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**Feminist Hashtag Activism and Digital Counterpublics:
#ChallengeAccepted and Un Violador en Tu Camino**

by

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Abstract:

This study combines scholarship on the digital counterpublic and feminist standpoint theory to illuminate the emergent and disruptive discourses generated by viral trends #Challenge Accepted and “Un Violador en Tu Camino”. I examine how geography, positionality, identity, and standpoint impact the narrative construction of viral posts and videos on Instagram as they flow into new online spaces and their visibility is negotiated. My research illustrates how multiple standpoints are presented within the feminist counterpublic as a result of the different and diverse understandings, experiences and subjectivities counterpublic members possess and the new ways feminist activists, organizers and cultural workers are disrupting mainstream narratives within their own digital feminist networks and communities. The trends I study demonstrate two poles of potentiality for feminist activism on social media. I reveal how online feminist activism can become ensnarled between ineffectual, distorted narratives which stagnate activism and important viral moments where true intersectional solidarity and resistance are achieved.

Key Words:

Digital Ethnography, #ChallengeAccepted, Un Violador en Tu Camino, Feminist Standpoint Theory, Counterpublics, Hashtag Activism, Social Media, Critical Discourse Analysis

Introduction

Since the momentous rupture created by #MeToo movement, the presence of online feminist activism has become a dominant force, permeating discourses on social media and impacting everyday conversations offline. Viral posts and videos, particularly on Instagram, are able to reach a larger swath of users as social media becomes a locus for movement organizing, the formation of alternative and disruptive discourses, and the rapid transmission of information and individual politicization.

In 2019 and 2020, two distinct social media trends received widespread recognition and engagement on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and mainstream news outlets as they spread like wildfire among feminist social media users globally. The two trends became known popularly as “Un Violador en Tu Camino,” originating in Chile, and #ChallengeAccepted, originating in Turkey.

In this essay, I consider how U.S. feminist users’ replication of these two trends reflected an evolution in meaning and messaging. This project examines the conflicting potentials and pitfalls of online feminist activism and questions how participants’ identities become wrapped up in the lifecycle of a social media trend as it traverses new digital communities. I will argue that identity construction and shared identities impact how online activism transmutes the original goals of a social media trend to readily align with local experiences, political and cultural contexts and new standpoints. I reveal how identity hierarchies and dominant feminist viewpoints are reflected in the new discourses that emerge around #ChallengeAccepted and “Un Violador en Tu Camino” through hashtag ethnography and a critical discourse analysis of the new counterpublic narratives which emerged to frame the two trends. I expound the roadblocks feminist digital content confronts when faced with modes of feminist resistance that struggle to

remain intersectional and honor marginal voices. Transnational feminist trends achieve more successful outcomes and evoke more effective resistance when marginalized voices are actively centered within feminist trends and shared meaning is informed by critical cross-cultural understanding. Feminist activism on social media ignites new forms of resistance when equipped with the appropriate conditions to thrive. Yet, participants and stakeholders must uplift the specific grievances these trends aim to accentuate. Without crucial support from members of the feminist community, feminist activism online falls flat and becomes ineffective at strengthening solidarity around gender-based violence issues.

Presenting Viral Moments

On November 20, 2019, the interdisciplinary feminist collective LasTesis¹ debuted their original performance “Un Violador en Tu Camino” (Un Violador) on the streets of Valparaiso, Chile. That day, the group posted a video of the performance on their Instagram. This protest performance combines original lyrics and dance with the feminist theories of anthropologist Rita Segato to call attention to the high rates of violence against Chilean women during a period of political protest and mass demonstrations, which resulted in repression and State violence.² The chorus chants:

Original Spanish:
“Un Violador en Tu Camino”

*Y la culpa no era mía
ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía
el violador eras tú
el violador eres tú*

English Translation:
“A Rapist in your Path”

*And it was not my fault
not where I was or how I dressed
the rapist was you
the rapist is you*

¹ LasTesis was founded by Dafne Valdés, Paula Cometa, Sibila Sotomayor, and Lea Cáceres. All of whom are based in Valparaiso, Chile.

² Information originates from recorded interviews on YouTube shared with the author by LasTesis.

Following Un Violador's debut, LasTesis invited their Instagram followers to perform the intervention in the capital, Santiago, on November 25th for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. @LasTesis shared a new video of the performance, this time with more participants. The post received 460,457 views and 108,514 likes on Instagram. That day, photos and videos of Un Violador began cropping up on Instagram with the hashtag #EIVioladorEresTu, which was first used by @patynila. Videos and posts of the performance were shared and re-shared, and Un Violador soon went viral. Women in countries across Latin America took to the streets to perform the Chilean protest anthem.³ Countries across the world followed.

Just eight months later, on July 21, 2020, women in Istanbul, Turkey, similarly took to the streets in protest, enraged by the femicide of Pinar Gültekin, a 27-year-old woman who was brutally murdered by her ex-boyfriend (Yalcin 2020). Fear and tension had reached a high as articles about femicide and victim's photos continually peppered the news. Black-and-white photos depicting murdered women became a tension point. Turkish women who feared they too might be killed began sharing black-and-white photos of themselves with friends and relatives, so that someone would have a photo of them to share if they were killed.

Calling attention to high rates of femicide, Turkish women began publicly posting these black-and-white photos on social media. The black-and-white photos quickly went viral on

³ In this paper, the participants of #ChallengeAccepted and "Un Violador en Tu Camino" are frequently referred to as women. This is in large part due to the self-identification of participants as women and the frequent use of women's empowerment in developing online narratives. These femicide and gender-based violence discourses are reflective of majority women's experiences. This is not meant to discount or erase diverse experiences within the feminist movement, but rather reflect the language the participants in my study use. Looking forward, movement organizers and participants should consider the value of more inclusive and nuanced language in future movement building. Readers and scholars alike should remain mindful that the feminist counterpublic is composed of a diversity gender identities and sexual orientations. I would underscore the reality that LGBTQIA+ folks experience violence at higher rates. I use of counterpublics "members" and "actors" seeks to utilize language that is inclusive of all gender identities.

Instagram and were formalized as a selfie “challenge,” accompanied by the hashtag #ChallengeAccepted, in addition to #FemicideinTurkey, #PınarGültekin, #İstanbulSözleşmesiYaşatır⁴, and #StopFemicide. The selfies drew attention to ‘everywoman’ quality of femicide. Within the week, the selfie trend from Turkey had spread globally, as women in Europe, Latin American, South Africa and the United States began posting their own black-and-white selfies on Instagram, and #ChallengeAccepted was born.

In the short time these two social media trends went viral, they were intensively reproduced by feminist activists, organizers, cultural workers, and social media users based in the United States. However, as Un Violador and #ChallengeAccepted entered the online and offline social and political atmosphere of the United States, U.S. social media users notably altered the trends’ narrative construction, online discourses and framing. As I will discuss here, “Un Violador en Tu Camino” and #ChallengeAccepted represent the various potentials of online feminist activism and provide compelling examples of how the life cycle of viral trends and of hashtags in particular transcends singular communities of origin. Feminist networks online are often connected, making the transnational diffusion of trends like Un Violador and #ChallengeAccepted possible.

Feminist Counterpublics, Feminist Standpoints

In order to explore how viral feminist videos and posts operate online and offline, it is necessary to engage the idea of feminist counterpublics. Feminist scholars Rita Felski and Nancy Fraser were among the first to develop counterpublic sphere theory. Felski (1989) and Fraser (1990) brought nuance and critique to Habermas’ concept of the “public sphere” (1964). Issue is

⁴ Translation: #EnforcetheIstanbulConvention

taken with the Habermasian idea of a singular, overarching public sphere, due its conception as a bourgeois public sphere. A singular public sphere for all citizens ignores the historic exclusions of ‘public life’ and the reality that the public is only readily accessible to *some* privileged citizens, and certainly not to all. Subsequently, the formation of public opinion and public discourse is limited to a select part of society, omitting the voices of subordinated social groups. As a result, the idea of a singular public sphere does not adequately capture the multiple spheres within which social life and social critique circulate. The exclusionary nature of the public sphere, which was not sufficiently complicated by Habermas, continues today through the marginalization of people of color, queer folks, immigrants, women, and people of various nationalities and religions globally. Considering this exclusionary praxis, Felski suggested the existence of a plurality of spheres where historically subordinated and marginalized groups engage in rich exchanges of ideas, experiences and partake in resistance to the exclusionary public sphere. Felski coined the term *counterpublic* to codify these observations.

Building on this idea, Nancy Fraser expanded and defined counterpublics as a “parallel discursive arena,” where marginalized social groups “invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (1990, 67). Fraser complicates the idea of the public sphere, suggesting there are in fact multiple publics where those historically subordinate or subaltern social groups can widen discursive contestation. Fraser suggests that feminists may seek to disrupt dominant narratives in a patriarchal public sphere that is rife with exclusion through participation in feminist counterpublics. In her work, Fraser cites the late 20th century feminist subaltern counterpublic as evidence of women’s ability to form new social identities through spaces such as bookstores, local meeting places, conferences, festivals, film and video production, academic programs and research centers

(1990). This counterpublic not only mothered identity formation, but also gave way to the creation of new terms, words and language to describe and recast feminist women's realities and needs (Fraser 1990). The creation of new and evolving discourse is a key feature of counterpublics. Counterpublics create opportunities for contestation to occur. Here, dominant narratives and knowledge structures are strategically challenged. Counterpublics work to make visible that issues affecting marginalized groups and put forth subaltern and marginalized knowledges and counterdiscourses with the goal of evoking cultural and social change (Fraser 1990; Asen 2000 & 2001; Squires 2002; Jackson 2015 & 2016).

In the 21st century, feminist counterpublics produce and progress feminist frames about gender-based violence while simultaneously contesting and challenging narratives within their own counterpublic. According to Catherine R. Squires (2002), counterpublics arise in response to oppression from the state or dominant public sphere. They also result from the internal politics and cultural resources of the counterpublic sphere (ibid). This leads to power differentials and marginalization within a counterpublic. Scholars who study raced counterpublics and feminist counterpublics online and offline have highlighted the multiple counterpublics that can exist in connection to a particular social identity. I argue that the existence of multiple, overlapping counterpublics is essential for understanding how counterpublics can contest internal knowledge production, while simultaneously critiquing dominant public narratives. For the purposes of this paper, I will consider how digital counterpublics not only function to contest and disrupt dominant narratives, but also consider how members of a counterpublic can present counterdiscourses internally, which challenge concentrations of power and privilege within counterpublic and amongst members.

The rise of digital networks and social media has provided conditions ripe for digital counterpublics to flourish and thrive (Hill 2018). Counterpublics around the globe have expanded and extended into online networks, becoming more interconnected and digital. Digital counterpublics become more and more usual as life and community building take place between online and offline worlds. When conceptualizing the feminist digital counterpublic, it is important to remember that this counterpublic is an extension of the feminist counterpublic. This online space has expanded the bounds of the feminist community in a transnational manner and shaped social media into an indispensable toolkit for activists. Hashtags, posts, and other forms of digital content on social media are powerful tools for expanding discursive and semiotic forms of online feminist activism. Digital platforms effectively disseminate feminist ideas, creating space for the development of new counterdiscourses about gender and sexuality (Baer 2015). These digital pathways possess the potential to connect feminist users to different “constituencies” and foster new, creative forms of protest (Baer 2015, 2). These elements have contributed to a paradigm shift in feminist protest culture and allowed activists to contest and reconstruct narratives through spaces online and offline. The feminist digital counterpublic and hashtag feminism are essential to this shift.

Within feminist online networks, counterpublic narratives are continually being remade and reconstructed. Moments of contestation, narrative reconstruction and shift within the feminist digital counterpublic demonstrate a complex web of relationships that converge and diverge. Noting these interactions, this work seeks to critically consider how geography, positionality, identity and standpoints impact the narrative construction of viral posts and videos on social media as they flow into news online spaces and negotiate visibility, repurposed within various, overlapping counterpublics. Internal interactions within the feminist digital

counterpublic present opportunities for shared and conflicting standpoints to be developed, reproduced, altered and repaired as members disseminate feminist ideas.

Feminist standpoint theory is valuable in this study of digital counterpublics because it pushes scholars and readers alike to consider how the standpoints of different members of a counterpublic are made less visible due to the interactions of oppression, such as race, class, gender, sexuality and ability. Since its inception, feminist standpoint theory has been a central and widely discussed topic. Feminist scholars have thoroughly debated its epistemological potential. Both Donna Haraway (1988) and Patricia Hill Collins (1997) locate standpoint theory within Black feminist thought. Haraway argues that “situated knowledges,” despite being subjective and partial, can provide a rich understanding of social phenomena. These knowledges reflect the social identities and social locations of those who produce them. Collins’ work suggests that standpoint theory provides a framework to analyze shared and group experiences which occur in unjust systems of power (1997). Feminist standpoint theory works to problematize the absolutes and universals of feminist movements and call attention to local and communal knowledge formation. These frameworks help interrogate the tendency to collapse women’s experiences along lines of gender oppression and hierarchies of power and privilege. As new feminist critiques and ideas about intersectionality came to the fore in the 1990s, feminist standpoint theorists engaged a more critical approach.

This project melds counterpublics sphere theory with feminist standpoint theory in the spirit of the intersectional and critical feminist scholarship of Donna Haraway, Patricia Hill Collins, Chandra Mohanty and Kimberlé Crenshaw. The writings of Chandra Mohanty and Kimberlé Crenshaw illustrate why standpoints are important in the context of contemporary national and even transnational feminist activism online. Mohanty (2003) repudiates the

characterization of women as a singular group on the basis of shared oppression. Her analysis cautions universal, all-encompassing narratives about women, and pushes for more critical perspectives. Crenshaw's (1991) seminal work on intersectionality provides a lens that will guide my understanding and analysis of the multiple, co-constitutive identities of counterpublic members and interrogate how these identities inform narrative production. Drawing from these scholars, I critically consider how hierarchies of power permeate spaces of resistance, such as the feminist digital counterpublic, and come to bare in the form of feminist discourses online.

Discourses which easily align with dominant narratives are often rewarded with greater attention (Castells 2007). Therefore, even the successful adoption of counterpublic discourses into the mainstream is linked to the discourse's ability to reproduce and maintain institutional and social hierarchies of power. Following Manuel Castells analysis, I will consider how counternarratives and counterdiscourses within the feminist counterpublic are also steeped in relationships of power which create and reflect the contemporary hierarchies of a globalized world. In this sense, even disruptive counterpublic narratives can become characterized by dominant and periphery.

Following Sarah J. Jackson (2016), my analysis complicates the notion of the feminist digital counterpublic and treats counterpublic space as non-monolithic. I ask how feminist counterpublics are composed of "shared *and* diverging experiences" that produce particular power dynamics (Jackson 2016, 394). I will consider how the virality of "Un Violador en Tu Camino" and #ChallengeAccepted indicates the formation of a disruptive space where resistance and transformation take root. I will consider how these two trends' reproductions in a U.S. context can offer a deeper understanding of the feminist counterpublic sphere's complexity. I will argue that internal relationships, existent within the feminist digital counterpublic, possess

the capacity produce and progress feminist frames about gender-based violence, while simultaneously negotiating and contesting internal narratives of exclusion and erasure.

Why Instagram?

For the purpose of this project, I focus the majority of my research and data collection on Instagram. This emphasis is intentional for two reasons. First, collecting such a large data set on multiple social media platforms in the allotted period of time proved difficult, and was not conducive to rigorous study. Secondly, though both of these trends were shared on multiple social media platforms, Instagram was the primary site through which these trends “went viral.” In fact, it was not until December 2019, after the widespread recognition of Un Violador that LasTesis created a Twitter account.

Instagram is one of the largest social media platforms online, with over 2 billion monthly users around the world (Kemp 2021). This makes the platform the fourth most popular social app in the world - following YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp (ibid). By comparison Twitter has approximately 21 million monthly users worldwide (ibid).⁵

Instagram is designed as an image-based application. To create a post, one must include a photo, video or reel (multiple short video clips stitched together), which is accompanied by an optional caption. Captions and comments on Instagram allow for additional elaboration and clarification as a result of their lengthy 2,200-character limit. Users are less constrained by character limits on Instagram than they are on platforms like Twitter, and often use this freedom to craft longer, more detailed and descriptive commentaries, increasing the richness of online

⁵ In recent years, mounting criticisms about the toxicity and vitriol of Twitter has led many users to favor other social media platforms, like Instagram (Haberman 2018).

exchange. While Instagram is most conducive to photo and video sharing, digital creators and creative users incorporate written content into their visual posts, thanks to simplified content creation websites that provide aesthetically-pleasing, postable images or posters containing written text.

Instagram's Story function adds to the complexity of communication strategies on the site. A 'story' real is a time-limited slideshow of posts and videos that disappear after 24-hours and are not logged on a user's profile for later viewing. Often, they are an ephemeral way for users to share their day. However, they can also be used to share time sensitive information as well as other users' posts in order to increase visibility. In recent years, Instagram Stories have become an important component in content "going viral."

Hashtag use frequently contributes to an Instagram post or trend going viral. Hashtags allow users to label their posts, making them searchable and discoverable to other users through the use of what are essentially keywords.⁶ Bonilla and Rosa (2015, 5) argue that hashtags "performatively frame" a post and indicate what it is "really about" in a manner that the image, video or caption may not. Hashtags thus have the ability to add both nuance and context. However, Bonilla and Rosa also warn that hashtag functionality is not clear-cut or simple (2015). Due to a hashtag's general nature, the text accompanying a hashtag can characterize perspectives outside the field of study. Hashtags can also possess varying degrees of distortion. Therefore, it

⁶ Hashtags are indicated by an octothorpe symbol (#) followed by a word or phrase, which serves as a link that connects the post to a hashtag page alongside other posts donning the same tag (Soh 2020).

On Instagram, a hashtag has three cataloging functions. Posts are cataloged by most "Recent" (chronologically), "Top" posts and "Reels" (edited video format). Top posts are sorted by Instagram's algorithm, based on how much engagement the post receives, the popularity of the hashtag, and how quickly the post receives engagement (Instagram 2022). Posts from public accounts are freely logged on the hashtag page and are publicly accessible. Due to private accounts protection functions, hashtags in private posts remain exclusively accessible for an Instagram user's "friends." In addition to this, posts are not only logged based on the hashtags in a user's caption. They are also logged when a hashtag is used in the post's comments. This means that a post can be hashtagged by the post's creator or by other users in the comment section.

is necessary to consider who uses a hashtag on social media, who has access, and how different online communities and personal perspectives might make accurate contextualization challenging (ibid). A hashtag's discursive complexities are important to consider when conducting hashtag research and digital ethnography on Instagram.

Un Violador en Tu Camino and #ChallengeAccepted

The two trends this project investigates are now dormant on Instagram, meaning research of the trends and their life cycles presented certain challenges. At the conception of this project, I hoped to interview a large group of interlocutors about their experiences and engagement with Un Violador and #ChallengeAccepted, respectively. However, responsiveness to my direct messages and emails was limited. Lack of interest in interviews could indicate the short-lived connections that users have with these trends. It could also index the challenges of researching past trends, which have now dwindled.

Noting these initial challenges, I shifted my research methodology to a multipronged approach using participant observation and discourse analysis of Instagram posts. I coded my data to analyze recurring feminist themes and discursive frames. I also conducted supplementary interviews with three self-identified activists and organizers. In these interviews, my interlocutors described the unfolding of these two trends, explained their experiences with the trends, and provided observations about discursive frames that emerged online. All expressed notable stakes in the viral phenomena researched herein as key organizers and outspoken feminist activists.

From December 2021 to June 2022, I collected qualitative and quantitative data from hashtags connected to Un Violador and #ChallengeAccepted. These included #ElVioladorEresTu #LasTesis #ChallengeAccepted #FemicideinTurkey.

Instagram Hashtag	Number of Posts
#ElVioladorEresTu	24,862
#LasTesis	43,214
#ChallengeAccepted	6,860,027
#FemicideinTurkey	3,192

To counteract the presence of extraneous usage of these hashtags, I established periods when Un Violador and #ChallengeAccepted were most active and evaluated the posts within this time frame. Un Violador posts were analyzed from November 20, 2019, to January 20, 2020. These dates correspond with the performance's inception and finally its performance at the US Women's March on January 18, 2020. #ChallengeAccepted posts were analyzed from July 21, 2020, to August 10, 2020. This temporal period corresponds with the discovery of Pinar Gultekin's body, subsequent protests and the last black-and-white #ChallengeAccepted selfie tagged with #FemicideinTurkey. A close analysis of these specific dates paints a picture of what these trends looked like in real time. By observing posts in succession, it is possible to analyze posts' content as well as the evolution of counterpublic narratives and frames in order to gain insight into how these trends moved through the feminist digital counterpublic and the subsequent modes of transformation which took place.

After establishing the temporal activity and lifespan of each viral trend, I conducted a post-by-post analysis of the four different hashtags. I also supplemented this initial analysis with

news articles to access posts from celebrities and “verified” individuals who participated in the two trends to increase the breadth of my sample size.

#ChallengeAccepted is a frequently used hashtag, which encompasses a hodgepodge of social media content from cancer awareness posts to fitness influencers working out. Due to #ChallengeAccepted’s general nature and the hashtag’s large volume of extraneous posts, I also conducted a more focused analysis using a “tracing exercise.” #ChallengeAccepted is unique in that it is a nomination-based challenge. This means Instagram users nominate their friends to post a black-and-white selfie by tagging them in their caption. Typically, “User A” would nominate three new women (Users B, C, and D) to post a photo. When Users B, C, and D post, they each nominate three more women, creating a growing chain of #ChallengeAccepted posts that are interconnected. This chain becomes easily traceable. In my “tracing exercise,” I identified an Instagram user who participated in the #ChallengeAccepted selfie challenge and traced and logged their network chain.

Following this first phase of analysis, I selected posts from both trends whose captions and comments tend toward narrative construction of social, cultural and political frames. Within each hashtag, I analyzed 150 to 300 posts. I conducted a discourse analysis of these posts, coding for feminist narratives and frames. In the following pages, I present examples from the coding processes, which inform my claims and illustrate the new discourses that emerged within the feminist counterpublic as a result of U.S. Instagram users and activists engagement with Un Violador and #ChallengeAccepted.

Many posts contained additional hashtags (co-occurring), beyond the four tags I rigorously analyzed. As noted by Bonilla and Rosa, hashtags can contextualize a post that may appear outside the research context. Noting this, I considered how the presence of additional co-

occurring hashtags create intentional shifts or additional elaborations that are not explicitly apparent in a caption's written narrative.

Un Violador en Tu Camino

As “Un Violador en Tu Camino” went viral in the United States online and offline, performances took place in major cities, including Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, New York City and Washington D.C. In the United States, Un Violador became linked to the #MeToo movement. Un Violador's message about gender-based violence easily molded to mounting feminist outrage in the U.S. over abusers remaining in positions of power, reports surfacing about physical and sexual abuse at the U.S.-Mexico border, and concerns about the looming 2020 U.S. primaries and election. One of the most widely broadcasted U.S. performances of Un Violador was a performance organized in front of the courthouse during the Harvey Weinstein trial and in front of the Trump Hotel on January 10, 2020, in New York City. Following the intervention's success, the New York City-based organizers coordinated a similar performance at the 2020 Women's March in front of Trump's White House in Washington D.C. The Women's March brought LasTesis to D.C. to join the performance.

#MeToo & #NiUnaMenos: Emergent Feminist Standpoints

Political and cultural tensions in the United States fostered a climate ripe for Un Violador's successful reception from the U.S. feminist community. This is apparent in the uptake of Un Violador as an anthem for gender-based violence issues in the United States. Un Violador's message of anti-rape, anti-victim blaming, and anti-state violence was quickly linked to the grievances of U.S. feminist movements as the performance went viral. Un Violador's visual and cultural adaption illustrates the diverging and converging discourses that developed

around the trend it was applied to a U.S. context. The narrative negotiations observed in my research reflect how U.S. feminists cultivated culturally sensitive solidarity with Chilean and Latin American women affected by gender-based violence.

In the United States, new interpretations of Un Violador emerged as the performance forged new points of meaning and connection with U.S. feminist movements and feminist politics. The evolving characteristics of Un Violador are denoted by the visual and linguistic differences the performance took on as it was adapted by U.S. participants. Noteworthy compositional, visual and discursive shifts are identified in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

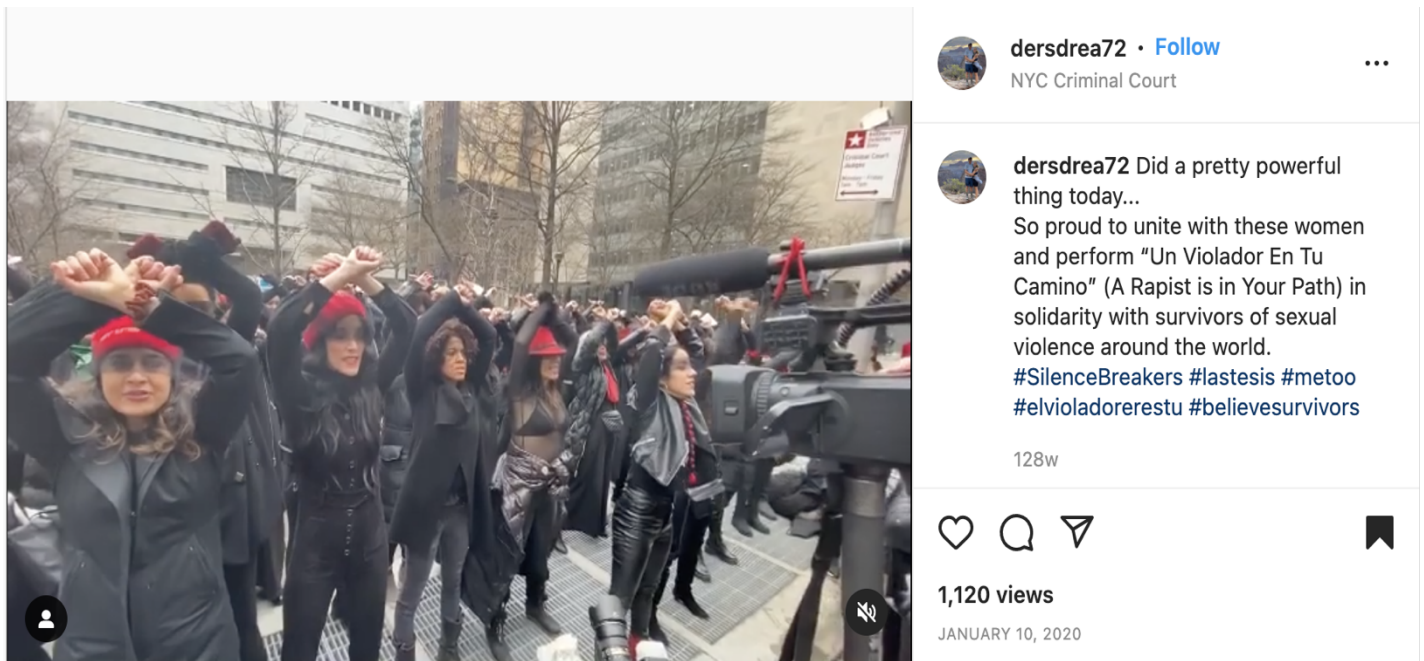


Figure 1. Un Violador en Tu Camino at the Weinstein Trial in New York City.

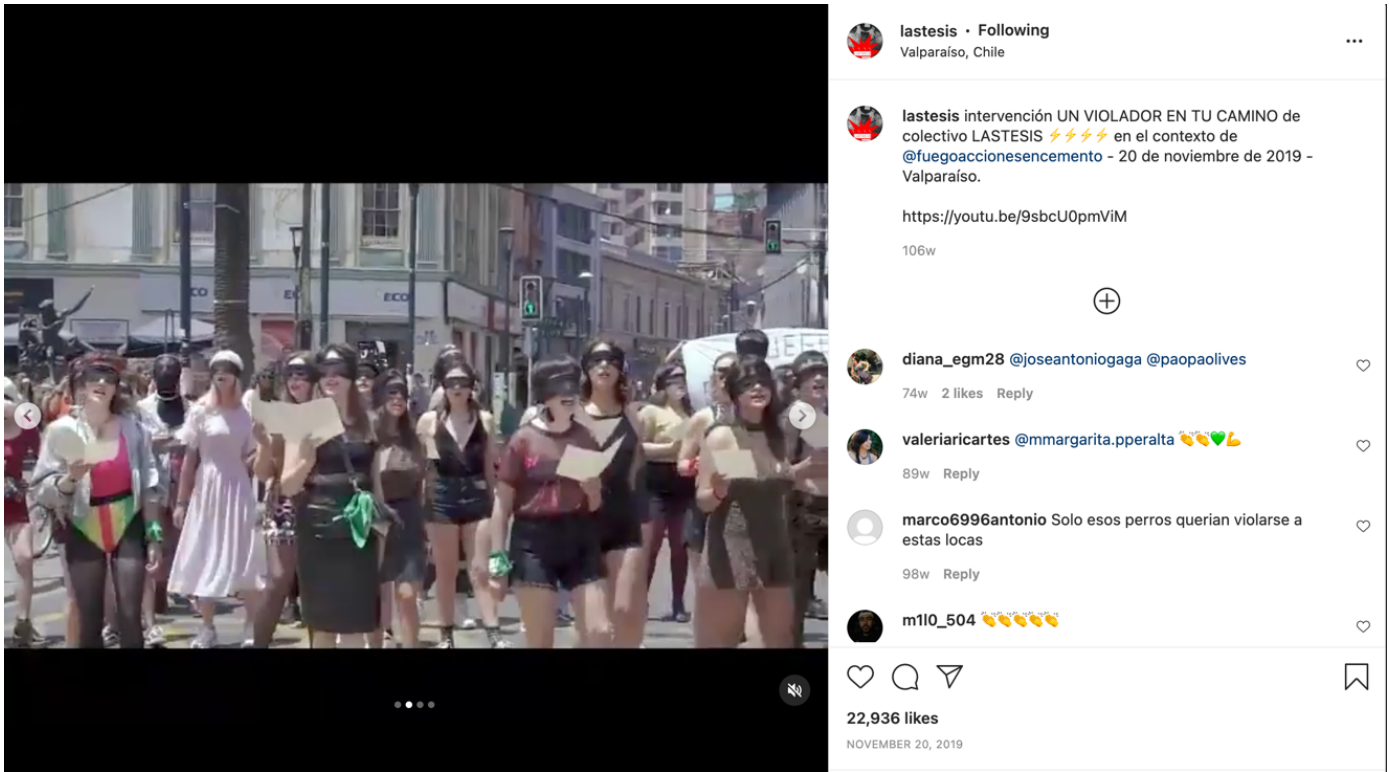


Figure 2. LasTesis’s first performance in Valparaiso, Chile, on November 20th.

The still image in Figure 1 depicts a video performance of “Un Violador en Tu Camino” in front of the Harvey Weinstein trial in New York City. Participants dress in all black with red accents. The attire of U.S. participants contrasts to the original LasTesis performances of Un Violador in Chile, which utilized bright colors and shimmery “night out” and “party” attire as a visual commentary on victim blaming (Figure 2). The NYC performance’s use of red accents pays tribute to LasTesis, who is known for wearing red jumpsuits at their talks and performances. The attribution to LasTesis is a visual example of Un Violador’s progressing interpretation by U.S. feminists.

Further adaption is indexed by the organizers’ translation of the lyrics to English, accompanying the performance’s original Spanish. Translation suggests an intentional shift to

accommodate U.S. standpoints.⁷ One interlocutor confirmed that the English translation was intended to make Un Violador's message more palatable for a U.S. audience, especially those who do not speak Spanish. The organizers' preservation of the Spanish version honors its Chilean origins and ensures the new reproduction continues to reach the maximum number of people. English translation widened reception and exposure of the performance to a larger audience of actors. Its popular reception is documented by widespread coverage by traditional media outlets, viral social media engagement in the U.S. and peaked interest from the Women's March organizers. The Women's March's interest in spotlighting the performance indicates Un Violador's successful alignment with #MeToo movement discourses in the United States as well as a perceived opportunity to make the Women's March more intersectional by centering Latinx voices.⁸

The new discourses that emerged around Un Violador frame sexual assault and victim blaming as a cross-cultural issue that affects women globally. Instagram users in the United States connected the lyrics about rape, victim blaming, and State violence against Chilean women to the issues spotlighted by the #MeToo movement in the U.S. The trend's popularization engendered opportunities for new cross-cultural discourses to emerge, highlighting shared and diverging identities between women in Latin America and the United States.

An analysis of the shifting discursive frames provides insight into how a variety of standpoints contributed to the evolution of Un Violador's applied meaning among U.S. users.

⁷ An interlocutor noted that the NYC-based organizers received permission from LasTesis to translate the lyrics into English.

⁸ The Women's March has been criticized for excluding women of color, antisemitism and performing a feminism that is exceedingly white, exclusionary and non-intersectional (Stockman 2018).

@Dersdrea72 post in Figure 1 exemplifies the shifts in Un Violador’s performance aesthetics and discursive frames as it went viral on Instagram. The post is one example of the many Instagram posts that use similar themes and frames. @Dersdrea72 hashtags frame the Un Violador post as an action with cross-cultural linkages.

Did a pretty wonderful thing today...
So proud to unite with these women and perform “Un Violador En Tu Camino” (A Rapist in Your Path) in solidarity with survivors of sexual assault around the world.
#SilenceBreakers #lastesis #metoo #elvioladorerestu #believesurvivors

The co-occurring hashtags used in the caption locate the post in multiple cultural and political contexts. #ElVioladorEresTu and #LasTesis harken to the origins of the performance and subtly link LasTesis to the post via hashtag accreditation. Delving deeper, #MeToo, #SilenceBreakers and #BelieveSurvivors link the action to the social, political, and cultural landscape of a United States feminist body politic by invoking popular hashtags used in the #MeToo movement. Signaling #MeToo contrasts to earlier posts by Chilean users, who use the hashtag #NiUnaMenos⁹ to locate Un Violador in Latin American women’s movements against gender-based violence and for reproductive justice (Figure 3). The connection to #NiUnaMenos is visually indicated by the green bandanas tied to participants’ necks, wrists and bags in Figures 2 and 3. The green bandana represents Aborto Legal,¹⁰ a Latin American abortion rights and reproductive justice campaign and platform of Ni Una Menos. Formative connections with Ni Una Menos are evident even in the earliest days of Un Violador performances.

⁹ Translation: #NotOneLess

¹⁰ Translation: Legal Abortion

Aborto Legal originated in Argentina. The campaign quickly spread to countries throughout Latin America.

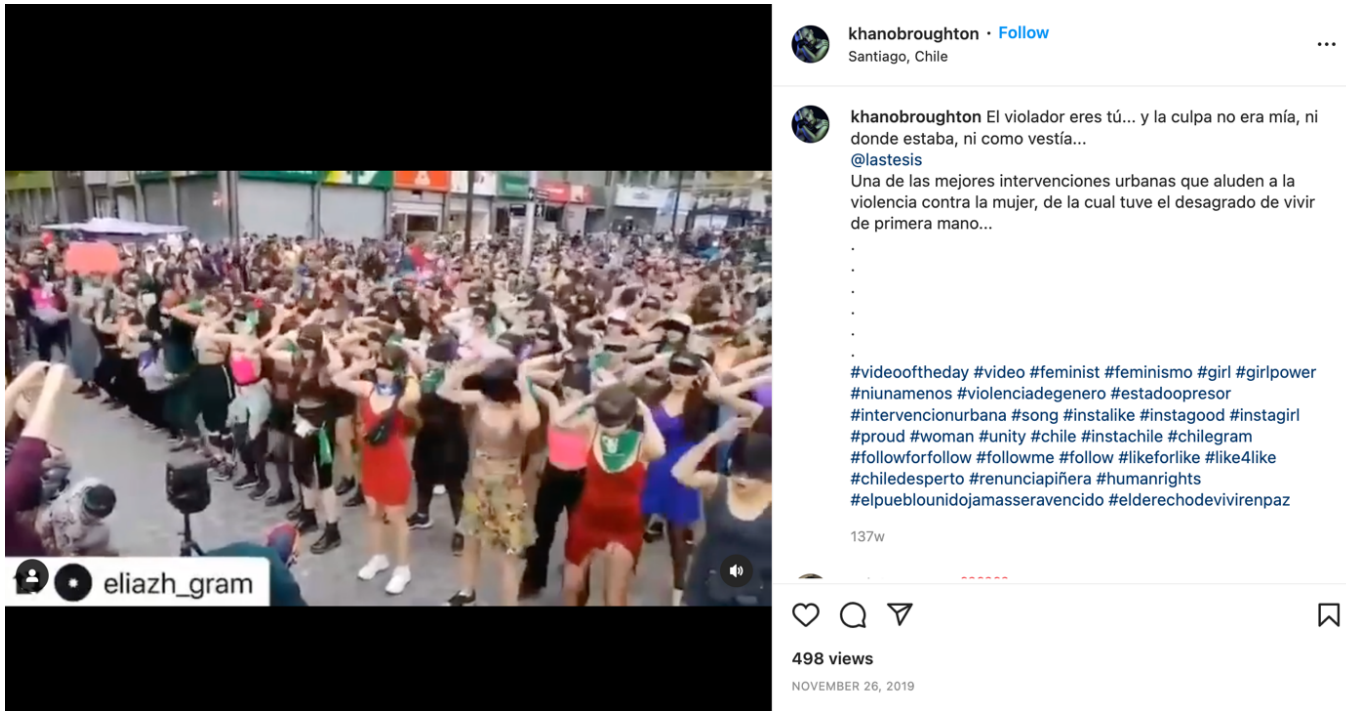


Figure 3. #NiUnaMenos hashtag and green bandanas used by Latin American feminists.

While the hashtags and meanings of #MeToo and #NiUnaMenos both have roots in questions of gender-based violence, the movements are not understood as the same. Ni Una Menos is a social movement and political campaign. The Ni Una Menos movement demands an end to gender-based violence and organizes for reproductive justice and access. The movement holds both abusers and the State accountable for their roles in extremely high rates of femicide and denounces personal and institutional control over women’s bodily autonomy.¹¹ In contrast to Ni Una Menos, #MeToo is widely used as an all-encompassing hashtag to call out sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and rape culture, and demand accountability for individual harm. Although

¹¹ Latin America is home to 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide in the world (Sabatini 2017). Rates of violence and the conditions for increased femicide are also worsening. During the COVID-19 pandemic, calls to domestic violence helplines increased by 91% in Colombia, 48% in Peru, 32% in Argentina, 50% in Panama, and 25% in Costa Rica and Ecuador, according to the World Bank.

the #MeToo movement calls out gender-based violence and gender inequality, it is rooted in awareness raising, personal storytelling and breaking the silence about sexual harassment and assault. Less emphasis is placed on movement organizing and policy goals.

#MeToo and #NiUnaMenos hashtags demonstrate the multiple frames used to capture the performance and indicate a shift in meaning as Un Violador permeated the U.S. feminist digital counterpublic. References to the #MeToo movement and lingering connections to Chile reveal how U.S. feminist standpoints impacted the discursive frames of Un Violador as it reached U.S. audiences. The new linkage between Un Violador and #MeToo underscores how new counterdiscourses emerged and negotiated visibility in the feminist counterpublic. Amongst U.S. feminists, there is a notable emphasis on U.S. feminist experience, while the shared struggles and Chilean origins of Un Violador linger in the background. Through this exchange and evolution, it is possible to conceptualize how narratives are negotiated and prioritized internally within the feminist counterpublic at large.

My analysis of Un Violador's shifting visual, lyrical and discursive content exemplifies how new standpoints affect the reproduction of viral social media trends as they enter into new spaces and communities on social media. Furthermore, this analysis points to the ways in which new discursive frames are introduced into the feminist counterpublic as the viral trend encounters and are transformed by new standpoints. As new standpoints become intertwined with a viral trend, the new counterpublic discourses must negotiate prominence and visibility within the feminist digital counterpublic.

Here, I have demonstrated how U.S. feminist standpoints interpreted Un Violador as both an issue with discernable connection to women's issues in the United States and maintained recognition and performative elements which referenced Chilean women's struggles. In the

following section, I will present additional discursive frames that developed and demonstrate why these frames were successfully received by counterpublic members.

Converging Struggles, Intersecting Identities

Despite cultural differences and divergent standpoints, these posts capture experiences of intersectional activism and cross-cultural solidarity. U.S.-Latinx standpoints introduced unique perspectives and discourses about “Un Violador en Tu Camino,” which present a lattice of multiple cultural connects. U.S.-Latinx user’s standpoints frequently complicated cultural linkages by offering rich, intersectional perspectives in their Instagram captions. In many instances, U.S. based Latinx actors within the feminist counterpublic invoke ideas of shared struggle while eloquently distinguishing women’s experiences with gender-based violence as diverse and complex. This is underscored by the Instagram posts of @paolamendoza, a core organizer of the NYC action.

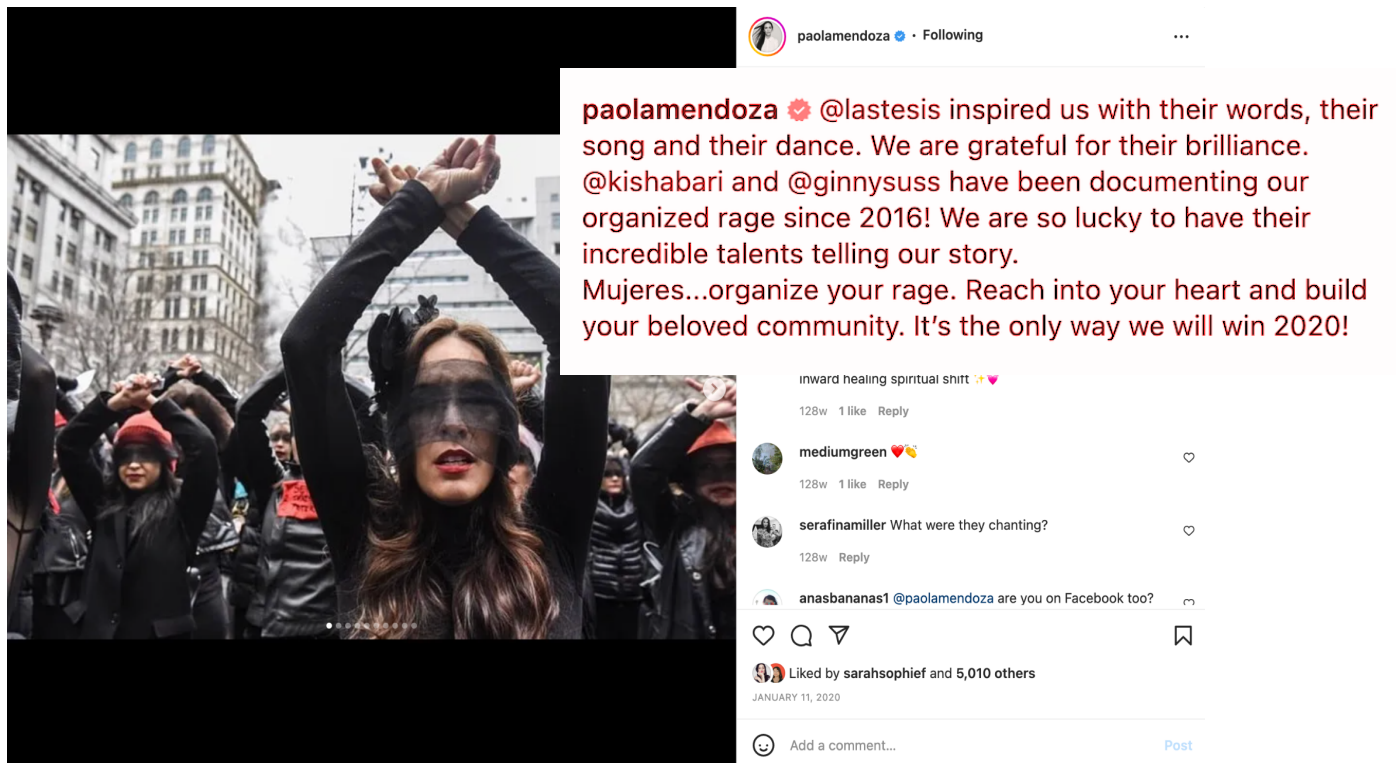


Figure 4. Evolution of Un Violador's discursive frames. Image of New York City performance

In Figure 4, @paolamendoza post invokes feminist rage around U.S. politics and foregrounds the uniting, cross-cultural struggles that bring women in Latin America and the United States together. The caption references the “rage” of the U.S. feminist community “since 2016,” namely referencing the election of Donald Trump, accused by more than 18 women for sexual misconduct and assault, the collective outrage embodied by the U.S.’s first Women’s March in 2017, and the confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Kavanaugh despite allegations of sexual assault.¹²

As the post concludes, the use of “Mujeres” invokes the standpoints of personal and collective Latinx identity. @Paolamendoza invokes multiple “communities,” not only the feminist community, but also the Latinx community and communities of color. This post signals both the broader, shared interests of the U.S. feminist counterpublic as well as the shared identities and interests of U.S.-Latinx women and Latin American women. These frames outline the multiple counterpublics that overlap and co-occur alongside one another. The overlaps demonstrated by this example cultivate an intersectional perspective of Un Violador and work to visibilize multiple struggles.

@Yaratravieso post (Figure 5) expresses a similar intersectional standpoint which coalesces between Latinx identities that straddle the U.S. and Latin America and identities as a woman of color, a feminist and an activist for U.S. women’s issues. @Yaratravieso caption focuses on shared experience, collective power and allyship between Latin American and United States women.

¹² These examples are drawn from well documented past actions on @paolamedonza Instagram, and additionally informed by an interview with another interlocutor and collaborator of @paolamendoza.

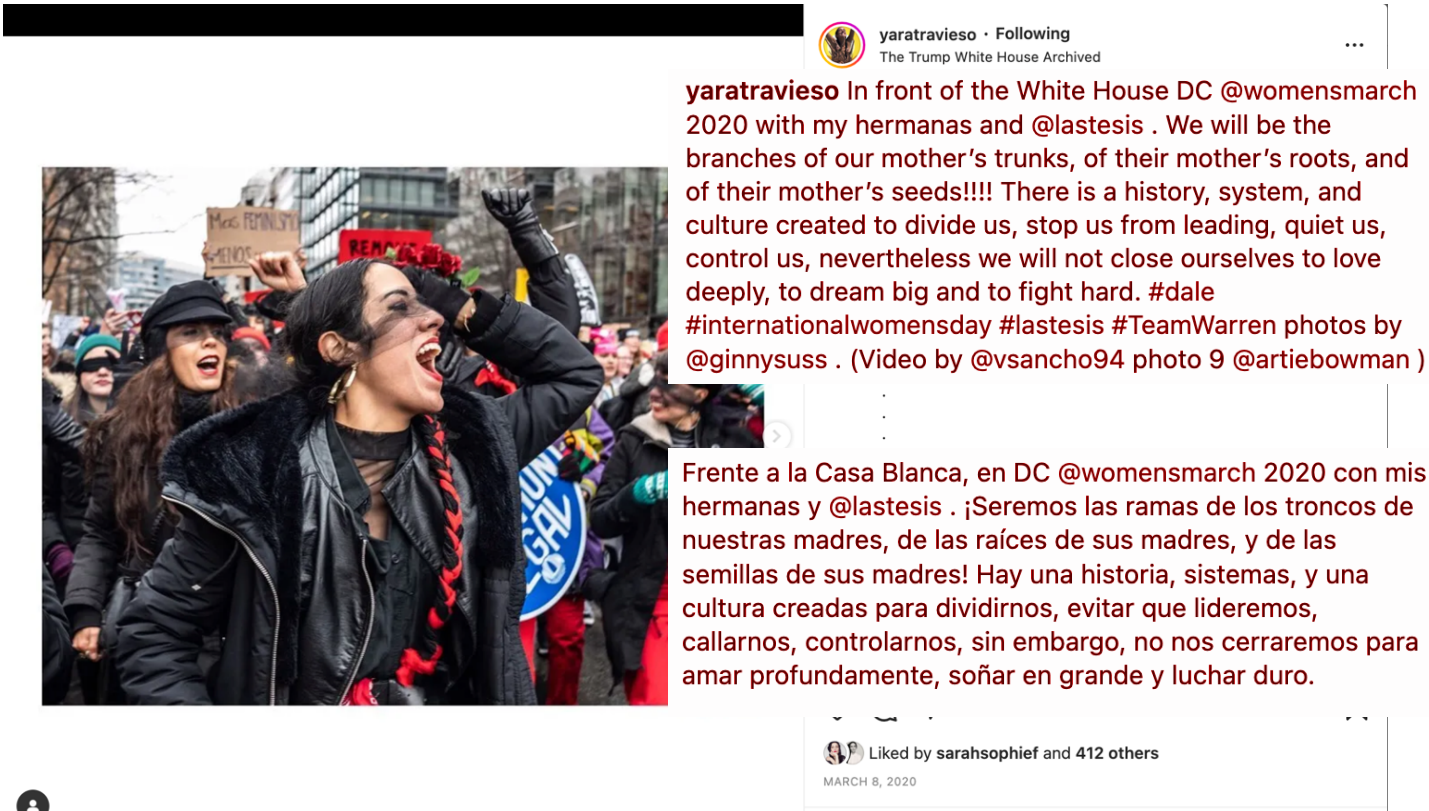


Figure 5. Additional discursive frames from Un Violador. Performance in Washington D.C.

This post, as well as her previous posts about Un Violador, invokes a sense of “sororidad” or “sisterhood” between U.S. feminist activists and members of LasTesis. The caption uses “hermanas” or “sisters” augments the sentiment. The caption disavows feminist divisions that work to control, silence and disempower women. The use of a collective “we” frames violence and disempowerment as inherent to a patriarchal system. The hashtags @yaratravieso uses further grounds her caption in the collective “we” and the shared experiences of women with #InternationalWomensDay. Yet, the caption’s use of Spanish and English also recognizes the multiple identities of users who interact with Un Violador and forges links between Latinx women and non-Latinx women in the United States and women in Latin America.

@Yaratravesio uses the #TeamWarren and the location tag “The Trump White House Archived” to anchor the caption in a U.S. political context. Both of these elements urge women to vote in the 2020 election cycle and convey support for presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren. These political references tease at voting Donald Trump out of office. This commentary evokes left-leaning constituencies understanding of the Trump administration’s politics to be harmful to the interests of women, immigrants, communities of color and the LGBTQIA+ community. This example illustrates how intersectional standpoints can formulate new discursive frames, which simultaneously ground activism in local issues while also expanding meaning and creating unifying points of connection between multiple struggles.

Centering intersectional standpoints allowed for a more complex understanding of “Un Violador en Tu Camino” to emerge within the U.S. feminist counterpublic. These standpoints are rooted in co-occurring and co-constituted identities such as Latinx, woman of color and U.S. citizen, to name a few. U.S.-Latinx feminist standpoints conceived Un Violador’s message through a diverse set of cultural lenses. A focus on cross-cultural solidarity and intersectional activism laid the foundation for inclusive feminist discourses to develop. The new counterpublic discourses that emerged as Un Violador went viral in the U.S. avoided universalizing narratives about gender-based violence by identifying rich points of intersection between feminist issues in the U.S. and in Chile. These connections served to amplify cross-cultural struggles through intersectional solidarity, while also emphasizing local gender-based violence issues. The intentionality activists’ used to frame various issues created space for multiple, intersecting struggles to resonate with U.S. feminist users online. As a result, standpoints with a more intersectional message and those that are historically marginalized were able to find prominence and share visibility.

Un Violador demonstrates the potential for viral feminist social media trends to successfully uplift multiple gender-based violence issues without overshadowing the original issues a trend seeks to highlight. Successful adaptation was accomplished through intersectional Latinx experiences' finding cross-cultural linkages which centered Latin America's gender-based violence issues while simultaneously formulating new discursive frames that skillfully complicated and enmeshed U.S.-Latinx experiences with #MeToo and gender-based violence in the U.S.

#ChallengeAccepted

After #ChallengeAccepted's popularization in Turkey, the trend went viral in Europe and the United Kingdom and then made its way to the United States. The trend's progression demonstrates an almost geographical diffusion. On July 26th, approximately five days after the trend gained widespread traction in Turkey, #ChallengeAccepted went viral in the United States. The trend reached peak virality among U.S. users July 28th and 29th.

(not)Hashtaging

As #ChallengeAccepted gained traction in the U.S., modifications to the black-and-white selfie challenge reflected a dilution effect that overshadowed the challenge's original aims. The visual content of the posts remained the same, depicting greyscale photos of women, usually in selfie format or as a candid photo. Notably different, however, were the captions that U.S. users authored to accompany in their posts. Many captions contained the original hashtag #ChallengeAccepted, but omitted other, co-occurring hashtags which had originally accompanied the posts. Failure to include information about the selfie's purpose and goals created a distancing effect which opened space for #ChallengeAccepted to become distorted and

decontextualized. The early viral posts shared by U.S. Instagram users demonstrate how narrative evolution and distortion can occur as social media trends are taken up by new and overlapping counterpublics.

Figure 6 (see appendix) contrasts the narratives presented in the #ChallengeAccepted posts of Turkish celebrity Serenay Sarikaya and U.S. celebrity Reese Witherspoon. These posts exhibit apparent differences in their discursive frames, even though they were created within one day of each other and received similar engagement. In the Turkish example, only three hashtags contextualize the image. Yet, the post effectively situates the image within a specific social and political commentary by hashtagging the photo #ChallengeAccepted and anchoring the post in outrage over femicide in Turkey through the use of #İstanbulSözleşmesiYaşatır.¹³ In comparison, Reese Witherspoon's post constructs a different narrative. This occurs through the decontextualization of the post from its original narrative frame. In her caption Witherspoon writes, “#Challengeaccepted! Thank you to all the magical women in my life for the endless love and support. ✨ May we all continue to shine a light on one another. This is what sisterhood is all about. #womensupportingwomen”.

Witherspoon's #ChallengeAccepted selfie creates an all-encompassing narrative of women's empowerment through the caption's written content as well as by linking the post to the visual #womensupportingwomen hashtag. At first glance, the two photos appear to possess the same qualities, which categorize them as related. However, at second glance, the details of each caption paint two distinct narratives. Interestingly enough, in terms of hashtag use, these posts are only one hashtag apart. However, the omission of #İstanbulSözleşmesiYaşatır coupled

¹³ translation: #EnforcetheIstanbulConvention

with a universalizing narrative about sisterhood and the #womensupportingwomen hashtag further distances Witherspoon's selfie from the challenge's original meaning. Together, these elements work to construct a general narrative of uplifting women, which spins and distorts #ChallengeAccepted as a lighthearted trend.

Women's Empowerment: Distorting Narratives

The new counterpublic narratives about women's empowerment that frame #ChallengeAccepted as a shared, feminist project with mutual stakes sheds light on feminist standpoints within the U.S. feminist counterpublic that lack a critical intersectional perspective and tend to gloss over feminist issues. As the reductive women's empowerment narrative dominated social media in the United States, Instagram users did not just drift away from the #ChallengeAccepted hashtag, they began abandoning the hashtag altogether (Figure 7).



As seen in Figure 7 (Appendix). Example of #ChallengeAccepted's omission.

As #ChallengeAccepted went viral the trend fell farther away from its origins, diminishing into a trend about women's empowerment. The four posts presented in Figure 7 illustrate how a viral trend can devolve into something else completely. In #ChallengeAccepted's most butchered form, participants cultivated narratives that said extremely little beside "thank you" to the women who inspired them. The substance of #ChallengeAccepted drifted so far from its original meaning, it is baffling to consider that participants did not wonder more at the challenge's origin or how it became viral in the first place, given its empty messaging.

A Turkish interlocutor notes that as #ChallengeAccepted underwent this shift, she began commenting on women's Instagram posts in capital letters saying things like "this originated in Turkey" and "this trend is meant to raise awareness about femicide in Turkey."

The emergence of a counterpublic narrative about women's empowerment and its prevalence among U.S. users demonstrates how a particular reductive narrative can become prominent, even within a feminist counterpublic that seeks to actively disrupt narratives of patriarchy, misogyny and inequality. The trend's distortion as a "fun" or "feelgood" challenge that centers women calls into question how U.S. feminists, and especially white feminists, struggle to actually embody intersectional feminism and intersectional solidarity. These standpoints also emerge in instances such as #YesAllWomen and #MeToo, in instances where queer women, trans women, and women of color's voices remained marginalized in these online movements.¹⁴ While there is power in engaging with narratives of shared struggle and women's

¹⁴ #YesAllWomen is a hashtag which gained popularity on Twitter to draw attention to the sexism and misogyny women face on a daily basis. This hashtag was critiqued by feminist of color who asserted that the hashtag did not provide an intersectional analysis of gender-based violence and omitted the reality that women of color experience violence at higher rates. As a result, #YesAllWhiteWomen emerged to actively critique this erasure and make spaces for women of color to share their stories. An example of this hashtag: "Black women experience domestic violence at a rate 35% higher than White women."

empowerment both transnationally and nationally, online feminist activism cannot continue at the cost of diluting historically marginalized voices and the experiences of women most affected by gender-based violence.

#FemicideInTurkey: Narrative Contestation and Repair.

Pervasive distorted narratives, which failed to highlight Turkish women, prompted allied users to call attention to U.S. feminists' role in debilitating the viral movement on social media. Due to the trend's dominating narrative of women's empowerment among U.S. users, the original meaning of #ChallengeAccepted had been washed out. This left many confused about the meanings and motivations for the black-and-white posts, especially given their prominent virality.

Even traditional news outlets were complicit in misrepresenting #ChallengeAccepted and faced criticism from their online readership. The *New York Times* in particular received ardent criticism from commentators who reproached an article entitled "'Challenge Accepted': Why Women are Posting Black-and-White Selfies" for failing to elaborate on the Turkish origins of the black-and-white selfie trend (Lorenza 2020). In fact, the article gave undue focus to celebrities' frivolous messages about women's power and provided speculative coverage about the multiple potential origins of the challenge. A single, unremarkable sentence mentioned femicide in Turkey as a doubtful original of the selfie trend. A reader in Rhode Island commented on the article, noting:

#YesALLWhiteWomen should know these stats if they're allies." @bo_bessa tweeted, "Because domestic violence against Native women are amongst the highest in the country #YesAllWomen #YesALLWhiteWomen" (Jackson 2016).

#MeToo has faced similar critiques. The movement has failed to be intersectional. Scholars and activists alike have called out the exclusion of queer and trans women and women of color from the stories that #MeToo made visible. Questions about the centrality of a white eurocentric feminism in the #MeToo movement are thoroughly investigated in *#MeToo and the Politics of Social Change* (2019).

I am a Turkish woman and I am sad to see that you have missed the mark with this article. The black and white photo challenge is not about celebrities or just about a general idea of female solidarity. It is a challenge started by women in Turkey- a country with incredibly high femicide rates. Everyday we see a black and white picture of another woman murdered by their husband, boyfriend or other male family member on the news. The message behind our black and white pictures is that this is so common in Turkey that it could be any of us next that makes the news with a black and white picture. I'm a very big fan of NY Times and I know you can do better. Please publish an article that tells the true story behind this challenge.

Other commentators were equally baffled and disappointed by the author's failure to write a thoughtful and well researched article that spotlighted femicide. *New York Times* readers and Instagram users alike battled to bring adequate attention to Turkish women's issue as #ChallengeAccepted's messaging became more detached and trivialized by news and social media platforms.

Narrative dilution and distortion began on social media and was perpetuated by various sources. However, obtaining information about a distorted narrative did not guarantee that Instagram users would repair their captions or work to increase awareness about femicide in Turkey. The comment section of @reshmasaujani, the CEO of Girls Who Code, #ChallengeAccepted post is an excellent example of feminist Instagram users who attempted to contest distorted, adulterated narratives within the feminist digital counterpublic and failed.



Figure 8. Contesting reductive narratives in the Instagram comment section.

Various users aimed to raise and awareness challenge @reshmasaujani to more critically consider the origins of #ChallengeAccepted. In Figure 8, @Jennifere2009 comments on the post and shares the link to a news article entitled, “‘Empowerment’ Selfies Are Burying a Turkish Women’s Rights Campaign.” Additional exchanges in the comments reveal users seeking to prompt narrative repair and contest @reshmasaujani reductive narrative about #ChallengeAccepted.



Figure 9. Comment section of @Reshmasaujani #ChallengeAccepted post.

In this exchange (Figure 9), @reshmasaujani replies to @leaningintostem and shares a narrative of erasure in her explanation of #ChallengeAccepted. Then, @gossamer.acrobat pushes back against the comment and attempts to engage @reshmasaujani in a narrative repair. @Gossamer.acrobat tags @reshmasaujani, explains the Turkish origins of the challenge, and links an account with more information about the challenge's goals. However, even with two user comments that illuminate the challenge's origins, there is no evidence of narrative repair from @reshmasaujani to indicate the comments were impactful.

Despite overwhelming instances of erasure and failed efforts to raise awareness about femicide in Turkey, Turkish women and allied users were able incite partial narrative repair on Instagram through narrative contestation. #FemicideInTurkey emerged as a reparative hashtag among some U.S. Instagram users to renew online conversations about femicide in Turkey. Posts

containing #FemicideInTurkey contested the dominating and reductive discursive frame of women's empowerment, called for solidarity and education about femicide, and repaired captions (i.e. edit captions) by amending the original post with new information and awareness about femicide. Instagram posts that used this hashtag touched on initial confusion about #ChallengeAccepted's origins, apprehension about posting, and the need to express solidarity and raise awareness about femicide in Turkey. A perspective on misrepresentation is given by @ramblinrosegreenberg on July 31st, "I know that a lot of women didn't know the origin of this challenge at the time they posted, but in the last couple of days women around the world did their due diligence to educate themselves, and each other, on the rampant femicide in Turkey, and that is what this is all about! 🙌 #womensupportingwomen."

This commentary outlines the value of contesting narratives within the feminist digital counterpublic. The potential for narrative repair points to feminist users who are critical of shifting discourses and able to adapt in light of contested narratives and new information. As standpoints were challenged, Instagram users came together to facilitate a partial narrative repair.

The impacts of such repair are elaborated on by @DrRachelNYC. In her post, she shares her motivations for participating in the selfie trend and how a reparative narrative that she observed influenced her post. @DrRachelNYC writes,

This challenge is more than women sharing black and white photos. Thank you to @zeycan_rochelle who shared that this hashtag first started in Turkey to bring awareness to Femicide in Turkey, which is the intentional killing of females for being female. Women in Turkey are used to seeing black and white photos of other women who were murdered by men. The idea to post these images was for women to band together for change. By having all black and white photos in solidarity it's to show that any of us could be the next victim.

The discursive negotiation that takes place on social media, in relation to #ChallengeAccepted demonstrates how a trend can undergo a process of framing and re-framing.

In this process, the counterpublic narrative is impacted by this evolution and distortion. As a result, the dominant standpoints within the feminist digital counterpublic are pushed to the fore, marginalizing other narratives. Implicit in this phenomenon is a potential for the dominant standpoint that emerges to be one of erasure. As demonstrate by #FemicideInTurkey, feminist counterpublic actors have the opportunity to challenge cultural, patriarchal, racial, national and global hierarchies of power by creatively contesting and disrupting singular, all-encompassing feminist narratives of empowerment. Now more than ever, counterpublic actors are equipped to define and redefine counterpublic narratives from their respective standpoints via digital platforms, fostering space for reflective conversations and improved configurations of feminist activism across the globe, online and offline.

Conclusion

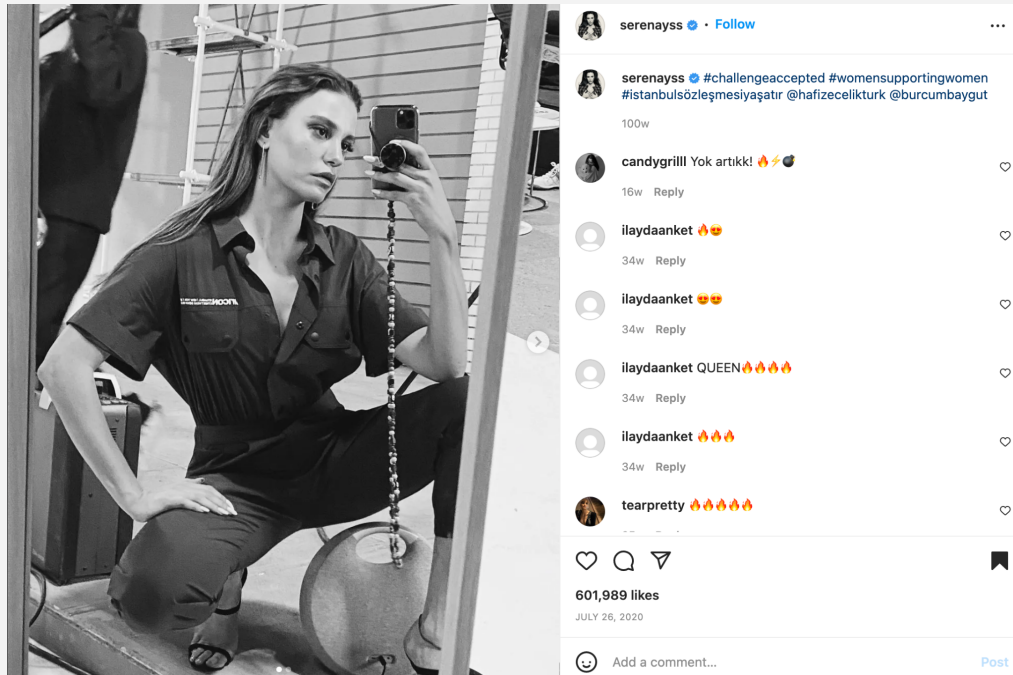
The rich, complex and sometimes conflicting discursive frames and narratives that developed alongside #ChallengeAccepted and “Un Violador en Tu Camino” expound the multiple counterpublics that intersect with the feminist counterpublic. Analyzing internal interactions within the feminist counterpublic opens up a world where shared and contested standpoints are presented, reproduced, altered and repaired as members interact and disseminate feminist ideas. In this analysis, I have demonstrated how multiple standpoints are presented within the feminist counterpublic as a result of the different and diverse understandings, experiences, and subjectivities counterpublic members have with gender-based violence. I have illustrated how conflicting feminist narratives arise within the feminist digital counterpublic, based on the intersectional identities and knowledges counterpublic members value. When intersectional perspectives are not prioritized, the new frames that emerge around online feminist

activism fall victim to universalized narratives, which present women's experiences in a reductive and singular light. The tendency toward overarching narratives of women's empowerment and universal struggle is unsurprising, given that such narratives conveniently conceal privilege and perpetuate hierarchies which undermine intersectional praxis. Favoring a narrative of shared experience without sufficiently diverse and intersectional perspectives, muffles and marginalizes specific feminist issues and undermines the standpoints of members who possess the greatest stake in online viral trends and the offline feminist issues they embody. Intersectional standpoints that are critical of hierarchies of power are better equipped to resonate with the diversity of members who compose the feminist counterpublic. Centering intersectional standpoints galvanizes marginalized voices to reclaim inclusion in feminist struggles. When the diversity of voices online is represented, feminist discourses and activism are more effective.

An analysis of feminist narratives' successes and failures online contributes to a deepened understanding of how the knowledges and voices of marginalized communities and identities negotiate visibility and challenge one-dimensional, exclusionary feminist narratives within digital feminist spaces. The two trends studied herein have revealed the potentiality of digital counterpublics as sites for cultural change-making and movement building. Studies that fuse digital counterpublics and feminist standpoint theory are increasingly relevant as online spaces become a cornerstone of contemporary feminist resistance. This study of feminist digital counterpublics has presented social media as a dynamic space where activist discourses develop to confront misogyny, patriarchy and gender-based violence. Even while writing this, U.S. abortion rights activists have adopted the green bandanas and imagery of the Aborto Legal movement in Latin America to symbolize their resistance. Cross-cultural exchange and the rapid diffusion of movement discourses and symbols persists as an influential phenomenon in feminist

activism. As this relationship increases in complexity, studies of feminist digital counterpublics will require multimodal approaches, which reach beyond a single field of study. Social media continually influences activism and resistance. Online spaces undoubtedly inform what modern day resistance looks like and underpin how feminist resistance evolves.

Appendix of Additional Figures:



Serenay Sarıkaya (@serenayss), Turkish actress and model.



Reese Witherspoon (@reesewitherspoon), American actress and producer.

Figure 6. Comparing #ChallengeAccepted in Turkey and the United States.



Figure 7. Distorting narratives and omitting #ChallengeAccepted.

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