

# Catcalling in the Philippines: what I think should not be tolerated

[October 2, 2014](#)[Rinrin](#)

A person close to me tells me that gender equality in my county, the Philippines, is quite fair compared to other countries. I agree. Heck, there are even times when the women overpower men here. (^\_^);

But in spite of this, catcalling is still done in the Philippines. As a woman who pass catcallers (or potential catcallers) every day, it affected my psychologically. I was afraid to pass streets where I felt I would be catcalled.

“Hi bheh!” Some stupid bystander would should when I pass. What right do they have to call women they don’t know that? Some people would argue that in the Philippines, female or gay friends would call one another “bheh”, but before that, lovers were the ones calling each other “bheh”. It’s like forcefully making women their own lover in that moment.

## Definition of catcalling

To catcall is to “make a whistle, shout, or comment of a sexual nature to a woman passing by” according to [Oxford Dictionary](#).

## What is catcalling to me?

There are bystanders in the streets who would say “Hi Miss”, “Hi Ma’am”, “Good morning ma’am” — these are not catcalls to me. To me, they are just greetings of overfriendly bystanders who need some attention. I just ignore these greetings because they are harmless to me, even though sometimes they could be very irritating.

And there are times when these crazy bystanders would whistle, shout “Sexy!”, or shout stuff and refer to women as “bheh” or “asawa ko” — these are what I call **catcalling**.

## How I deal with catcalling

What I used to do when catcalled was think, think, think and feel sorry for myself at night because I was helpless. I couldn’t even do anything to get back at catcallers.

After a long time of enduring and passing streets in fear, I decided I should do something. Anything.

Now, when I am catcalled, I answer back.

A bystander near a hotel in Sta. Cruz, Manila said to me one day, “Morning bheh.” I turned to him and told him to repeat what he said. He could only repeat “Morning”, which he said with a face that looked embarrassed. I said “Ang bastos mo ah” before walking away.

Another night, a sidecar driver was slacking off in his pedicab. I was on my way home when I passed the despicable man, and he said “teh gumaganda ka ah.” This is an unwanted comment, not a compliment to me. But my feet just kept walking on. BUT the man wasn’t content so he added “teh pawis ka na ah.” It was very annoying so even though I was already a bit far, I turned around and shouted “PAKIALAM MO?!” He waved his hand in a dismissive manner and turned away.

Just this morning (Oct. 2, 2014), I was passing Santillan St., Makati when a man near what seemed like a hardware shop was saying in a not-so-loud voice “ingat ka dyan haaaa~” after a quick whistling. I was too sleepy to process everything I heard that I decided not to mind it so much because the whistling was so faint and I think there’s nothing so foul about a creep saying “ingat ka”. Creepy, yeah. But not anything sexual or forcing anything (like calling a girl ‘bheh’, ‘babe’, or ‘asawa ko’). I should be more on guard tomorrow morning when I pass again, and react on the faintest sound of whistle in that street as I pass. Whistling is not okay to me either. I’m not an animal for you to call by whistling.

Ref.: <https://stopcatcalling.wordpress.com/2014/10/02/catcalling-in-the-philippines-what-i-think-should-not-be-tolerated/#more-15>

**Look also here <http://www.humanrights.aboutphilippines.ph>**