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## RISE OF THE TROLLS: FOUR CORNERS

Airs Monday 19<sup>TH</sup> June 2017

***Rise of the Trolls: The dark side of the internet.***

*"They do it because they want to get a reaction. They want to see me lash out and it all feeds into this sick and twisted entertainment value to them." Blogger*

The digital revolution has transformed our world. Never in human history have we been more connected to each other in ways that would have seemed unimaginable only a decade ago. But with the rise of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, and a smartphone in virtually every pocket, the internet bullies known as trolls are only ever a click, tap or swipe away.

*"We want to make them cry. We love to make them cry." Troll*

Instead of bringing people together, trolls use the internet to target those they disagree with by provoking, harassing and threatening them.

*"It may be that the internet has unleashed a kind of dark demon, within millions of people out there in the general public." Psychiatrist*

On Monday night *Four Corners* takes you into the dark side of the internet to explore the rise of cyber trolls.

*"They send things to my home. It terrifies me to think what they could do, if they wanted to, knowing exactly where I live, knowing where my children go to school." Blogger*

Many trolls go to great lengths to try and hide their identity and as the program explores, psychiatrists believe this is helping to propel the appalling behaviour.

*"Anonymity seems to be a very important factor on the internet, in that it seems to make people less inhibited about doing nasty things." Psychiatrist*

One self-proclaimed hard core troll outlines the trolling landscape and boasts about his extensive conquests, all while hiding behind a cloak of anonymity.

*"I've been associated with all kinds of organised trolling groups...The Internet presented something that was never available to us before." Troll*

And some of the trolls are not who you'd expect.

*"The trolls and the really dangerous people that I attract are, themselves, mothers and have small children at home." Blogger*

We meet Britain's most notorious troll, jailed for sending threatening tweets, and a campaigner in Canada as he goes on trial after a confrontation on Twitter.

*"If you're hurt, if the truth hurts you, it's not my problem, because I'm just telling the truth."*  
Canadian Activist

The prosecution of trolls raises uncomfortable questions about how far our commitment to freedom of expression goes. Activists are warning of an Orwellian future of thought police.

*"Trolling is a free speech issue and if you aren't free to hate someone then you're not free... If we are serious about freedom of speech, then we have to allow people to say hateful, obnoxious, racist, sexist things."* Magazine  
Editor

**RISE OF THE TROLLS**, from Canadian film-maker John Baltrusaitis and presented by Sarah Ferguson, goes to air on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June at 8.30pm EDT. It is replayed on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June at 10.00am and Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> at 11pm. It can also be seen on ABC NEWS channel on Saturday at 8.00pm AEST, and on [ABC iview](#).