



Mapping the Ideological Landscape of Extreme Misogyny

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Abstract

Despite the growing complexity of the online misogynist landscape and important efforts to study some misogynist groups through singular case studies, scholars have a limited understanding of the distinctions between the various relevant misogynist communities in terms of their rhetorical, operational, and social facets. The current research aims to address this gap by employing a multi-layered analytical framework of different misogynist communities. We begin with a comprehensive literature review conceptualising extreme misogyny with an overview of the current misogynist spaces and ideological narratives. Consequently, we sample the online ecosystem of extreme misogyny both within and across these communities while utilising a multi-categorical tool in order to identify the discursive, organisational, and operational distinctions between various misogynist communities. Our findings reflect substantial differences between the various misogynist communities in terms of their legitimacy to violence, the conceptualisation of their adversaries, ideological vision's time orientation, and overall operational discourse.

Keywords: Misogyny, Extremism, Masculinity, Far-right, Conservative

Introduction

During 2018, two related violent incidents, which occurred nearly 1500 miles apart, manifested concerning similarities. In both cases, individuals attacked a group of people indiscriminately after having been influenced by anti-feminist and misogynist narratives. In April, 25-year-old Alek Minassian from Toronto killed ten pedestrians by intentionally ploughing a rented van into a busy street. Seven months later, 40-year-old Scott Paul Beierle from Tallahassee, Florida, walked into a yoga studio and shot six people, incurring two fatalities, before killing himself. Both perpetrators described themselves as “incels” or involuntary celibates and had a long history of threatening women online.¹

Incels are members of an online, predominately male community that has proliferated in recent years, who believe because of their physical appearance, combined with the bias and behaviour of women, they are unable to find a partner for any intimate relationship.² Importantly, incels believe that they are entitled to women for sexual and romantic purposes and that women are only valued to meet these needs.³ When the incel movement first appeared online in the late 1990s,⁴ it was seen by many as a comforting resource, a safe space for those who had no success in developing romantic relationships. However, as the rhetoric in some incel communities escalated and became more toxic, a growing number of its members felt motivated to express their sentiments via violent behaviour. In some cases, as the above examples illustrate, they even engaged in acts of mass violence that generated a high number of casualties.⁵

However, while incels are one of the most well-known misogynist communities in terms of media coverage, there exists a multitude of subcultures and primarily online spaces that support the utilisation of various coercive mechanisms to restore what its adherents see as the appropriate power relations between the gender binary classification. Commonly known as the “manosphere,” this umbrella network includes a broad spectrum of online communities ranging from Men’s Rights Activists (MRAs), Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW), Pick Up Artists (PUA), and incels, through to Gamer/geek, TradCon (Traditional Christian conservatives), the father’s rights movement, NoFappers, and chauvinist far-right groups.⁶ The complexity of the misogynist

1 Hendrix, S. “Yoga shooting Incel attack fuelled my male supremacy”. *The Washington Post* (website). Retrieved October 31, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/local/yoga-shooting-incel-attack-fueled-by-male-supremacy/>; Holcombe Madeline and Chavez Nicole. “Florida yoga studio shooter planned attack for months and had ‘lifetime of misogynistic attitudes,’ police say,” *CNN*, Retrieved October 31, 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2019/02/13/us/tallahassee-yoga-studio-shooting>.

2 Zimmerman, Shannon., Luisa Ryan., and David Duriesmith. “Recognizing the violent extremist ideology of ‘Incels’”. Women in International Security Policy brief. (2018). <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/resource/recognizing-the-violent-extremist-ideology-of-incels/>.

3 Kelly, Megan, Alex DiBranco, and Julia R. DeCook. “Misogynist incels and male supremacy: Overview and recommendations for addressing the threat of male supremacist violence.” *New America* (2021).

4 The first “incel” forum was created by “Alana” in 1995 and was designed to be a safe space for people from all walks of life who had difficulties with developing romantic relationships. In the decade or so after “Alana” abandoned the site, and more ideologically extreme users migrated to other forums, members of the manosphere coalesced under the banner of her long-lost project and became what we know them as today - incels.

5 Scaptura, Maria N., and Kaitlin M. Boyle. “Masculinity threat, ‘Incel’ traits, and violent fantasies among heterosexual men in the United States.” *Feminist Criminology* 15, no. 3 (2020): 278–98. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085119896415>;

6 Burnett, Scott. “The battle for “nofap”: myths, masculinity, and the meaning of masturbation abstinence.” *Men and Masculinities* 25, no. 3 (2022): 477-496; DiBranco, Alex. “Male Supremacist Terrorism as a Rising Threat.” *ICCT Journal Perspective* (2020); Hartmann, Marlene. “The totalizing meritocracy of heterosex: Subjectivity in NoFap.” *Sexualities* 24, no. 3 (2021): 409-430; Jasser, Greta, Megan Kelly, and Ann-Kathrin Rothermel. “Male supremacy and the Hanau terrorist attack: between online misogyny and far-right violence.” *ICCT Journal Perspective* (2020); Jane, Emma A. “Systemic misogyny exposed: Translating rape-gish from the manosphere with a random rape threat generator.” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 21, no. 6 (2018): 661-680; Leidig, Eviane. “Why Terrorism Studies Miss the Mark When It Comes To Incels.” *ICCT Journal Perspective* (2021a); Marwick, Alice E., and Robyn Caplan. “Drinking male tears: Language, the manosphere, and networked harassment.” *Feminist Media Studies*

landscape is further enhanced by the frequent emergence of new ideological narratives and “families.” These emerging groups comprise of those engaging with far-right networks and orthodox-fundamentalist communities who espouse misogynist practices, including within female-dominant communities. Nonetheless, despite the growing complexity of the online misogynist landscape and important efforts to study some of these groups through singular case studies, scholars have a limited understanding of the distinctions between the various relevant communities in terms of their rhetorical, operational, and social facets.

The current paper aims to address this gap by employing a multi-layered analytical framework of different misogynist communities. We begin with a comprehensive literature review conceptualising extreme misogyny with an overview of the current misogynist spaces and ideological narratives. Consequently, we map the online ecosystem of extreme misogyny both within and across these communities while utilising a multi-categorical tool in order to identify the discursive, organisational, and operational distinctions between various misogynist communities. We conclude with theoretical and conceptual insights about the dynamics between different misogynist streams, factors that seem to facilitate the emergence of new narratives and ideological groups, and, lastly, the societal and policy implications of extreme misogynist communities.

Conceptualising Extreme Misogyny

Male Supported Misogyny

Spread across multiple online platforms (blogs, forums, message boards, social media, etc.), the manosphere ecosystem is far from homogenous, differing on topics, user motivations, and engagement levels, however, it is all united by the concept of the Red Pill, derived from the 1999 film *The Matrix*.⁷ As Ging notes, the “Red Pill philosophy purports to awaken men to feminism’s misandry and brainwashing, and is the key concept that unites all of these communities”.⁸ The Red Pill has become a recurrent “cultural motif” across the manosphere to cement a transnational collective identity, supplemented more recently by the blackpill – an adjacent concept of nihilism that is usually, but not exclusively, ascribed to incels.⁹ In the description of the manosphere communities below, it should be noted that there are not always clear boundaries between these groups and overlap between them is common. But while some communities such as PUAs and MGTOW have starkly different orientations, they do converge on an anti-feminist agenda.

18, no. 4 (2018): 543-559; Marwick, Alice E., and Rebecca Lewis. “Media manipulation and disinformation online.” Data & Society Institute (2017); Guy, Rachel. “Nation of Men: Diagnosing Manospheric Misogyny as Virulent Online Nationalism.” *Geo. J. Gender & L.* 22 (2020): 601-640; Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 638-657; Ribeiro, Manoel Horta, Jeremy Blackburn, Barry Bradlyn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Gianluca Stringhini, Summer Long, Stephanie Greenberg, and Savvas Zannettou. “The evolution of the manosphere across the web.” In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, vol. 15 (2021): 196-207; Schmitz, Rachel M., and Emily Kazyak. “Masculinities in cyberspace: An analysis of portrayals of manhood in men’s rights activist websites.” *Social Sciences* 5, no. 2 (2016): 18; Starr, Chelsea. “Attack Frames: Framing Processes, Collective Identity, and Emotion in the Men’s Rights Subreddit.” *Contention* 5, no. 2 (2017): 91-113; Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*. Emerald Group Publishing (2021).

7 DeCook, Julia R., and Megan Kelly. “Interrogating the “incel menace”: assessing the threat of male supremacy in terrorism studies.” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 706-726.

8 Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 640.

9 DeCook, Julia R., and Megan Kelly. “Interrogating the “incel menace”: assessing the threat of male supremacy in terrorism studies.” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 706-726.

Men's Rights Activists (MRAs)

One of the oldest groups of the manosphere that emerged during second wave feminism as an ally against gender hierarchies is the Men's Rights Movement (MRM). It has since splintered into the anti-feminist MRAs, who believe that feminist practices, policies and narratives are to blame for many contemporary social crises and societal breakdowns.¹⁰ MRAs focus on male-related social issues and the alleged institutional, especially legal, discrimination against men.¹¹ They assert that there is a contemporary crisis of masculinity¹² resulting from men being explicitly oppressed, marginalised, and discriminated against.¹³ Thus, the erosion of masculine values facilitates the economic, social, and psychological struggles of a large portion of men in Western societies. One of the most influential figures within MRAs is Paul Elam, who runs the popular "A Voice for Men" (AVFM) website in which its contributors "frequently deploy violent rhetoric in their focus on issues such as fathers' rights, circumcision, antiabortion laws, allegedly female-perpetrated rape and violence, and, in particular, a supposed epidemic of 'false rape claims'."¹⁴

Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW)

The MGTOW community "frames itself as a political movement akin to the Men's Rights Movement (MRM) and the men's liberation movement of the 1970s."¹⁵ Thus, similar to many MRA communities, it also claims that society is "gynocentric" dominated by feminist interests and female perspectives¹⁶ resulting in men being both marginalised and victimised. The solution for such societal trends, according to MGTOW community members, is the rejection of any type of relationship and social interactions with women. In contrast to other manosphere communities who emphasise hopeless deterministic perceptions (incel communities) or manipulative behaviours (such as PUAs),¹⁷ MGTOW believe that total avoidance of women can contribute to perceptions of individual worth and empowerment among men. MGTOW communities often appear as harmless and considered the most "respectable" of the manosphere because of their alleged "rational" thinking,¹⁸ which seems to avoid hostility towards women. Nevertheless, the reality is that such communities spread one of the highest volumes of violent misogynistic

10 Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*. Emerald Group Publishing (2021); Marwick, Alice E., and Robyn Caplan. "Drinking male tears: Language, the manosphere, and networked harassment." *Feminist Media Studies* 18, no. 4 (2018): 543-559; Guy, Rachel. "Nation of Men: Diagnosing Manospheric Misogyny as Virulent Online Nationalism." *Geo. J. Gender & L.* 22 (2020): 601-640; Hopton, Kathryn, and Susanne Langer. "'Kick the XX out of your life': An analysis of the manosphere's discursive constructions of gender on Twitter." *Feminism & Psychology* vol. 32, no. 1 (2022): 3-22.

11 Ribeiro, Manoel Horta, Jeremy Blackburn, Barry Bradlyn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Gianluca Stringhini, Summer Long, Stephanie Greenberg, and Savvas Zannettou. "The evolution of the manosphere across the web." In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, vol. 15 (2021): 196-207.

12 Schmitz, Rachel M., and Emily Kazyak. "Masculinities in cyberspace: An analysis of portrayals of manhood in men's rights activist websites." *Social Sciences* 5, no. 2 (2016): 18.

13 Jane, Emma A. "Systemic misogyny exposed: Translating rape-gish from the manosphere with a random rape threat generator." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 21, no. 6 (2018): 661-680.

14 Ibid, pg. 666.

15 Hopton, Kathryn, and Susanne Langer. "'Kick the XX out of your life': An analysis of the manosphere's discursive constructions of gender on Twitter." *Feminism & Psychology* vol. 32, no. 1 (2022): 4.

16 Lin, Jie Liang. *Antifeminism online. MGTOW (men going their own way)*. Transcript (2017).

17 Hopton, Kathryn, and Susanne Langer. "'Kick the XX out of your life': An analysis of the manosphere's discursive constructions of gender on Twitter." *Feminism & Psychology* vol. 32, no. 1 (2022): 4.

18 Hopton, Kathryn, and Susanne Langer. "'Kick the XX out of your life': An analysis of the manosphere's discursive constructions of gender on Twitter." *Feminism & Psychology* vol. 32, no. 1 (2022): 16-17; Jones, Callum, Verity Trott, and Scott Wright. "Sluts and soyboys: MGTOW and the production of misogynistic online harassment." *New Media & Society* 22, no. 10 (2020): 1903-1921

content on Reddit,¹⁹ and harass users - sometimes violently - on Twitter.²⁰ It is important to note that despite their ideological leanings, some MGTOW members engage in sexual relationships with women and are married,²¹ a fact that raises questions regarding member observation and self-practice of the MGTOW ideology.

Pick Up Artists (PUAs)

PUAs emerged from the “seduction” industry of the 1970s which promoted perceptions about the potential of men to acquire specific skills that can enhance their popularity among women and thus acquire partners for sexual relationships. Seduction entrepreneurs and influencers transitioned to online forums in the 1990s²² and further fostered a rhetoric which regarded women as objects or sexual targets that can be manipulated into having sex through “game” rationale²³ and tactics like negging, i.e., decreasing a woman’s self-esteem through insults.²⁴ Members of PUAs communities justify this approach by perceiving women as shallow and only concerned about their physical appearance and money, thus viewed as “fair game.”²⁵ Although PUAs don’t always care about MRA politics, and prefer to invest in the seduction industry,²⁶ they are often included in the manosphere because of their conspiratorial belief in the reach of feminism and their growing overlap in rhetoric and memberships to other manosphere communities.²⁷

Incels

While there is no formal definition of an incel, most academics and experts are in consensus about several of their characteristics. First, Incels are typically men who see themselves as being unable to have intimate relationships with women, despite desiring them.²⁸ Second, Incels’ animosity and hostility towards women results from their belief that male access to sexual relationships are a “basic human right” with which women should only be valued for fulfilling these needs.²⁹

19 Farrell, Tracie, Oscar Araque, Miriam Fernandez, and Harith Alani. “On the use of Jargon and Word Embeddings to Explore Subculture within the Reddit’s Manosphere.” In 12th ACM Conference on Web Science (2020): 221-230.

20 Jones, Callum, Verity Trott, and Scott Wright. “Sluts and soyboys: MGTOW and the production of misogynistic online harassment.” *New Media & Society* 22, no. 10 (2020): 1903-1921.

21 Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*.

Emerald Group Publishing (2021), pp.23-24; Krendel, Alexandra. “The men and women, guys and girls of the ‘Manosphere’: A corpus-assisted discourse approach.” *Discourse & Society* 31, no. 6 (2020): 607–30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926520939690>.

22 DeCook, Julia R., and Megan Kelly. “Interrogating the “incel menace”: assessing the threat of male supremacy in terrorism studies.” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 706-726.

23 Santos, Sofia José, Inês Amaral, Rita Basílio Simões, and Maria José Brites. “Debunking the# Manosphere: An Exploratory Analysis on Patriarchy and Ageism Within the Digital Realm.” In *International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction*, pp. 420-429. Springer, Cham (2021).

24 Ribeiro, Manoel Horta, Jeremy Blackburn, Barry Bradlyn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Gianluca Stringhini, Summer Long, Stephanie Greenberg, and Savvas Zannettou. “The evolution of the manosphere across the web.” In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, vol. 15 (2021): 196-207.

25 Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*. Emerald Group Publishing (2021), p. 24.

26 Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 644.

27 Jane, Emma A. “Systemic misogyny exposed: Translating rape-gish from the manosphere with a random rape threat generator.” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 21, no. 6 (2018): 666.

28 Jaki, Sylvia, Tom De Smedt, Maja Gwóźdź, Rudresh Panchal, Alexander Rossa, and Guy De Pauw. “Online hatred of women in the Incels. me forum: Linguistic analysis and automatic detection.” *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict* 7, no. 2 (2019): 240-268; Høiland, Thea. “Incels and the stories they tell. A narrative analysis of Incels’ shared stories on Reddit.” Master’s thesis, University of Oslo (2019).

29 Jaki, Sylvia, Tom De Smedt, Maja Gwóźdź, Rudresh Panchal, Alexander Rossa, and Guy De Pauw. “Online hatred of women in the Incels. me forum: Linguistic analysis and automatic detection.” *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict* 7, no. 2 (2019): 240-268; Kelly, Megan, Alex DiBranco, and Julia R. DeCook. “Misogynist incels and male supremacism: Overview and recommendations for addressing the threat of male supremacist violence.” *New*

Third, most incels are active in incel online forums, which are mainly responsible for the evolution of incel subculture and its proliferation; and lastly. Lastly, incels have limited social interactions offline, and for the most part, demographically consist of males aged between early 20s to late 30s.³⁰

Self-identified incels emerged initially as a backlash to PUAs, as angry young men grew frustrated from the failure of tactics which promised to help them be more successful in their sexual and romantic endeavours.³¹ While some scholars claim that incels are not politically motivated,³² their views of women and society are in fact political.³³ Indeed, “some incel communities advocate for a variety of very specific (though unfeasible) political changes and policies, including enforced monogamy, taking away women’s suffrage, legalised rape and paedophilia, and the legal torture and physical harm of women (per the Incel Wiki).”³⁴

Another noteworthy aspect of incels is their shift in worldview from the redpill to the nihilistic blackpill: society is still dominated by feminism, but given that physical attractiveness is genetically predetermined, incels are destined to either accept their fate or change society, usually through mass violence or terrorism. Whilst this worldview is common, not all incels are necessarily blackpilled.³⁵ Furthermore, in debunking misconceptions of incels, it should also be noted that incels are not unique nor extraordinary, but must be situated within the broader manosphere, as well as, more importantly, mainstream social norms and gender roles of everyday misogyny. Finally, we note that not all incels are violent,³⁶ nor are all gender-based terrorist attacks committed by incels; therefore we agree with scholars that the use of the term violent misogynists is a more accurate one to use.³⁷

Gamer/Geek

Unlike the aforementioned communities, only a subsection of gamer and geek culture lies in the manosphere with group boundaries less neatly defined.³⁸ This community came to prominence with Gamergate in 2014 and the subsequent networked harassment of women online.³⁹ In contrast to other communities, the “geek and gamer elements of the men’s rights community have

America (2021).

30 Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 638-657; Baele, Stephane J., Lewys Brace, and Travis G. Coan. “From “Incel” to “Saint”: Analyzing the violent worldview behind the 2018 Toronto attack.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 33, no. 8 (2021): 1667-1691; Bratich, Jack, and Sarah Banet-Weiser. “From pick-up artists to incels: Con (fidence) games, networked misogyny, and the failure of neoliberalism.” *International Journal of Communication* 13 (2019): 25; Crimando, Steven. “Alone together and angry: An incel revolution.” *Asis Online* (website). Accessed October 31, 2022. <http://www.asisonline.org/security-management-magazine/articles/2019/03/alone-together-and-angry-an-incel-revolution/>.

31 DeCook, Julia R., and Megan Kelly. “Interrogating the “incel menace”: assessing the threat of male supremacy in terrorism studies.” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 706-726.

32 Hoffman, Bruce, Jacob Ware, and Ezra Shapiro. “Assessing the threat of incel violence.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 7 (2020): 565-587.

33 Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*. Emerald Group Publishing (2021), pg. 15.

34 DeCook, Julia R., and Megan Kelly. “Interrogating the “incel menace”: assessing the threat of male supremacy in terrorism studies.” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 711.

35 Ibid, pp 706-726.

36 Kelly, Megan, Alex DiBranco, and Julia R. DeCook. “Misogynist incels and male supremacy: Overview and recommendations for addressing the threat of male supremacist violence.” *New America* (2021), pg. 5.

37 Jasser, Greta, Megan Kelly, and Ann-Kathrin Roethermel. “Male supremacy and the Hanau terrorist attack: between online misogyny and far-right violence.” *ICCT Journal Perspective* (2020).

38 Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 644.

39 Marwick, Alice E., and Robyn Caplan. “Drinking male tears: Language, the manosphere, and networked harassment.” *Feminist Media Studies* 18, no. 4 (2018): 543-559.

adopted a significantly different strategy regarding beta masculinity. These cultures rail against rather than aspire to be the alpha males of jock culture, whom they refer to as chads, normies, and frat boys (Nagle, 2015).⁴⁰ Thus, they embrace so called *geek* traits like intellect and introversion over physical masculinity and extroversion. Furthermore, this community also acts as a gateway and a recruitment pool for members transitioning into other manosphere communities.⁴¹

TradCon

TradCons (traditional Christian conservatives) advocate for traditional values like gendered roles and the nuclear family,⁴² in which women are subservient and societal structures are patriarchal and conservative.⁴³ They represent a convergence of being redpilled and Bible study, Christianity, and never marry a woman over thirty. TradCons also believe in the ‘alpha widow’ concept, “whereby women who have had sex outside of marriage will always be haunted by fantasies of their previous alpha male lovers and will never be satisfied by a beta male husband... [believed to be the] main reason for marriage failure and divorce.”⁴⁴

Father’s Rights Movement

The Father’s Rights Movement is mostly concerned with custody court cases (i.e., paternal rights), which they believe is a result of “institutionalized feminism” and misandry.⁴⁵ In particular, they oppose “men’s subjugation in familial issues, such as the prejudice and discrimination they claim fathers experience in custody and divorce proceedings that privilege mothers’ rights.”⁴⁶ Fathers for Justice is perhaps the most well known group, claiming to focus more on men’s problems than hatred against women. Yet, it still reflects the father’s rights movement more broadly, which holds misogynistic attitudes by undermining women’s access to services and resources.⁴⁷

NoFappers

While not a dominant community within the manosphere, the NoFappers are known for abstaining from pornography and masturbation, as this will supposedly allow them to persevere testosterone and achieve greater sexual power.⁴⁸

40 Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 638-657.

41 Guy, Rachel. “Nation of Men: Diagnosing Manospheric Misogyny as Virulent Online Nationalism.” *Geo. J. Gender & L.* 22 (2020): 601-640.

42 Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*. Emerald Group Publishing (2021).

43 Guy, Rachel. “Nation of Men: Diagnosing Manospheric Misogyny as Virulent Online Nationalism.” *Geo. J. Gender & L.* 22 (2020): 605.

44 Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 650.

45 Jane, Emma A. “Systemic misogyny exposed: Translating rape-gish from the manosphere with a random rape threat generator.” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 21, no. 6 (2018): 666; Marwick, Alice E., and Robyn Caplan. “Drinking male tears: Language, the manosphere, and networked harassment.” *Feminist Media Studies* 18, no. 4 (2018): 543-559.

46 Schmitz, Rachel M., and Emily Kazyak. “Masculinities in cyberspace: An analysis of portrayals of manhood in men’s rights activist websites.” *Social Sciences* 5, no. 2 (2016): 2.

47 Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*. Emerald Group Publishing (2021), pp. 23-24.

48 McInnes, Gavin. “Introducing: The Proud Boys.” *Taki Magazine* (blog). Accessed October 31, 2022. https://www.takimag.com/article/introducing_the_proud_boys_gavin_mcinnes/.

Far-right Chauvinist Groups

On the far-right of the political spectrum, new groups that emphasise misogynist ideology – and veteran groups that have intensified their ideological focus on these issues – seem to be on the rise. One such group that advocates for militant masculinity is the Proud Boys (PB), whose members self-identify as “Western chauvinists who refuse to apologize for creating the modern world.”⁴⁹ The group’s ideological propaganda emphasises male grievances and victimhood, and in general aspires to uncover what its members see as the growing subjugation of men by women. Thus, the group encourages individuals who suffered romantic disappointments to abandon regular coping mechanisms, adopt aggressive masculine behaviours, and commit to rigid gender roles. As a PB member describes: -

(with regards to) the deterioration of traditional gender roles, I agree with Gavin [McInnes, former PB’s leader] that women probably are happier as housewives. I think men ought to be free to act like men without being corrected by the nags and the busybodies that our society has produced. I think kids ought to be allowed to make mistakes, get scraped knees, play with B.B. guns, and that sort of thing⁵⁰

The anti-feminist masculine ideological agenda of PBs has also meandered into broader far-right activism and violence.⁵¹

More veteran far-right groups are additionally increasing their focus on misogynist propaganda and activism, especially as they recognise that misogyny is increasingly becoming an effective tool for new member recruitment. As indicated by multiple scholars, new male recruits who are drawn to misogynist rhetoric are also gradually exposed to more traditional white supremacist, ethnocentric indoctrination. A prime example is Volksfront, one of the more influential racist skinheads’ organisations in the United States, which became a hotbed for socially isolated men looking to express their grievances against women. Some Volksfront leaders even describe this new wave of recruits as “Gender Supremacists.”⁵² Importantly, the manosphere and violent misogyny is not a gateway ideology to the far-right, but rather demonstrates that “misogyny, racism, and xenophobia are intrinsically interlinked.”⁵³ The far-right connects and weaponises misogyny, masculinity and anti-gender practices with its political ideology of racial and ethnic nationalism. It shares in common with the manosphere a similar worldview of gender norms and roles.⁵⁴

Female Supported Misogyny

Female supported misogyny also manifests across communities that operate adjacent to the manosphere but can still be considered as part of the broader misogynistic online ecosystem. The ideological agendas, affiliation, identity, and roles that women hold within these communities vary according to their involvement within the spectrum. A shared distinguishing feature across all iterations of the spectrum is anti-feminism and the need to persevere traditional gender roles and societal norms currently perceived as under threat in modern day society.

49 McInnes, Gavin. “Introducing: The Proud Boys.” Taki Magazine (blog). Accessed October 31, 2022. https://www.takimag.com/article/introducing_the_proud_boys_gavin_mcinnes/.

50 Extracted from PB GAB account.

51 Kutner, Samantha. “Swiping right: The allure of hyper masculinity and cryptofascism for men who join the Proud Boys”. ICCT Journal Research Paper (2020).

52 Ibid.

53 DeCook, Julia R., and Megan Kelly. “Interrogating the “incel menace”: assessing the threat of male supremacy in terrorism studies.” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 714

54 Agius, Christine, Alexandra Edney-Browne, Lucy Nicholas, and Kay Cook. “Anti-feminism, gender and the far-right gap in C/PVE measures.” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 685-886.

Conservative Anti-Feminist Women

Female supported misogyny is apparent within anti-feminist conservative female figures and their rhetoric. These figures reject feminist theory which stipulates that i) gender equality is both socially and morally desirable, ii) feminism is a necessity for social change, and that iii) gender is socially constructed.⁵⁵ Conservative anti-feminists view feminism as a direct threat to traditional gender norms, and instead impose the view that natural biological differences between the sexes should in fact guide and determine complementary gender roles.⁵⁶ As such, women should hold roles centered around the primary institution in society – the heteronormative family – with motherhood glorified as a woman’s “greatest honour.”⁵⁷ As Ferrari⁵⁸ further notes, “most conservative women see their male counterparts as the primary agents in their communities and support their access to a higher degree of power”. This framing depicts women as inferior to males, reinforcing gender imbalances and misogynist attitudes.

Tradwives

A subculture prevalent with conservative, anti-feminist thought is the Tradwife (short for traditional wife/housewife) community, predominately comprised of white heterosexual women who nostalgically interpret and advocate past traditional values, norms, and practices. Key hallmarks of the movement are paramount devotion to the family, the observation of traditional gender roles, pro-patriarchy, pro-life, and often a strong devotion to Christianity.⁵⁹ It is important to note, however, that the basic tenets, concepts, and goals within the Tradwife movement are interpreted differently by its adherents, thus producing various iterations of misogynistic support and radical ideological thought among the subculture. Iterations range from reserved wives who publicly enjoy the Tradwife homemaker lifestyle to far-right thinkers that publicise their subjectivities and political ideologies under the guise of a Tradwife, or an affiliate of the subculture.⁶⁰

The Tradwife subculture is fronted by key figures, aka “exemplars”, such as Alena Pettitt and Caitlin Huber (more commonly known as “Mrs Midwest”), who are elevated within misogynistic spaces for conforming to idealised standards through displaying specific behavioural norms, judgements, and virtues worthy of imitation.⁶¹ Furthermore, dubbed as “mommy vloggers,”⁶² these women propel their influencer status through frequently posting on social media channels,

55 Jordan, Ana. “Conceptualizing backlash: (UK) Men’s Rights Groups, anti-feminism, and postfeminism.” *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 28, no. 1 (2016): 18–44. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cjwl.28.1.18>

56 Bacchetta, Paola, and Margaret Power. *Right-wing women: From conservatives to extremists around the world*. Routledge (2002); Ferrari, Bianca. “Women RedPilling women: Anti-feminist radicalization on YouTube”. (Master’s thesis., University of Amsterdam, 2019).

57 Alvanou, Maria Chr. “Nationalism and women in Greece during 1936–1941 and today: Indicative historical and sociological notes.” In *Gender and Far Right Politics in Europe*, edited by Michaela Köttig, Renate Bitzan, and Andrea Petö, 141–56. Gender and Politics. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-43533-6_10

58 Ferrari, Bianca. “Women RedPilling women: Anti-feminist radicalization on YouTube”. (Master’s thesis., University of Amsterdam, 2019), pg. 10.

59 Kelly, Annie. “The housewives of white supremacy.” *The New York Times* (website). Accessed October 31, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/opinion/sunday/tradwives-women-alt-right.html> ; Kelsey-Sugg, Anna., and Siobhan Marin. “For some, being a Tradwife is about more time with family. For others it’s a dangerous far-right ideology”. *ABC News* (website). Accessed October 31, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-08-22/tradwife-movement-personal-pleasures-or-extreme-right-ideologies/100356514>.

60 Campion, Kristy. “Women in the extreme and radical right: Forms of participation and their implications.” *Social Sciences* 9, no. 9 (2020): 149

61 Mattheis, Ashley A. “#TradCulture: Reproducing whiteness and neo-fascism through gendered discourse online.” In *Routledge Handbook of Critical Studies in Whiteness*, pp. 91-101. Routledge (2021).

62 Love, Nancy S. “Shield Maidens, Fashy Femmes, and TradWives: feminism, patriarchy, and right-wing populism.” *Frontiers in Sociology* (2020): 122; Darby, Seyward. *Sisters in hate: American women on the front lines of white nationalism*. Little, Brown (2020).

informing their audiences on their lifestyle and traditional housewife virtues through providing support, tips, and homemaking inspiration.

Far-right Women

Scholars suggest that the Tradwife subculture overlaps with far-right misogynistic communities when women push authoritarian ideological agendas which are often masked through the front of a “hyperfeminine aesthetic.”⁶³ Within far-right misogynistic communities, women promote idealised gender binary roles and recruit both sexes into joining such spaces. Firstly, these idealised gender roles are promoted through suggestions that women represent figures of traditionalism and (white) purity whose purpose is to engage in childbearing, maternal caregiving duties, and domestic labour – fulfilling their biological duty.⁶⁴ Love⁶⁵ has labelled such women as “shield” maidens, who normalise and shield white supremacy with their “delusions of domesticity, purity, and vulnerability”. Mattheis⁶⁶ also notes how far-right female figures such as Lana Lokteff play on “alt maternalism” by framing the maternal qualities women possess, as well as their ambitions to “attract the best mate possible and be protected and provided for until death,”⁶⁷ as innate natural desires. Furthermore, such figures view and express concern over the alleged threat that societal functioning, traditional womanhood, and national purity currently faces from modern day structures such as multiculturalism, feminism, and homosexuality. Examples showcasing such radical social conservatism include supporting the restrictions of women’s rights to vote, abortion, and the outlawing of homosexuality. As such, attentional focus is placed on critiquing selected groups such as feminists, leftists, and immigrants⁶⁸ with rhetoric riddled in anger, disgust, and criticism.

Secondly, as recruiters for far-right movements, anti-feminist rhetoric and the support for misogynist thinking is evidenced by far-right women claiming that society is controlled by feminists pushing anti-male agendas, denying men the opportunities to assert their “natural biological masculinity.”⁶⁹ Such rhetoric lures male viewers into radicalisation and engagement within far-right spaces due to the dissemination of fringe ideas into mainstream spaces through mainstream online platforms, such as YouTube and Instagram, by far-right women⁷⁰ – a tactic also used by Tradwife influencers. Additionally, co-operation between key thinkers is apparent through regular collaborations and the mutual hosting of fellow far-right female supporters across media

63 Kelly, Annie. “The housewives of white supremacy.” The New York Times (website). Accessed October 31, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/opinion/sunday/tradwives-women-alt-right.html> ; Kelsey-Sugg, Anna., and Siobhan Marin. “For some, being a Tradwife is about more time with family. For others it’s a dangerous far-right ideology”. ABC News (website). Accessed October 31, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-08-22/tradwife-movement-personal-pleasures-orextreme-right-ideologies/100356514> ; Mattheis, Ashley A. “#TradCulture: Reproducing whiteness and neo-fascism through gendered discourse online.” In Routledge Handbook of Critical Studies in Whiteness, pp. 91-101. Routledge (2021).

64 Skjelsbæk, Inger, Julie Marie Hansen, and Jenny Lorentzen. “Hopes and misguided expectations: How policy documents frame gender in efforts at preventing Terrorism and violent extremism.” Politics, Religion & Ideology 21, no. 4 (2020): 469–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2020.1851873>.

65 Love, Nancy S. “Shield Maidens, Fashy Femmes, and TradWives: feminism, patriarchy, and right-wing populism.” Frontiers in Sociology (2020): 3

66 Mattheis, Ashley A. “#TradCulture: Reproducing whiteness and neo-fascism through gendered discourse online.” In Routledge Handbook of Critical Studies in Whiteness, pp. 91-101. Routledge (2021).

67 Ibid, pg. 144.

68 Leidig, Eviane. “‘We are worth fighting for’: Women in far-right extremism.” ICCT Journal Perspective (2021b); Ottoni, Raphael, Evandro Cunha, Gabriel Magno, Pedro Bernardina, Wagner Meira Jr, and Virgílio Almeida.

“Analyzing right-wing youtube channels: Hate, violence and discrimination.” In Proceedings of the 10th ACM conference on web science, pp. 323-332 (2018); Mamié, Robin, Manoel Horta Ribeiro, and Robert West. “Are anti-feminist communities gateways to the far right? evidence from reddit and youtube.” In 13th ACM Web Science Conference 2021, pp. 139-147 (2021).

69 Leidig, Eviane. “‘We are worth fighting for’: Women in far-right extremism.” ICCT Journal Perspective (2021b)

70 Ibid.

platforms.⁷¹ As such, far-right female leaders facilitate the propagation, cross-pollination, sharing, and reinforcement of far-right ideas⁷² through their ability to softly frame their rhetoric and ideology to normalise and legitimise violent action.⁷³

Extreme Misogyny

All of the above communities, in many cases, legitimise violence and measures of coercion against women, and manifest an intense hostility towards symbols of women's empowerment and equality, feminist institutions, and other social constructs that its members feel are threatening to masculinity.⁷⁴ Taken together, we define the above communities as ones which share an outlook of extreme misogyny.⁷⁵ We acknowledge that the misogyny, sexism, and heteropatriarchy expressed by these communities does not operate in a vacuum, but rather builds upon, and is inspired by, pre-existing social and cultural structures that underpins mainstream society. In short, the misogyny expressed by members of these communities is extreme, but not exceptional. Furthermore, a failure to recognise the link between misogynistic violence as both a systemic and motivational act of terrorism, contributes to the normalisation of misogyny. Consequently, our study accounts for the prevalence of misogyny co-existing in the form of "everyday intimate terrorism,"⁷⁶ as well as spectacular violence.

The analytical methods used within the existing literature to study extreme misogyny fall into three major streams. The first predominantly engages in online discourse analysis of misogynistic rhetoric in either one platform or one community.⁷⁷ This form of analysis relates to a broader

71 Lewis, Rebecca. "Alternative influence: Broadcasting the reactionary right on YouTube." Data & Society Institute (2018).

72 Campion, Kristy. "Women in the extreme and radical right: Forms of participation and their implications." *Social Sciences* 9, no. 9 (2020): 149.

73 Leidig, Eviane. "'We are worth fighting for': Women in far-right extremism." *ICCT Journal Perspective* (2021b); Love, Nancy S. "Shield Maidens, Fashy Femmes, and TradWives: feminism, patriarchy, and right-wing populism." *Frontiers in Sociology* (2020): 122; Mattheis, Ashley. "Shieldmaidens of whiteness:(Alt) maternalism and women recruiting for the far/alt-right." *Journal for Deradicalization* 17 (2018): 128-162

74 Saragoza, Phillip. "The 'Incels' and the ideology of extreme misogynistic violence." Work Trauma Services (blog). Accessed October 31, 2022. <https://www.wtsglobal.com/the-incels-and-the-ideology-of-extreme-misogynistic-violence/>.

75 DeCook, Julia R., and Megan Kelly. "Interrogating the "incel menace": assessing the threat of male supremacy in terrorism studies." *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 15, no. 3 (2022): 706-726.

76 Sjöberg, Laura, and Caron E. Gentry. "Introduction: gender and everyday/intimate terrorism." *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 8, no. 3 (2015): 358-361.

77 Hopton, Kathryn, and Susanne Langer. "'Kick the XX out of your life': An analysis of the manosphere's discursive constructions of gender on Twitter." *Feminism & Psychology* vol. 32, no. 1 (2022): 3-22; Ging, Debbie. "Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere." *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 638-657; Jones, Callum, Verity Trott, and Scott Wright. "Sluts and soyboys: MGTOW and the production of misogynistic online harassment." *New Media & Society* 22, no. 10 (2020): 1903-1921; Krendel, Alexandra. "The men and women, guys and girls of the 'Manosphere': A corpus-assisted discourse approach." *Discourse & Society* 31, no. 6 (2020): 607-30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926520939690>; Papadamou, Kostantinos, Savvas Zannettou, Jeremy Blackburn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Gianluca Stringhini, and Michael Sirivianos. "'How over is it?' Understanding the Incel community on YouTube." *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* 5, no. CSCW2 (2021): 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3479556>; Bratich, Jack, and Sarah Banet-Weiser. "From pick-up artists to incels: Confidence games, networked misogyny, and the failure of neoliberalism." *International Journal of Communication* 13 (2019): 25; Jaki, Sylvia, Tom De Smedt, Maja Gwóźdź, Rudresh Panchal, Alexander Rossa, and Guy De Pauw. "Online hatred of women in the Incels. me forum: Linguistic analysis and automatic detection." *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict* 7, no. 2 (2019): 240-268; Van Valkenburgh, Shawn P. "Digesting the red pill: Masculinity and neoliberalism in the manosphere." *Men and Masculinities* 24, no. 1 (2021): 84-103; Schmitz, Rachel M., and Emily Kazyak. "Masculinities in cyberspace: An analysis of portrayals of manhood in men's rights activist websites." *Social Sciences* 5, no. 2 (2016): 18; for an exception see Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin, Megan Kelly, and Greta Jasser. "Of Victims, Mass Murder, and 'Real Men': The Masculinities of the 'Manosphere.'" *In Male Supremacism in the United States*, pp. 117-141. Routledge (2022).

tendency observed by Ging and Murphy⁷⁸ as “gathering a dataset from one platform and subjecting it to either manual or machine analysis to identify key themes or characteristics,” which, whilst important, has potentially reached the point of knowledge saturation due to its staunch replication. Furthermore, an additional focus on female-supported misogynist spaces is significant given that comparative studies of the manosphere and equivalent female communities are rare.

The second stream examines how the emergence of the manosphere is associated with broader historical, cultural, and social changes in, predominantly, Western societies.⁷⁹ Such studies trace the connection between ‘fringe’ manosphere and mainstream spaces, in particular by exploring the role of misogynistic discourse and norms as a conduit. While situating the manosphere within a larger societal context is vital, it can obscure the heterogeneity of views and online behaviours underpinning these communities. Unpacking these differences across communities can provide better insight into not only the various manifestations of extreme misogyny (in both male- and female-dominant spaces), but also discern the ways in which mainstream misogynistic norms are operationalised differently by these groups.

The third and last stream focus more on conceptualising the phenomenon and its ideology, while discussing both how it is situated in the broader study of political violence, as well as its policy implications.⁸⁰

These corpora of literature lack a systematic analysis of the scope and features of extreme misogynistic spaces, the social and rhetorical frameworks that traverse these communities, as well as the diversity of practices. As Ging and Murphy⁸¹ astutely point out:

Consequently, we have many useful static snapshots but we are missing the dynamic aspects of how and where ideas travel and interconnect. In addition to this, there is a tendency to think of the various sub-communities as homogenous, despite the significant diversity within them in terms of their agendas, motivations, and levels of involvement.

Furthermore, few studies systematically explore the overlap of misogyny and male supremacism between the manosphere and far-right movements.⁸² As such, our study attempts to fill this gap by employing an innovative analytical framework that integrates these bodies of scholarship in order to map the dynamic online ecosystem of extreme misogynistic communities. In doing so, such new data can help to develop more effective theoretical and analytical frameworks for understanding extreme misogyny, which we hope could lead to the formation of government policies and civil society initiatives that can potentially address the aforementioned threats.

78 Ging, Debbie, and Shane Murphy. “Tracking the pilling pipeline: limitations, challenges And a call for new methodological frameworks in incel And manosphere research.” *AolR Selected Papers of Internet Research* (2021).

79 Sugiura, Lisa. *The incel rebellion: The rise of the manosphere and the virtual war against women*. Emerald Group Publishing (2021); Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 638-657; Jane, Emma A. “Systemic misogyny exposed: Translating rape-gish from the manosphere with a random rape threat generator.” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 21, no. 6 (2018): 661-680; Marwick, Alice E., and Robyn Caplan. “Drinking male tears: Language, the manosphere, and networked harassment.” *Feminist Media Studies* 18, no. 4 (2018): 543-559.

80 Hoffman, Bruce, Jacob Ware, and Ezra Shapiro. “Assessing the threat of incel violence.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 7 (2020): 565-587;

81 Ging, Debbie, and Shane Murphy. “Tracking the pilling pipeline: limitations, challenges And a call for new methodological frameworks in incel And manosphere research.” *AolR Selected Papers of Internet Research* (2021).

82 For exceptions see Mattheis, Ashley A., and Michael S. Waltman. “Gendered hate online.” *The International Encyclopedia of Gender, Media, and Communication* (2020): 1-5; Bjork-James, Sophie. “Racializing misogyny: Sexuality and gender in the new online white nationalism.” *Feminist Anthropology* 1, no. 2 (2020): 176-183. DeCook, Julia R. “Memes and symbolic violence: #proudboys and the use of memes for propaganda and the construction of collective identity.” *Learning, Media and Technology* 43, no. 4 (2018): 485-504.

Research Design and Methodology

In order to facilitate our exploration of the landscape of extreme misogyny, a multi-faceted approach was employed. The first phase focused on sampling discursive data from the digital spaces of five misogynist communities: 1) Incel, 2) Chauvinist far-right, 3) MGTOW, 4) MRA, and 5) PUA. We aimed to compile both a comprehensive and representative sample of the discourse and social practices of each English language community. However, we omitted female supported misogynist communities from our data collection. While we acknowledge the importance of these actors, our data collection approach (discussed below), was not well-suited to capture the interactions between female supported misogynist and manosphere communities, given their differing online presence, for example, the latter communicate on insular online forums and websites, whereas the former predominately on influencer Instagram and YouTube accounts. In addition, we did not include data collection of Gamer/geek, TradCons, father's rights movement, and NoFappers since misogynistic manifestations are less consistent and frequent in their discourse (gamer/geek), and their online presence is fairly limited (NoFappers). The second phase utilised the data to engage in fine-tuning our various measurements of the variables under examination. Lastly, we conducted multiple analyses to examine and validate the classifications of the various misogynist actors and effectively map the overall landscape of these manosphere communities.

Phase I - Data Collection

We began the data collection process by creating a database of all the relevant digital spaces by reviewing academic and professional sources and publications. Subsequently, we used a systematic sampling design through open-source internet searches to find additional ideologically relevant websites, either by name or from the scholarly/professional literature on each group. Specifically, after identifying a relevant major website, we used Screaming Frog SEO Spider (a search engine optimisation programme) to collect the weblinks present on each web page. The tool begins on a single web page and identifies all hyperlinks on that initial page. The tool then goes from web page to web page in the same domain, cataloguing each web page and every hyperlink present on the page, both those from the same domain and externally linked web pages. The tool continues its cataloguing of the websites until it exhausts all public online domains. Several recent studies have used web-crawling software and techniques to collect online research data, verifying the effectiveness and reliability of such methods within large online databases,⁸³ likewise created for this study.

After compiling the list of online platforms, we employed several criteria to determine the inclusion of specific online spaces in our analysis. First, the space has been active for at least a year to ensure relevancy and sufficient discursive data. Second, there is evidence of actual social interaction, meaning posts constantly generate likes or similar responses, helping to filter out niche spaces with limited impact. Third, the platform describes itself as a promoter of discourse related to misogynist sentiments or gendered social and political issues. Lastly, the space's discourse is in English (due to the methodological limitations of our linguistic analysis tools).

The scraping of textual data was conducted with multiple computer-assisted tools (Octoparse, ScrapeStorm, Apify, and the specialised Python package BeautifulSoup). The scraping was conducted from April-June 2022 and covered, for the most part, all textual communication in the

83 Aldridge, Judith, and David Décary-Héty. "Hidden wholesale: The drug diffusing capacity of online drug cryptomarkets." *International Journal of Drug Policy* vol. 35 (2016): 7–15. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2016.04.020> ; Avarikioti, Georgia, Roman Brunner, Aggelos Kiayias, Roger Wattenhofer, and Dionysis Zindros. "Structure and content of the visible Darknet." *arXiv preprint arXiv:1811.01348* (2018); Ball, Matthew, and Roderic Broadhurst. "Data capture and analysis of darknet markets." SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY, February 18, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3344936> .

prior year in each space. The inclusion of other media forms were considered (for example, memes), however the automated format and composition of the scraping tools used meant only text could be scrapped. Furthermore due to the quantity of data collected, the decision to exclusively focus on textual communication was made. Naturally, some platforms are more active than others, so the volume of the scraped text differs across platforms. Nonetheless, we aimed to ensure that the overall scraped data for each ideological stream would be comparable in size.

Table 1 provides an overview of the scope of the data in our study. For each community, we utilised a minimum of four different platforms and analysed, at minimum, more than a thousand posts and more than 25,000 words. While incel platforms seem to be the most active online community, thus producing a higher volume of available text for analysis, the overall volume of data collected across all communities was substantial.

Table 1 - Scope of Data Collection

Community	Online platforms	Overall no. of posts	Overall no. of words
<i>Incel</i>	Forever Alone Incel.Blog Incel.co Incel.net 2022 SAID IT The Red Pill Right Women can only love Chad	12937	463,715
<i>Chauvinist Far-Right</i>	Achilles of 86 Britain First Don't Tread on Liberty Euroman Gab Women Lord Man Delslime PollMan Proud Boy Proud Boys Red Lion Trouble Man Wermacht	2178	47,459

<i>MGTOW</i>	A Voice for Men Gynocentrism Mensactivism MensRight Vox Popli	1074	189,996
<i>MRA</i>	A Voice for Men Gynocentrism Mensactivism MensRight Vox Popli	4254	189,996
<i>PUA</i>	Chateau Heartiste Dating Advice for Men Pick Up Artist Community Seduction	2161	111,333

Phase II - Operationalisation of Measurements

In order to identify the distinct differences between the various misogynistic online communities, we utilised four measurements of analysis:

1. *The prominence of violent language* – we measured the prevalence of terms and phrases which are associated with the following perceptual and behavioural aspects of violence: (a) support, praise, and legitimise violent practices; (b) indicate a willingness to use violence; (c) using violent terms for describing a social or personal situation; and (d) indicate planning and coordinated effort to execute violent acts. Here we define violent acts as those which are purely physical and harm people or property. Due to the motivation and commitment required to engage in a physical act, and its greater destructive potential, compared to forms of violence online (such as bullying, harassment, or zoom bombing), the decision was made to exclusively focus on physical acts. A specialised lexicon of violent language was developed by the research team and used in order to classify the various actors onto a spectrum depicting the levels of violent discourse. Due to a substantial body of literature associating derogatory language with violent behaviours,⁸⁴ we expanded our efforts to map the potential for violence in the various online communities by also looking at their usage of derogatory language. Specifically, we examined the frequency and use of disparaging and insulting terms while distinguishing between whether such terms focused on gender, body image, and/

84 Bakare, Lilian Eguriase, and Justina Aniefiok James. "Drama-in-education in understanding the contributing factors to aggressive behaviour among Teenagers." *Gender and Behaviour* 17, no. 2 (2019): 12978–90. <https://journals.co.za/doi/epdf/10.10520/EJC-16ebab075c>; Lunneblad, Johannes, and Thomas Johansson. "Violence and gender thresholds: A study of the gender coding of violent behaviour in schools." *Gender and Education* 33, no. 1 (2021): 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2019.1583318>; Orchard, Treena, and Doreen Mathura Sangaraganesan. "Exploring the links between slang and sexual and gender-based violence among University students in a Canadian city." *Sex Education* (2022): 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2022.2108780>.

or misogynist attitudes, versus those that did not.

2. *Definition of Adversaries* – We identified the specific terms in which “enemies” of the ideology/group are framed and presented. In this context, we examined potential differences in the (a) identities of the adversaries, (b) what tactics should be implemented against them, and (c) the scope of adversaries (i.e., are multiple or single forms of adversaries discussed).
3. *Deterministic vs. Dynamic Ideological Focus* – we measured the prevalence of terms and phrases which indicate personal agency and desire or efforts to change the status quo (i.e., dynamic perspective), versus terms that indicate acceptance of the current status quo and its permanent nature (i.e., deterministic perspective); a relationship described by Rothermel, Kelly and Jasser⁸⁵ as “diagnosis” and “reaction”. A specialised lexicon of relevant terms was developed by the research team and used in order to classify the various communities on the spectrum between deterministic and dynamic rhetoric. In addition, we examined the frequency of terms related to time orientation, to explore if the language was “present” or “future” oriented, as an additional data point for profiling this aspect of the online communities.
4. *Emotional Profile* – we measured the prevalence of terms and phrases which are associated with specific emotional reactions/triggers related to (a) anger, (b) anxiety, (c) sadness/negativity, (d) happiness, (e) social empathy, and (f) aptitude for risk. Specialised and validated lexicons from the LIWC (Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count) Software⁸⁶ were utilised by the research team in order to classify the various communities based on their predominant emotional depictions. This analysis can help identify underlying motivations and psychological triggers which may be associated with the different types of misogynist communities, as well as if the communities themselves use specific language/emotion to engage, interact, and motivate their followers

Phase III - Data Analysis

Automated content analysis was used to explore how the various misogynist communities differ on the measurements detailed above. Specifically, we utilised LIWC software,⁸⁷ which uses computerised text analysis to measure over 40 different psychological constructs such as analytical thinking, clout, intensity of us/them language, the use of profanity, and various emotions, including anger and intense negative emotion. More importantly, the LIWC lexicon can be adapted based on the specific interest of the researcher. Hence, we used LIWC based on the generation of our own lexicons to detect both emotional discursive elements as well as to identify vocabulary related to the legitimacy of violence, description of adversaries, and level of deterministic approach in the discourse of the various groups.

Several steps were taken in order to validate the lexicons for the first three measurements (Legitimacy for violence, Definition of Adversaries, Deterministic vs. Dynamic Ideological Focus). First, one of the authors created the lexicons, which were subsequently reviewed and adapted by the two other authors independently. Coding was compared, and discrepancies were analysed to finalise the lexicon. Afterward, multiple pilot content analyses were conducted to verify that indeed text and sentences which include terms from the lexicons corresponded with the measurements. Subsequently, terms that seemed to generate a substantial number of false positives were dropped. Lastly, in the post-analysis phase, a manual review of all the matched terms was conducted in order to identify additional false positives. Specifically, the results were coded to identify matches that are directly relevant to the measurement (for example, directly indicate

85 Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin, Megan Kelly, and Greta Jasser. “Of Victims, Mass Murder, and “Real Men”: The Masculinities of the “Manosphere.” In *Male Supremacism in the United States*, pp. 117-141. Routledge (2022).

86 Pennebaker, James W., Ryan L. Boyd, Kayla Jordan, and Kate Blackburn. “The development and psychometric properties of LIWC2015,” University of Texas at Austin (September 15, 2015). <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/31333>.

87 Ibid.

support for violence, or plan to engage in violence), those which are more ambiguous, and those which are clearly irrelevant.

In order to map the fourth measurement (The emotional characteristic of the different communities), we used LIWC's original emotional lexicon, which has been validated by numerous studies.⁸⁸ In cases where supplementary analysis was needed to identify potential discrepancies or ambiguities in language, we utilised additional tools such as VADER (Valence Aware Dictionary and Sentiment Reasoner, a lexicon and rule-based sentiment analysis tool that is specifically attuned to sentiments expressed on social media) and NVIVO's sentiment analysis.

Finally, this study applies a novel methodology and unique approach in exploring the rhetoric of various communities within the manosphere, however it does not come without its limitations which lie in its sample and data gathering methods. Based on the stark differences between communities within the frequency of use and popularity of online platforms, large discrepancies lay in the amount of posts and subsequent words which were then scrapped and analysed. Furthermore, the cross sectional nature of the research evidently meant any temporal effects were not studied. This is particularly a limitation within the analysis of online rhetoric due to its amalgamation with daily news topics and situational factors. Within the analysis itself, the low percentage scores of the legitimization of violence and derogatory terms suggest the created LIWC dictionaries were also too narrow in their inclusion criteria.

Findings

The review of the results of our analysis is organised in accordance with the four measurements presented above. The implications of the findings from both a theoretical and policy perspective will be discussed more broadly in the concluding section.

Legitimacy for Violence

As Table 2 illustrates, there are apparent differences in the use of explicit violent language between the various misogynist online communities. The communities in which we see the highest levels of violent discourse are those affiliated with chauvinist far-right groups, followed by MGTOW, MRA, and Incels – once again reinforcing that the term violent misogynists is more accurate than assuming that all gender-based terrorist attacks are committed by incels. In line with the literature, these findings contradict commonly held assumptions that MGTOW members allegedly espouse less confrontational ideological attitudes towards women compared to Incel communities, with their alleged focus on the “quality of life of men” seemingly masking underlying violent attitudes. The focus of far-right groups actively promoting societal changes and de-legitimising existing political and social institutions seems to explain, at least partially, their highly violent discourse.⁸⁹ In contrast, PUA communities are the least inclined to utilise violent discourse. The focus of PUA on emotional manipulation and “positive” attitudes seems to account for the marginal amount of violent discourse in their communities, notwithstanding practices of sexual manipulation.

88 Tausczik, Yla R., and James W. Pennebaker. “The psychological meaning of words: LIWC and computerized text analysis methods.” *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010): 24–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X09351676> ; Robinson, Rebecca L., Reanelle Navea, and William Ickes. “Predicting final course performance from students’ written self-introductions: A LIWC Analysis.” *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 32, no. 4 (2013): 469–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X13476869>.

89 Karpova, Anna, Aleksei Savelev, Alexander Vilnin, and Sergey Kuznetsov. “Method for detecting Far-Right extremist communities on social media.” *Social Sciences* 11, no. 5 (2022): 200. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11050200> ; Perliger, Arie. *American Zealots: Inside Right-Wing Domestic Terrorism*. Columbia University Press, 2020.

Table 2 - Textual Analysis of Legitimation of Violence

Community	Matches (percent of overall posts)	Ambiguous matches (percent of overall posts)	Combined Matches and Ambiguous matches (percent of overall posts)
Incel	180 (1.39)	49 (0.38)	229 (1.77)
Chauvinist Far-Right	149 (6.84)	23 (1.06)	172 (7.90)
MGTOW	21 (1.96)	20 (1.86)	41 (3.82)
MRA	69 (1.62)	34 (.80)	103 (2.42)
PUA	13 (.60)	5 (.23)	18 (.83)

We further expanded our effort to comprehend the potential for violence in the various online communities by also looking at their usage of derogatory terminology. Specifically, we examined the level of use of disparaging and insulting terms while distinguishing between those focusing on gender/body image (which may be an extension of the sexual ideological orientation of the groups) with those not related to specific misogynist attitudes, i.e., general. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 - Textual Analysis for Derogatory Language

Community	Sexual Derogatory Terms (percent of overall posts)	General Derogatory Terms (percent of overall posts)	Combined matches (percent of overall posts)
Incel	1651 (12.761)	1459 (11.24)	3110 (24.04)
Chauvinist Far-Right	20 (.92)	59 (3.71)	79 (3.63)
MGTOW	108 (10.06)	23 (2.14)	131 (12.20)
MRA	106 (2.49)	130 (3.06)	236 (5.55)
PUA	98 (4.53)	124 (5.74)	222 (10.27)

Incel communities are more inclined to use derogatory language than any other online community, followed by MGTOW and PUA. It is important to note that both Incel and MGTOW communities are closely ranked in terms of usage of sexual/misogynist derogatory language; for MGTOW, this often takes shape in the form of discussion on forums of how women have wronged them, or shaming women for sexual activity or looks.⁹⁰ In comparison, far-right and MRA communities are substantially less prone to use derogatory language. Overall, the findings suggest an association between the ideological emphasis on males' individual helplessness and self-pity, and the tendency to use foul language. In contrast, groups focusing more on broader ideological/political narratives are less inclined to use derogatory terms, especially sexual/misogynist terms.

The gaps between the usage of violent and derogatory language across the different communities provides some additional insights. Far-right groups are more focused on the practical ap-

90 Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin, Megan Kelly, and Greta Jasser. "Of Victims, Mass Murder, and "Real Men": The Masculinities of the "Manosphere." In *Male Supremacy in the United States*, pp. 117-141. Routledge (2022), pp. 128-129.

proaches of harming their enemies rather than undermining or ridiculing them - a feature that aligns with the many typical “revolutionary” narratives they promote.⁹¹ In contrast, incel communities (and to some extent also MGTOW) are less focused on the violent depiction of harm against their adversaries, or their situation, but instead mainly use derogatory language to describe and marginalise themselves.⁹² Low self-image regarded by the physical attributes of the incel, and to a lesser extent MGTOW, community members, may explain the substantial gap between their usage of foul language and actual violent terms. Similarly, the focus on emotional manipulation and the instrumental depiction of women by PUA communities may explain why they are more inclined to use derogatory, especially sexualised, language.⁹³

Adversarial Discourse

Our analysis of the adversarial discourse of the various communities further confirms that differences in ideological focus are reflected in the language used to address the adversaries, or ideological “enemies”, of the community. We identified for each community the main designations of adversaries, revealing some similarities but also substantial differences between the various online communities (see Table 4).

Table 4 - Textual Analysis of the Definition of Adversaries

Top adversaries (1 percent < of overall adversarial designations).

Incel		Chauvinist Far-Right		MGTOW		MRA		PUA	
Adversaries	%	Adversaries	%	Adversaries	%	Adversaries	%	Adversaries	%
Women	35.50	Women	37.40	Women	38.530	Women	47.40	Women	38.70
Chad	12.10	Left/Liberal	5.10	Feminist	10.20	Feminism	11.70	Girl	33.60
Girl	9.00	Migrant	4.60	Feminist	7.80	Female	9.60	Dude	5.80
Female	6.50	Jewish	4.00	Left	6.20	Girl	4.30	Bro	3.60
Dude	3.80	Transgender	3.60	Chick	3.80	Left	1.80	Female	2.60

91 Ravndal, Jacob Aasland. “From bombs to books, and back again? Mapping strategies of Right-Wing revolutionary resistance.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (2021): 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2021.1907897>.

92 Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 638–657; O’Malley, Roberta Liggett, Karen Holt, and Thomas J. Holt. “An exploration of the involuntary celibate (Incel) subculture online.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 37, no. 7–8 (2022): NP4981–5008. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520959625>; Glace, Alyssa M., Tessa L. Dover, and Judith G. Zarkin. “Taking the Black Pill: An empirical analysis of the ‘Incel.’” *Psychology of Men & Masculinities* vol.22, no.2 (2021): 288–97. <https://doi.org/10.1037/men0000328>; Pelzer, Björn, Lisa Kaati, Katie Cohen, and Johan Fernquist. “Toxic language in online Incel communities.” *SN Social Sciences* 1, no. 8 (2021): 213. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-021-00220-8>.

93 Green, Kathleen, Zoe Kukan, and Ruth J. Tully. “Public perceptions of ‘Negging’: Lowering women’s self-esteem to increase the male’s attractiveness and achieve sexual conquest.” *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research* 9, no. 2 (2017): 95–105. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JACPR-06-2016-0235>

Bro	3.60	Muslims	2.90	Girl	2.60	Dude	1.10	Left	2.60
Feminists	2.30	Activists	1.60	Chads	2.40	Wife	1.10	Wife	1.80
Left	2.20	Wom. Empower.	1.60	Dude	1.40				
Gay	2.10	Feminism	1.40	Gay/ Lesbians	2.20				
Whores	1.70	Girl	1.20	Wife	1.20				
		Gay	1.00						

Among Incels and PUA communities, there is a substantial focus on male competitors or “enemies” (such as “dude/s,” “chads,” etc.), while other communities seem to focus more on various terms referring to female adversaries. Relatedly, PUA is the only community in which the term “girl” is more popular than “women,” which associates seduction with “girls” that have a higher sexual market value (SMV) when younger women. Akin to the violent discourse findings, far-right communities are also distinct within this category, with much more focus on minorities (Jews/Muslims/migrants) and political rivals (left/liberals). The political left receives widespread attention, indicating the growing linkage these communities are drawing between progressive gender perceptions (i.e., “gender ideology”) and current political polarisation in North America; for example, the Proud Boys, while originally a MRA group, shifted towards the chauvinist far-right.⁹⁴ Not surprisingly, feminism/ist is highly ranked among MRA groups and MGTOW, whom they believe control ‘gynocentric’ societies discriminatory towards men.⁹⁵ Lastly, LGBTQ-related terms are more prominent in the adversarial discourse of incel, MGTOW, and far-right groups, whilst absent in the rhetoric of PUAs and MRAs. In the case of the latter two communities, this adheres to the literature which finds that PUAs are more invested in the seduction of women rather than socio-political causes,⁹⁶ whilst gay men are seen as allies by MRAs on the basis of shared anti-feminism and anti-“political correctness” perceived as threats to (white male) social privilege.⁹⁷

Deterministic vs Dynamic Ideological Focus

In order to identify if discursive dynamics were trending towards acceptance of the status quo (i.e., deterministic), or the promotion of change and empowered personal agency (i.e., dynamic), we created a specialised lexicon to measure the balance between these two discursive trends. Because of the high potential for false positives, the findings were further validated manually after the completion of the automated LIWC analysis. Despite these efforts, we still recommend caution in the interpretation of these findings (see Figure 1).

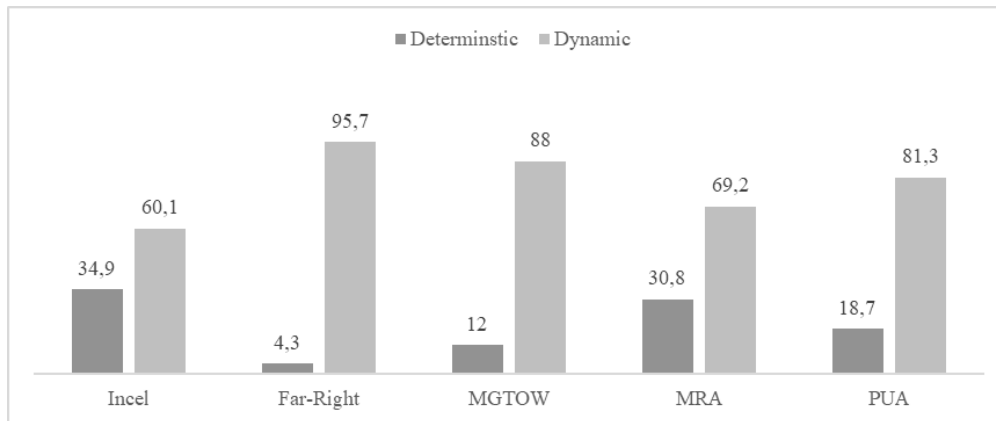
⁹⁴ Stern, Alexandra Minna. *Proud boys and the white ethnostate: How the alt-right is warping the American imagination*. Beacon Press (2019).

⁹⁵ Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin, Megan Kelly, and Greta Jasser. “Of Victims, Mass Murder, and “Real Men”: The Masculinities of the “Manosphere.” *In Male Supremacism in the United States*, pp. 117-141. Routledge (2022).

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ging, Debbie. “Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities* 22, no. 4 (2019): 638-657.

Figure 1 - Deterministic vs Dynamic Discourse (Percentile)



The results illustrate that while in all online communities, dynamic and agency-oriented language is more prevalent than a deterministic one, the balance between the two varies across each community. While deterministic language is marginal among far-right and MGTOW groups, surprisingly only around a third of the relevant discourse accepting or recognising the existing status quo is evident among MRA and Incel platforms with language aspiring to change the status quo more dominant. This echoes the literature above that not all incels are necessarily blackpilled, while for MRAs this is predicated on their understanding as activists within a social movement seeking legal and political goals.⁹⁸ Further, even the PUA community, whose entire rationale is based on the aspiration to achieve personal change and self-improvement, still has a fairly substantial amount of language focusing on deterministic sentiments. This reflects what Rothermel, Kelly and Jasser⁹⁹ describe as “PUAs have no shared diagnosis of society” but instead “what unites them is they strive for individual success to attract women and become involved with them,” thus allowing for variation in outlook among this community.

Beyond the differences between the online communities, it is surprising to see that even in the more deterministic ideological groups (with a strong focus on the acceptance of personal inability for successful intimate relationships and of the alleged growing marginalisation and helplessness of men), deterministic rhetoric is still less prevalent than language focusing on change and agency. We suspect that a stronger focus on dynamic discourse across these communities may be partially attributed to close overlap with self-help and self-improvement communities that influence manosphere narratives— an area identified for further research.

Emotional Characteristic

In order to identify potential emotional and attitudinal triggers that may be associated with the different types of misogynist communities and how they shape the overall manosphere’s emotional discursive climate, we utilised the LIWC dictionary to measure emotions and attitudes which the literature tends to associate with misogynist inclinations. Table 5 summarises our findings.

⁹⁸ Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin, Megan Kelly, and Greta Jasser. “Of Victims, Mass Murder, and “Real Men”: The Masculinities of the “Manosphere.” In *Male Supremacism in the United States*, pp. 117-141. Routledge (2022), pp. 124-125.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Table 5 - Textual Analysis of Derogatory Language

Variable	Incel	Far-Right	MGTOW	MRA	PUA	ANOVA
Positive Tone	30.21	23.77	22.69	34.42	50.24	F = 216.939***
Sense of belonging	6.07	6.61	6.72	5.71	5.88	F = 2.106*
Positive emotions	7.12	7.62	3.95	5.52	8.26	F = 5.383***
Negative emotions	7.55	5.7	6.3	4.73	5.09	F = 8.221***
Anger	4.82	7.16	2.69	3.41	2.45	F = 8.029***
Sadness	4.61	6.48	1.7	3.6	3.84	F = 1.672
Social Empathy	8.43	9.23	9.51	9.19	8.49	F = 6.259***
Prosocial behavior	4.76	5.28	3.27	5.28	4.48	F = 1.704
Wellness	3.83	5.69	1.28	3.5	2.36	F = 1.508
Mental	6.1	5.52	2.83	4.5	2.93	F = 1.782
Fulfillment	2.54	4.47	1.34	2.09	1.67	F = 5.888***
Risk-taking	3.72	5.49	3.75	3.95	3.21	F = 5.193***
Past focus	7.69	6.73	6.6	8.65	17.06	F = 7.238***
Present focus	9.27	7.25	9.12	8.23	6.29	F = 34.458***
Future focus	5.02	6.21	3.53	4.81	5.35	F = 10.037***

Key: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The ANOVA analysis demonstrates that the gaps between the communities in most emotional and attitudinal characteristics are statistically significant. Some of the findings seem to align with the groups' ideological orientation. It is not surprising that Incel and MGTOW communities are more present-oriented, risk-averse, and have a low sense of fulfilment, while the discourse of far-right groups is more future focused, risk-taking, and presents a high sense of fulfilment. In other words, the former emphasises existing helplessness and a deterministic approach, whilst the latter focuses on future political reforms. Interestingly, the discourse of far-right communities seems to generate more anger and sadness compared to other groups.

Some of the findings, however, are more puzzling and difficult to explain strictly via the ideological differences between the groups. While it is clear why members of Incel, MGTOW, and far-right groups have a stronger sense of belonging to a community than members of PUA communities (which are more instrumental and transactional in nature), it is not clear why members of MRA groups also have a lower sense of belonging. We suspect that it is due to the size of MRAs as the largest community in the manosphere, who view themselves through the framework of an outward-facing movement¹⁰⁰ rather than insular in-group identity building. Likewise, incels demonstrate substantially higher levels of emotional language (both positively and negatively) in comparison to members of MGTOW and MRA groups, which we interpret as their likeliness to exhibit obsession with physical image and self-esteem more than other communities. Both PUA and far-right groups are also more inclined to engage in emotionally positive discourse since, in both cases, the objective of personal or political change, respectively, is more ingrained into the group's ideological/narrative rationale. Lastly, expressions of social empathy are much more prevalent among MGTOW communities in comparison to what we find among incels, which is striking considering both groups' similar levels of derogatory discourse. However, we suspect that members of MGTOW are more openly supportive of others' lifestyle decision making.

Discussion

When looking at the differences across five communities (Incel, far-right, MGTOW, PUA, MRA) within the manosphere, our analysis found distinct differences between the community groups. Results showed that incels and communities focusing on male helplessness and self-pity have a greater inclination to use both sexual and general derogatory language. Yet, these groups also displayed a lower propensity to use physically violent discourse. Such findings are not surprising given the ideological focus of these communities, which are based on internalised feelings of pity, powerlessness, and ineptitude that are all tied to, and hindered by, in their own eyes, their physical appearance. These insecurities can also explain why incels and PUAs see male competitors as their main adversaries due to the direct threat that “dudes” and “chads” pose to their identity, social pursuits, and aspired successes.

The emotional characteristics of the rhetoric used by incels and MGTOW showcase qualities of low risk aversion and sense of fulfilment. Furthermore, we suggest that “lookism”¹⁰¹ may explain the puzzling finding in which incels demonstrate substantially higher levels of both positive and negative emotive language compared to other community groups. Lookism refers to the heavily weighted concern that incels place on their physical appearance and the idea that it is to blame for their difficulties in developing relationships with women. As a result of their prescribed looks, this obsessive thinking drives in particular negative emotive language due to the grief and rejec-

100 Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin, Megan Kelly, and Greta Jasser. “Of Victims, Mass Murder, and “Real Men”: The Masculinities of the “Manosphere.” In *Male Supremacism in the United States*, pp. 117-141. Routledge (2022).

101 Pelzer, Björn, Lisa Kaati, Katie Cohen, and Johan Fernquist. “Toxic language in online Incel communities.” *SN Social Sciences* 1, no. 8 (2021): 213. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-021-00220-8>.

tion members experience, fueling rage and toxic emotive language. We suggest that more than any other manosphere group, the incel community provides members with a sense of belonging and validation of their own internalised hate, shame, and pity and thus encourages more positively charged emotional rhetoric.

Meanwhile, chauvinistic far-right groups, along with MGTOW and MRA, evidenced the highest legitimisation for violence, and promoted greater future-oriented, and risk-taking discourse. Such findings match the ideological focus of these communities and reflects their wider/broader political narratives and agendas. By leaning into and advocating misogynistic values and anti-feminist thinking supporters (both men and women), this helps strengthen far-right claims that white heritage, culture, tradition, and identity are under threat and must be reclaimed.¹⁰² Such rhetoric provides a call for action, legitimises violence, and encourages the regression back to traditional gender roles in which men dominate and lead across societal sectors, as well as within their own personal relationships, whilst the women are subordinate and serve to domestically support their husband and children.

Similarly, the consideration and promotion of political agendas within the far-right community in their rhetoric across the manosphere is also mirrored in their choice of adversarial targets. Results show that this community places a greater focus on minority groups (for example, migrants, Jewish, Muslim, and transgender populations) and political rivals (for example, the left, liberals, female advocates), a finding akin to prior literature analysing far-right channels and rhetoric emphasising attentional focus to be placed on critiquing societal functioning and social issues such as immigrants and Muslims¹⁰³ or feminism and women's rights.¹⁰⁴

Interestingly, across all groups, similarities were seen within the ideological focus of each group pushing for dynamic changes and the overhaul of the status quo. Whilst the proportionality varied in the focus placed between community dynamic and deterministic thinking, it is apparent that all groups within the manosphere are advocating for change and calls to action. This finding importantly highlights the fluidities within the placement of focus on each group's ideology, providing a stark reminder that focus is not fixed, but in fact is likely based on societal movements, political support, and other contextual factors.

Regarding policy implications, we echo DiBranco's¹⁰⁵ argument that "misogyny/male supremacism should be recognised as a motivating ideology in and of itself—not just a 'gateway'" into the far-right; extreme misogyny should be a sole concern. By extension, not all gender-based terrorist attacks are committed by incels, but more accurately by violent misogynists who may or may not be connected to the manosphere. At the same, the dangerous presence of chauvinistic far-right groups within the manosphere must be acknowledged and recognised. Our findings on the threat of far-right groups (highly violent discourse, encouraging political polarisation, future-oriented action) uncovers the strategic pairing of far-right political ideology with misogynistic practices and language in order for these communities to generate more followers, boost their public profile, and threaten opposing ideologies and political parties. We further urge policy

102 Campion, Kristy. "Women in the extreme and radical right: Forms of participation and their implications." *Social Sciences* 9, no. 9 (2020): 149.

103 Ottoni, Raphael, Evandro Cunha, Gabriel Magno, Pedro Bernardina, Wagner Meira Jr, and Virgílio Almeida. "Analyzing right-wing youtube channels: Hate, violence and discrimination." In *Proceedings of the 10th ACM conference on web science*, pp. 323-332 (2018).

104 Mamié, Robin, Manoel Horta Ribeiro, and Robert West. "Are anti-feminist communities gateways to the far right? evidence from reddit and youtube." In *13th ACM Web Science Conference 2021*, pp. 139-147 (2021).

105 DiBranco, Alex. "Male Supremacist Terrorism as a Rising Threat." *ICCT Journal Perspective* (2020).

Farrell, Tracie, Oscar Araque, Miriam Fernandez, and Harith Alani. "On the use of Jargon and Word Embeddings to Explore Subculture within the Reddit's Manosphere." In *12th ACM Conference on Web Science* (2020): 221-230.

makers to be aware of the recruitment practices that misogynistic groups use online to entice recruits, which expose radicalising narratives. As our findings show, all communities within the manosphere champion a dynamic ideological focus which can arouse stronger emotional ties and inspire radical action. We recommend that violent forums and online platforms are more heavily moderated and/or shut down, with outlets for such grievances instead being created and acknowledged in a safe, controlled, and validated way. Part of that process entails recognising that misogynist and male supremacist ideas do not exist out of a vacuum, but are an extreme manifestation that amplify mainstream gender norms.¹⁰⁶

For future research directions, we suggest that subsequent work should look to engage in longitudinal data scraping methods in order to capture how sentiments change over time, as well look to broaden the pool of groups within the manosphere to be scraped and analysed for comparison. The findings of this research, we hope, have cultivated new avenues of research, theory generation, and inspire greater use of cross-community comparative research in order to develop and deepen our insights into understanding the portrayal and actualities of each group. Furthermore, such methods enable the uncovering of the discrete interplays, similarities, and irregularities between groups operating within the manosphere. We also recommend further research exploring the interlinkages between the manosphere and broader men's self-help and self-improvement networks given the mainstreaming potential for dynamic ideological discourse in new avenues.

106 Leidig, Eviane. "Why Terrorism Studies Miss the Mark When It Comes To Incels." *ICCT Journal Perspective* (2021a).

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