

Why footnotes?^[1]

The real {{cn}} impacts of [[Wikipedia:Verifiability]]

[1]<https://goo.gl/DY5VSr>

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- English Wikipedia [[WP:Verifiability]]

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Toilet paper orientation [[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

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maintenance

Toilet paper when used with a **toilet roll holder** with a horizontal **axle parallel** to the floor and also parallel to the wall has two possible orientations: the toilet paper may hang *over* (in front of) or *under* (behind) the roll; if perpendicular to the wall, the two orientations are right-left or near-away. The choice is largely a matter of personal preference, dictated by **habit**. In surveys of US consumers and of bath and kitchen specialists, 60–70 percent of respondents prefer *over*.^[1]

While many people consider this topic unimportant, some hold strong opinions on the matter. Advice columnist **Ann Landers** said that the subject was the most responded to (15,000 letters in 1986) and controversial issue in her column's history. Defenders of either position cite advantages ranging from aesthetics, hospitality, and cleanliness to paper conservation, the ease of detaching individual squares, and compatibility with a **recreational vehicle** or a cat. Some writers have proposed connections to age, sex, or political philosophy, and survey evidence has shown a correlation with socioeconomic status.^[2] A generic answer is that it should hang the way the person doing the roll changing prefers.

Solutions range from compromise, to using separate dispensers or separate bathrooms entirely, or simply ignoring the issue altogether. One man advocates a plan under which his country will standardize on a single forced orientation, and at least one inventor hopes to popularize a new kind of



Context and relevance [[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

In the article "Bathroom Politics: Introducing Students to Sociological Thinking from the Bottom Up",^[4] **Eastern Institute of Technology sociology** professor Edgar Alan Burns describes some reasons toilet paper politics is worthy of examination. On the first day of Burns' introductory course in sociology, he asks his students, "Which way do you think a roll of toilet paper should hang?"^[5] In the following fifty minutes, the students examine why they picked their answers, exploring the **social construction** of "rules and practices which they have never consciously thought about before".^[6]

Burns' activity has been adopted by a **social psychology** course at the **University of Notre Dame**, where it is used to illustrate the principles of **Berger** and **Luckmann's** 1966 classic *The Social Construction of Reality*.^[7] Similar everyday topics that have been used to awaken the **sociological imagination** include games of **tic-tac-toe**, violations of **personal space**, the rules of walking, and the etiquette of which urinals men choose in **public restrooms**.^[8]

Christopher Peterson, a professor of psychology at the **University of Michigan**, classifies the choice of toilet paper orientation under "tastes, preferences, and interests" as opposed to either **values** or "attitudes, traits, norms, and needs". Other personal interests include one's favorite cola or baseball team. Interests are an important part of **identity**; one expects and prefers that different people have different interests, which serves one's "sense of uniqueness". Differences in interests usually lead at most to teasing and gentle chiding. For most people, interests don't cause the serious divisions caused by conflicts of values; a possible exception is what Peterson calls "the 'get a life' folks among us" who elevate interests into moral issues.^[9]

Morton Ann Gernsbacher, a professor of psychology at the **University of Wisconsin–Madison**, compares the orientation of toilet paper to the orientation of cutlery in a dishwasher, the choice of which drawer in a **chest of drawers** to place one's socks, and the order of shampooing one's hair and lathering one's body in the shower. In each choice, there is a prototypical solution chosen by the majority, and it is tempting to offer simplistic explanations of how the minority must be different. She warns that **neuroimaging** experiments—which as of 2007 were beginning to probe behaviors from **mental rotation** and **facial expressions** to grocery shopping and **tickling**—must strive to avoid such **cultural bias** and **stereotypes**.^[10]

In his book *Conversational Capital*, Bertrand Cesvet gives toilet paper placement as an example of **ritualized** behavior—one of the ways designers and marketers can create a memorable experience around a product that leads to **word-of-mouth** momentum. Cesvet's other examples include shaking a box of **Tic Tacs** and dissecting **Oreo** cookies.^[11]

Broadcaster **Jim Bohannon**, who once spent an hour on toilet paper orientation, explains that such issues are good for **talk radio**: "It is an interactive medium, a certain kind of clash, it doesn't have to be a violent clash, but at least a disagreement would certainly be at the top of the list. It has to be something that's of general interest."^[12]

Arguments for over or under [[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

The main reasons given by people to explain why they hang their toilet paper a given way are ease of grabbing and habit.^[13] Some particular advantages cited for each orientation include:

- Over* reduces the risk of accidentally brushing the wall or cabinet with one's knuckles, potentially transferring grime and germs.^[14]
- Over* makes it easier to visually locate and to grasp the loose end.^[15]
- Over* gives hotels, cruise ships, office buildings, public places and homeowners with guest bathrooms the option to **fold over the last sheet** to show that the room has been cleaned.^[16]
- Over* is generally the intended direction of viewing for the manufacturer's branding, so patterned toilet paper looks better this way.^[17]
- Under* provides a tidier appearance, in that the loose end can be more hidden from view.^{[18][19]}



Folded and sealed toilet [?]

Notes [edit | edit source]

- ↑ This paragraph summarizes material in the body; details and citations are found below. For definitions of the choices, see [Preliminaries](#). Habit is discussed in [Arguments](#). See [Survey results](#) for statistics.
- ↑ For pros and cons, including RVs and cats, see [Arguments](#); for celebrities and experts, including Ann Landers, see [Noted preferences](#); for theories, see [Themes](#).
- ↑ The enthusiast, Bill Jarrett, and the inventor, Curtis Batts, are described in [Solutions](#).
- ↑ [Burns 2003](#).
- ↑ [Burns 2003](#), p. 111.
- ↑ [Burns 2003](#), p. 113.
- ↑ [Collett 2008](#).
- ↑ [Paul 2006](#). The previous topics are discussed in the section "Finding Sociology in everyday places: a review".
- ↑ [Peterson 2006](#), pp. 173–175.
- ↑ [Gernsbacher 2007](#).
- ↑ [Cesvet, Babinski & Alper 2008](#), p. 68.
- ↑ [Voice of America 2004](#).
- ↑ ***ab*** [Progressive Grocer 2010](#).
- ↑ [Ode 2010](#): "The Kimberly-Clark company cites three advantages for rolling over: perforation control, viewing advantage and wall avoidance."; [Garton 2005](#); [Jarski &](#)

- ↑ [Jarski 2007](#).
- ↑ [Ode 2010](#); [Elliott 2006](#)
- ↑ [Lind 1992](#); "The Grand Princess cruise ship replaces its toilet paper with the leading edge over the front, so that it can be folded as is done in five-star hotels. (Yes, someone really did ask this question.)" ([Carpenter 1999](#)); [Rosencrans 1998](#); [Garton 2005](#).
- ↑ [Grant 1991b](#); [Garton 2005](#); [Mitchell & Sugar 2005a](#); [Jarski & Jarski 2007](#).
- ↑ [Jarski & Jarski 2007](#)
- ↑ [Brandweek 2009](#)^[*dead link*]
- ↑ [Darbo 2007](#); [Garton 2005](#); [O'Connor 2005](#), p. 63.
- ↑ [Nerbas 2009](#).
- ↑ [Ode 2010](#); [Weingarten 2008](#); [Keeran 1993](#).
- ↑ [Downey & Harrison 1993](#).
- ↑ [McNatt 2010](#).
- ↑ [Centralian Advocate 2002](#).
- ↑ [Yeld 2010](#).
- ↑ [FitzSimons 2009](#), p. 99.
- ↑ [Scriven 1991](#), "EVALUATION SKILLS", pp. 151–153, especially p. 153 for the quotations.
- ↑ [Nalebuff & Ayres 2006](#), pp. 115–118.
- ↑ [Harris 2010](#).
- ↑ [The Daily Examiner 2009](#).

- ↑ ***ab*** [Rubin 1989](#).
- ↑ ***ab*** [Oldenburg 1989](#).
- ↑ Mark Wolf Scripps [Howard News Service 1990](#).
- ↑ [Kanner 1995](#), pp. 56, 120.
- ↑ [Ladan 2001](#).
- ↑ [Nestruck 2005](#).
- ↑ The 1996 report, which may not have contained this question, was the fourth annual report: ([McCarthy 1996](#))
- ↑ ***ab*** [PR Newswire 1993](#).
- ↑ ***ab*** [Ortega 1995](#).
- ↑ [Ciancio 1994](#).
- ↑ [Ciancio 1995](#).
- ↑ [Dickson 2001](#).
- ↑ [Ebenkamp 2004](#); [Pierson 2004](#).
- ↑ ***ab*** [Toronto Star staff and news services 1993](#).
- ↑ [Stark 1993](#).
- ↑ ***ab*** [Clark 1993](#).
- ↑ [American Standard Press 2008](#).
- ↑ [Harden 1995](#).
- ↑ [Henry 1999](#).
- ↑ [CottonelleRollPoll.com](#)
- ↑ [Ode 2010](#).
- ↑ [PR Newswire 2010](#).
- ↑ [Poretz & Sinrod 1989](#), p. 34.

- ↑ ***abcd*** [Floyd 1999](#).
- ↑ [Ms Maud 2002](#).
- ↑ [Kimberly-Clark 2010](#).
- ↑ [LaForte 2003](#).
- ↑ [Barrett & Mingo 2003](#), p. 400.
- ↑ [Buckley 2005](#), p. 106.
- ↑ ***ab*** [Landers 1998](#).
- ↑ [Keim 1997](#).
- ↑ [Breithaupt 2003](#), pp. 126, 135.
- ↑ [Wyman 2001](#), p. 61.
- ↑ ***ab*** [Marelius 1987](#).
- ↑ ***ab*** [Toronto Star 1986](#).
- ↑ [The Oprah Winfrey Show 1996](#).
- ↑ [Landers 2002](#).
- ↑ [Welsh 2005](#); [Rawson 2008](#).
- ↑ [Burns 2003](#), p. 116.
- ↑ [Maybelle Morgan \(19 March 2015\)](#). "Over or under? The age-old debate of which way a roll of toilet paper should sit is FINALLY settled... by a 124-year-old diagram"^[*?*]. *Mailonline, dailymail.co.uk*. Daily Mail. Retrieved 2 May 2015.
- ↑ [Jenny Che \(17–19 March 2015\)](#). "This 124-Year-Old Patent Reveals The Right Way To Use Toilet Paper"^[*?*]. *HuffPost: Business*. The Huffington Post. Retrieved 2 May 2015.
- ↑ [Wolf 1999](#), pp. 74–75; [Hogan & Hogan](#)

- ↑ [Lui 2009](#); [Grant 1991a](#).
- ↑ [Daily Express 1999](#), p. 39.
- ↑ ***ab*** [Newman 2000](#).
- ↑ [Miller 1999](#).
- ↑ [Greenberg 2007](#), p. 149.
- ↑ [Hunt & Edwards 2000](#).
- ↑ [Stovall 1997](#).
- ↑ [Greenberg 2007](#), p. 149. See [The Tilt-A-Roll homepage](#)^[*?*] at [Curtis Batts Online](#)^[*?*]
- ↑ [Zayas 2009](#).
- ↑ [Luna 2009](#).
- ↑ [Walsh 1999](#); [Marelius 1987](#).
- ↑ [Mitchell & Sugar 2005b](#).
- ↑ [Arkins 1994](#); [Jarski & Jarski 2007](#).
- ↑ [Godfrey 2006](#), p. 103.
- ↑ [Rademacher 2005](#).
- ↑ [Lind 1992](#).
- ↑ [Ratzlaff 2009](#).
- ↑ [Wuthrich 2006](#).
- ↑ [Saunders 2006](#).
- ↑ [O'Connor 2005](#), pp. 2–3.
- ↑ [O'Connor 2005](#), pp. 63–64; [Davis 2006](#).
- ↑ [Knuth, Donald E. \(October 1984\)](#). "The Toilet Paper Problem". *American Mathematical Monthly* **91** (8): 465–470. doi:10.2307/2322567^[*?*]. JSTOR 2322567^[*?*].

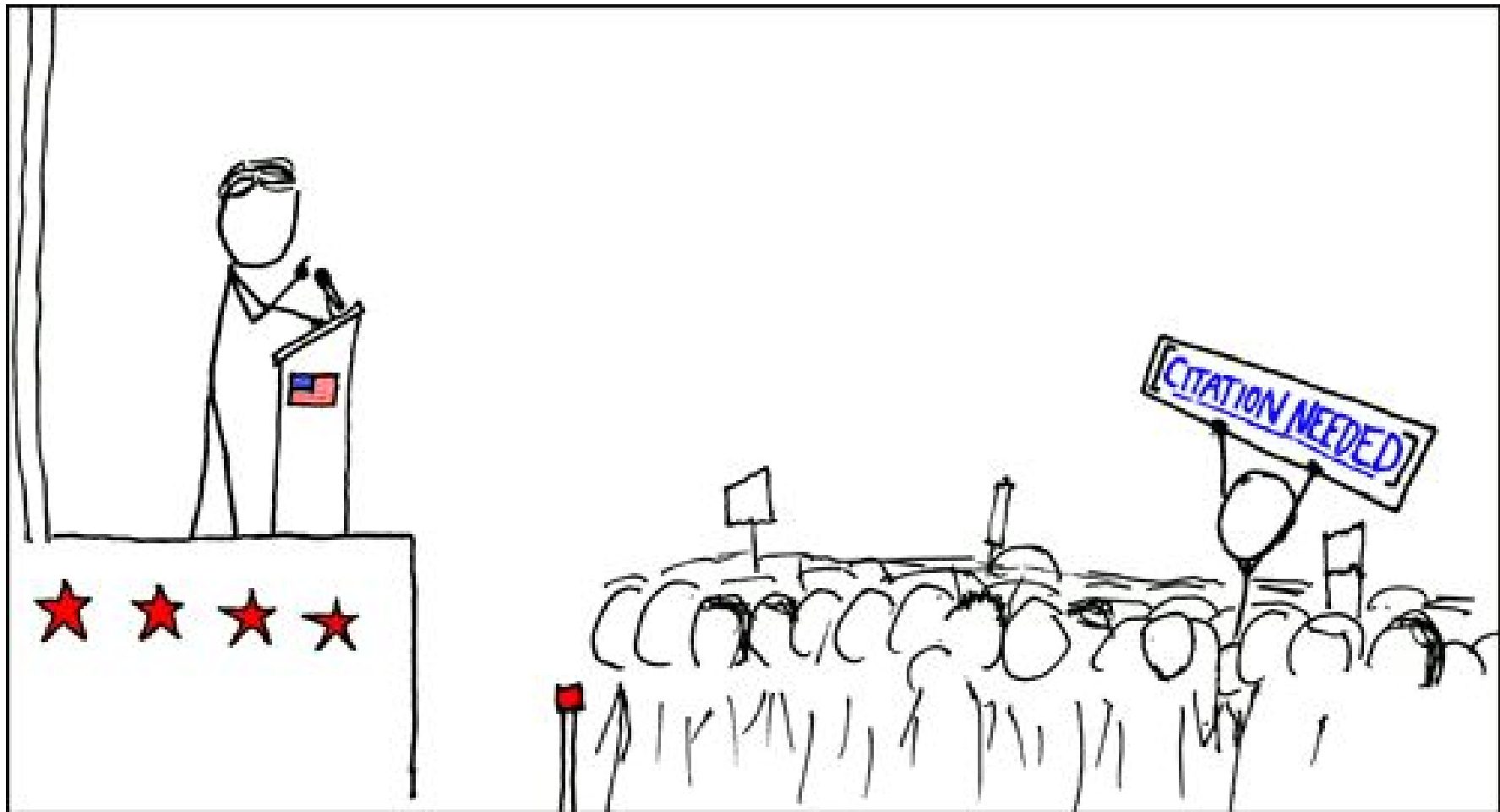
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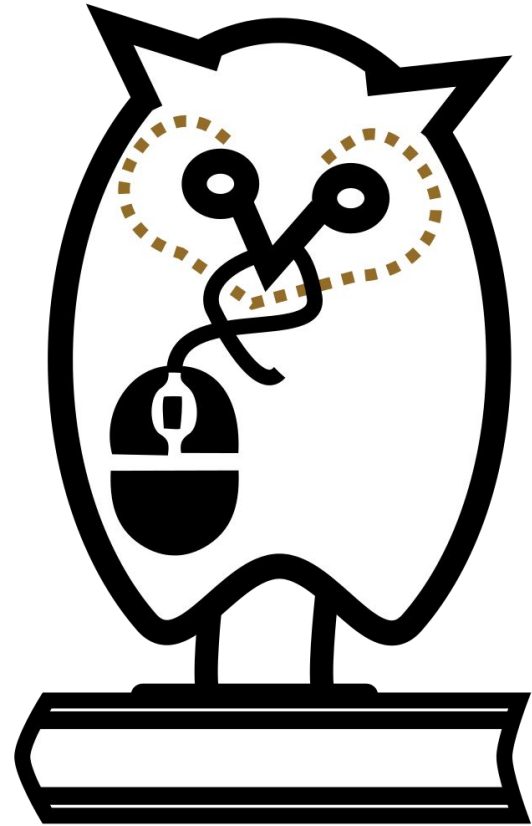
- ↑ Answer Fella (January 2007), "Famous Birthdays, Girlfriend Advice & a Brief History of Toilet Paper"^[*?*], *Esquire* **147** (1), p. 52, retrieved 11 July 2010
- ↑ Arkins, Diane C. (7 October 1994), "Consider Fallout of New Bath", *Chicago Sun-Times*, p. 22N. Factiva chi0000020011028dqa700wzz
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- ↑ Kanner, Bernice (15 September 1995). *Are You Normal?: Do You Behave Like*
- ↑ Peterson, Christopher (2006), *A Primer in Positive Psychology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- ↑ Pierson, Amy (13 January 2004), "Dick Clark Helps Usher in a New Year of Softness (press release)". *Market Wire*. Factiva ITWR000020040113e01d00001

And so, I think that one of the things that we can do is that, in the coming years, I think one of the themes is going to be, and **a big theme for me in the coming year, is a turn towards quality**. Especially in English. Also in German, French, Japanese, and all of the larger languages. We can no longer feel satisfied and happy when we see those numbers going up. When you go from 1.2 million articles to 1.8 million articles, what did you add? ... **But I think we also need to be very interested in focusing our attention on improving the quality of the central core topics, and finding ways to make those things better.**

-- Jimmy Wales







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If it's so popular, why do undergraduates say things like....

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“It was the second source on the list so I figured it must be the 2nd best”

“I think it is easiest/most convenient to select the first source”

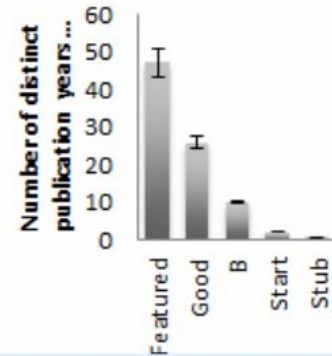
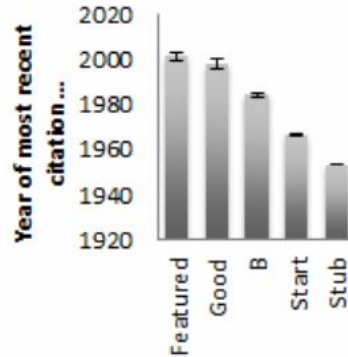
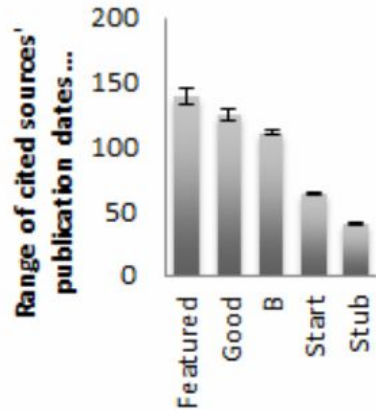
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I got this!

Nope, next!

What makes you tick? ▼

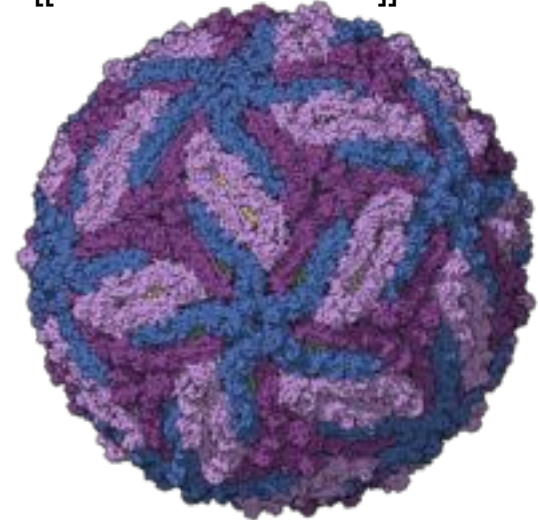
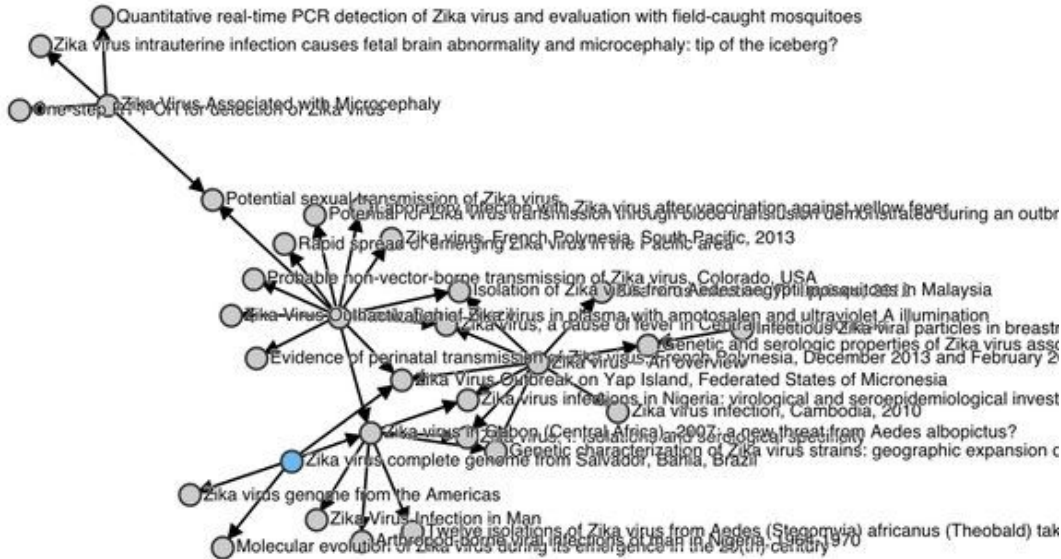
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