

Internet trolls live to upset as many people as possible, using all the technical and psychological tools at their disposal. To quote a famous Internet meme, trolling is why we can't have nice things online. Or at least that's what we have been led to believe.

In this provocative book, Whitney Phillips argues that trolling, widely condemned as obscene and deviant, actually fits comfortably within the contemporary media landscape. Trolling may be obscene, but, Phillips argues, it isn't all that deviant. Trolls' actions are born of and fueled by culturally sanctioned impulses—which are just as damaging as the trolls' most disruptive behaviors. Phillips shows how trolls align with social media, and she documents how trolls, in addition to parroting media tropes, also offer a grotesque pantomime of dominant cultural tropes, including gendered notions of dominance and success and an ideology of entitlement. We don't just have a trolling problem, Phillips argues; we have a culture problem. *This Is Why We Can't Have Nice Things* isn't only about trolls; it's about a culture in which trolls thrive.

Whitney Phillips is Assistant Professor of Writing at Mercer University.

"Opens up an opportunity for much-needed dialogue about the ethico-political implications of online antagonism."

PopMatters

"A terrific introduction to the world of trolling, exploring how trolls put on figurative masks (or literal masks in the case of online anonymity) and generate lulz from those they encounter."

Curtis Frye, Technology and Society Book Reviews