



Dear all,

Women's March Victoria would like to make a public statement about the pink "pussy hats" that many people have chosen to wear at previous Women's Marches.

We realize that for some the hats have been a symbol of unity. Unfortunately, the symbolism of the pink "pussy hats" is based around the idea of biological gender essentialism, which excludes trans women and non-binary folks. The pussy hats perpetuate the concept of shared womanhood, which ignores the complex ways in which women face different levels of marginalization based on race, sexual orientation, gender presentation, class and disability status. This notion is detrimental to our mission of inclusivity and intersectionality. We want everyone to feel safe and welcome at the march. Wearing one of these toques displays a lack of empathy and understanding towards the various manifestations of gender.

Not every woman has a vagina, and not every person who has a vagina is a woman. In addition, not every pussy is pink. Symbols that equate uteruses, vulvas and vaginas with womanhood are transphobic. Women's March Victoria strives to be inclusive of all women, including trans women and women of colour (as well as sex workers, women with disabilities, queer women, poor women, etc.), and in that effort, we ask that attendees think about how they can work towards making the march as inclusive and intersectional as possible.

The theme of Women's March 2019 is Ending Violence, and our chapter has taken this theme very seriously and we want to remind everyone planning on attending that trans people and non-binary people encounter more acts of violence and discrimination on a daily basis, which is why we all should take a firm stance on this issue.

We want to express our solidarity with the various communities and folks that wish to come and participate in the march. This is a gentle reminder to make conscious choices in terms of the symbolism one chooses to make in their outerwear. We do not believe in telling women what to wear or not to wear, but rather focus our attention on conversations, education, and community understanding. If you would like to learn more about why the “pussy hats” are problematic, you may check out the following resources:

<https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/pink-flag-what-message-do-pussy-hats-really-send>

<https://www.readingthepictures.org/2017/03/feminism-race-pussy-hat/>

Alternatively, this year Women’s March Canada proposed that marchers wear a red scarf on the day of the march. It was suggested by the Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC) to bring awareness to the disproportionate violence faced by Indigenous women and girls.

We are also working closely with the Moosehide campaign (who work nationwide on ending violence against Indigenous women and children), Bridges for Women (who support survivors of domestic violence and abuse), and Rainbow Health Co-Op (the largest trans support co-op in BC) - they will all have tables set up at Centennial Square after the march to provide more information on their important work.

In solidarity,
Women’s March Victoria