

## Essay Hate Speech

I am politically active myself. As a left-wing queer woman speaking publicly on current debates, you are bound to be met with hate. I don't want to talk about me here, though. It's about a woman who shaped my entire world view. I'm anonymizing her here because her name is not relevant in this context.

I live in Switzerland. At first glance, this country is neutral, open and free. But misogynistic structures also pervade our society. The woman I'm about to tell you about was raped. There was a court case. The facts were clear. The rapist was convicted. What followed was uncontrollable. Newspapers with a lot of power reported during this process, the names of the people were published. From the victim and the perpetrator. The journalists' own opinions were included in every newspaper article.

What followed was a huge unstoppable wave of hate and violence on the internet. Everyone had an opinion on the subject. Victimblaming was found in every hate comment under articles whose headline was intended to incite people. Hate was marketed, made acceptable.

The hate pyramid gave me a good insight into the different levels and manifestations of hate. The case I am recounting has a similar trajectory, but was cushioned in time by a strong network of people in solidarity who took a public stand on the case and against the rabble-rousing of the angry masses fueled by media.

I think, in hindsight, that the worst thing was the silent mass of people. Those who have accepted this injustice in silence. As a society, we have a responsibility to protect marginalized groups and minorities. I hope this case will not be repeated. That we can further expand the legal framework against hate on the Internet and in anonymously written hate comments in Switzerland. And that institutions that are committed to a tolerant, open Switzerland without discrimination will be further strengthened.