Targeted Trolling and Trend Manipulation:

How Organized Attacks on Amber Heard and Other Women Thrive on Twitter

Report

07-18-2022

PREPARED BY:

BOT SENTINEL INC.

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KEY FINDINGS

1. We identified 627 Twitter accounts focused predominantly on tweeting negatively about Amber Heard and her female supporters.
2. 3,288 accounts were tweeting #AmberHeardIsAnAbuser, #AmberHeardLsAnAbuser, #AmberHeardIsALiar, and #AmberHeardLsALiar, and 19% of those accounts were dedicated to spamming the hashtags.
3. Women who tweeted in support of Amber Heard were subjected to rampant abuse and targeted harassment on Twitter.
4. Someone used a photo of a woman's deceased child to create a fake account and troll the woman because she tweeted in support of Amber Heard.
5. Toxic trolls used hashtag spamming to trend anti-Amber Heard hashtags artificially.
6. Over 24% of the accounts tweeting anti-Amber Heard hashtags were created within the past seven months.
7. Tactics like copypasta (copying and pasting duplicative content) were used to amplify messaging artificially.
8. Toxic trolls continued to tweet anti-Amber Heard hashtags and attack women weeks after the Depp vs. Heard trial ended.

DISCLAIMER

In 2020, Amber Heard's legal team contacted Bot Sentinel after we published our findings on the coordinated attack targeting Lisa Page. Amber Heard's legal team hired us to determine whether the social media activity against Ms. Heard was organic or if there was some other explanation.

We determined that a significant portion of the activity wasn't organic and put our findings in a report. In June 2022, we began reexamining the activity after the Depp v. Heard verdict. Neither Amber Heard nor anyone from her team hired Bot Sentinel to review the activity. No one hired Bot Sentinel to compile and publish this report.

OVERVIEW

During the Depp vs. Heard trial, we observed anti-Amber Heard hashtags regularly trending on Twitter. After the trial ended, the anti-Amber Heard hashtags continued trending. We researched the activity to determine whether the trending hashtags resulted from organic activity or platform manipulation.

We immediately observed dozens of newly created accounts spamming negative anti-Amber Heard hashtags. Many accounts were replying to tweets with hashtags unrelated to the tweet they were responding to. Some accounts encouraged others to get the hashtags trending, and the trolls were successful on multiple occasions.

Our research also uncovered rampant abuse and widespread targeted harassment. Abusive trolls who identified as Johnny Depp supporters had subjected women to verbal abuse and targeted harassment. The trolls didn't limit their abuse to women; they also targeted their family members. In at least one case, the trolls doxxed a woman's family and created a fake Twitter account using a photo of the woman's deceased child to troll her.

This report will illustrate one of the worst cases of platform manipulation and flagrant abuse from a group of Twitter accounts. It will show how trolls used tactics to manipulate conversations and trends across Twitter while targeting and abusing women to suppress any positive tweets supporting Amber Heard.

We gave a copy of this report to Twitter prior to publishing.

INTRODUCTION

We analyzed 14,292 tweets with the hashtags #AmberHeardIsAnAbuser, #AmberHeardLsAnAbuser, #AmberHeardIsALiar, and #AmberHeardLsALiar. We identified 627 Twitter accounts focused predominantly on tweeting negatively about Amber Heard and her female supporters. Approximately 24.4% of the Twitter accounts tweeting negative Amber Heard hashtags were created within the past seven months. The number of new accounts tweeting about Amber Heard was significantly higher than accounts tweeting about other topics.

Some would argue the accounts were created because individuals were interested in the Depp vs. Heard trial. We agree a significant number of anti-Amber Heard accounts were created in response to the trial. Still, the new accounts focused mainly on discrediting and attacking Amber Heard and anyone who supported her.

We observed Twitter trolls using various platform manipulation tactics. For example, the trolls used hashtag spamming and copypasta (copying and pasting duplicative content) to amplify content, manipulate trends, and suppress pro-Amber Heard content. Accounts openly boasted about platform manipulation tactics and urged others to help get anti-Amber Heard hashtags trending.

Twitter trolls didn't limit their abuse to platform manipulation. We observed the trolls abusing and harassing Amber Heard and multiple other women and swarming the tweets of their victims. Offensive tweets, misogyny, doxxing, and death threats were rampant. The same group of toxic trolls also harassed and abused women who tweeted positively about Amber Heard.

Twitter trolls that attacked Amber Heard and her allies recently began attacking Evan Rachel Wood and Cassidy Hutchinson. The trolls compared the women to Amber Heard and used the same abusive tactics against the women.

The accounts in this report violated multiple rules and policies of the platform, including but not limited to violent threats, abuse/harassment, hateful conduct, private information, and platform manipulation and spam.

To reduce the number of pages in this report, we have uploaded a separate list of accounts violating Twitter's rules.

Download the list: https://botsentinel.com/reports/documents/amber-heard/report-07-18-2022-accounts.zip

HASHTAG SPAMMING

Hashtag spamming was essential to amplifying anti-Amber Heard content and trending anti-Amber Heard hashtags artificially. Hashtag manipulation tactics gave the false impression of overwhelming opposition to Amber Heard.
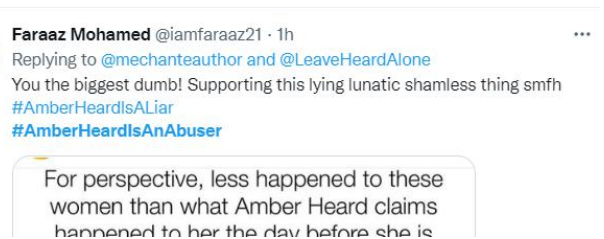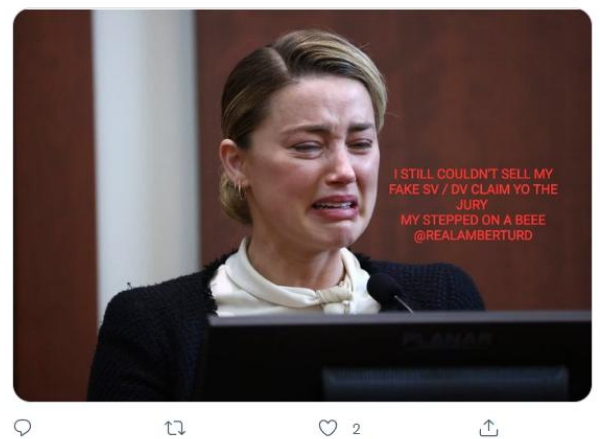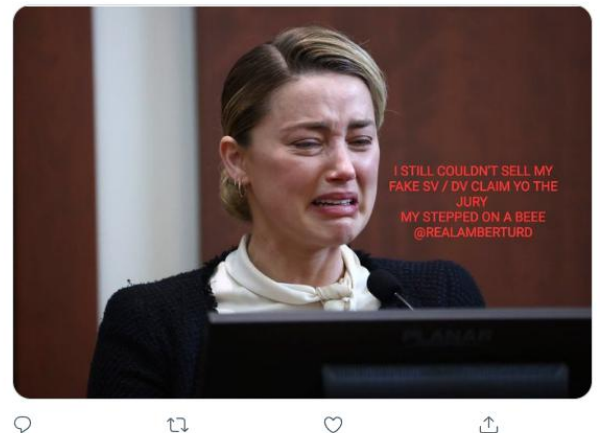
COPYPASTA

Trolls used tactics like copypasta (copying and pasting duplicative content) to amplify messaging and manipulate Twitter's trends. The goal, in this case, was to paint Amber Heard as a liar while painting Johnny Depp as an intelligent man who was telling the truth.

We Stand With JD ⚔️⚔️ @Ronaldo61616950 · Jun 4
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp

💬 1   ⟳   ♡ 3

OVO Community @benxiong0213 · Jun 4
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp #Amber #JohnnyDepp #OVO

💬   ⟳   ♡ 7

Kashif @M__Kashif81 · Jun 3
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp #AmberHeard #JohnnyDepp

💬   ⟳ 1   ♡ 3

TheNews2Day @TheNews_2Day · Jun 3
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp

💬   ⟳   ♡

TheR.Raouf87 @TRaouf87 · Jun 3
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't

💬   ⟳   ♡

Kashif @M__Kashif81 · Jun 2
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp

💬   ⟳   ♡ 1

Goldenmike @123_Coaching · Jun 2
Replying to @TorneyMarie and @JudgeJeanine
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp

💬   ⟳ 3   ♡ 79

Goldenmike @123_Coaching · Jun 2
Replying to @ThatUmbrella
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp

💬   ⟳   ♡ 1

Chuks Samuel Ogbunubi @OgbunubiChuks · Jun 1
Replying to @Jaimi_Shrive and @Eve_Barlow
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't. #JusticeForJohnnyDepp

💬   ⟳   ♡ 2

Nour🍓 @Nourzinhaa · Jun 1
People turned against Amber Heard, not because Johnny Depp is a powerful man or a famous actor, but because we watched the trial and saw who was telling the truth and who wasn't!!!

---

jay🧵 @traxxsh · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old shit better than a Latina that's for damn sure😭

💬 1   ⟳ 3   ♡ 32

Lock❄️🕷️ @ilu210_ · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female on his team. No one knows how to bring up old shit better than a Latina that's fs 😂

💬   ⟳ 1   ♡ 3

aaayooo? @ayoo0804 · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old stuff better than a Latina that's for damn sure! 🤣

💬   ⟳   ♡ 1

Ivory 💎🦋 @_iameyes · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old shit better than a Latina that's for damn sure🤣

💬   ⟳   ♡

Steven Gonzalez @jewelcitysteven · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old Shit better than a Latina that's for damn sure 😎

💬   ⟳   ♡ 1

Ray🐉 @raymond024_ · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Latina female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old shit better than a Latina. 🤣

💬   ⟳ 1   ♡

Thomas Casanova🦙 @iamcasanovax · May 20
Replying to @BBCWorld
Someone wrote "**Johnny depp was smart** in getting a Hispanic lawyer on his team no one knows how to bring up old shit better than a latina" 😉

💬 1   ⟳   ♡ 9

uhndreZ 🇪🇸🇺🇸🇲🇽 @Andy_v5151 · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old shit better than a Latina that's for damn sure🤣

💬 1   ⟳   ♡

Bella @RealArabellaTom · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old stuff better than a Latina that's for damn sure! 🤣

💬   ⟳   ♡

Angel🤍 @Angelicara94 · May 20
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old shit better than a Latina that's for damn sure😂

💬 1   ⟳ 1   ♡ 8

Cristian Villalobos @Cristia17887245 · May 19
Johnny Depp was smart in getting a Hispanic female lawyer on his team. No one knows how to bring up old shit better than a Latina that's for damn sure🤣

BRAGGING AND ENCOURAGING

Trolls that participated in spamming anti-Amber Heard hashtags bragged about their ability to get hashtags to trend. They also encourage others to spam anti-Amber Heard hashtags.

Linda Lou - 🇺🇸 ☠️ ☠️
@PlzeExplain512

Wonderful to see these trending at the same time! ☠️ ☠️

#JohnnyDeppIsASurvivor
#AmberHeardIsAnAbuser

LET'S KEEP IT GOING!
RETWEET & TWEET! 👉👇

Entertainment · Trending
#JohnnyDeppIsASurvivor
1,466 Tweets

Entertainment · Trending
#AmberHeardIsAnAbuser
1,204 Tweets

Lyra Willow ☠️
@LyraWillow

Hey fam, I suggest a new hashtag #IBelieveAmberHadTheTurd what do you think?How funny would that be to make it trend next to #AmberIsAliar #AmberHeardIsAnAbuser ...?

GIF ALT

Lyra Willow ☠️
@LyraWillow

When these hasthags are trending together, you know the 1st one had been trolled again 🤣😂🤣😂

#Ibelieveambertheturd #ibelieveamberhadtheturd #ibelieveamberistheturd 🤣😂🤣😂🤣

Trends for you

Trending
Elaine
8,297 Tweets

Trending in Amber Heard
#IBelieveAmberHeard
9,419 Tweets

Trending
#AmberHeardIsALiar
4,800 Tweets

Celebrities · Trending
#JohnnyDeppWon
6,515 Tweets

Entertainment · Trending
#AmberTurd
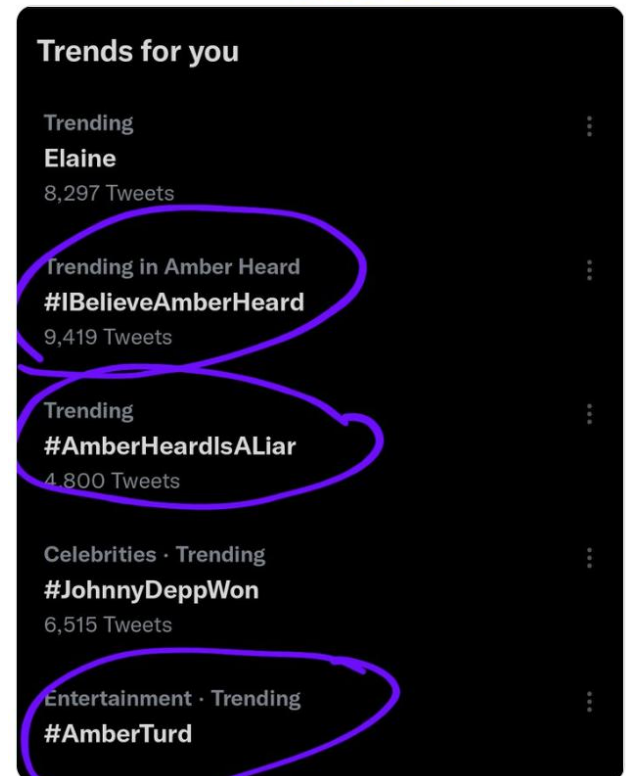
violet att 🇮🇱
@AttViolet

Replying to @Izze1122

I trended #AmberHeardIsAnAbuser without telling to trend it. Just commented that everywhere until people started to use that also.

The several times i asked to trend it was when they spammed TUG and Popcorned planet

Why she need to announce?

ABUSE AND HARASSMENT

Amber Heard and women who tweeted in support of Amber were attacked relentlessly. Twitter trolls would swarm the tweets of women who tweeted positively about Amber Heard and often used vulgar and threatening language.

Harion Demon @DemonHarion

Replying to @LindseyBoylan and @a_mberheard

you're right let's go fuck amber heard together anyway she likes these things

Darrel Johnson @DARRELdaPATRIOT

Replying to @LindseyBoylan

lmao the bitch heard got what she deserved, cant wait to hear her dying in overdose after her life falls apart. #AmberTurd

🇺🇦♡Sydney Blaque♡🇺🇦 @SydneyBlaque

@realamberheard wow you are a dumb f*cking cúnt. Get the hèll over yourself. Leave the man alone and stop being the trash we all know you are. 🖕🏻🖕🏻🖕🏻

Cloudier @CloudierClouds

@realamberheard cunt

Translate Tweet

tom @tom49676092

@Eve_Barlow you would look good nailed to a cross you rusty slut

🦙 Valentine 🦙 @Valentine02022

@Eve_Barlow how fucking embarrassing for Amber's Turd licker #EveFartlow

Shartlow doesn't even realize how badly she's been manipulated by a cunt who is INSANELY obsessed with her Johnny Depp!!! 😂

#AmberHeardIsALiar #AmberHeardIsAnAbuser #boycottaquaman2 #scissorsforfingers

miss independant @missind01386835

@Eve_Barlow my god shut up no one likes amber turd because they can see through her bullshit and lies all u do is post about her and Johnny depp u are clearly obsessed by them and making yourself look like a complete dick shes a lying cunt deal with it

Jasmine @Jasmine14629484

Slut.

#AmberIsALiar #AmberHeardDoesNOTSpeakForMe #AmberHeardIsACheater @realamberheard

Ashley Anne @arickroxy · Jun 22
Didn't Amber say something along the lines of "I did everything I could to make the relationship work." Bringing a bunch of trash in off the street & cheating on your husband with said trash, in his bed, is not trying very hard ma'am #AmberHeardIsACheater #AmberIsALiar #AmberTurd

Kim @Kim49210384 · Jun 10
@Eve_Barlow log off shitbag

Kim @Kim49210384 · Jun 10
@Eve_Barlow hey dumb dumb you were in the court room making a mess you will be judged ya slimy cunt enjoy life behind bars.

Kim @Kim49210384 · Jun 10
@Eve_Barlow you're so clumsy and DUMBSY so fucking delusional you have an axe to grind. You're a sell out shit bag who I'd love to slap around

Kim @Kim49210384 · Jun 10
@Eve_Barlow YOU ARE VILE DISGUSTING DISGRACE TO THE JEWS! We don't need you as our voice ya sad slimy junkie now fuck off

Kim @Kim49210384 · Jun 10
@Eve_Barlow Desperate waste of flesh , feeble minded low level wanna be something or somebody so bad you jealous. Shit bag. I dare you to keep stalking Johnny ya fucking smelly silverback gorilla

Rando Who Drinks Lots Of Tea @Margo56381403

Well of course @realamberheard lied. That's all she's done probably her whole life. Her parents should be ashamed of the scum whore they produced and created. Good job just what the world needed. Mote trash

TROLLING PROMINENT ACADEMIC

Trolling didn't stop with vulgar and abusive tweets. In one case, someone created a fake account using the image of a deceased child of a prominent academic. The troll used the fake account to taunt and torment the person because she tweeted in support of Amber Heard. Trolls escalated their harassment and doxxed the academic's family members. This criminal activity led to the target fearing for the safety of her family and herself.
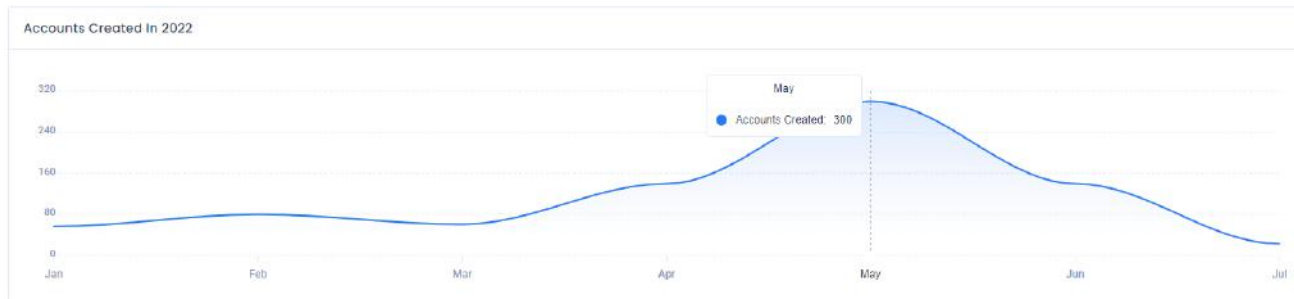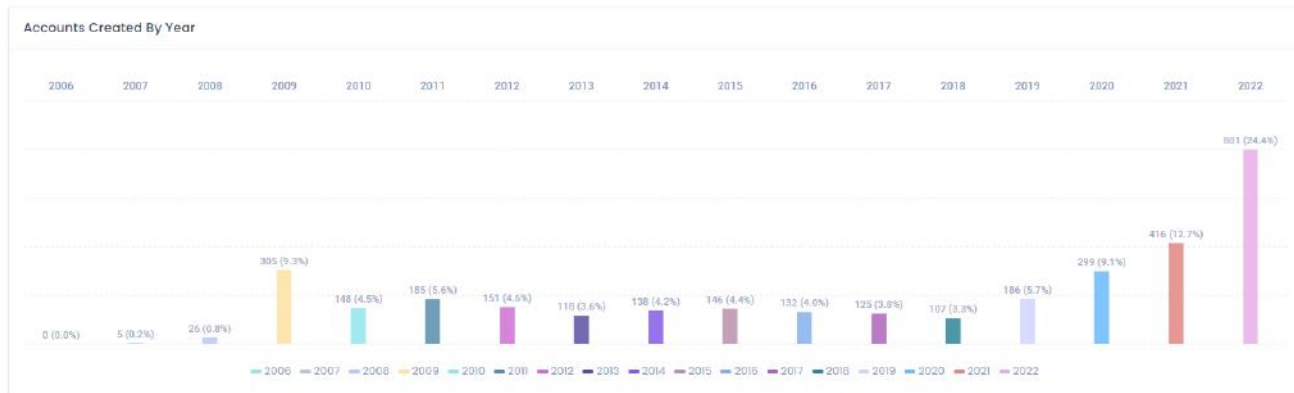
We didn't include the name of the academic to protect her identity and her family's safety. However, we felt it was important to include her story in this report to document the severity of the harassment.

TWEET DATA

We analyzed 14,292 tweets and identified 627 anti-Amber Heard Twitter accounts tweeting exclusively about Amber Heard and her female supporters. Approximately 24.4% of the Twitter accounts tweeting negative Amber Heard hashtags were created within the past seven months; the average for other topics is 8.6%. Accounts spammed #AmberHeardLsAnAbuser and #AmberHeardLsALiar with the letter "I" purposely replaced with the letter "L" to deceive Twitter's algorithms. The intentional misspelling demonstrates a calculated effort to manipulate hashtag trends.

Tweets	Retweets	Tweets With Media	Likes
14,292	**25,293**	**2,794**	**189,488**
The number of tweets.	The number of retweets.	The number of tweets with media.	Total number of likes.

Hashtags	Avg. Retweets Per Tweet	Avg. Likes Per Tweet	Avg. Hashtags Per Tweet
50,907	**1.7697**	**13.2583**	**3.5619**
Total number of hashtags.	Average number of retweets per tweet.	Average number of likes per tweet.	Average number of hashtags per tweet.

ACCOUNT STATS

Unique Accounts	Avg. Tweets Per Account	Avg. Hashtags Per Account	Accounts With Few Followers
3,288	**4.3467**	**15.4827**	**589**
Total number of unique accounts.	Average number of tweets per account.	Average number of hashtags per account.	Accounts With 10 or fewer followers.

Accounts Created By Year

Year	Accounts
2006	0 (0.0%)
2007	5 (0.2%)
2008	26 (0.8%)
2009	305 (9.3%)
2010	148 (4.5%)
2011	185 (5.6%)
2012	151 (4.6%)
2013	118 (3.6%)
2014	138 (4.2%)
2015	146 (4.4%)
2016	132 (4.0%)
2017	125 (3.8%)
2018	107 (3.3%)
2019	186 (5.7%)
2020	299 (9.1%)
2021	416 (12.7%)
2022	801 (24.4%)

Accounts Created In 2022

May — Accounts Created: 300

(Chart by month Jan–Jul)

Top 10 Hashtags

Hashtag	Tweets
#AmberHeardIsAnAbuser	1720
#AmberHeardIsALiar	923
#AmberHeardLsALiar	706
#JohnnyDeppIsASurvivor	442
#AmberHeardLsAnAbuser	381
#JohnnyDeppGotJustice	285
#AmberHeardCommittedPerjury	264
#JohnnyDeppWon	264
#JusticeForJohnnyDepp	261
#AmberHeardIsANarcissist	261

Top 10 Sources

Source	Tweets
Twitter for iPhone	1190
Twitter for Android	1168
Twitter Web App	808
Twitter for iPad	112
TweetDeck	5
IFTTT	2
FenixApp	1
Twitter for Mac	1
Even Newer Newer Dank Bot	1

TOP 20 SPAM ACCOUNTS

The top 20 Twitter accounts spamming the hashtags #AmberHeardIsAnAbuser, #AmberHeardLsAnAbuser, #AmberHeardIsALiar, or #AmberHeardLsALiar.

Handle		ID	Tweets	Joined	Account Age
	@AttViolet violet att ɪʟ	1539822661454397442	520	06-23-2022	21 day(s)
	@TerrryParker Terrry Parker	361196381	288	08-24-2011	132 month(s)
j	@jaybee556677 jay bird	1538654582712242178	278	06-19-2022	24 day(s)
	@NormaiSantos Norma I. Santos 👹	995214637300879360	255	05-12-2018	50 month(s)
	@fishyfishfry fishyfish	1523161316852121600	211	05-08-2022	2 month(s)
	@monchxriii cereza 🌸	1423159980237066241	170	08-05-2021	11 month(s)
	@amtstuff AP	1529641615119511552	158	05-26-2022	1 month(s)
	@Havasuboo Havasu Boo eff/off	1536562984474054656	146	06-14-2022	1 month(s)
	@MarciaModenese8 Marcia Modenese Coelho Bartlett	402001712	140	10-31-2011	130 month(s)
	@emmastrange2702 Emma Strange	740875406102958080	133	06-09-2016	74 month(s)
	@ChelsyHelbling Chelsy	1513572922635571206	114	04-11-2022	3 month(s)
	@dickwarlock13 🏴 l Dick Warlock l🏴	1529517120035463168	109	05-25-2022	1 month(s)
	@kermccoy Kerri McCoy	3031526901	98	02-11-2015	90 month(s)
	@TheTypewriterQ The Typewriter	1442471158780100623	95	09-27-2021	9 month(s)
	@aMegaDeppFan A Mega Depp Fan	1539053415262826499	91	06-21-2022	23 day(s)
	@JUSTICE4DEPP01 Justice4Depp	1289362738393702402	82	08-01-2020	23 month(s)
	@pacifiicc pacific	1418624095525146624	79	07-23-2021	11 month(s)
	@JDs_Best_Life JohnnyRules	1523337436264288258	70	05-08-2022	2 month(s)
	@Rando_99999999 Rando #99,999,999	1519058134425210880	68	04-26-2022	2 month(s)
	@Ranigill108 Rani gill	922570812929990656	67	10-23-2017	57 month(s)

TWITTER RULES

The accounts in this report violated multiple rules and policies of the platform, including but not limited to violent threats, abuse/harassment, hateful conduct, private information, and platform manipulation and spam.

Safety

Violence: You may not threaten violence against an individual or a group of people. We also prohibit the glorification of violence. Learn more about our violent threat and glorification of violence policies.

Terrorism/violent extremism: You may not threaten or promote terrorism or violent extremism. Learn more.

Child sexual exploitation: We have zero tolerance for child sexual exploitation on Twitter. Learn more.

Abuse/harassment: You may not engage in the targeted harassment of someone, or incite other people to do so. This includes wishing or hoping that someone experiences physical harm. Learn more.

Hateful conduct: You may not promote violence against, threaten, or harass other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, caste, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, disability, or serious disease. Learn more.

Perpetrators of violent attacks: We will remove any accounts maintained by individual perpetrators of terrorist, violent extremist, or mass violent attacks, and may also remove Tweets disseminating manifestos or other content produced by perpetrators. Learn more.

Suicide or self-harm: You may not promote or encourage suicide or self-harm. Learn more.

Sensitive media, including graphic violence and adult content: You may not post media that is excessively gory or share violent or adult content within live video or in profile or header images. Media depicting sexual violence and/or assault is also not permitted. Learn more.

Illegal or certain regulated goods or services: You may not use our service for any unlawful purpose or in furtherance of illegal activities. This includes selling, buying, or facilitating transactions in illegal goods or services, as well as certain types of regulated goods or services. Learn more.

What is Copypasta?

"Copypasta" (a reference to copy-and-paste functionality to duplicate content) is an Internet slang term that refers to an attempt by multiple individuals to duplicate content from an original source and share it widely across social platforms or forums.

On Twitter, copypasta or duplicative content can be a block of text, image or a combination of content that has been copied and pasted, or duplicated by any means across the platform.

While copypasta or duplicate content is a tactic for propagating a message, and is used for a wide range of purposes, it can be repetitive, spammy, and disruptive to people's experience on Twitter. Duplicative content can also be used to artificially amplify content, suppress information or manipulate Twitter's Trends, Top Search results and conversations across the platform.

Hashtags

- using a trending or popular hashtag with an intent to subvert or manipulate a conversation or to drive traffic or attention to accounts, websites, products, services, or initiatives; and

- Tweeting with excessive, unrelated hashtags in a single Tweet or across multiple Tweets.

Privacy

Private information: You may not publish or post other people's private information (such as home phone number and address) without their express authorization and permission. We also prohibit threatening to expose private information or incentivizing others to do so. Learn more.

Non-consensual nudity: You may not post or share intimate photos or videos of someone that were produced or distributed without their consent. Learn more.

Authenticity

Platform manipulation and spam: You may not use Twitter's services in a manner intended to artificially amplify or suppress information or engage in behavior that manipulates or disrupts people's experience on Twitter. Learn more.

Civic Integrity: You may not use Twitter's services for the purpose of manipulating or interfering in elections or other civic processes. This includes posting or sharing content that may suppress participation or mislead people about when, where, or how to participate in a civic process. Learn more.

Misleading and Deceptive Identities: You may not impersonate individuals, groups, or organizations to mislead, confuse, or deceive others, nor use a fake identity in a manner that disrupts the experience of others on Twitter. Learn more.

Synthetic and manipulated media: You may not deceptively share synthetic or manipulated media that are likely to cause harm. In addition, we may label Tweets containing synthetic and manipulated media to help people understand their authenticity and to provide additional context. Learn more.

Copyright and trademark: You may not violate others' intellectual property rights, including copyright and trademark. Learn more about our trademark policy and copyright policy.

Multiple accounts and coordination

You can't mass-register Twitter accounts or use automation to create Twitter accounts.

You can't artificially amplify or disrupt conversations through the use of multiple accounts or by coordinating with others to violate the Twitter Rules. This includes:

- overlapping accounts – operating multiple accounts with overlapping use cases, such as identical or similar personas or substantially similar content;

- mutually interacting accounts – operating multiple accounts that interact with one another in order to inflate or manipulate the prominence of specific Tweets or accounts; and

- coordination – creating multiple accounts to post duplicative content or create fake engagement, including:
  - posting identical or substantially similar Tweets or hashtags from multiple accounts you operate;
  - engaging (Retweets, Likes, mentions, Twitter Poll votes) repeatedly with the same Tweets or accounts from multiple accounts that you operate;
  - coordinating with or compensating others to engage in artificial engagement or amplification, even if the people involved use only one account; and
  - coordinating with others to engage in or promote violations of the Twitter Rules, including violations of our abusive behavior policy.

CONCLUSION

A group of Twitter trolls repeatedly used platform manipulation tactics to trend anti-Amber Heard hashtags. The trolls encouraged hashtag spamming and openly boasted when they were successful. Trolls frequently used copypasta techniques to amplify pro-Johnny Depp content while spamming negative Amber Heard propaganda.

Twitter trolls regularly swarmed the tweets of women who supported Amber Heard, and abuse and targeted harassment were commonplace. Tweeting in support of Amber Heard without being swarmed by trolls was difficult at best.

Vocal supporters of Amber Heard received the most abuse, which included death threats and doxxing. Trolls targeted their victims' families, and the children of their victims weren't off-limits to the trolls. What we observed was one of the worst cases of cyberbullying and cyberstalking by a group of Twitter accounts that we've ever seen.

It's our opinion Twitter didn't do enough to mitigate the platform manipulation and did very little to stop the abuse and targeted harassment. Twitter essentially left the women to fend for themselves with little to no support from the platform. The abuse and targeted harassment continued well after the Depp vs. Heard trial ended, and unless Twitter takes action, the abuse and targeted harassment will still continue.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Bad actors have become adept at platform manipulation and targeted harassment, and Twitter has allowed itself to become weaponized against its users. Twitter must be more aggressive at suspending accounts that abuse hashtags and copypasta, but more importantly, adopt new policies to address accounts that target specific individuals or organizations.

Twitter must improve the way it moderates content. Far too many tweets that break Twitter's rules are incorrectly found not to have violated Twitter's rules, and this is frustrating for users. We believe the deficient current reporting system will have the unintended effect of users reporting abusive content less often, which in turn would allow abusive content to flourish.

ABOUT BOT SENTINEL

Bot Sentinel Inc. is a research firm comprising data scientists, machine learning engineers, and researchers specializing in identifying and understanding disinformation and targeted attacks on social media platforms. Our mission is to detect, analyze, and effectively expose threats using machine learning/artificial intelligence, HUMINT (Human Intelligence), and other various methods and technologies.

The name Bot Sentinel means autonomous guard. In other words, we are using a good "bot" to help identify and guard against inauthentic accounts and toxic trolls. Bot Sentinel doesn't just classify automated accounts aka bads bots, we developed Bot Sentinel to classify several types of accounts including accounts operated by human beings.

Our free platform and tools help expose ongoing threats while helping to protect our users from targeted attacks. The platform we provide also allows journalists and other experts to conduct their own research using the free tools and data we offer.

Over 30 news outlets and publications have cited our research and data, and approximately 100,000 active users use our free platform and tools each month.

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