

# JENNIFER HOPELEZZ



## #CALLITOUT

What's feeding the outbreak of gay bashing in Holland? Sadly, violence against LGBTQI people isn't new, but with acceptance at an all time high why is this shit still happening in 2018?

There is no obvious answer. My guess is that it's a result of a larger issue of widespread, insidious homophobia which has never disappeared. And our heightened acceptance and visibility has paradoxically made us an easier, more obvious target.

It starts in primary schools, where 'homo' is a common swear word and teachers turn a blind eye. The teachers may not actually be homophobic themselves but it sets the tone for kids to bully kids who are different.

Or in the football world where Rene van der Gijp and Johan Derksen openly mock gays and transgenders on their program Voetbal Inside. Sure, they aren't smacking anyone in the teeth with a bolt cutter themselves but they create the environment for drunken louts to take out their frustrations on queers on a Saturday night.

Or influencers such as Ines Agelova ('model, dream chaser, life enjoyer' - oops excuse me as I retch) who vlogged her disgust at Suit Supply's homoerotic poster campaign. She didn't take a sledgehammer to the billboards herself but she does make it acceptable for ignorant thugs to do it.

I love Ellie Lust and her gay cops at Roze in Blauw. They do great work. But why in hell should there be a need for a Roze in Blauw? Shouldn't it be self-evident that all police are always on our side? Sad to say but they're not.

We have problems in our schools, talk shows, sports clubs, religious organizations and police forces and that can lead to violence on the streets. More 'law and order' is not the answer when the law enforcers and the present rotten order are the problem.

Until we address this omnipresent homophobia we can keep putting a bandaid on the problem of anti-LGBT violence but we're not getting to the cause.

We need to call out this corrosive, dangerous homophobia wherever it exists. Not because we're playing the victim- I'm nobody's pushover - but we gotta show it for what it is- bullying and intimidation that leads to violence.

We LGBTQers haven't had our #MeToo or #BlackLivesMatter moment yet- when the links between off-color jokes, discrimination, harassment and assault finally fall into place. But it's only a matter of time before we get our own hashtag.

Jenny H+

