

# Fact Check: Lists Claiming Hundreds Of Trans Women Are Dominating Sports Are Dangerous and Incorrect

How dubiously-sourced lists like “HeCheated” and “SheWon” made their way from the anonymous backwaters of the internet to mainstream media, the United Nations, and statehouses across the country.



S. BAUM

APR 23, 2025



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On Easter Sunday, [the New York Times](#) published a longform story about Blaire Fleming, a senior public relations major at San Jose State University. She's a student volleyball player who, like many other trans athletes, has found her identity, body, and very existence quite literally dissected down to the bone by anti-trans activists, politicians, the courts, journalists, doctors, her friends, her teammates, her coaches, her rivals, and spectators around the world.

“One factor that vexes the debate over trans women in female sports is that no one agree on—or even determine—just how prevalent they actually are,” The Times’ Jas Zengerle wrote. He goes on to cite hundreds of supposed instances of trans women sports, courtesy of “HeCheated.org, which describes itself as ‘working to document every instance of men and boys stealing from female athletes in women’s sports.’” On the other side, Zengerle says, is John Oliver, “who has used his HBO show ‘Last Week Tonight’ to advocate for including trans athletes in women’s sports, [and who] looked at this same state of affairs and concluded that there are ‘vanishingly few trans girls competing in high schools anywhere.’”

Indeed, in a segment aired earlier this month, “Last Week Tonight” [debunked](#) HeCheated.org’s predecessor, SheWon, which had gone viral over the highly misleading claim that “900 medals” in women’s sports were “displaced”—meaning, given to a trans woman instead of a presumed-cis woman. *Erin in the Morning* uncovered the seedy origins of these anonymous websites and raised serious doubts about their findings, tracing them back to the fringes of anti-trans internet hate.

SheWon, like HeCheated, used dubious methodology to manufacture misleading statistics surrounding trans women in sports, an investigation by *Erin in the Morning* found. In turn, hate groups and anti-trans zealots were able to propel misinformation about trans people into the highest halls of national and international governance.

Together, HeCheated and SheWon may falsely make it seem as if there are thousands upon thousands of trans women and girls dominating their presumed-cis competitors across the globe. But many of their claims are uncorroborated or just plain wrong. Nonetheless, they have become part of a thriving online ecosystem dedicated to documenting, compiling, and attacking every incident of trans or presumed-trans women and girls for merely existing, not just in sport, but in public life.

## **Where did these numbers come from?**

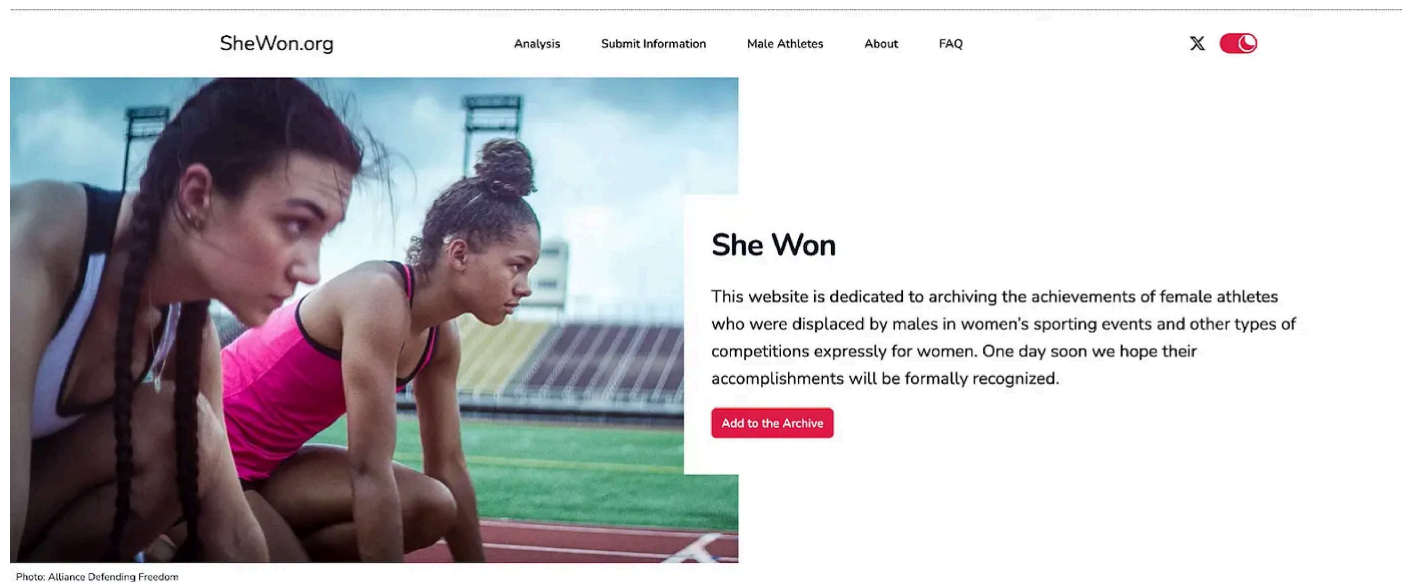
SheWon first went viral last year, after it was featured in a report stamped with the United Nations letterhead. Fox News declared, “Biological females have lost nearly 100 medals to trans athletes: UN report.” Similar headlines ran in outlets such as The New York Post, The Daily Mail and The Hill. Senator Tommy Tuberville, a Republican of Alabama, cited the number during a March floor speech on an anti-trans sports ban.

But the statistic did not originate from a United Nations report; it was merely “information submitted” by third parties to Reem Alsalem, a Special Rapporteur, which is a kind of independent expert who advises the Assembly. A Special Rapporteur doesn’t express the official views of the United Nations, although Alsalem has publicly maintained the veracity of the report and its claims.

As *Erin in the Morning* previously reported, Alsalem has a history of opposing trans-affirming policies, such as those found in President Joe Biden’s Title IX reforms and standards set by the World Health Organization supporting self-identification.

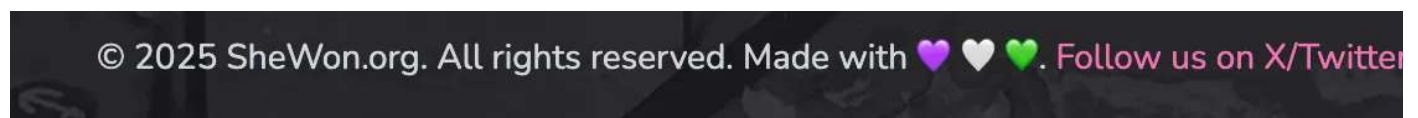
The real sources of these statistics, SheWon and HeCheated, sought to stay anonymous, but there are some smoking guns connecting the sites to well-known extremist communities.

For starters, the header of SheWon’s homepage is attributed to a Southern Poverty Law Center-designated hate group, the [Alliance Defending Freedom](#), which has advocated for the criminalization of homosexuality and the forced sterilization of trans people.



SheWon website

Meanwhile, the footer is a series of purple, white and green hearts resembling a British suffragette flag—a [symbol which has been co-opted](#) by trans-exclusionary radical feminists, or TERFs, which the [Cambridge Dictionary](#) defines as a community believing “that feminism should not include supporting the rights of transgender people.”



SheWon Footer

Prior iterations of the website uncovered via [the Internet Archives](#) also reveal an alternate version: one that paid homage to Ovarit.

SheWon.org cannot be contacted directly, due to the potential for harassment.  
The women of Ovarit know how to reach us.

Prior SheWon Footer

Ovarit is a largely anonymous, invite-only extremist forum designed by and for anti-trans zealots who were kicked off of platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit's r/GenderCritical for violating hate speech policies.

“On these sites and others, they use many of the same trolling tactics as other internet-based fringe political movements to disrupt conversation, skew reality, and make the internet another dangerous place for trans women through doxing and harassment,” *The Atlantic's* Kaitlyn Tiffany reported in 2020. “The anti-trans activists have used social media to call out specific trans women who use women's bathroom for instance, labeling them ‘predators’ and ‘pedophiles,’ and promising to resist them by any means necessary—be it pepper spray or pistol.”

Ovarit developer Mary Kate Fain *denied* that “gender critical” ideology is hateful.

*Erin in the Morning* surfaced Ovarit posts dating back as early as 2021, when a user under the handle “*Watcheratthegates*” posted that “I spent the day creating the SheWon.org website, and it is now live!” In 2024, user “*sws*” posted that they had been inspired by SheWon to create its “counterpart,” HeCheated.





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## It's Here! Website Cataloging Men in Women's Sports

Posted on Apr 28, 2024 by [sws](#) in [SaveWomensSports](#)

Here it is!!!!

<https://www.hecheated.org/>

Sorry for the delay. I have been working almost nonstop for the past couple of months and I decided to put it up as is for now.

This is very much a work in progress. I'm almost embarrassed to be posting it here already as I have not had a chance to really design things the way I want. This is a very rough framework and may go through a complete overhaul in the future as far as page design, color scheme, etc. I welcome any input on design ideas if you have them or any help with html or css (as I'm a total beginner). I just know that it could take me months before I get it to where I want and I'd like to share the information I've collected so far as soon as possible. I will continue to add to it.

The tentative name is HeCheated.org, sort of a counterpart to SheWon, but it sounds sort of like a site about cheating husbands/boyfriends, and I'm not sure I like that. I also don't want to sound like I'm ripping off of SheWon, so I'm open to suggestions for other name ideas.

Posted on Apr 28, 2024 by

[sws](#)

Score: 92

Q Title search...

/o/

**SaveWomensSp**

7080 subscribers

Created Dec 7, 2020

Show posts with flair...

Women and girls deserve 1  
and equal sporting  
competitions.

Ovarit Post

Sunday's New York Times piece fails to disclose any of these connections to "gender critical" groups, which are widely regarded as **hateful** and **pseudoscientific**. (SheWo like Fain, **disputes** these claims.)

According to Taylor Lorenz—a tech reporter, **founder of User Mag** and former staff journalist for the likes of The New York Times and The Washington Post—"gender critical" communities have been warships for spreading anti-trans misinformation.

"A huge problem with all of these online groups is not even necessarily that they're fomenting hate on these platforms," Lorenz told *Erin in the Morning* in an interview, which occurred before the Fleming piece came out. "It's hateful and it's bad, but the effect of it is limited, in my opinion."

The bigger issue, Lorenz says, is when major institutions funnel this extremism and misinformation into popular narrative. "These are people that should be just relega

to the backwaters of the internet,” she said. “But their belief systems are finding the ways into outlets like the New York Times and others.”

In the Fleming piece, for example, The Times extensively discusses the Independent Council on Women’s Sports, or ICONS, without mentioning [its ties to the ADF](#) and other far-right organizations. And its reference to HeCheated fails to mention that site’s extremist roots and errors.

“Our reporting is rigorous, respectful of the people we’re covering and sensitive to the moment,” a New York Times spokesperson told *Erin in the Morning*, defending the article. “Our story was reported fully and fairly, and underwent a thorough fact checking process.”

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## What do the lists get wrong?

John Oliver’s debunk of SheWon discussed how it uses a broad methodology that could leave viewers with the impression that there are more trans women winning more competitions than there actually are. The same applies to HeCheated. SheWon’s supposed tally of “displaced” women athletes is now nearing 2,500, while HeCheated has purportedly gathered over 12,000 incidents since the 1900s.

Both SheWon and HeCheated rely on, at least in part, public crowdsourcing.

Both websites cross reference one another, and there is a lot of overlap. Both feature duplicate entries—incidents where one presumed-trans woman generates multiple flags because she competed multiple times, or because her presence counted as “displacing” multiple women.

Both include elite sports, such as the Olympics and NCAA competitions, but also local and recreational games. Entries include athletes' full names and often link out to existing reportage about their sport, a social media post, or publicly reported numbers like race times.

In emails, an anonymous operator of HeCheated maintained the legitimacy of its methodology and defended its decision to create a massive, centralized public register of presumed-trans women and children. They claim most of the athletes on the list “have already been publicly out (most voluntarily),” that there have not been “any safety issues or concerns raised,” and that “all results are already publicly available including those for minors.”

As many trans athletes do not publicly label themselves, a source for HeCheated often won't explicitly say an athlete is transgender. They may merely indicate a name change, or purport to show photographs of athletes that prove they are trans, or link to a presumed-trans person talking about playing a sport. They contain hundreds if not thousands of entries with the full names and schools, as well as photos, of presumed trans women and children.

HeCheated denied that this could be characterized as doxxing children because it did not directly list home addresses, contact information, “or any personal information that would constitute doxxing.”

Both HeCheated and SheWon also include “sports” that do not appear to have a sex-based “biological advantage” at all—like poker, darts or billiards. Even competitive oyster shucking made the list.

According to [SheWon's internal analysis](#), the most widely represented sport was track and field; the second most common was disc golf, which comprises over 400 of the “medals.”



Both also feature sections for “non-athletic” events, too. The much-renowned actress Laverne Cox shows up almost 20 times on HeCheated’s list for her industry accolades. The lists track presumed-trans prom queens, a *Jeopardy!* contestant, and an elected official.

Michelle Lesco, a Nathan’s Hot Dog eating contest champion in the women’s division, ended up on the list after a radio jockey once joked about her being trans. *She has clarified that she is not a trans woman*—but that was evidently enough to put and keep her on the lists, anyways.

SheWon concedes that some of the entries are “contested.”

“When official sources [such as news reports] are unavailable, we verify results through independent research,” SheWon’s webpage says. “In some cases, it’s straightforward, such as when male athletes publicly share photos of themselves with women’s trophies.”

Meanwhile, HeCheated told *Erin in the Morning* that targeted individuals can be removed from the anti-trans list if they provide proof of having ovaries.

The entries do not target only trans women. One such case is Algerian boxer Imane Khelif, who won gold at the 2024 Paris Olympics. Her success has become a lightning rod for anti-trans vitriol; J.K. Rowling tweeted that Khelif is “a male” who “knows he is protected by a misogynist sporting establishment.” Khelif sued Rowling and others for cyberbullying and levying *false claims* about her gender.

Nonetheless, Khelif remains a target of the lists, which are growing by the day. SheWon “does not purport to provide a comprehensive list of every woman denied a medal to male athletes,” they posted in response to the John Oliver segment. “The database we compile is almost certainly the tip of the iceberg.”

In a sense, this is true. For as long as modern elite sports have been around, *people who defy gender norms* have participated in them. And for as long as sex-segregated

categories in sport have existed, so have other categories that seek to redress biological parity or “advantage,” such as weight class, age and skill level brackets.

Meanwhile, TERFs and the GOP alike stoke the flames of the “trans athlete debate, which conservatives have touted as a cudgel for undermining all LGBT rights policies.

The ensuing trans panic, as seen firsthand by Blaire Fleming, has led to chaos and devastation across the country—on women’s sports teams, across major institutions and in scholastic and academic life. There are numerous cases, including that of Fleming, where a student athlete and/or entire school has had to seek out armed guards to defend women and girls in sports, cis and trans alike, from the anti-trans craze.

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363 Likes · 78 Restacks



A guest post by  
**s. baum**  
literally just asking questions!!!!

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