

# An Ethnography of Women in Free/Open Source Software

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Rails Girls Galway, 17-18 May 2013  
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# Gentlemen's Club?

- PyCon UK 2011

|   |         |        |        |      |      |
|---|---------|--------|--------|------|------|
| 1 | Sagan   | Carl   | Eduard | NULL | 1934 |
| 2 | Odersky | Martin | NULL   | DE   | 1958 |
| 3 | Spoon   | Lex    | NULL   | NULL | NULL |
| 4 | Venners | Bill   | NULL   | NULL | NULL |

4 rows in set (0.00 sec)

10gen  mongoDB



# A Hacker's Ideal Soul Mate



## **RMS's Personal Ad**

(as of 23 May 2012, it's stated that "Currently for amusement only.")

My former Personal Ad

[This was last updated in early 2009. The ages are out of date now.]

I'm a single atheist white man, 55, reputedly intelligent, with unusual interests in politics, science, music and dance.

I'd like to meet a woman with varied interests, curious about the world, comfortable expressing her likes and dislikes (I hate struggling to guess), delighting in her ability to fascinate a man and in being loved tenderly, who values joy, truth, beauty and justice more than "success"--so we can share bouts of intense, passionately kind awareness of each other, alternating with tolerant warmth while we're absorbed in other aspects of life.

My 25-year-old child, the Free Software Movement, occupies most of my life, leaving no room for more children, but I still have room to love a sweetheart if she doesn't need to spend time with me every day. I spend a lot of my time traveling to give speeches, often to Europe, Asia and Latin America; it would be nice if you were free to travel with me some of the time.

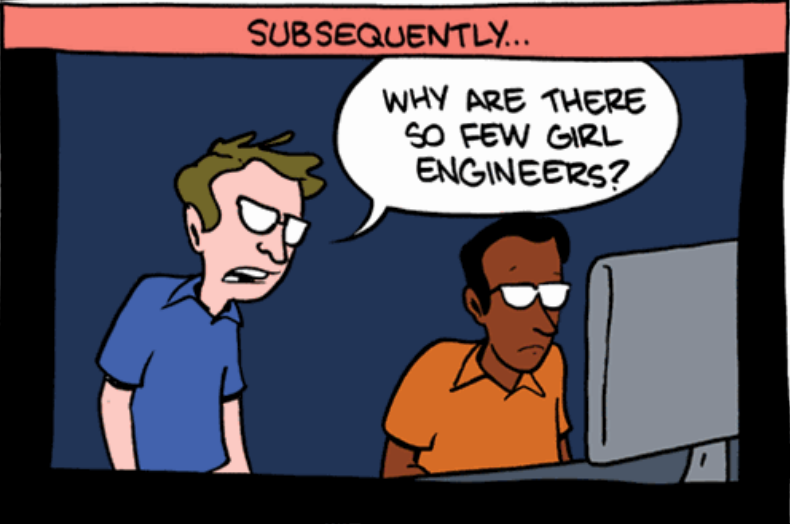
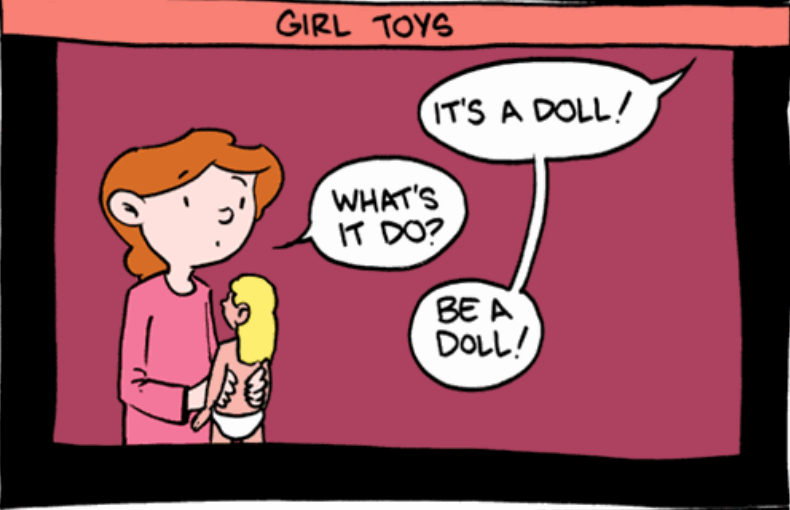
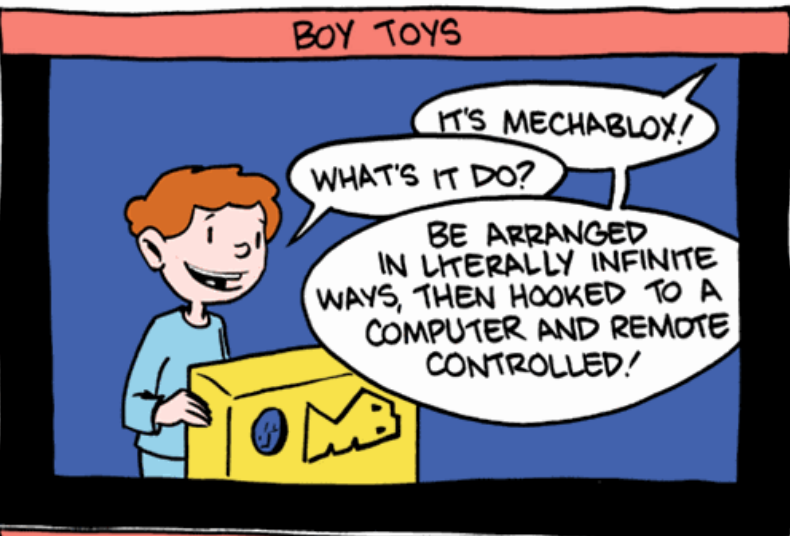
If you are interested, write to rms at gnu dot org and we'll see where it leads.

<http://stallman.org/extra/personal.html>

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# YRS 2011





Source:  
<http://tinyurl.com/ckolnku>

These s



# Barriers of Including Women

- Cyberbullying & trolling, sexist & discriminative languages
- Unfriendly and inhumane online environment (e.g. RTFM)
- gendered role in FLOSS development - inequality of different types of knowledge & women's reduced role
- Housework (child-rearing) – lack of time
- Lack of role models, mentors and support
- Education
- A male-dominated competitive worldview (reputation, flaming)
- Any other reasons that differ from culture to culture, nation to nation, region to region?



# Diverse solutions

- Debian-Women, Ubuntu-women, KDE-women (mixed sex)
- GenderChanger (single sex)
- IMC-Women (single sex)
- who (memberships), said what (topics), done what (actions)

# Feminising FLOSS Mascots



debian  
women



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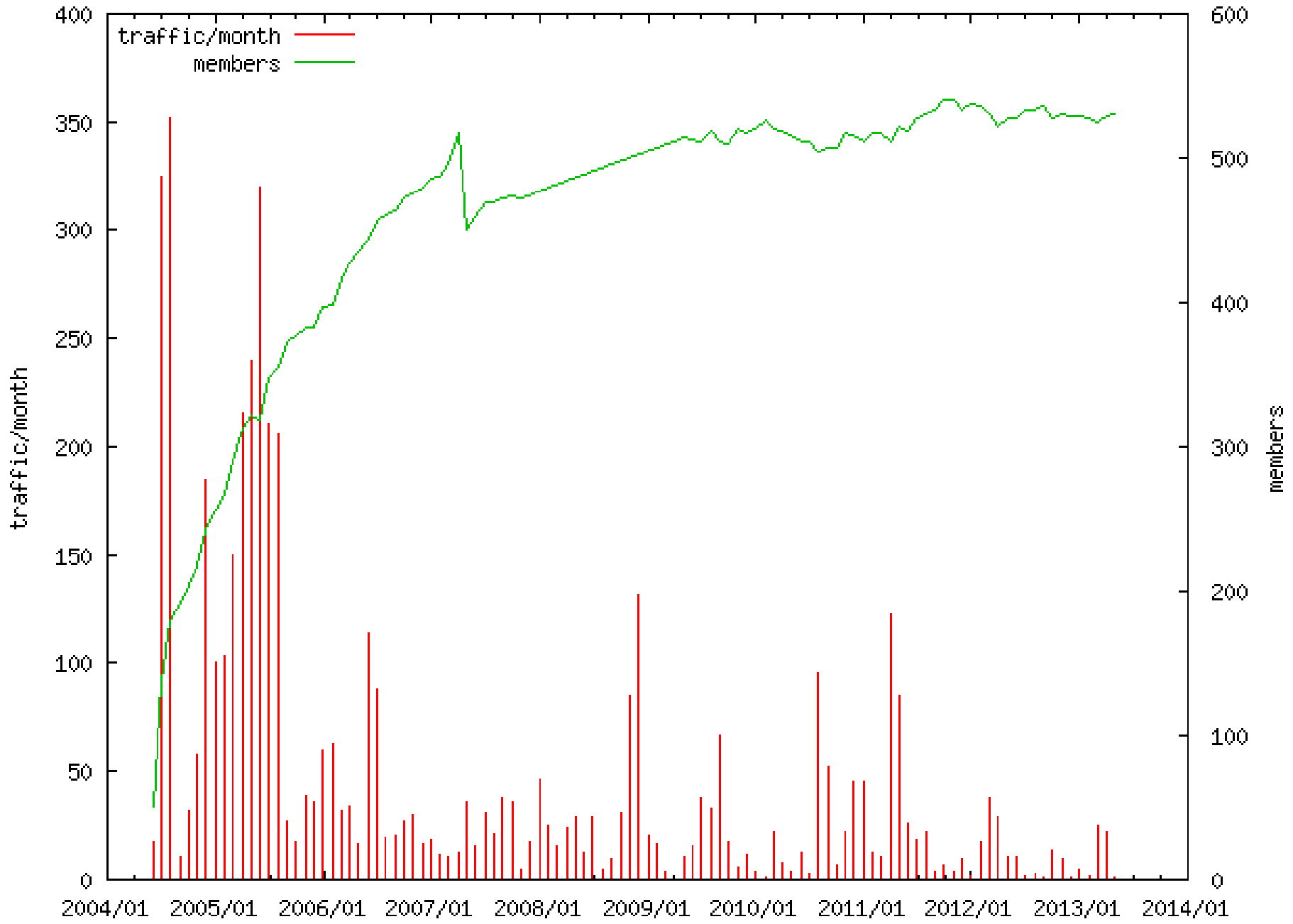
# Debian-Women



- Founded in May 2004
- Aim to balance and diversify the Debian Project by actively engaging with interested women and encouraging them to become more involved with Debian
- Promoting women's involvement in Debian by increasing the visibility of active women, providing mentoring and role models, and creating opportunities for collaboration with new and current members of the Debian Project (e.g., translation).
- Activities: online tutorials, bug-squashing parties, outreaching, mailing list, IRC channel
- Not just women members, but all who are interested in increasing the participation of women in Debian

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debian-women mailing list traffic and/or members

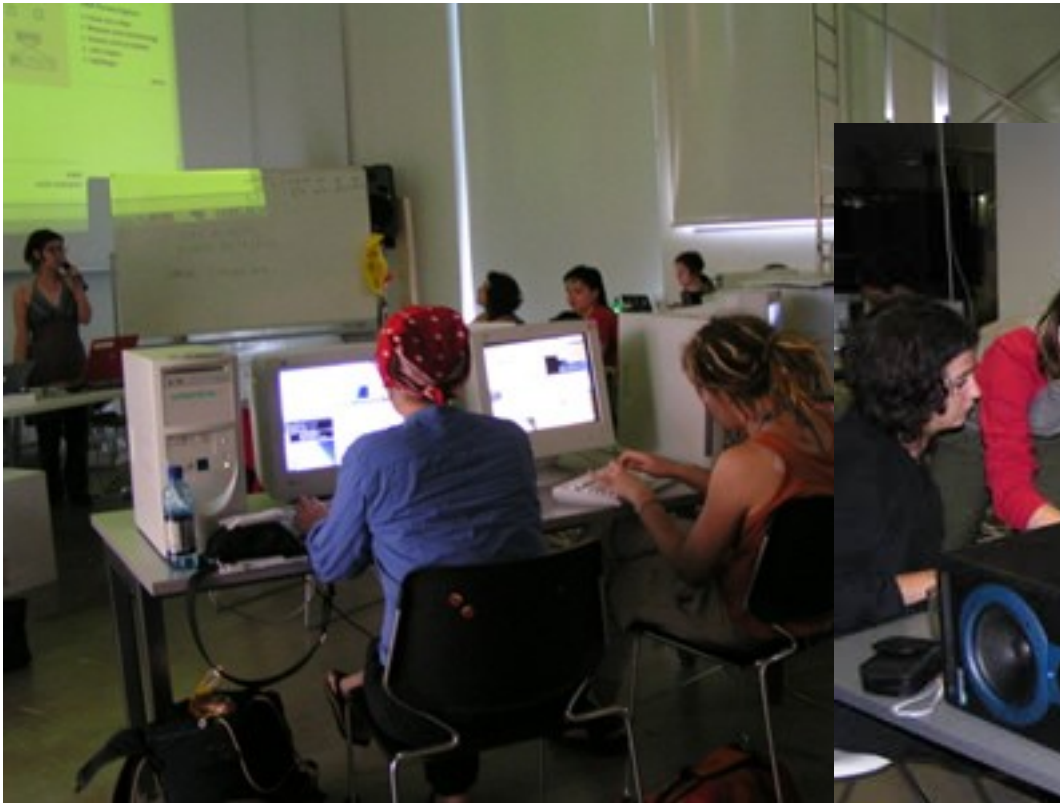


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# GenderChangers Academy

- since Nov. 1999
- ladies only (on the etc-int list)
- /etc - eclectic tech carnival
- DIY or DIO (hands-on training)
- exchanging computer related skills
- grass root and local
- The /etc is named for the /etc directory in which Linux stores system configuration files.

# /etc the Eclectic Tech Carnival.



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# Mcr Girls' Geek



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# PyCon UK 2011



- PyCon UK had keynotes from Allison Randal, Laura Creighton and Lorna Jane Mitchell.
- Allison kicked things off with “The Fallacy of the Zero-Sum Game”, discussing why free software is the future of technology because the values of cooperation and collaboration provide a better environment for improving technology.
- PHP developer Lorna Jane Mitchell conducted a wonderful, well-timed, slide-free talk about contributing to open source projects and the benefits outside the project that can result: job offers, recognition, personal improvement.



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