dating apps/play parties, etc.) but often it's just for the sake of data collection.  
Think twice about whether it adds anything.
- **Facial / body scanning:** Nope. Scrap it. Just don't think of using this for pretty much anything. It largely excludes (or if not, misgenders) trans people for almost any application. Don't do work for the surveillance state, either. (Uber's scanner banning trans workers is a clear bad example.)
- **Have a reviewed way of reporting misconduct.** Include explicitly that transphobia (and racism, sexism, etc) is reportable. This **must** be reviewed at some level, not fully automated: Tinder and other apps auto-ban accounts, which sounds nice, but transphobes have realized this and abuse it to kick trans people off the app.