“Jim Norton- 1, Walking Land Whale- 0”

- Gender and Language Asymmetries in Cyber-Bullying

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Abstract

Unfiltered online language use is most visible where social media sites highlight power injustices such as racism, homophobia, feminism and sexism, which in turn sometimes promotes behavior such as cyber-bullying or internet-trolling. Women have been explicit targets for cyber-bullying and internet-trolling. The linguistic sub-field of gender and language considers questions of how language is used by and about men and women. This is a language and gender study with focus on a gender vocabulary and gendered language use in an online social media forum. This study aims to reveal the linguistic patterns in the discussions about genders. This was represented by YouTube video where one man and one woman, engaged in a debate on misogyny in comedy. The research was done through a qualitative and a quantitative research, by studying the comment section regarding the YouTube video. The results show that there are two different ways of how and what people tend to focus on when talking about men and women. For a woman, her appearance will most likely be in focus while, when talking about a man, it is the man’s performance that is of relevance. The asymmetry is that men are discussed with regards to what they are saying while women are evaluated for how they are saying it, and what they look like saying it.

Key Words: Gender, Language, Asymmetries, Social Media, Online Behavior, Internet Trolling, Cyber-Bullying, YouTube
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1. Introduction

The internet has become a platform for people to connect and has given rise to what is known as social media. Social media refer to websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Some of the biggest social media platforms today are Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, each with millions of users. At the same time as social media provide a new platform of entertainment and increased communication, they also include features which facilitate negative behaviors. For example, many social media sites today allow users to post anonymous comments, and the ability to hide one’s true identity encourages some people to act out more intensely than they would in person. In other words, what some people say and do online does not correspond to what they would do face-to-face (Suler, 2004). This aspect of unfiltered online language use is most visible where social media sites highlight power injustices such as those motivated by racism, homophobia, and sexism, which in turn promotes behavior such as cyber-bullying or internet-trolling.

Women have been explicit targets for cyber-bullying and internet-trolling. The most common online accusations directed at women include unintelligence, hysteria and ugliness, which are all then commonly combined with threats and/or fantasies of violent sex acts (Jane, 2004).

The linguistic sub-field of gender and language considers questions of how language is used by and about men and women. Language use by men and women focuses on differences that can be explained as a function of gender. However the study of language use about men and women attempts to illuminate how gender perceptions are expressed, possibly to the advantage or disadvantage of one gender over another. In this essay, the focus is on gendered language use in an online social media forum, not focusing on potential differences between how women and men speak, but rather on linguistic patterns in the discussions about the genders. This will be represented by one man and one woman, engaging in a debate on misogyny in comedy, broadcasted on YouTube. This essay considers the comments posted in reaction to that episode. The questions this essay aims to answer are:

1. How do viewer comments distribute with regards to representing reactions to the guest, the topic, or other elements of the video?
2. With regards to this distribution, what do the comments focus on specifically?
3. Considering the relative equality between the professional statuses of the guests, do the comments indicate that gender emerges as a defining difference?
4. What kind of language is used in comments about the male vs. female guest?
1.1 Structure
This thesis is organized in the following order. Starting with background information and the history of YouTube, followed by a short explanation of the Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell-Show. Furthermore the participants Jim Norton and Lindy West are presented. The essay continues with a literature review where “Gender and Language” and “Online Behavior” are presented. Furthermore there is a presentation of data collection methodology followed by data analysis methodology before, the result is revealed. The essay ends with a discussion and a conclusion.

2. Background
This section provides some general background information about the phenomenon of YouTube, explains how the comment section works, and presents the talk-show Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell. The guests of the show, Jim Norton and Lindy West, and their general opinions on misogyny and the topic of rape as suitable for comedy are also presented. Lindy West argues that rape is not suitable material for comedy while Jim Norton argues that comedy is the only place where no topic should be banned. Norton furthermore claims that comedy should never be censored because it deals with everyday traumas, problems and difficulties both society and individuals face.

2.1 YouTube
Youtube.com is a video-sharing website founded in February 2005 and officially launched in December of that year. It is now a Google company that has more than 1 billion users. Every day people watch hundreds of millions of video-hours on YouTube and generate billions of views. Its users and viewers are approximately 44% female and 56% male and most viewers are between 12-17 years old. 70% of YouTube traffic comes from outside the US (YouTube: Statistics, 2015) and, in fact, YouTube is localized in 75 countries and available in 61 languages. “YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally-created videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small.” (youtube.com: about, 2015)

On YouTube, other YouTube users can post comments on uploaded videos and personal channels. Posting a comment requires logging in, but user-generated user-ids allow for anonymous commenting. Any YouTube user can read posted comments, and these comments
can, in turn, generate new comments or be flagged as abusive. However, only the video owner, or the user who uploaded a video, can delete comments. This user can also choose how to manage comments, for example, some choose to proofread them before publishing and others choose just to leave comments open without any requirement of approval before they are posted to the video or channel (Google: YouTube comment section, 2015).

Since unlimited and embedded commenting is possible, YouTube sorts comments for better readability and relevance. According to sorting protocol, comments most relevant to the logged-in user will show first. Any user logged in to a Google+ account, will see comments at the top of the list from people in his or her own Google+ Circles, from creators, and from popular personalities. Comments with many likes and replies will rank highly as well. If a visitor to YouTube is not logged in, comments with many likes and replies and popular personalities will show first. (Google: YouTube Answers, 2015).

2.1.2 Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell

*Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell* is an American stand-up comedy television series that premiered on the TV channel FX Networks in 2012, starring comedian W. Kamau Bell. Bell performs typically observational comedy routines, focusing on current news stories and recent events within the topics of politics, pop culture, race, religion, media and sex (Wikipedia, Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell, 2015).

One episode of *Totally Biased* featured an interview with Lindy West and Jim Norton, airing on YouTube on May 31, 2013. The episode, which has received almost 370 000 views on YouTube, is described by as such, “Kamau sits down in an extended interview with comedian Jim Norton and “Jezebel” blogger Lindy West to debate misogyny in comedy and whether any topic can be considered off-limits for artists. Don’t expect either side to give in-the show’s called “Totally Biased” for a reason” (YouTube, 2013). This was the final episode of the second series, and the series finale before its cancellation.

2.2 Jim Norton

James Joseph “Jim” Norton (1968) is an American comedian, radio personality, actor, and author. Norton has appeared on multiple TV-shows such as “The Tonight Show” with Jay Leno, the “Late Show” with David Letterman and “Jimmy Kimmel Live” and he has also worked extensively with HBO productions. Norton frequently tours the United States, performing at well-known comedy clubs and was voted best comedian and breakthrough
performer of the year 2014 on the *Cringe Humor* website. His stand-up shows often include black comedy, cringe humor, satire and he often jokes about human sexuality and self-deprecation (Wikipedia, Jim Norton 2015).

### 2.3 Lindy West

Lindy West (1982) is an American writer, editor, and performer. Her work mostly focuses on pop culture, social justice, humor, and body image. Since 2012 West has made a name for herself as one of the most controversial staff writers and top blogger at Jezebel. Jezebel is a feminist blog community aimed at women's interests, under the tagline “Celebrity, Sex, Fashion for Women Without Airbrushing.” (Jezebel.com 2007) The Jezebel manifesto states that the site is a “blog for women that will attempt to take all the essentially meaningless but sweet stuff directed our way and give it a little more meaning, while taking more the serious stuff and making it more fun, or more personal, or at the very least the subject of our highly sophisticated brand of sex joke. Basically, we wanted to make the sort of women's magazine we'd want to read, a magazine that would never actually see glossy paper because big-name advertisers and the publishers who kowtow to them don't much like it when you point out the vulgarity of a $2000 handbag.” (Jezebel.com 2007) One of the site's guiding principles, according to the creator Anna Holmes, is to avoid saying "misogynist things about women's weight.” (Wikipedia: Jezebel, 2011) In 2007 Jezebel reached 10 million monthly views and today they are on multiple other social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. (Jezebel.com 2015)

Today, West is a culture writer for *GQ Magazine* and GQ.com and a weekly columnist at the *Guardian*. She is also founder and editor of an advice blog for teenagers. In 2013, West won the Women's Media Center's Social Media Award and the same year her work was selected among the *Nation's* top ten feminist articles of the year. She was chosen by *Cosmopolitan* and *Seattle Magazine* as one of *City Arts's* artists of the year, and nominated for Best Print/Web Columnist by Mediaite (lindywest.net, 2014). West is an outspoken activist, and has delivered influential speeches on the topics of feminism, rape culture and body image at multiple influential universities (lindywest.net, 2014). As a result of the *Totally Biased* episode, West was the immediate target of hundreds, possibly thousands, of negative comments, which she wrote about on Jezebel (Jezebel.com, 2014).

In these sections, background information on YouTube, the “Totally Biased”-show, Jim Norton and Lindy west was presented in order to establish the context of the primary source.
of this investigation. In the next section, relevant literature is presented, which will serve as pillars and sources of information for the purpose of data analysis. The literature review focuses on “Gender and Language” and “Online Behavior”.

3. Gender and Language

Language use is influenced by many factors, including features of the speaker, the addressee, the social context, the topic, the communicative goal, etc. Among the features of a speaker that influence language use is the variable of gender. The relationship between gender and language has long featured as an engaging and controversial subject of linguistics, but it was only in the 1970s that influential, groundbreaking studies emerged. Gender is embedded everywhere in today’s society and a large number of studies have already been conducted on gender differences. The use of the term “gender” has now been established to distinguish people in terms of their socio-cultural behaviors, and to signify masculine and feminine behaviors as scales rather than as a dichotomy (Holmes 2001). There is one branch of gender studies called interactional research which is characterized by four different theoretical perspectives: deficiency, dominance, cultural differences and social constructionism.

The Deficit theory could simply be explained as the view on women’s language as the result of girls, from an early age, being taught or exposed to models of language that conforms to specific conventions. “Women’s language” was established through the subordinate status of the women in the 1970s and thus is proposed to be a deficient version of men’s language. Women’s language is thought to be a more tentative, hesitant, indirect and powerless version of men’s speech. This lady-like way of talking is a manifestation of modifiers, e.g. hedges (phrases like “sort of”, “kind of”, “it seems like”) and tag questions (“You don't mind eating this, do you?”) that unintentionally signify the speaker as insecure and powerless (Lakoff 1975:5).

The Dominance theory claims that women are socialized to be subordinate through language. There are two different branches within the theory: language as social interactions, which explains the constructed gender inequalities through the routine interactions between men and women, and language as a system, which focuses on the practice of sexism within a language (Lakoff 1975:333). Women are thought through society to obey in conversations by unequal gender relations in the way silence, questions, interruptions and back-channeling (how a woman use encouraging responses while a man is talking) are used through language. In terms of Language as a system, it is explained that language has evolved over the years to serve male needs, represent male interests and to express male experiences. This creates a
male-centered view of the world and even though the quest for a more inclusive “anti-sexist” language is beginning to be firmly established within institutional practices, there are others arguing that this feminist, political correctness is overly exaggerated and that language should be treated with some playfulness (Mills 2003).

The *Cultural difference theory* explains how men and women constitute different ‘sub-cultures’ learnt through interactions as children in single-sex peer groups. Boys learn how to use goal-oriented and referential language and to say things for impact and effect. Girls on the other hand learn how to build relationships of equality and trust, how to cooperate with others in order to get things done. They are allowed to express feelings and emotions through their language. These contrasts in up-bringing and socialization change the conversational goals and result in different gendered speech styles where “women speak and hear a language of connection of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence.” (Tannen 1990:42)

The *Social constructionist theory* suggests that men and women are not born with a gender but that they *become gendered* through their interactions. Researchers on the topic suggest that girls from an early age are taught how to use a separate “woman's language” which is a socially constructed use of language associated with a ladylike-way of speaking. The theory argues that males and females are not born with a gender but they become gendered through social, linguistic interactions, meaning that, individuals do not *have* a specific gender, they *do* gender through repeated behavior and linguistic interactions. Talbot writes in *Language and Gender* (2010) that, “women and men are different because language positions us differently. In this view, subjectivity- our sense of selves- is something constructed, not pre-given and our gender identities are not fixed. We take up positions in our enactment of discourse practices so our identities are constructed moment by moment.” (Talbot: 110-111) Butler (1990) states that people's identities are performative and that one learns to perform many aspects of one's identity, such as acting feminine or masculine through “the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a rigid regulatory frame which congeal over time to produce the appearance of a substance, of a ‘natural kind of being’” (Butler 1990:33). The social constructionist approach suggests that gender roles and identities are not open to generalization or easy to categorize. Gender roles and identities are not fixed and static but moving, fragmentary, numerous, frequently contradictory and always in the process of being negotiated and reconstituted through linguistic interactions.

All of these four branches of gender theory share some common points but to summarize: The deficit theory is the result of girls, from an early age, being taught or exposed
to models of language that conforms to specific conventions. The dominance theory claims that women are socialized to be subordinate through language. The cultural difference theory explains how men and women constitute different ‘sub-cultures’ learnt through interactions as children and the social constructionist theory suggests that men and women are not born with a gender but that they become gendered through their interactions. This paper is an investigation of language as a system in the context of online social media commentary and thus the dominance theory will be used and invoked in the analysis.

4. Online Behavior

The topic of gender is embedded everywhere in today’s society, as the large number of studies on gender differences have established. One field of gender studies that has been extensively investigated is the connection between gender and language and the way in which women and men may use language differently. However, in this essay, gender issues in language will instead focus on how men and women are spoken about, focusing on the online context. This is an important question in today’s society where online interactions are as common as face-to-face interactions. There is some existing research about online behavior, but only a few tackle the topic of cyber-bullying, flaming and internet-trolling. In the following sections current research on the topic will be explained and examined in order to be connected to the “Gender and Language” section as the academic pillars and background knowledge for this thesis.

In investigations of trolling in online discussion groups, a troll is defined as a person who baits and provokes other group members, often with the purpose of starting fruitless arguments and redirecting the stated purpose of the group. Feminist and other non-mainstream online forums are especially common targets for trolls, since they have a vulnerable balance of inclusive ideals against the need for protection and safety. That tension can easily be exploited by disruptive elements to generate forum conflicts (Herring et al., 2002:371). Trolling is a widespread phenomenon the effects of which on their readers and readership greatly concern magazine- and digital editors. Trolling is the act of deliberately, cleverly, and secretly attempt to annoy and/or upset other users on social media platforms using dialogue. A troll is a person who starts arguments or upsets people, by posting provocative, irrelevant, or off-topic messages in with the intent of infuriating readers or targets into an emotional response. (Wikipedia 2015: Internet Troll). Few website editors, monitors or moderators have the capacity to keep the trolls under control and feel overwhelmed by the task (Binns, 2012:559). The methods of building websites have developed quickly but the
methods of managing them have fallen behind. Online communities often seek to increase traffic by developing busy online communities with high levels of user-generated content. The phenomenon of trolling and negative online behavior have created concerns among magazine and digital editors at the same time as the user-generated content is necessary to create good and user-friendly websites (Ibid:559).

When some people go online, they act out more often and more intensely than they would in person. What some people say and do online, are things that they would not say and do face-to-face. This could be explained as the online disinhibition effect. There are two different opposing manifestations of the online disinhibition effect, one being benign and the other one toxic. Benign disinhibition one is when people share personal information, fears, emotions, wishes or when they show unusual acts of kindness or generosity. The toxic one is rude language, harsh criticism, anger, hate or threats (Suler, 2004:321). There is a special kind of deindividuation in computer-mediated communication, where anonymity allows a sense of immunity, loss of self-awareness and a greater probability of someone acting out of character. When trolls engage in this immoral, narcissistic behavior online, they and their references are unclear.

Another state of online trolling is dissociative anonymity which is described as when people have the possibility to hide their identity, some choose to separate their online and offline lives as some might feel less vulnerable about self-disclosing. “In a process of dissociation, they don't have to own their behavior by acknowledging it within the full context of an integrated online/offline identity. The online self becomes a compartmentalized self in the case of expressed hostilities or other deviant actions, the person can advert responsibility for those behaviors, almost as if superego restrictions and moral cognitive processes have been temporarily suspended from the online psyche.” (Ibid: 322) The lack of authorities or a minimization of the status of authorities online could also be triggering trolling. Due to an inability to express authorial body language or status and power in e.g. their way of dressing, online authorities create more of a peer-relationship compared to real life interactions. This makes people more willing to misbehave (Ibid: 324). The fact that no one can see who is the real person behind the computer puts people in a sort of comfortable invisibility, which then gives them the courage to experiment with behaviors they never would in real life. “People don't have to worry about how they look or sound when they type a message. They don't have to worry about how others look or sound in response to what they are saying” (Ibid: 322) meaning that anonymity is the concealment of identity, and the absence of face-to-face interactions in combination with text communication can modify self-boundaries.
The term *e-bile* is used to describe “the extravagant invective, the sexualized threats of violence, and the *recreational nastiness* that have come to constitute a dominant tenor of Internet discourse.” (Jane, 2014:531) E-bile can occur in many different platforms, from individual exchanges through emails and private social media messages to open publication such as websites, forums and social media networks where people can choose to be anonymous or not when posting information or comments. The figurative assembles of individual e-bile wording are very similar in terms of profanity and hyperbolic descriptions of explicit, and often sexual, violence targeting women (Ibid: 533). The most common accusations and threats of women online are unintelligence, hysteria and ugliness, which are all then commonly combined with threats and/or fantasies of violent sex acts. Women as online targets of trolling are “dismissed as both unacceptable unattractive man haters and hypersexual sluts, who are inviting sexual attention and/or attacks.” (Ibid: 533) What might look like hate speech from the trolls’ perspective might better be classified as boredom speech or gaming speech, as many e-bile producers boost of their exploits and openly say that they are enjoying themselves, which could be seen as a form of textual sadism (Ibid: 534). Many women in the public domain are subjected to high levels of online hostility and such discourse has now almost become a normalized second nature, which many women try to ignore. If people continue to ignore the online trolls, there will develop a normalized discourse of aggression and hate, including hyperbolic threats of (often sexualized) violence. E-bile can therefore be seen as “threatening the realization of broad ideals such as civil discourse, social inclusivity, and democratic engagement” (Ibid: 542). This will allow e-bile to reduce the inclusivity and civility in both on- and off-line cultures.

To conclude this literature review, this study can contribute to this line of inquiry since it aim is to explore gender and language asymmetries in cyber-bullying.

5. **Data and Method**

In this section the data that have been used will be described and explained. This study is a language and gender study with a focus on a gender lexicon. The methodology is primarily qualitative, with some quantitative aspects to identify general lexical patterns. The data collection methodology section is followed by the data analysis methodology, giving the background information for a quantitative and qualitative methodology.
5.1 Data Collection Methodology

The data used for analysis in this study include the comment section related to a video on YouTube, which shows one episode of *Totally Biased*, featuring an interview with Lindy West and Jim Norton and airing on YouTube on May 31, 2013. There are currently (22/04/2015) a total of 7321 comments on this YouTube video, which presently has received 377,312 views. The choice of this particular YouTube video is the result of exploratory research on women who were targets of online trolling. Lindy West emerged as an online personality who has written openly about the multitude of harassment and mean commentary directed daily at her blog. The idea for the current study was to consider the linguistic form and semantic nature of such comments directed at West, but also to explore whether the content was directed at her gender or at her ideas. For this reason, the *Totally Biased* video was chosen, as it featured both Lindy West and a male guest of comparable professional status (Jim Norton). The inclusion of a male and a female participant is proposed to allow for an observation of the saliency of gender in online commentary. In the comments related to the video, we may be able to identify gender-based differences in the reactions of viewers presented with professionals debating a serious topic, namely, misogyny in comedy and whether rape can be considered off-limits for comedians. As guests of the show, both Norton and West are qualified to argue their sides and the content can be considered compelling enough to warrant a disregard for their genders. An investigation of the viewer comments will reveal whether viewers orient towards Norton’s and West’s actual participation in the discussion or towards their genders.

To this end, the data thus consist of viewer comments. Specifically, the dataset includes the first 100 comments (4198 words), sorted by “popularity”, that is, according to the comments with the highest numbers of replies and likes. Only top-level comments were included in the data collection; replies to comments were excluded, as they, in contrast to top-level comments, were not directly related to the video.

5.2 Data Analysis Methodology

Data analysis is based on quantitative and qualitative methodology, the former allowing for a focus on general patterns within the data, while the latter allows for a deeper investigation of language and gender in terms of language as a system. The reason for this combination is to achieve both an overall understanding of the data and a more detailed analysis of the content.

The quantitative data analysis focuses on the content of the comments, to provide an overview of 1) how the comments distribute with regards to targeting Norton, West, the
discussion topic itself or another focus, 2) how participant-specific comments distribute with
regards to generally negative or positive stances, 3) which sub-categories, if any, can be
identified with regards to comments targeting Norton and West, and 4) which words are used
to talk about the two participants. While it is unknown at this point how the over 7000
comments would distribute with regards to content, the comments considered in this study
reflect those that rose to the top of the list and for this reason can be considered the most
salient and meaningful.

The qualitative data analysis focuses on sub-categories of comments directed at Norton
and West. This analysis aims at exploring language as a system, and whether language used
about two relatively equal participants who nonetheless differ by gender reveals an
orientation to this one difference, that is, gender. The qualitative analysis also allows the
investigation of gendered talk to reveal any asymmetries, where one gender representative is
discussed more frequently and/or with an unequal set of terminology.

6. Results
For the first quantitative analysis, a small corpus of 4198 words was compiled and a selection
of specific words was searched for, within the first 100 comments. The selection of chosen
words is based on a superficial reading where some words emerged as salient due to repeated
usage in multiple comments. The words that were repeatedly used are shown in the figure
below (Figure 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindy</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comedy</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuck</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist/Jezebel</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vagina</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitch</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cunt</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumb</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cow</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1.
Figure 1 shows that words such as “Rape”, “Jim” “Fat”, “Comedy” and “Lindy” were used repeatedly throughout the first 100 comments. The word “fat” stands out as one of the words used many times throughout the comment section. “Fat” is a word that has nothing to do with the content of the video but a word that is used to describe West. Even more specific words such as “cow” and “whale” are used multiple times which do not have anything to do with the content of the video but are also words used to describe West. There were numerous other profanities and swearwords noted, such as “cunt”, “fuck” and “bitch” which says something about the tone of the comments. This will be further discussed and elaborated later on in the “Discussion” section.

The initial analysis of the data resulted in four different categories (see figure 2 and 3): comments about West, comments about Norton, comments mentioning both participants, and comments that referred to neither Norton nor West. The comments were interpreted and categorized into four categories. The comments were categorized according to pronouns and names. Comments that did address neither Jim Norton nor Lindy West were categorized as an “other comment”, examples will be provided below (Example 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lindy West</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Norton</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2

![Comments mentioning](image)

Figure 3
Figure 2 shows that the majority of the comments, a total of 86, mention West while Norton is only mentioned in 23 comments out of 100. Since both West and Norton could be mentioned in the same comment Figure 3 features an overview of the percentage of whom or what the comments are targeting. Already there is a notable asymmetry in this focus.

The “other comment”- category had to be included since there were comments that mentioned neither West nor Norton. The category is illustrated by two comments, shown in Example 1 (the numbers provided refer to the placement of the comment database, included in the appendix).

Example 1, #16 and #68
“I used to go to comedy clubs often....I have never heard a rape joke. Have any of you?”

“Statistically speaking, 9 out of 10 people enjoy gang rape”.

Comment #16 discusses the issue of the video’s content but does not include any direct targeted participant. Comment #68 could be referred to as a troll-comment, since it deliberately, cleverly, and secretly attempt to annoy and/or upset other users on using dialogue but since it does not refers to any contender, it still categorizes under the “other-comment”- category.

6.1 Categories
When studying the comments individually, one can see that even though comments may not specifically mention, for example, Jim Norton by name, the use of the pronoun he can indicate a reference to the male guest. However, only close readings can disambiguate between the two featured males, and in general, it is problematic with digital communication that other contextual cues are not evident, so exact references or even implicatures can be difficult to ascertain.

Figure 4 features an overview of the comments, indicating the target, the stance, and the content. It is also worth mentioning that one comment can appear and be applicable in multiple categories. For example if there is a negative comment about West’s performance, and it is also negative about her weight the comment will therefore be categorized as both ‘negative performance’ and ‘negative weight’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jim Norton</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Lindy West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
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Figure 4

In following sections, these different categories will be further defined and explained one by one.

### 6.2 Norton Comments

A clear pattern was discovered when analyzing and categorizing comments targeting Norton. The result reveals that comments about him reflected mostly positive feedback. This was shown by giving him compliments on his performance as the examples 2 and 3 below illustrate.

Example 2, #10

“Damn, Jimmy OWNED that interview.”

Example 3, #70

“Norton destroyed Lindy every time he spoke”.

There were a total of five comments that gave Norton positive feedback on his content as shown in Example 3:

Example 4, #68

“I truly love when a person tries to dissect comedy, especially when they have no idea what they’re talking about. Male or female it does not matter. Side note: good job jim!”
Such comments validate Norton’s opinion and his content but also approve of his performance.

Only two of the top 100 most popular comments were negative towards Norton, but it is important to point out that those comments were also negative towards West:

Example 5, # 34
“I think Jim Norton sucks ass..... Almost as bad as O&A..... however.... this woman needs some dick.... not mine by the way. She's just being a bitch. She made no sense what so ever she just came across as a bitter douche..... and I can't believe I'm defending Jim Norton”

This example illustrates that even though there is some negative criticism directed towards Norton, the commenter still ends up giving him a complement.

Few of the 100 most popular comments focused on Norton, but those that did typically expressed positive evaluations of either his performance or the content of his arguments, but rarely about both participants. Only two comments included positive feedback on both content and performance. On the other hand, the results show that of the comments targeting West, nearly half applied to two or more categories.

6.3 West Comments
A clear pattern was discovered when analyzing and categorizing comments targeting West, most comments were negative feedback. The majority of the comments targeted her performance and her appearance as the examples below illustrate (Example 6). It should also be noted that the majority of the comments targeted West and not Norton, confirming the asymmetry that is identified in talk about males and females within the study of language as a system (Mills, 2003:207). Out of 100 comments, 86 referred in some way to West and 84 of these comments were negative. As mentioned before, comments could be both negative and positive and therefore the results also show that there were six comments that were positive towards West:

Example 6, # 87
“That Lindy West chick actually held her own in this and was even pretty funny. And norton was hilarious as usual” (Noted that this comment was also positive towards Norton).

Another example of a West positive comment
Example 7, #49
“Both of them make nothing but excellent points, but neither seem to understand the jist of what the other is saying. He’s talking about the morality of and issues stemming from the censorship of art, while she’s talking about the effects that art has on society and the freedom of the individual to criticize it. It’s just two people arguing even though they agree”

This result shows that there were no comments that were positive towards West without also saying something negative about her (as shown in #87) or adding something positive towards Norton too (as shown in #49).

The negative comments were so many for West it was necessary to make sub-categories to further see what the comments were negative about. The top comments-categories for West focused on her performance (32 comments), her weight (28 comments), her content (24 comments) and other insults (16 comments). It should be noted that many comments directed at West constituted two or more categories. This is in significant contrast to the most popular comments directed at Norton, which rarely addressed more than one aspect. Among the comments directed at West, a total of 41 comments fit the criterion for multiple categories as the following example illustrate:

Example 8, # 30
“what a fat cow. the face of femdumb the reason women are paid less”

This comment fits within the “feminist” as well as the “weight” category.

Example 9, #56
“Lindy West is a fat, miserable, repulsive, morbidly obese cunt faced bitch. She is an awful human being, and her vagina is dried up and there are tumbleweeds rolling through there!”

This comment fits within the “weight”, “appearance” and “other insult” category.

Figure 5 below shows an overview of the distribution of the negative comments towards West calculated in a percentage. Furthermore each category will separately be more carefully examined and explained in the following sections.
6.3.1 Performance

The comments that were negative about West’s performance had the highest number of comments, but the result also showed that those comments most often also had other categories combined with it.

Example 10, #42

“The way this broad talks makes me want to skin a kitten and beat it off the wall. Fuck”

There were only a few comments that only mentioned how West preformed in the video, without targeting anything else:

Example 11, #46

“From 11:47 on Lindy West completely fell apart”

This comment is one of the few comments that only mentions West’s performance without targeting anything else. Norton also had “performance” as his top category but in comparison his comments were positive instead of negative.

6.3.2 Weight

Out of the 100 most popular comments regarding this video, 28 referred to West's appearance specifically in terms of her weight, most commonly by using the word “fat” but also by using
other words such as “cow”, “whale” or “obese”. There were no comments targeting only her weight, but rather comments on weight appeared together with other (negative) comments.

Example 12, #79 and #82

“Jim Norton kills this fat cunt... awesome”

“lindy west is a dumb fat bitch fucking idiot”

Both #79 and #82 targets her weight but the comments also use profanities to emphasize how little the commentators agree with West’s opinion. It seemed like this specific category was used as a tool for the commentators to emphasize negative evaluations of West’s performance and/or content, since none of the comments focused exclusively on her weight.

6.3.3 Content

This category, with 24 comments, followed the same pattern as the “performance”-category; in other words, the content-comments rarely focused on the content of West’s contributions but rather were accompanied by one or more other negative comments. “Content”-categorized comments often appeared together with “other insults” or “performance” comments, which suggests that the person commenting not only disagreed with what West was saying but also how West was presenting it on the show. Two examples are presented here:

Example 13, #50 and #67

“I disagree with Lindy entirely, but what's up with all the comments about her weight? Who cares what she looks like, why can't people just disagree with her views without the childish name calling? Majorly lame, dudes.”

“So racist jokes from 60 years ago are why lynchings happened?”

Comment #50 is defending West from all the other comments about her appearance/weight, even though the comment is still negative about what West is debating and disagrees with her content. Comment #67 disagrees with the content of what she is saying and questions it without targeting anything else about her performance, weight or other aspect.
6.3.4 Other Insults
This category was necessary to add because due to the great variety of negative comments about West. These comments do not target her appearance or weight, but nor did they target any one specific aspect that would allow the identification of further distinct categories. Comments within the “Other insults” category also often appeared in combination with other categories. The insults include mostly profanities and name-calling towards West, including words such as “bitch”, “cunt” and “whore” e.g.:

Example 14, #33
“Lindy West... fuck me she's a wet blanket to the entire world.”

By saying someone is a “wet blanket” describes a person who spoils other people’s fun by disapproving of their activities. This comment is an insult but is not targeting her looks or her performance, or does not fit in any of the other categories.

6.3.5 Feminist/Jezebel
There were a total of 13 negative comments about feminism or mentioning “Jezebel” and in this selection of comments, feminist or Jezebel were used to emphasize stereotypical feminists in a negative way. It almost seemed like “feminist” or “Jezibel” were synonyms with ugly and dumb.

Example 15, #86 and #95
"Jezebel staff writer" She is exactly as fat as I thought she would be."

“Just more feminist trash. Fucking tired of it.”

Any ‘minority’ group, such as feminists (or any other political/religious/sexual/other protruding views) will more often be targets of insults and negative stereotypes (Herring et al., 2002:371). These comments show clear examples of how feminism and Jezebel are used as name-calling. Many women in the public domain are subjected to high levels of online hostility and such communication has now almost become a normalized second nature, just as these comments can attest (Ibid: 371).
6.3.6 Appearance
While many comments targeted West’s appearance with regards to her weight, further comments referred to other aspects of her appearance, often via use of the word “ugly”. Comments within this category often included other negative content about West, and thus, like comments about her weight, they served to boost the negative content.

Example 16, #23 and #40
“I think she is more angry at the fact that she is unattractive, and dislikes the fact that she probably gets very little male attention. She is someone finding excuses to hate on men (…) They always have to turn it into it being a larger issue. “

“I didn't even have to see what she looks like to know what she looks like”

These comments use her appearance to explain why she is debating and arguing the cause the way she does. By saying that she wants to ban rape-jokes because she is “ugly” takes away the focus from the topic and makes it personal about West’s appearance instead of her opinion.

6.3.7 Rapeability
This category concerns the subject of rape and since the topic of the whole debate is about misogyny in comedy and whether rape is appropriate to joke about there are many top comments on that topic. However this category targets and rates West’s rapeability. Out of 100 comments there were six comments that mention rape in a way that suggested that West should be “happy” if she got raped.

Example 17, #5 and #8
“You can see her back fat coming out from behind her armpit. Nobody will rape you.”

“she's just mad because she knows that she wont get raped.....because she fat n ugly”

In these examples “rape” is used as a tool of sexual dominance and a way of criticizing West, suggesting that West should be happy if anyone one would rape her. Many women consider rape as one of the worst things that could happen. By victimizing and dismissing West as hy-
persexual sluts West’s professional opinion is completely minimized and put in a lower standing position as a human being.

6.3.8 Intellect
Out of the 100 most popular comments regarding this video, five referred to West’s intelligence. As one of the most common accusations of women online is unintelligence, this category was not unexpected. These comments show how West is classified as being unintelligent because she is a woman (especially in #12):

Example 18, #12 and #39
“The more she talks the dumber she sounds.”

“ ‘obviously our opinion on how speech effects the world are different’ It’s about context you dummy”

These comments were also frequently used in combination with the “performance”-category. Even though most of the intellect-categorized comments were used as a tool to describe her as a unintelligent woman who should not have an opinion. These types of comment also offends West’s professional career, as they implies that West does not what she is talking about.

7. Discussion
It is worth mentioning that this research does not put any value in the points or performance that these two participants make. What is interesting to see is how they are talked about in the comments section. Their performance might be taken into consideration but as the result shows, there is only a vast minority of the comments that talks about West’s actual performance compared to how many comments mention her appearance in a negative way. Since the material is not a massive, random sample from multiple YouTube-clips, this study does not fully represent and reflect reality of online commenting, but can nevertheless provide insight as to how comments can reveal orientations towards gender.

In this following section, the literature review will be analyzed and discussed in relation to the findings of the conducted research. The discussion will focus on the “Gender and Language” review with focus on the dominance theory, which claims that women are socialized to be subordinate through language and the “Online Behavior” review with focus on women and trolling. Since this paper is an investigation of language as a system in the
context of online social media commentary, there is a necessity to start off by evaluate the comments through the dominance theory lens.

The data consisted of the 100 most popular comments on a video featuring a discussion between a male and female guest about misogyny in comedy. When discussing the qualitative part, it shows an asymmetry between how certain words immediately stood out as repetitive. Those words were later a help to define different patterns which would help with categorizing the different comments. An example of the asymmetry discovered was that Norton’s name was mentioned 21 times and he was the subject of 23 comments, whilst West’s name is mentioned 19 times but she is the subject of 86 comments. The corpus presented in the quantitative overview suggests that, instead of writing West’s name when referring to her, the commenting viewers use other words such as “whale”, “pig” or “bitch” which show inequalities between the two participants.

In the qualitative part, different sub-categories were presented which also show an asymmetry: Norton did not almost need any subcategories because most comments targeting him were positive feedback about his performance. However, West needed eight subcategories for her ‘negative’ comments, to fully map out what specifically the comments were negative about. This could be an indication that, professionally, Norton did a better job than West, but the sub-categories revealed that it was not only her performance that was negatively targeted. If adding up comments that only target West’s performance or content, there were 76 comments that target her appearance, her weight, call her names, discriminate her for being a feminist and discuss her rapeability and unintelligence. The asymmetry between Norton and West is not a coincidence because West, supposedly, did not perform as well as Norton, it is the proof of how women are targets by online trolls.

When discussing the results in relation to the dominance theory the results clearly confirm that society is divided into two sub-categories called men and women with specific socially constructed roles. As men are generally more physically powerful, according to the theory, they project their physical domination into social roles. It is all a matter of dominance and subordination where women have applied to the lower standing position (Lakoff 1975:333). When comparing these results to the literature section, it is clear that the asymmetry validates the dominance theory. It also shows how feminist and other non-mainstream online forums are especially common targets for trolls, since they have a vulnerable balancing of inclusive ideals against the need for protection and safety. This raises the question if the comment section would look any different if Norton also was a woman, but still had his opinion. Most likely the comments would not be as strongly negative towards
West because there would not be any differences between the genders of the guests, only the participants’ professional opinions.

The relevance of the Deficit, Dominance, Cultural difference and the Social Constructionist theory in relation to the results, is that the theories serve as literature pillars and basic background knowledge to gender studies. The results supports the theories by confirming the idea that men and women are not born with a gender but that they become gendered through their interactions and society. Norton is mentioned by name, sometimes even by last name only, while West gets called names and is addressed by swearwords even though West is Norton’s professional equal. Another notation when discussing the dominance theory is what the comments targeting West would look like if she hypothetically were a ‘stereotypical’ beautiful woman. The fact that she is not considered ‘main-stream beautiful’ jeopardizes her professional opinions and instead of being evaluated by her performance, most comments are negative about the way she looks. No comments mention anything about Norton’s appearance even though he is not either ‘traditionally’ attractive, being a bald man above forty and slightly overweight. This shows that despite a woman’s opinion, she will always be judged on the way she looks. However a man can say whatever he wants and receive positive or negative feedback on that, but a man’s appearance will most likely not be attended to over his opinion and performance.

Moving on to discussing “Online Behavior”, this research shows a clear indication of the toxic disinhibition effect which includes rude language, harsh criticism, anger, hate or threats (Suler, 2004:321) just as many of these comments include. West is multiple times targeted by such comments and trolls, and as a troll is defined as a person who baits and provokes other group members, often with the purpose of starting fruitless arguments and redirecting of the stated purpose of the video, one can clearly see how these top comments (comments with most likes and replies), are mainly trolling comments. It is also noted that feminist and other non-mainstream online forums are especially common targets for trolls, since they have a vulnerable balancing of inclusive ideals against the need for protection and safety. Having said that, this research is not investigating a feminist forum, it is investigating the top comments on a video clip on YouTube and even so the comments are targeting the fact that West is an outspoken feminist. This study also confirms Binn’s (2012) theory on e-bile and how the most common accusations of women online are unintelligence, hysteria and ugliness, which are all then commonly combined with threats and/or fantasies of violent sex acts. As women as online targets of trolling are thought of as undesirable, ugly man haters and hypersexual sluts, who are inviting sexual attention it also confirms what has been found in
this study. Many of the comments targeting West are rhetorical constructs of individual e-bile texts and some are very similar in terms of profanity and hyperbolic imagery of graphic, as well as often sexual. The negative comments about West confirms this theory, but is also being put in relation to the comments that Norton received, which even more provides proof of the asymmetry between the two participants.

This study aims to further the knowledge in these fields by providing evidence that online trolls, mostly, and specifically in this case, targeting women are a common feature of internet activity. As anonymity provides a feeling of being safe and invisible, it enables some to act out in a way that they would not do in face-to-face situations. The topic on cyber-bullying targeting women is starting to be more and more unmanageable and a growing problem. Women’s opinions should not have to be evaluated in relation to what they look like.

8. Conclusion
Before any potential conclusions can be drawn, it has to be stressed that the data used for this study was limited, and therefore this study does not provide a general image of the situation but could viewed as a pilot investigation. It should also be mentioned that there are individual differences between what one person would define as a ‘negative’ or ‘positive’ comment. Nevertheless the study points to a pattern in the way viewer commenter’s discuss the guests, with regards to their gender.

The way the viewer comments distribute with regards to representing reactions to the guest, the topic, or other elements of the video shows in the comment asymmetry of the both contestants. With regards to this distribution, the comments targeted Norton specifically focused on positive feedback on his performance. The comments targeted West specifically focus on negative feedback on her performance, often in combination with negative feedback about her appearance. Many negative comments considered West’s weight and used it as way to minimize her professional content and performance. Considering the relative equality between the professional status of the guests, the comments clearly reflect that gender emerges as a defining difference between Norton and West. One could stay that the language used in comments about the male vs. female guest differentiated in how they addressed the participants and also what they focused on.

In conclusion, one could say that there are two different ways of how and what people tend to focus on when talking about men and women. For a woman, her looks will most likely be in the focus while, when talking about a man, it is the man’s performance that is of relevance. The asymmetry is that men are discussed with regards to what they are saying
while women are evaluated for how they are saying it, and what they look like saying it. The conclusion is that the data analyzed for this study do seem to suggest that viewers oriented towards the genders of the guests, and that they did this asymmetrically, both in volume (number of comments) and in content (aspects addressed). The female guest was the target of more of the 100 most popular comments, and the majority of these comments were negative. The content of the comments focused also on a wider range of aspects in comparison to the comments targeting directed at the male guest. These findings seem to support previous research which has established asymmetries in language used to talk about men and women, and that women are more often the target of cyber-bullying. It is important to acknowledge that gendered harassment could cause implications for women’s status online and place in the digital era. As the negative attitude for women online is a global phenomenon it is significant that it is talked about, made public and that a discourse is established through which these issues can be articulated and pointed out. Nothing can change unless awareness and unity are recognized against the normalized violence and sexist attitudes that persist in defining women online.

Further research could possibly look closer at this type of interaction, but on a bigger scale, for example with more comments and/or on more similar YouTube videos. That would provide the study with more depth and might allow for more categories and identification of patterns of how men and women are talked about in online forums. To get a better, more reliable data to support the general result that women, more than men, seem to be criticized on their looks rather than their skills would also be to conduct a larger scale corpus with all comments included. The overview of the words used in the comment section would be more reliable but it is also important to closer examine the comments as the qualitative part gives more depth of the result. In addition it would also have been interesting to investigate the gender of those who posted comments on the clip and evaluate if the trolls are mostly women or mostly men. It would be possible to find out to a certain degree since the usernames sometimes give indications but trying to guess would only result in mass conjecture and assumptions and would create a distorted and misleading interpretation of the comments which would reflect an inaccurate picture.
9. References

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Electronic

10. Appendix

1. Camelworks för 1 månad sedan
5:06 She makes a rape joke. What a hypocritical dope.
2. Lana V oreskova för 5 månader sedan
So basically if your over-sensitive about hearing things that might make you feel uncom-
fortable, then you have three options. A: Go on talk shows and whine and throw out a
whole lot of totally debunked factoids. B: Don't go to comedy clubs for a while. C:
Grow up and stop being such a whiny baby.
3. Maj0ra för 2 månader sedan
Pontificating Jimmy - 1, Jezebel Staff Cow - Pizza
4. MrSpaankie för 7 månader sedan
no one would ever think about raping this women
5. Chip Chipperson för 5 månader sedan
You can see her back fat coming out from behind her armpit. Nobody will rape you.
6. PIZZA för 2 månader sedan
Lindy West makes the world a terrible place
7. CorpsmanUP87 för 4 månader sedan
Jim Norton – 1, walking land whale -0
Luciano Gaspar Zelaschi för 3 månader sedan
she's just mad because she knows that she wont get raped.....because she fat n ugly
8. N-word Jim för 4 månader sedan
Lindy stinks. Basically - stereotypical female arguing tactics. She would ALWAYS bring
something new in - something that isn't part of the conversation. Is it allowed to make
fun of something that left some people traumatized? Yes. Let the audience figure it
out. Hack comedians exist - call them out on their shitty jokes. A lot of them have no
idea where they are in terms of comedy and this feedback helps. Don't just say "well,
you can't make fun of rape", and the only justification you have is a vagina, and then
complain that your vagina is a crutch to others? Nah, sweetiepie, your vagina is a
crutch to you only.
9. Tom McCarthy för 1 månad sedan
Damn, Jimmy OWNED that interview.
10. Wiser InTime för 1 månad sedan
4:41 <-- Comedy clubs are dark basements full of angry men? Really? If we could only
have a nickel for every drunk loud mouth obnoxious woman that heckles comedi-
ans. Truth is guys do it too. Why don't we stop trying to be so divisive? How's about
we judge people as individuals instead of categorizing them as men or women.
11. Shawnee Longbow för 2 månader sedan
The more she talks the dumber she sounds.
12. Skiller MGTOW för 1 månad sedan
E ver notice how these Feminist never get their panties all wet over jokes that concern het-
erosexual men? I wonder why? Gee...maybe because it's a JOKE!
13. WillHerndon för 4 veckor sedan (redigerad)
At least she can sleep tight knowing that no self-respecting rapist would ever go for such
an obese slob as herself.
14. americanslime för 5 månader sedan
I don't think anybody is against the existence of rape jokes- we're against jokes that are
structured for rapists to laugh at. And I'll say that my girlfriend definitely stopped
thinking rape jokes were funny when she got raped, and so did I. If the point of come-
dy is to help us laugh at our problems, shouldn't comedians take it seriously when rape victims are telling them that their rape jokes just make them feel awful? That doesn't make you an oppressed artist, it makes you a shitty comedian. I guarantee you that you can make a rape joke rape victims will laugh at- but it needs to be one making fun of the rapist for being a complete asshole, not the victim or the act of rape. George Carlin's act on rape jokes was only funny to me when (as far as I knew) I hadn't actually known somebody who was raped. "Picture Porky Pig raping Elmer Fudd" isn't funny. Not because it's so offensive, but because somebody who has been raped or who has heard a rape victim tell their story will picture something extremely different from what the average audience member or, for that matter, a rapist will picture.

15. **Wiser InTime för 1 månad sedan**
I used to go to comedy clubs often....I have never heard a rape joke. Have any of you?

16. **jefferzy43 för 2 månader sedan**
Nothing like a girl complaining about comedians using "her vagina as a crutch" 30 seconds after she says, "I'm gonna call you a 'dick'"
I'm black and offended by black jokes. Now lets ban Dave Chappele, Chris Rock, Kevin Hart, and any person who isn't 100% politically correct.

17. **MCcookiebreath för 1 månad sedan**
if she says "like" one more fucking time

18. **TheAgamer100 för 1 månad sedan**
According to the physics behind black holes, nothing can escape a black hole. Yet judging from her mass she is a black hole and yet she is the loudest thing i have ever heard.

19. **Mark Danielle för 4 månader sedan (redigerad)**
I am a mega-feminist, no question, but Lindy West takes it to an unreasonable level. Norton nailed it: everybody has their sacred cow, everybody has the place they don't want comedy to go. Bringing up religion was the perfect argumentative tactic, because as much as your particular idea means to you, it isn't special. And her stoicism on the subject mirrors exactly the religious stubbornness of the "is nothing sacred?" crowd. "We're not talking about censorship"? Well, yeah, we kind of are. Not 1st Amendment stuff, but the kind of censorship that throws context out the window to demonize speech she doesn't agree with. You're not guaranteed to not hear things that make you uncomfortable, and removing opposing voices from the discussion is the fastest way to tyranny, and worse, taking yourself WAY too seriously. No, nothing, NOTHING is sacred to speech, especially comedy. If you can't tell the difference between Glenn Beck and a comedian, you need to reexamine yourself before you criticize others.

20. **Dre V för 8 månader sedan**
5:07 She just made a rape joke. Whoops.

21. **Paulie Vandy för 1 vecka sedan**
"There are systemic forces that are affected by speech..." No shit, that's literally the point of the first amendment

22. **Gus Palomino för 4 månader sedan**
I think she is more angry at the fact that she is unattractive, and dislikes the fact that she probably gets very little male attention. She is someone finding excuses to hate on men. She is also a hypocrite as Jim pointed out. Jim also defended comedy in an incredible way. I am a noob comic, and some girl just deleted me from twitter because of something I said on stage... most likely. It's just a bunch of nonsense it seems. People just can't say "well, I was personally offended." They always have to turn it into it being a larger issue.

23. **Scram blade för 1 månad sedan (redigerad)**
Why can't these moralist people, conservative fundamentalist religious people and liberal pseudo-marxist sensitive cry babies, just admit they want to POLICE SPEECH. Just fucking admit it already. They want speech codes, they want to write them and enforce them and everyone else is supposed to follow them.

24. Butts Tinkle för 4 veckor sedan
I'm REALLY trying to get this woman's self diagnosed PTSD perspective, but it's simply so self serving, and so obviously from a place of gynocentrism. I mean, the thing is, if a person is going to forego the concept of sarcasm in an environment where it's a person's job to make jokes, then like Norton said, they're not a reasonable person. If it's every sane person's job to assume this exhausting mindset of "oh jeez, how should I say this thing to avoid giving someone a case of the vapors," then why not just censor everyone? Irrational people included?

25. Lickitung för 1 månad sedan
That cup that she drank out of at the end must have been filled to the brim with salt

26. GroddOfWar 777 för 3 dagar sedan
I wonder how man FemiFascists would line up to blow Hitler?

27. Hooded "Progressive Warrior" Reptilian för 2 månader sedan
Why is that feminazi land whole so worried about getting raped?! No one will touch her with a ten foot pole even!

28. Chris J för 1 månad sedan
Jim owned this bitch!!!!!! I have never heard him sound this intelligent.

29. floppycooldog för 2 veckor sedan
what a fat cow. the face of femdumb the reason women are paid less

30. coconut7joemanji för 1 månad sedan
Goddamn feminist meat blimps, no sense of humour or abstract thought.

31. windmill10 för 2 månader sedan
I know of some people from Paris who made jokes about Jezus, Buddha and ..... some holy messenger guy with a beard. I bet they also made a joke or two about rape. I know where Lindy can get a kalashnikov for quite cheap.

32. Evan Lindsay för 1 månad sedan
Lindy West... fuck me she's a wet blanket to the entire world.

33. Keith Yo för 3 veckor sedan
I think Jim Norton sucks ass..... Almost as bad as O&A..... however.... this woman needs some dick.... not mine by the way. She's just being a bitch. She made no sense what so ever she just came across as a bitter douche..... and I can't believe I'm defending Jim Norton

34. lmiddleman för 3 månader sedan
Once in a while it's nice to hear both sides of beef... I mean an argument.

35. Paul Mike för 1 månad sedan
ugh she is horrible.

36. Jk Meenan för 3 veckor sedan
you can't build societal behaviour around peoples psyche. to give a decent comparison: ptsd'ed veteran's are known to often being overly stressed or overcharged by new years celebrations, because it triggers a brain's reaction to previous gunfights in war and the psychological trauma connected to it. the same goes for a women that was raped by a cab driver that get's a fear response (again, trigger) whenever she then see's a taxi. as impairing and rough these situations are for the traumatized person it's very obvious that there is no reasonable way to just prevent these triggers happening (i.e just forbidding new years celebrations or cab drivers - to reference to my both real life examples)
"Systemic forces based on speech..." Adorable. Dear "oppressed" people of the first world, Please, PLEASE, continue to believe you're being held-back and you can't succeed because of external forces. PLEASE continue to delude yourself and make excuses for your own shortcomings. I want you to keep trying to take down nonexistent boogey-men like the patriarchy, and I want you to remain as ill informed as this woman for as long as possible. Why? because in the end it means more for me. Everything you could have had will instead be mine, thanks chumps.

38. Seph F för 1 vecka sedan
"obviously our opinion on how speech effects the world are different" It's about context you dummy

39. Jesus Christ för 1 vecka sedan
I didn't even have to see what she looks like to know what she looks like.

40. puffykilled2pac för 1 månad sedan
You don't have a right to not be offended. There's a generation of Americans that believe this is a right and it is SO not.

41. Tyler Blanchard för 1 månad sedan
The way this broad talks makes me want to skin a kitten and beat it off the wall. Fuck.

42. Tom Martin för 1 månad sedan
Apparently, according to 2008 research by Professor Thomas Ford, sexist humour that causes laughter is the way that sexist prejudice is spread. Rape happens to women and men though, so I am not sure rape jokes will necessarily generate more prejudice towards one sex. It MIGHT make rape more likely (although rape jokes are on the up whilst rapes are decreasing) but more likely rape jokes trivialise rape, which in historical context is apt, as lately, rape has been portrayed over-seriously, as if it's worse than being shot in the knee-caps. Are we talking anal rape? As Dave Chapelle says, "When men get raped, we just walk that shit off." I've read that a lot of the trauma female rape victims feel is that whilst they rapidly recover from the rape and get on with their lives, they are surrounded by social workers and advocates telling them how traumatised and devastated the rape victim must be, the rape victim herself ends up feeling guilty or abnormal for not letting the rape ruin her life. More damaging than a rape joke is calling someone who makes a rape joke or laughs at a rape joke "a dick" as Lindy West does, because she is associating rape approval with something intrinsically male, thus normalizing rape as something that people with dicks are more likely to do or condone. Lindy should have used a gender-neutral put down, but couldn't because of the patriarchy in her head that has been forcing her to eat all those cakes. Sometimes fat-shaming works.

43. Punk Rock Penguin för 2 månader sedan
She argues like a whiny teenaged girl. You can sense her maturity is lacking from her intro.

44. Max R för 1 månad sedan
to summarize the girl never made it in comedy and jim still hosts opie & jim norton and lives in trump tower.

45. Jax T för 4 veckor sedan
From 11:47 on Lindy West completely fell apart.

46. Thywill Joshua för 2 månader sedan
Wow, pretty judgmental for a fat chick.

47. Leon Faerman för 2 månader sedan
Absolute and complete destruction, Jim.

48. Jedward Cunterblast för 4 månader sedan
Both of them make nothing but excellent points, but neither seem to understand the jist of what the other is saying. He's talking about the morality of and issues stemming from the censorship of art, while she's talking about the effects that art has on society and the freedom of the individual to criticize it. It's just two people arguing even though they agree.

49. Vanesa Bukowski för 8 månader sedan
I disagree with Lindy entirely, but what's up with all the comments about her weight? Who cares what she looks like, why can't people just disagree with her views without the childish name calling? Majorly lame, dudes.

50. typeerk för 1 månad sedan
LOL she's actually saying; don't make a joke about rape you never know who's in your audience, then makes a joke about the holocaust victims who were probably asking for it- and it gets laughs while she laughs herself! That's very ironic...

51. D.R. Thompson för 2 månader sedan
Ever notice that it's always the fat, unattractive girls that are so concerned about being raped?

52. Mychael Darklighter för 2 månader sedan
Humourless moron. She never had a chance.

53. S W för 1 månad sedan
5:10, Lindy West tells a rape joke.

54. damvid21 för 1 månad sedan
Also, it cracks me up how feminists insist that "bitch" and "cunt" are gendered insults yet they have no problem whatsoever with calling people "dicks".

55. ANTIHAES för 5 månader sedan
Lindy West is a fat, miserable, repulsive, morbidly obese cunt faced bitch. She is an awful human being, and her vagina is dried up and there are tumbleweeds rolling through there!

56. Ken Gaska för 2 månader sedan
If she wasn't so inherently condescending and had such arrogant off putting mannerisms then maybe she'd be taken more seriously. Anybody who knows Jim can see how polite and engaging he's trying to be where she opens her entire portion of the show calling the host stupid.

57. Franco Selem för 5 månader sedan
So much inconsistency. If you can't make rape jokes on the off chance that you might offend someone, then what can you joke about that won't offend anyone?

58. Tyron Lannister för 1 månad sedan
RIP her chair.

59. ch0ngodro1d för 2 månader sedan
Absolute pwnage... as soon as Jim got that first well articulated point out, it was over. You can hear her stammering and stuttering as she sees how ridiculous her point is. Jim... I fucking love you.

60. Jordan Permenter för 5 dagar sedan
I truly love when a person tries to dissect comedy, especially when they have no idea what they're talking about. Male or female it does not matter. Side note: good job jim!

61. jasonking44 för 1 månad sedan
The fat bitch should appreciate that without men looking after and raising cattle to supply the triple cheeseburgers she no doubt at all, consumes on a daily basis, she would waste away from starvation.... so its a fare trade to exchange a few jokes with being starved....

62. jmc90213 för 2 månader sedan
Fatty is ruining comedy.

so..her argument is that she should be able to call him a dick for making a rape joke.. nothing is stopping her from calling him a dick... she just wants rape jokes to be banned.. "now obviously you should never rape someone.. but if your are going to rape someone.. then you should at least have a good reason.. like you know.. if you want to fuck somebody and they wont let you” -Louis CK  best rape joke ever

She has been the butt of fat jokes her whole life and now she wants to crush freedom of expression. Fuck her, its a shame that she's covered in fat instead of it just being a thicker skin...

This is the same chick who said a teenager asking Miss America to the prom was sexual assault. So when she says women are always sexually assaulted she means they are asked out on a date.

So racist jokes from 60 years ago are why lynchings happened?

Statistically speaking, 9 out of 10 people enjoy gang rape.

God her voice sounds like she's crying 24/7.

This asshole is still pissed that she wasn't popular in high school & now has to force her PC bullshit on the world because she never bothered to do a sit-up or exercise. Fuck you.

Everybody cringed at 15:25 .. nobody wants to know that, that thing has a dirty minge

I agree with lindy, but can she reference more than just shitty daniel tosh suggesting everyone rape a girl? definitely an unfair example of comedians

Lindy said "You have the right to say it, I have the right to call you a dick in response!"  Jim said "O.K...." Why does she have a problem?

What a fine beast. Her blubber could light all the lamps of Bristol...

That closing line by Jim was genius. Great comic.

Jim Norton kills this fat cunt... awesome

What a whiny horrible pussy.

Faux-comedian feminist bloggers shouldn't be posting open letters to white, male comics if they're not ready to step out from behind the safety of the filtered comments sections on their sites and actually defend their stance on a subject. Even with her cheering section and Kamau carrying her through this debate she clearly doesn't have much of a
leg to stand on and is rebutted on every point she tries to make, while conveniently side-stepping Norton's points (ie. Jeff Goldblum) to only try to take the argument to new places where she thinks she might be safe.

80. Michael Clavelli för 7 månader sedan
The problem with Lindy West's arguments is she's constantly trying to solve problems with a very broad paint brush. This comedian told a rape joke and it offended someone? Let's ban all rape jokes! She may not be implying that; I know she's calling for accountability. But a broad stroke like banning all rape jokes and ruining the career of a comedian over one joke causes more harm than good. Rape is a subject of discussion (among other things). Therefore it's a tool that's available to comedians to make jokes. How they use that tool affects how funny the joke is and how hurtful it is to people affected (and victimized) by rape.

81. Peter Hagen för 3 månader sedan
lindy west is a dumb fat bitch fucking idiot
82. utar88utar för 1 månad sedan
dont worry girl, no body is going to rape you. trust me :j] cheers
83. CapAnson12345 för 1 månad sedan
I'd say she's an 8. You'd have to have downed at least 8 drinks at a bar before you'd consider fucking her.
84. van ban för 2 månader sedan (redigerad)
What is this woman's point? She says she is against censorship, because being anti censorship is not cool, but then she goes on about how Rape jokes should never be used because someone could get raped? So her point is she won't admit that censorship is what she wants. You can not fight brown shirt tactics with brown shirt tactics.
85. bulbinking för 7 månader sedan
"Jezebel staff writer" She is exactly as fat as I thought she would be.
86. AnimA HQ för 1 månad sedan
That Lindy West chick actually held her own in this and was even pretty funny. And norton was hilarious as usual
87. Anuskasv0 för 5 månader sedan
This woman wrote an article, claiming that the seats in airplanes are too small. Now I can see that the problem is not with the seats.
88. Eric Jung för 3 månader sedan
Dude Norton is tearing it up in this debate. 6:20
89. Ras Fiend för 2 månader sedan
Hey fat cow - no one is using your vagina for the closer...the point of a closer is to leave the audience wanting more - if anyone used your fat sloppy vagina - the audience would be glad to go home.
90. Angelwork Tech för 2 månader sedan
Even if I didn't disagree with most of what she was saying, I'd still be infuriated by her cadence and inflection.
91. James Jefferson för 7 månader sedan
I can guarantee NOBODY wants to use her vagina as a crutch or anything else.
92. Mychael Darklighter för 2 månader sedan
Glenn Beck has the right to a radio show same as anyone else.
93. Peter Collins för 3 månader sedan
I really enjoyed this debate. Nice to see a discussion involving feminist topics that is rational and respectful on both sides. Both people made good points (protecting comedy as a genre like other art forms from censorship VS the role of language in perpetuating oppression). Ultimately, and I think both Jim and Lindy nearly made this point, the
context and set up of the joke is pertinent. You can't blanket ban all rape jokes because some of them are great (Sarah Silverman, interestingly about this very topic; Jim Jefferies and the 'awkward rape'). But you know how slowly we have accepted as a society that it's difficult for a white guy to make a black joke unless it's fucking hilarious? Well, rape being primarily a women's issue, should perhaps be, primarily, fodder for women comedians (as Lindy kind of said at the end). If a man is going to make a rape joke, it better be clever as shit and unfortunately a lot of them are not. The set up is relevant because you can construct a rape joke in a way that does not trivialise the plight of rape victims. Comedians like Dapper Laughs fails this test, which is why I think it's appropriate for his 'comedy' to be banned whilst Jim Jefferies and George Carlin can get away with it because 1) it's not the entire basis of their show and 2) the construction of the joke is exceptionally clever. I understand that this creates a grey area where some jokes might be considered acceptable by some and offensive by others but hopefully those ones will die or survive based on the majority of the audience's reactions to it. Democracy, if you will.

94. guatemalantomcat för 2 veckor sedan
   Just more feminist trash. Fucking tired of it.
95. Rastinny för 2 månader sedan
   Stuck like most dworkinites no arguments just lazy gimmicry.
96. Morningvodka för 2 månader sedan
   #whale #rekt
97. Akiraows för 3 månader sedan
   it feels like they both agree and the point is settled. Norton repeats himself after a certain point and West tries to rekindle the discussion with disagreeing and taking it into different areas.
98. droppingmyopinioninyourcommentssection för 3 månader sedan
   I hate how this woman is allowed to have a voice and not cause she's a woman, not cause she's fat, not cause she's white she's just a complete utter CUNT, a well versed but grandious, childish and selfish CUNT
99. misstrKevin för 2 månader sedan
   Dumb bitch
100. Bluedragon094 för 3 månader sedan
   Norton wins. Flawless victory