
News Item

Who Hates Star Wars for Its Newfound Diversity? Here Are the Numbers. | The Washington Post

By Bethany Lacina

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I [collected](#) thousands of tweets from Star Wars fans and used computer algorithms to characterize fan conversations. With [tools](#) developed at Cornell University, I examined tweets for positive or negative attitudes, “offensive language” (profanity and belligerence), and “hate speech,” which includes ethnic, misogynistic, and homophobic slurs, as well as threats of violence. Cornell’s algorithm also classifies extreme slurs against political and ideological groups as hate speech.

[...]

I wanted to know how people tweet about Star Wars in general — and how that differs from how they tweet about women and minorities in Star Wars. I compared general Star Wars-related tweets to tweets about Kelly Marie Tran, the actress harassed on Instagram, or about Rose Tico, her “Last Jedi” character. The proportion of tweets with offensive language doubled from 6 to 12 percent — and hate speech jumped 60 percent, rising from 1.1 percent to 1.8 percent of all tweets.

That’s not because Rose Tico is an unpopular character. The algorithm measures abuse, not dislike. The difference in abusive language is even larger if we compare only negative posts. Fans complain about Star Wars’ first nonwhite female lead in more degrading language than they complain about other parts of the franchise.

It is not inherently racist or sexist to dislike Star Wars or “The Last Jedi.” The point of the comparison is that tweeting about these movies turns belligerent when it comes to race and gender.

Source: [Who Hates Star Wars for Its Newfound Diversity? Here Are the Numbers. | The Washington Post](#)