

Lin Mengdi / Mandy

Dr. J Marquardt

ENG 1300

Nov. 30 / 14

766

#YesAllWomen

It looked a little strange when I saw it firstly. Is it about women or something others? Just thinking wouldn't bring about the answers, I decided to find some materials to prove my assumptions.

#YesAllWomen is a Twitter hashtag and social media campaign in which users share examples or stories of misogyny and violence against women. First used in online conversations about misogyny following the 2014 Isla Vista Killings, the hashtag was popular in May 2014 when the murder case happened. “#YesAllWomen reflected a grassroots campaign in which women shared their personal stories about harassment and discrimination”(Grinberg,2014).

What caused the hashtag #YesAllWomen's appearance? I found some reliable reasons. These causes are not isolated from each other. They have some causal relations. There are the causes following:

First is the fundamental cause – “2014 Isla Vista Killings”, a killing spree was perpetrated on May 23, 2014, in Isla Vista, California, Santa Barbara, by 22-year-old

Elliot Rodger. Rodger killed six people and injured thirteen others before committing suicide. “The spree began when Roger stabbed to death three men in his apartment. Leaving the scene in his car, he drove to a sorority house, where he shot four people outside, killing two female students. He drove to a nearby delicatessen and shot to death a male student who was inside. He then sped through Isla Vista, shooting at pedestrians and wounding several of them, and striking four others with his car. Rodger exchanged gunfire with police twice during the killing spree, receiving a non-fatal gunshot to the hip. The rampage ended when his car crashed into a parked vehicle and came to a stop. Police found him dead in the car, with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head”(Strauss,2014).

After the “2014 Isla Vista Killings” happened, people found a video titled “Elliot Rodger’s Retribution” on YouTube. Actually, before driving to the sorority house, Rodger uploaded this video, in which he outlined details of his upcoming attack and the motivations behind his killing spree, which he described as “a desire to punish women for rejecting him and also a desire to punish sexually active men for living a better life than him”(Anonymous,2014).

Maybe it makes you a little confused that the third cause is also a hashtag - #NotAllMen. However, it is honest to say the hashtag is the direct cause of this case. #NotAllMen is a shortened hashtag version of the phrase not all men are like that. It started not because of the “2014 Isla Vista Killings”, but it became hot again because of this. Following the attacker’s Internet activity was described as misogynistic, and hatred of women was cited as a factor in the killing spree. In the wake of the killings, some

Twitter users made the argument that "not all men" are like this, or would commit such crimes.

So, #YesAllWomen is a response to #NotAllMen (as in not all men are as horrible as that particular killer).

Then, let's talk about effects of the hashtag. Firstly, #YesAllWomen "has been tweeted 1.2 million times on Twitter"(Grinberg,2014), it means that this hashtag brought a huge discussion and drew attentions of a large population online. Secondly, it put up a novel topic for people to think about: women's some rights haven't been protected well up till now; how government and related organizations protect women's benefits effectively. This topic is of realistic value today. Thirdly, it may change people's mind about the prevalence of misogyny in American society. Finally and the most important effect is raising awareness of sexism that women experience, often from people you know.

There are some dangerous and potential aspects hiding in our daily life. We just need an opportunity to expose it, actually. #YesAllWomen is an appropriate chance for most women who suffered from sexism to share their experience. #YesAllWomen suggests that, while not all men are dangerous, all women are subject to harassment. Not only it is an effective/logical way for women to abreact their negative mood, but also a good stage to make public know the bad phenomenon. #YesAllWomen suggests that, while not all men are dangerous, all women are subject to harassment.

References

- Grinberg,E.(2014).Why #YesAllWomen took off on Twitter.*CNN*. Retrieved from<http://www.cnn.com/2014/05/27/living/california-killer-hashtag-yesallwomen/>
- Strauss,V.(2014). Thousands hold vigil as UC santa barbara reacts to shootings. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/05/25/thousands-hold-vigil-as-uc-santa-barbara-reacts-to-shootings>
- 'Elliot Rodger's Retribution': Santa Barbara killer in his own sick words before shooting.(2014). *New York Daily News*. Retrieve from<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/elliott-rodger-retribution-santa-barbara-shooter-sick-words-article-1.1804761>