

I have to start this by recognising that I am a man.

I am a man born into a country where until 1991, 3 years after I was born, it was not explicitly illegal for a man to have sex with their wife. Say, after a night at the pub, a hard day at work, or 'just because'. Consent was, in the eyes of the law 'presumed to be of irrevocable consented to'.

I am a man in a country where it was acceptable for women and girls to be 'catcalled' on the street, because of how they looked, because of what they wore, or 'just because', until when I was in my 2nd / 3rd year of university when 'lad culture' was finally tackled. Until then, it was not only acceptable to sexualise women, it was on Page 3 of the Daily Star, and the publication I refuse to call a newspaper or recognise as such.

I am a man in a country where one of the best pieces of TV drama I have seen in my life was about a kid drawn into the 'manosphere', and drawn towards a set of beliefs. Not religious, not cultural in a sense, because of the idea that men are superior to women, you could argue in some cases, it's 'just because'. It's called adolescence, and I strongly suggest that everyone watch it, because it's heartbreaking on so many levels.

I am a man in a country where since when cameras were added onto phones, women and girls have been actively encouraged to send photos from revealing to nude, whilst being bombarded with 'Dick pics'. Ask any women on any dating app how long it took for an erect penis to land in their messages without asking. Days would likely be the longest answer. Oh, and if you fall out with the person you may have sent these images to, you have to live in fear of them sharing these images without your consent, 'just because'.

I am a man in a country where 'getting laid' gets a high five from 'the lads', whilst for a woman it's 'the walk of shame'. The STI tests, the pregnancy tests, the guilt, and knowing that somewhere, every detail is being altered, shared, and made into a story. 'Just because' it was a night out, and at 2AM in some random bar, club, hybrid or whatever, what was left of 'the lads' made a pact not to end up in Maccies as Big Macs became McMuffins, and the busses, tubes and trains rolled around. Or the Rail Replacement busses if you got unlucky.

I am a man in a country where the same old 'Three Lions' song is played every damn time a football (association) competition rolls around, forgetting what the purpose of the song actually was, whilst forgetting at the same time the women's team has smashed down every glass ceiling, won it all, and are celebrated, then forgotten 'just because' it was

alright at the time, but it's not the same. It's not the one we really want. It's just a consolation at the end.

I am a man in a country where there is the threat of violence against women and children every single minute of every single day. That football match, better hope the other half's team won. That night out, let's hope the word doesn't spread around, and whilst you may have been a bit tipsy and didn't say yes, that consent was made up by not explicitly saying no. 'Just because' that's the way it is, and trying to challenge it isn't worth the hassle at the end of the day. That photo you posted on Facebook, where it's either being virtually 'catcalled', or having it shared around and joked about by groups of people for the simplest of things. Filters were built not because it was something 'fun', but because it keeps the algorithm ticking along.

I am a man in a country where we look at people different to us and place labels before thinking about the person behind the skin colour, religion, background, whatever. We pretend that racism and xenophobia and all this 'leftie nonsense' is just make believe, forgetting that the same people we are trying to put into a box of 'loonies' are the same people this country, that I was born in, went to colonise, invade, partake in wars in, took slaves from, drew red lines without thinking 'Just because' we could. The consequences of our forefathers actions we don't challenge 'just because' it was a different time and we've moved on, even though we haven't. Not really.

To be frank, I am a man in a country where we're entering phase II of Enoch Powell, one step away from another Rivers of Blood Speech, and instead of Peter Griffiths asking if we want a 'nigger for a neighbour', it's someone asking if we want a 'refugee for a neighbour'. Except we don't call them refugees. We call them 'illegal immigrants'. 'Just because' it's more impactful. We can take away the horrors of having to flee countries where even having an opinion can have you shot, take away the journey across half the world, and focus on a boat. Except it's not a boat, it's a dinghy. With people trying to have one more shot at a life of peace, and maybe prosperity. But we take away the horrors they have, and think that they are just here to hurt us.

I am a man in a country where just today, I had a woman comment about a horrific crime by a man of colour, generalising it as such:

👍 14 💬 16 ➦ 6



Newest ▼



Francine Lewis · 44m

Year round tan pretty much gets you off everything nowadays ...



Reply

Share



Wil Vincent · 6m

Francine Lewis excuse me? I know there's not many people of colour living in Gornal, but I am one of them. And the last time I checked, I do abide by the law.



Reply

Share



Reply as Wil



The assumption that by not being white, rules and consequences don't apply. 'Just because' the algorithm says so. 'Just because' people forget that fear is the easiest way to make someone make a post, share a tweet, and believe something because someone else thinks it to be true.

I am a man in a country where 1000 people will be housed in a former MOD site, with all services needed on site, who will be monitored, processed, and given the fair right to claim asylum. However 'just because' some people like spreading fear, all of a sudden it's apparently 'not safe to walk the streets'. Despite decades of catcalling, wolf whistling, sexualisation, oppression, consensus that it's OK to act differently to women and girls 'just because' it's cool like happy slapping once was, despite the people on our TVs, reading the news and hosting the entertainment shows being the ones committing horrific acts.

I live in a country where despite EVERYTHING this country has done over decades and longer to oppress women and girls, NOW is the time to be scared. Because some people with names different to theirs, who may practice a different religion (Whilst in some cases still recognising Jesus as a prophet), or eat different food, or be used to different customs. NOW is the time to be up in arms. 'Just because' the cycle of fear and hate is hitting at just the right time.

Women of Piddington. If it is only now that you've become scared. I commend the bravery you have shown to date. 'Just because' you may feel scared now, doesn't mean that people moving close to you are likely to be the issue. Look around. There's other things happening in plain sight that we've been hard wired to ignore. 'Just because' it doesn't fit the narrative.

I am a man in a country where I feel ashamed to be a man born in my country. Where I know that in other countries I would see people being held accountable for things ranging to the casual to the vile and horrific.

'Just because' it was 'different' back then, doesn't mean that the 'difference' now is going to be worse. And if that message can't get through, there is no hope.

Image Credit: Independent Newspaper. I may scare people if I went to took a photo myself.