An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road that curves through a dense, green forest on a mountain slope. The road is light-colored and contrasts with the dark green trees. The background shows more of the forested mountain range under a clear sky.

# Womens Motorcycle Clubs

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ART 291H  
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Why is it important to talk about womens motorcycle clubs?



What about when it deals with women only?  
- Is it a lot?

**Opening**

**Questions**

What do you know about motorcycle gangs/ clubs?



# Term Gang vs. Club

- Gang:
  - a group of persons working to unlawful or antisocial ends (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gang>)
  - Negative connotation
  - Known for illicit activity
- Club:
  - an association of persons for some common object usually jointly supported and meeting periodically (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/club>)
  - Positive association
  - Support systems, common likes or beliefs, friendly environment

# Types of clubs

**Social  
Club (SC)**

**Riding  
Club (RC)**

**Motorcycle  
Club (MC)**



# Social Club

01

Social Clubs are less formal compared to a riding or motorcycle club

02

They do not have the “stereotypical” patch on the back of their jackets

03

They are not recognized among the community as an actual club



# Riding Club

01

They are considered a sanctioned club but do not have strict codes of conduct

02

In a riding club you can earn a patch to go on the back of your jacket but you have to be an active participant in events

03

In a riding club the commitment level is low, and you are not a member for life



01

A sense of community and discipline  
They are members for life  
3 back patches

02

Focus heavily on  
Philanthropy



03

This type of club requires a larger sense of responsibility, you have to go to events, participate in activities



<https://metcha.com/article/this-is-what-motorcycle-gangs-actually-look-like-in-2020>

Motorcycle Club

# Why are these clubs looked at negatively?

- Look at the clubs through the lens
- Immediately think of stereotypes of your “typical” motorcycle group
  - Rude
  - Thugs/Thieves
  - Criminals
  - Drunkards
  - Destructive
  - Dangerous/high death rate
- What is your first thought when you see a group of people riding their motorcycles?



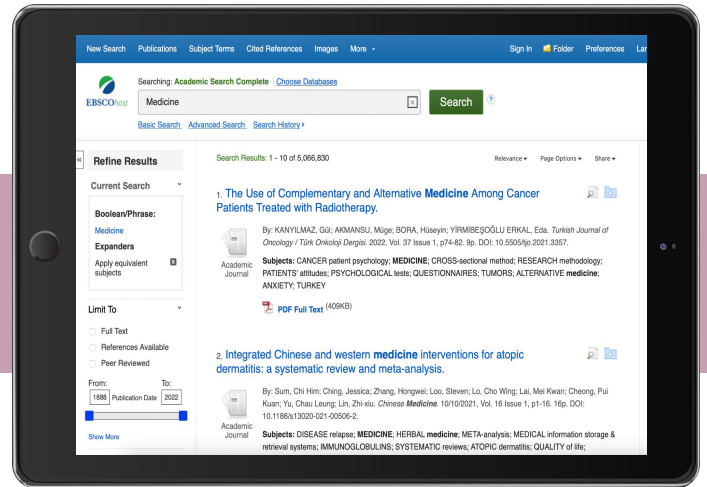
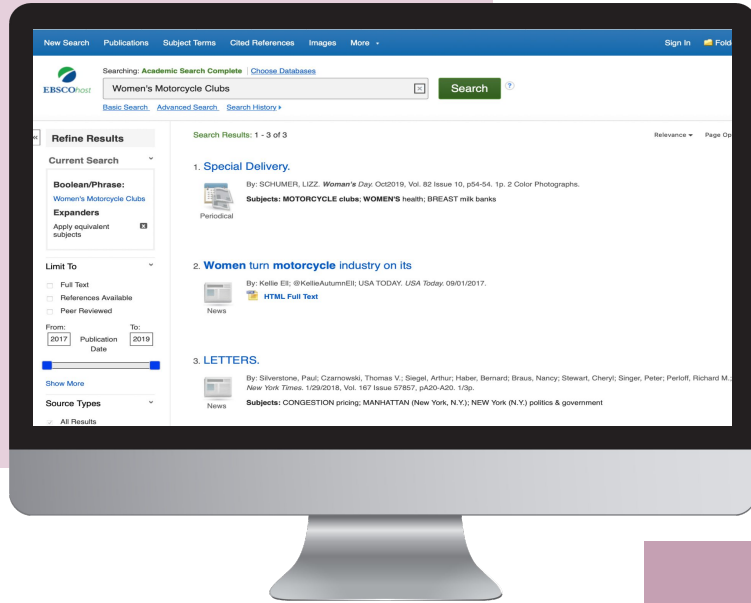


## The Motor Maids

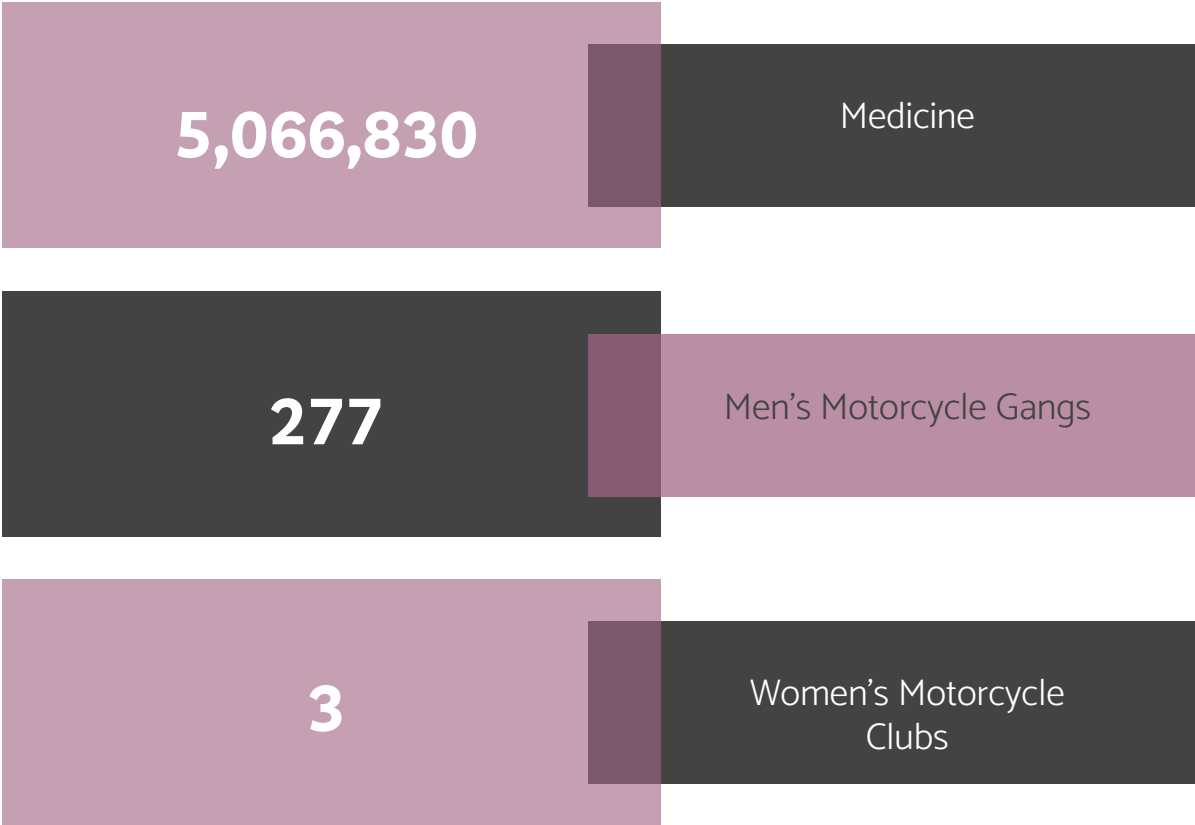
- America's First all-women's motorcycle club
- Founded in 1940
- Women between the US and Canada
- Also oldest existing women's club in America
- Main mission is to promote safety among fellow riders
  - Do safety checks before every single ride

**How much is  
really out there on  
women's  
motorcycle clubs?**

# Not Enough Sources



# Comparison



**What do you feel  
when looking at this  
comparison?**

# View in Media

- “That’s where I learned to ride like a man and look like a lady”
- A Women’s Journey
  - Getting rid of the femininity in order to be “accomplished” or at the same level as men
- Published In April 2005

passions

## MOTORCYCLE MOMMA

Texan Tracy Hennen is one of a new wave of churchgoing suburban moms who are hitting the open road on their Harleys

competed in local rodeos. “That’s where I learned to ride like a man and look like a lady,” she says. In 1998, when she was a divorced mom working in a civil engineer’s office, she agreed to a blind date with Raymond, a fellow churchgoer with a solid job—who zoomed up her driveway on a Harley. She was thrilled: “As a kid, I loved looking at pictures of Harleys in magazines.”

After a year and a half of riding on the back of her new husband’s motorcycle, she took a safety course, aced it and immediately bought a 1996 Springer. She’s now the president of the Tippa Riders chapter of Leather & Lace M.C., an international women’s motorcycle club. “We have a committed spirit,” she says. “We’re mavericks.”

These days she and Raymond clock a lot of hours on the road. “We leave in the morning and ride all day until after dark,” Raymond says. “I’m doing what makes me feel like me,” Tracy says.

On Tuesdays, 45-year-old Tracy Hennen, who has lived in Wichita Falls, Texas, much of her life, heads off to her porcelain-doll class, where she crafts delicate figurines. At her Thursday knitting workshop Tracy, who wears her red hair shoulder-length and favors diamond earrings, stitches garments for her husband, Raymond, her son, Gage, 19, and her daughter, Laci, 15.

But on weekends, Tracy slips into leather, hops on her 2003 Harley-Davidson Fat Boy and hits the road.

Surprised? You shouldn’t be. Women are no longer relegated to the back of the motorcycle, clinging to their guys for dear life. These days, they command their own hogs—and ride them hard. The number of female motorcycle owners increased 36 percent between 1998 and 2003, according to the Motorcycle Industry Council. The typical new female rider is between the ages of 30 and 45 and college educated.

Tracy was not exactly a shrinking violet pre-Harley. As a teenager she

BY KRISTEN KEMP



144 LADIES HOME JOURNAL | APRIL 2005 [WWW.LHJ.COM](http://WWW.LHJ.COM)

# View in Media- Esperanza Miyake

- The New York Times article “No, it’s not my boyfriends bike”
- Enjoying the thrill of riding a bike is gender-neutral but the experience is solely based on gender
- A sub-culture within a sub-culture
- Correlation between men and machines
- Media has sexualized women who ride motorcycles
  - Catwoman
  - Transformers



**How are women  
viewed in men's  
motorcycle gangs?**





# Men's Motorcycle Gangs

## “Outlaws”

Known for disobeying the law  
The “Bad Guys”

## “Dangerous”

Violent crimes  
Drugs/Human Trafficking  
Weapons Trades

## “Notorious”

Most notorious is Hell's Angels

## “Obnoxious”

Known to be loud and rowdy



## The 1% er's

Term coined by the Hell's Angels Motorcycle gang stating that "99% of motorcyclists were law-abiding citizens"

(<https://www.history.co.uk/shows/outlaw-chronicles-hells-angels/articles/top-6-notorious-biker-gangs>)

# Women In Men's Motorcycle Gangs



## Their “Old Lady”


- Often disrespected
- Talked down to
- In several clubs they do not hold membership

## Sex Symbols

- Known to dress scandalously
- Biker week seen in bikinis
- looking for a good time

## “Obedient”

- Not allowed to hold votes or have a say in anything with the club
- Don't wear patches



“We are our brother’s keeper, and we are our brother’s wife’s keeper.”

**John Owens**

**(<https://www.quora.com/How-are-women-in-motorcycle-clubs-treated>)**

# How Motorcycles Empower Women

- Female bikers have doubled since the 90's
- 8% of motorcycle owners were women in 1998
- 19% of motorcycle owners were women in 2018
  - In the past 20 years there has been a 42% increase in female bikers.
- Motorcycles provide women
  - Transportation
  - Independence
  - Protection from sexual harrasments they may encounter in public transportation
  - Overall freedom and control



<https://metcha.com/article/this-is-what-motorcycle-gangs-actually-look-like-in-2020>

# Deodorant Commercial



<https://youtu.be/ABqLJ84Wi90>

# Lita's Lume Challenge

01

**Women of all different backgrounds**

- Lawyers
- Pilots
- Nurses

02

**Anyone woman with a bike welcome**

03

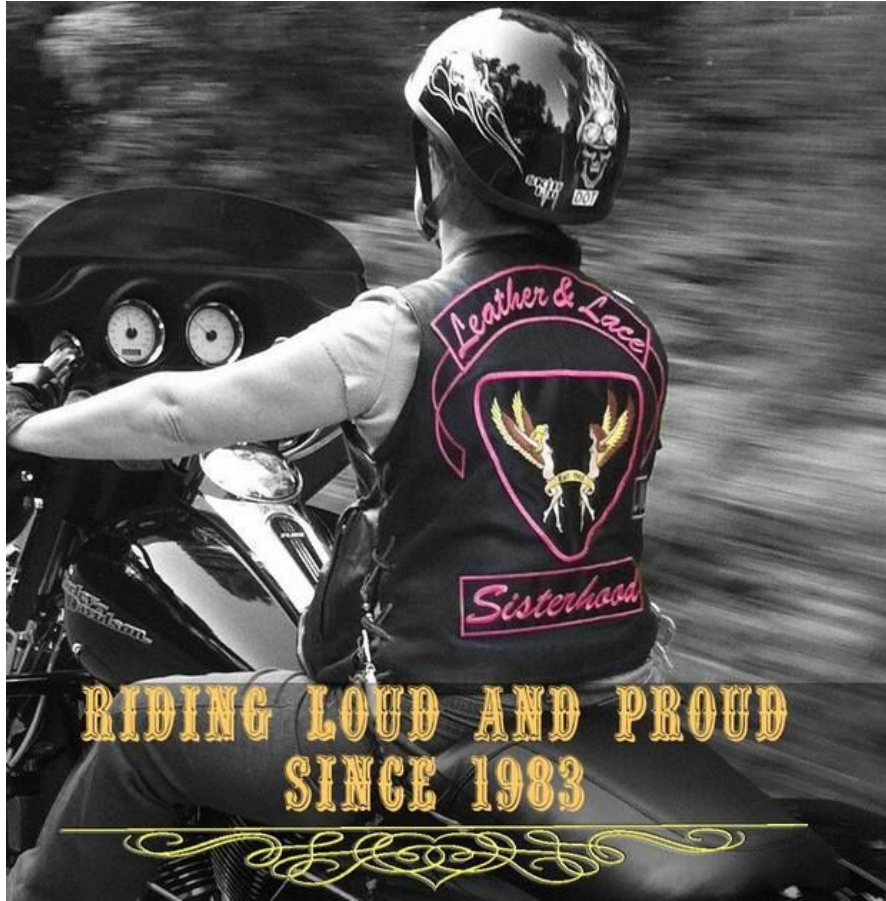
**Different attire for each woman**

04

**Different personalities**

05

**Everyone comfortable with each other**



How are they  
identified?



# Identifiers



# Women on Wheels

- Non-profit international, family oriented organization
- Founded in 1982
- Accepts any rider at any stage of life
- Received the Hazel Kolb Brighter Image Award in 1993
- Spreading positive image of the motorcyclists to the non-riding community



Established the term of being “frogged”

Started in 1994

If you are frogged in a club or during a ride it means that someone is thinking about you and wants you to know



<https://womenonwheels.org/about/>

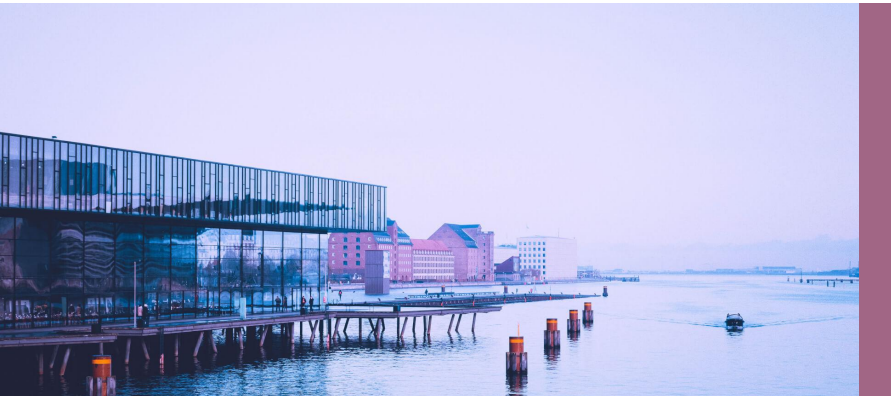
Being “Frogged”



NY Motorcycle  
Club

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx6DU8VO4bc>

# NY Motorcycle Club

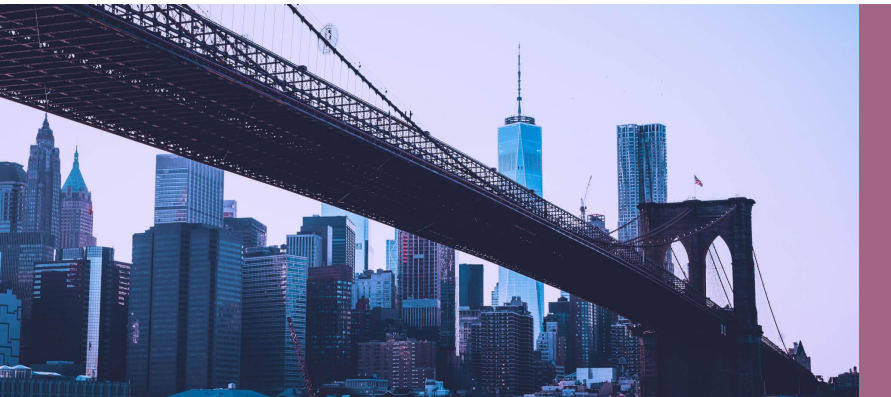


## Style

The style of their bike usually matches their personal style

Vintage bikers dress in vintage clothing

Some have tattoos and piercings



## Support System

Can rely on each other if they end up stuck somewhere or need a place to stay during a long ride

Has your idea of motorcycle clubs changed?



Will there be growing representation of these clubs?

**Discussion**

**Questions?  
Comments?  
Shrieks of  
rage?**



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