

Social media is not colour-blind and neither gender-neutral, a study reveals

Many of the victims of the worrisome and increasing phenomenon of hate speech freely fostered on social media are ethnic minority individuals and black women



Delaware, Wilmington, Mar 19, 2021 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - In a report released in 2017, the *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance* called our attention to the fact that the intersection of gender, religious affiliation, place of origin and ethnicity, can amplify women's vulnerability and that the internet plays a distinctive role in this process.

In alignment with this report, in the same year, the *United Nations Human Rights Council* released a document expressing concerns regarding the surge of hate speech on the internet and the risk of its naturalisation.

Within this overall context, *No Laughing Matter: Race Joking and Resistance in Brazilian Social Media*, plays a major role in raising people's awareness regarding new facets of contemporary forms of racism and bigotry fostered on social media. These practices not only exacerbate intersecting forms of

discrimination but also perpetuate and naturalise white supremacy ideologies, especially against black women.

Although the book is drawn from the Brazilian social context, much can be learned from this innovative study, especially what the author calls the ‘anatomy of racism on social media, which certainly comprises a cross-cultural aspect of this phenomenon. Moreover, it is also alarming to learn that online hate speech can keep engaging new and recurring users in the same derogatory conversation for up to three years after the original posting, whose consequences are the amplification and prolonged negative impacts on the victims’ lives.

Finally, what is particularly appealing about this book, is the fact that it reveals how disparagement humour has been consistently employed by white supremacists to belittle black Brazilian women. Indeed, conveying racist ideologies through humour makes it very challenging for the victims (and convenient for the offenders) due to its ambiguity.

Overall, this book is a timely and relevant contribution to the debates regarding ways to tackle online hate speech, and of great interest not only to academics but also to leaders of non-governmental organisations, advocates of human rights, policymakers, and educators.

About the author

[Luiz Valério P. Trindade](#) holds a PhD in Sociology from the *University of Southampton* (UK). His work has already been published by the *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, *Discover Society*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Social Science Space*, *International Network for Hate Studies*, *The Conversation*, among many others.

About the book

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