

Rhetorical Analysis of the Movement Cocks Not Glocks: Put Your Penises Away

Cocks Not Glocks is a modern movement based on replacing one absurd thing with another. In the case of Cocks Not Glocks, the group does not hide it in the meaning. The group's does in fact replace Glocks, any sort of firearm, with cocks, in this case dildos. The group believes that there is no need for guns on campuses. In Texas, a law was passed that allows guns on college campuses (Kunter). However in Texas, dildos are not allowed in public view. Cocks Not Glocks takes out the dildos and waves them around. The Cocks Not Glocks movement uses Radical Expressivism in their rhetoric for political change, arguing firearms are just as obscene as dildos.

The group, made up largely of women and college students, argues that both dildos and guns are obscene. In modern day America, people are much more used to seeing guns over any genitals. Americans watch violent films so we have become accustomed to violence. So accustomed that in 2015, there were on "average five days between mass shootings" (Chalabi). The FBI defines a mass shooting as "'an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area'" (Chalabi). As well in 2015, there were 64 school shootings, so college students have a reason to be fearful ("Guns in the US"). These school shootings range from elementary through higher learning. After the Sandy Hook Massacre at an elementary school in 2012, the National Rifle Association reported their numbers rose by five million ("Guns in the US").

Many college campuses and school systems take the threat to their students seriously with measures such as early alert systems via cell phones, doors automatically locking and students being trained about what to do in the situation. However, the Cocks Not Glocks movement believes mass shootings are being handled poorly and not enough is being done. The movement's belief is students should not have to learn what to do in a mass shooting; it should never have to come to a shooting. Many people are involved in a mass shooting, not just the shooter and the victims, but all the people effected via family, classmates, friends and even through media. At a rally at the University of Texas- Austin, 5,000 dildos were given out (Dart) and the movement ran out of dildos after 23 minutes (Chester). Makers of dildos started to send free dildos to the Cocks Not Glocks movement (Kutner).

The movement has been backed by comedians as well as other gun safety advocates like Moms Against Gun Violence. Many people have taken up the movement because it is fun, even though it is a serious topic (Sun). Cocks Not Glocks has slogans like "You're packing heat, I'm packing meat." Cocks Not Glocks fights the stereotypical gun safety pushers with using a new comedic approach. The group was featured on *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, a very popular comedy show on Comedy Central, which had many people turn their attention to the movement. With this attention, the group was able to flourish. But to get to that point of comedic site, the group had to be known for the ability to take a joke and give a joke. It adds almost a childish tone when dildos and penises are brought up. Most people can speak about those things, even if it means cracking a smile. It is not a large task for many college students to speak about dildos, penises and other genitals because they have been more openly spoken about in recent years. The thought is "Everyone has them. Let's move on." However, guns are openly talked about in the United States of America as compared to genitals, masturbation and dildos. Even then, the U.S. protects guns and the right to guns, where in Texas, dildos are not protected.

With the comedic approach, the slogans will stay in the head longer and this approach will get people to talk more openly about gun violence (Sun). It is easier to speak about something

so horrific if we can speak about it in a lighter tone. Cocks Not Glocks is trying to do that. The group realizes this is a serious topic, which makes it hard for people to speak about it. It can be very emotional. The creator of the movement, Jessica Jin, said, "The Gun Lobby got what it wanted, to normalize gun culture in America." If young people, the future generations, speak out against normalization of guns in America, then there is yet still hope.

Other groups argue that even the movement's name of Cocks Not Glocks alienates some people (Herskovitz). There are people who are uncomfortable with the name because it pushes the idea of dildos into the public eye. The idea of sexual activity being an open topic has some people leaning different ways. Others say the Cocks Not Glocks movement is making a mockery out of the political system (Young). The thought is that this group goes against all decency ideals that many people have, or there are just some things you do not speak about. Some groups have even produced videos to discredit the movement. One video shows a group of girls being gunned down after an intruder breaks in; to protect themselves, the girls use dildos (Young). The video argues that only guns can stop guns, and dildos have no place in our society or practicality. The movement disagrees.

The movement Cocks Not Glocks uses the theory of Radical Expressivism. Using something (the dildo) so outlandish makes a person watching this protest think about the world around them. The idea of Radical Expressivism is identifying the problem and using a creative source to fight the problem (Sontag 263). With these creative problems, the idea will stick into your mind more (Deemer 121). The creative aspect is not about being fluffy, but it is about being blunt but stylistic (Lutz 35). Tell people what you want, but use some form of creativity so that it is remembered. Many people use dildos, but we do not speak much about it. It is the same way many people have experienced gun violence, but they do not speak about it. For the movement, it is time to end the idea of hiding and use your voice for a good reason. Dildos are outlandish because no one would actually think to fight off an intruder that has a gun with a dildo.

Cocks Not Glocks uses this theory perfectly because they are "Fighting Absurdity with Absurdity," as their website says. The act of wearing dildos on backpacks and waving dildos in the air is absurd. Many people would look away from being so uncomfortable. However, many people are used to guns being strapped on someone's backpack or someone waving a gun around. The movement tries to argue against that. Radical Expressivism is used by the group to push the thought that we should look away at both or be okay with both. Though one can kill you and one cannot, both items are not for public view. If dildos are not okay for children to see, why are firearms okay for children to see?

Jessica Jin started a website in 2016 with the idea beginning in late 2015, and she laid the groundwork for the movement. Proudly displayed on their website is that the group has been featured on *The Daily Show* and endorsed by 2nd Wave Feminism, which is a group that refers back to the second wave of feminism and differentiates from the third wave of feminism. It also shows a picture of a dildo on a backpack, asking "Does this look stupid?" The connection is made back to the movement believing guns strapped to backpacks would also look stupid. Since gun culture is normalized, why should other "absurd" items not be normalized too? The website also includes guidelines to being a part of the movement. All members must follow by these rules because, though it may be a funny way to speak about gun safety, this is a serious topic for everyone involved. For many people, it is a personal topic, and it must be dealt with in the upmost respectful manner.

The group is all inclusive, allowing everyone in and allowing everyone to be safe. By being all inclusive, it does not matter what your background is or what you look like. On the Cocks Not Glocks website, on the guidelines is to never body shame. The group wants to make you feel safe. Sometimes the movement does not seem at all about gun violence but about the inclusion of people by bringing them together. Their concept is to stop gun violence and violence in general against anyone. Many women feel empowered by the movement because to hold up a dildo is not a small task. First you must admit you have one, and in our age, there is still an idea that women do not masturbate, only men. The movement can alienate men because rarely would a man hold up a dildo. It could emasculate them. A little under half of college students in this movement are male (Herskovitz).

This movement is not just about gun violence; it is a feminist movement. Women are pushing the boundaries of sexual behavior and of stereotypical behavior. With a wide base of women, it is the women who go out and protest. Unlike the stereotypical damsel in distress, these women do not sit at home and stay silent. It is one of the group's biggest assets because they organize so quickly and easily. People, especially women, have a very strong connect to the Cocks Not Glocks movement because of gun violence and feminism. At the protests, the movement members hold dildos up. Several times at these protests, pro-gun advocates have shown up, who are mostly men, and guns will usually be pointed at the female protesters (Bradshaw). However, that has not stopped the female protesters of the Cocks Not Glocks movement from protesting. With each incident, usually the numbers in the movement grow. More people take up "arms," or in this case, dildos.

Some men feel demeaned by these actions from their female counterparts because the argument has been made that men who use guns have small penises, and by showing off your guns, you are basically showing off your penis. Furthermore, the argument goes on to ask, "How big is your penis? Are you overcompensating?" Though the movement is all inclusive, it does go back to Herskovitz's argument about alienating their supporters and opponents. By perhaps suggesting to firearms enthusiasts that they have small penises, the movement has received some backlash. The group on the website says it will not body shame and will always be respectful, but how the group challenges social norms can be considered crude.

Cocks Not Glocks has the best of best of intentions, but it does not reach everyone. Some people feel there are better ways to fight for gun safety. However, the Radical Expressivism that Cocks Not Glocks uses is great for the younger generation, who are in college or have recently graduated college. It may be rebellion against social norms, or perhaps it is acceptance that no longer do people fit into boxes. If guns have become cultural norms and only certain people use them, in the minds of Cocks Not Glocks, only certain people use dildos and they should become social norms too.

The movement does not appear to be slowing down or changing its tactics, which have been widely endorsed. Many younger people believe the change of society norms will change gun culture, which will change gun safety in the United States of America. The idea of Cocks Not Glocks started as a movement because of Texas legislature's law, but it has evolved into a feminist and political campaign against guns. With comedic strategy, the movement will be remembered for "Fighting absurdity with absurdity."

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