

Mobilization of Sexual Violence within the Manosphere: A Mixed Methods Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

The manosphere, a decentralized network of online communities united by anti-feminist and male supremacist ideologies, has increasingly been recognized as a site of radicalization, violence, and cultural influence. This mixed methods systematic review synthesizes 105 empirical studies on the manosphere (e.g., The Red Pill, incels, Men's Rights Activists, Men Going Their Own Way, Pickup Artists) to examine how sexual violence is mobilized in these communities. Sexual violence mobilization refers not only to abusive incidents, but also broader discourses, attitudes, and practices that work to reproduce gendered power. Using a convergent integrated approach to synthesis and reflexive thematic analysis, we identified that manosphere actors leverage sexually violent acts and rhetoric to consolidate group identity and further their ideological goal of male supremacy, though, paradoxically, they do so under the guise of personal victimhood. Drawing on these findings, we propose a framework for conceptualizing sexual violence mobilization within the manosphere, highlighting how this mobilization is being used as a tool for recruitment, indoctrination, application of core ideologies, and the maintenance of these communities. The scope of this issue requires multi-level interventions, centering liberatory, gender-transformative programming for men.

The manosphere, a loosely defined, decentralized network of digital communities that share misogynistic, anti-feminist perspectives, has garnered increasing scholarly, media, and governmental attention in recent years (Aiolfi et al., 2024). Consisting of groups such as The Red Pill (TRP), Involuntary Celibates (Incels), Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW), Men's Rights Activists (MRA), and Pickup Artists (PUA), the manosphere's reach and influence have massively expanded in the decades following the shift to Web 2.0 (Ging, 2019). Web 2.0 provides technical capabilities for anti-feminist discourse to spread more efficiently than similar activism in the pre-Internet era, facilitating broader uptake of anti-feminist ideals among men, particularly young men (Barnes & Karim, 2025; Dashtgard, 2022; DeCook, 2019).

Although some early research explored online anti-Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) activism by father's rights activists (Dragiewicz, 2008), interest in anti-feminist radicalization within the manosphere was piqued after a string of ideologically-driven violence, including mass shootings, doxxing campaigns, and targeted harassment, was carried out by individuals linked to the manosphere starting in the 2010s (e.g., Marwick & Caplan, 2018; O'Donnell & Shor, 2022). Prominent among these incidents was the 2014 Isla Vista attack in which a young man who had been involved in the Incel community killed six and injured 14 people. This attack spurred additional violent rhetoric within the manosphere and pushed researchers and political leaders to take notice of the manosphere as more than just a handful of online

fringe groups (e.g., Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 2024).

In 2016, after experiencing a harassment campaign led by a local MRA organization in response to their anti-rape work, Gotell and Dutton (2016) presciently stated that, in response to changing cultural attitudes related to gender, the men's rights movement was shifting their primary focus to opposing feminist efforts to combat sexual violence. Just one year later, the digital #MeToo Movement garnered global attention, flooding social media and popular culture with feminist commentary on sexual violence, which manosphere actors have spent subsequent years capitalizing on to rally anti-feminist backlash (e.g., de Maricourt & Burrell, 2022; Kettrey et al., 2024). As rhetoric about sexual violence has become even further entrenched into manosphere ideology and anti-feminist radicalization, the present systematic review seeks to understand how sexual violence is mobilized within the manosphere.

Manosphere Ideologies and Core Groups

"Red Pill" philosophy permeates the manosphere, providing conceptual frameworks and shared terminologies that inform discourse and practices across communities. TRP references the 1999 film *The Matrix* in which a character chooses between taking "the blue pill" (remaining oblivious to reality) or "the red pill" (which would allow him to see reality outside the illusion of the Matrix). In the context of the manosphere, being "red pill" means opening one's eyes to a gynocentric,

feminist-dominated reality (Ging, 2019). TRP philosophy relies on various capitalist-economic logics that commodify women and perpetuate a patriarchal culture of domination (hooks, 1981; Van Valkenburgh, 2021). Among these logics is an emphasis on sexual market value (SMV), suggesting that women have higher SMV than men, thus affording them unjust power in heterosexual relationships and, by extension, society more broadly. Adherents of TRP frame feminism as a sexual strategy women use to further their control and exploitation of men (Bachaud & Johns, 2023). Whereas most manosphere factions subscribe to TRP philosophy, divergences emerge in how groups respond to the “blue pill” feminist society. Despite idiosyncrasies, it should be noted that membership or identification with manosphere subcommunities are not mutually exclusive; users may be active within or consume content across multiple groups.

Involuntary Celibates (Incels)

Incels comprise perhaps the most well-known faction of the manosphere, possibly because of links between Incel groups and the perpetration of mass violence (Hoffman et al., 2020; O'Donnell & Shor, 2022). Though the term “Incel” was first coined in the late-1990s by a woman named Alana on a website (“Alana’s Involuntary Celibacy Project”) designed to support people of all gender and sexual identities experiencing loneliness (Taylor, 2018), Incel communities have since become highly insular and intended exclusively for men. In line with TRP, Incels believe women hold all power over sexual activity and misuse this power to deny certain men sex (Glance et al., 2021). Incels are highly self-deprecating and view themselves in contrast to alpha male “Chads,” ultra masculine men who hold greater SMV and can attract women (Chua & Wilson, 2023). Women are viewed as either hypersexual “Stacys,” who wield their sexual power over men, or “Beckys,” less sexually attractive but arguably more attainable women (Fowler et al., 2023). Women are believed to exclusively seek sex with Chads until their SMV depreciates with age, at which point they turn to preying upon “beta” males (men less attractive than Chads who are not Incels), with whom they have children and rely on for monetary support (Menzie, 2022). Thus, Incels understand SMV through a lens called “alpha fucks, beta bucks” (Cannito & Camoletto, 2022). Despite their intense hatred toward women, Incels are distressed by their lack of intimate relationships, with some engaging in “looksmaxxing” (body modification practices ranging from exercise and grooming to plastic surgery) to increase their SMV (Sousbois, 2025). However, many Incels instead follow a nihilistic “black pill” philosophy, which suggests that no amount of self-improvement will be enough to “ascend” out of incelhood, leading Incels to encourage each other to “lie down and rot” (i.e., give up) or even suggest suicide (e.g., “rope” in Incel terminology; Puhrmann & Schlaerth, 2024).

Pickup Artists (PUAs)

PUAs have roots in pre-internet era bulletin board systems (van Geuns, 2022), and their teachings have become commercialized, with pickup “gurus” selling the “secrets” of pickup artistry to other men via books (e.g., Neil Strauss’s, *The Game*), television shows (VH1’s reality show, *The Pickup Artist*), and

in-person seminars. PUAs also subscribe to TRP philosophies; however, in contrast to Incels’ nihilism, they believe that social skills for achieving access to women’s bodies can be learned (Hambling-Jones & Merrison, 2012). Thus, their response is to build up or reclaim their power within the sexual marketplace by learning and implementing “seduction” techniques to have sex with as many women as possible, by any means necessary (Cosma & Gurevich, 2018; Dayter & Rüdiger, 2019). Capitalist logic in this community leads PUAs to commodify and dehumanize women, viewing them as “targets” from which to obtain sex or submit into obedience (Bates, 2020; Çağlar et al., 2025). PUAs gamify the pursuit of sex to perform patriarchal masculinity for one another, drawing on a shared repertoire of manipulation tactics that manifest in extreme objectification of women and blatant disregard for their sexual autonomy (Bates, 2020; Dayter & Rüdiger, 2022). One of the core tenets of PUA strategies is building inequality into interactions through tactics like “negging,” which involves talking down to or subtly insulting women as a way of asserting dominance and prompting them to seek validation and approval, often through sex (Millar, 2022; Scarlott, 2023).

Men’s Rights Activists (MRAs)

MRAs comprise the most politically active and policy focused manosphere faction. MRAs’ response to TRP is to “right the wrongs” perpetrated by the “gynocracy” by inciting policy change, focusing on gender and sexual politics as well as legal rights (Ging, 2019). MRAs view women as master manipulators who have twisted political systems to be biased against men, allowing women to exploit men for their resources (Banet-Weiser, 2018). The related Men’s Rights Movement traces back to the late 1970s when an offshoot of men’s liberation discourse, which considered oppression of both women and men by patriarchy, began to instead argue that society is matriarchal and benefits women much more than men (Messner, 1998). The emergence of MRAs as a manosphere group occurred with the publishing of *The Myth of Male Power* and creation of online communities such as *A Voice For Men* (Bates, 2020; Scotto di Carlo, 2023b). MRAs once focused on issues such as military drafting, yet contemporary MRA rhetoric largely focuses on correcting the perceived weaponization of the courts against men. This includes divorce-related issues (e.g., the idea family courts are biased against men) and father’s rights but has become increasingly focused on issues related to sex and gender-based violence, particularly in the aftermath of the #MeToo Movement (Kettrey et al., 2024).

Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW)

MGTOW respond to TRP philosophies by eschewing romantic relationships or interactions with women entirely, instead focusing on narrowly defined self-improvement and empowerment. Although closely aligned with MRA philosophies (Farrell et al., 2019; Schmitz & Kazyak, 2016), unlike MRAs, MGTOW do not seek to fight women and “blue-pill” society, instead proposing to combat gender inequality through separatism. Like MRAs, MGTOWs’ qualms largely focus on women as manipulators and liars to harm men, particularly in the context of sexual relationships. In their

avoidance of intimate relationships with women, MGTOW may remain celibate (“going monk”) or seek to become imperceptible to society (“going ghost”) (S. Wright et al., 2020). Although these methods of self-removal from society may seem the least combative, research has found MGTOW rhetoric to be harassing (Jones et al., 2020) and aggressively misogynistic toward women (S. Wright et al., 2020). Given that MGTOW is defined by the explicit rejection of women and femininity, these actions and attitudes represent performances used to affirm their masculinity and group membership (Jones et al., 2020). Thus, a paradox is created such that MGTOWs claim to want a separatist existence despite constructing their own identities primarily through the degradation of women and queer folks.

Rape Culture within the Manosphere

Rape is a tool of domination used within patriarchal cultures to subordinate feminized “others” and police essentialist views of gender; thus, anti-sexual violence work has been a core tenet of modern intersectional feminist movements (Berke et al., 2025; Brownmiller, 1975). Perpetuating rape culture, “a pervasive ideology that effectively supports or excuses sexual assault” (Burt, 1980, p. 218), is thus a logical tactic for men who seek to resist and overturn social advances that challenge hierarchical and essentialist views on gender. Given the manosphere’s roots in anti-feminism and misogyny, it is unsurprising that numerous studies have identified the flourishing of rape culture ideals within these communities (e.g., Barber, 2022; Gosse et al., 2024). Persson (2025) provided a critical review of how core TRP ideologies, which act as source text for most manosphere communities, amplify and purport to legitimize rape culture (Johnson & Johnson, 2021). For example, TRP supports essentialist views of gender that position men as sexual aggressors and women as gatekeepers, perpetuating societal rape myths that men are naturally prone to sexual aggression and women are responsible for protecting themselves; thus, victims are ultimately to blame (Persson, 2025). TRP also frames heterosexual power dynamics as antagonistic, such that men’s masculinity and status are reliant upon their ability to dominate women, particularly when it comes to sex (Persson, 2025). Further, women are dehumanized within TRP in numerous ways, including assertions that they are incapable of perceiving “reality,” bolstering rape myths related to women’s believability related to sexual victimization (Persson, 2025).

In many cases (e.g., Scotto di Carlo, 2024), rape myths in the manosphere follow a pattern that Freyd (1997) called “DARVO,” which stands for “deny, attack and reverse victim and offender” (p. 29). Scotto di Carlo (2024) argued that, for some manosphere communities in the post-#MeToo era, the pervasiveness of such patterns means these communities are engaging in “collective DARVO,” which goes beyond the use of DARVO to denigrate individual survivors, instead positioning all men as the victims of a non-existent “rape culture” fueled by feminist activism and ostensibly false statistics about the prevalence of sexual assault. In this review, we take a similar approach, focusing on the collective practices and discourses through which sexual assault is mobilized within

the manosphere more broadly, as well as across manosphere communities.

Performance of Masculinities within the Manosphere

Despite divergences in how men “do” masculinity within the manosphere (Ging, 2019; West & Zimmerman, 1987), these communities are united by their efforts to legitimize the subordination of women, gender minorities, and other men. This definition aligns, in part, with hegemonic masculinity as conceptualized by Connell (1995), but performances of masculinity within the manosphere lack the social legitimacy to be considered hegemonic (Lucy, 2024). Lucy (2024) argued that the dominating, explicitly misogynistic, and often violent performances within the manosphere are not (currently) viewed as socio-politically acceptable configurations of masculinity. Of course, hegemonic gender performances are culturally and contextually specific and therefore subject to shifts over time; as the sociopolitical positions of the manosphere become increasingly legitimized within mainstream cultural institutions, the dominating masculinities of the manosphere are shaping what is perceived as acceptable and ascendent gender performances in society more broadly (Roberts, Fairchild, et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, performances of masculinities within the manosphere are currently best described as complicit and patriarchal – advancing the cultural dominance of cisgender, heterosexual men and benefitting from a patriarchal culture of domination, without embodying a hegemonic performance of gender (Connell, 1995; hooks, 1981). Ging (2019) argued that these divergent performances of gender within the manosphere can be understood as hybrid masculinities, performances that borrow from marginalized or subordinated masculinities in ways that reaffirm, rather than challenge, patriarchal hegemony (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014). Performances of hybrid masculinity create discursive distance between men who view themselves as oppressed and social power, while simultaneously reinforcing existing power hierarchies (Ging, 2019). Bridges (2021) explained that these types of non-hegemonic performances enacted for the purpose of legitimizing patriarchal power structures represent adaptations to our evolving cultural understandings of privilege and inequality. Considering the positions that manosphere masculinities occupy, our use of “masculinity” in this manuscript, unless otherwise noted, refers to hybrid masculinities that can be understood as complicit and patriarchal (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014; Connell, 1995; hooks, 1981).

Mobilization of Sexual Violence

Building from conceptualizations of hybrid masculinities, Pascoe and Hollander (2016) discuss the mobilization of sexual violence as a suite of tools men use to reify masculine dominance. In their framing, the mobilization of sexual violence is not limited to discrete incidents which meet the legal definition of rape, but considers more broadly how attitudes, beliefs, practices, and discourse related to sexual violence also serve to maintain patriarchal gender hierarchies (Pascoe & Hollander, 2016). The mobilization of sexual violence, then, includes many behaviors and attitudes such as making rape jokes,

blaming survivors for their victimization, calling others rapists, and encouraging the perpetration of violence (Pascoe & Hollander, 2016). In their framework, men may mobilize sexual violence in fluid, seemingly contradictory manners that function to reinforce rape culture; for example, by discursively positioning others' violence as problematic while signaling that one's own sexual aggression doesn't count (Pascoe & Hollander, 2016). Although a wealth of empirical research and theory demonstrate that mobilization of sexual violence traces back to general hatred of women and beliefs in male supremacy (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 2021), an assessment of how the manosphere mobilizes sexual violence to this degree would require a systematic review of *all* studies written about the manosphere because of its roots in anti-feminist misogyny. Due to this, we narrowed our scope of what is considered mobilizing sexual violence to focus on explicit discussions or rhetoric related to sexual violence identified within the manosphere.

The Current Study

Previous evidence syntheses have explored violent extremism associated with manosphere communities and the anti-feminist discourse expressed within these forums (e.g., Aiolfi et al., 2024; O'Hanlon et al., 2024). However, despite the wealth of attention given to discussions of sexual violence within specific manosphere communities (e.g., Barber, 2022; Gosse et al., 2024; Persson, 2025), we are not aware of any work that has integrated findings from studies across the manosphere to help understand the mobilization of sexual violence and the role thereof in furthering the manosphere's ideological interests. In response to this gap in the literature, the present mixed methods systematic review aimed to answer the following research questions:

RQ₁: How is sexual violence mobilized within the manosphere?

RQ₂: How is this mobilization used to further the ideological goals of the manosphere?

Method

We conducted this systematic review according to the JBI Mixed Methods Systematic Review guidance (Lizarondo et al., 2024) and followed PRISMA guidelines to report results (Page et al., 2021). We created and registered the review protocol with the Open Science Foundation (<https://osf.io/sg26a>).

Mixed Method Systematic Reviews

We conducted a mixed method systematic review (MMSR) as including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed data strengthens the breadth and depth of findings related to our primary research questions (Stern et al., 2020). Given the overrepresentation of qualitative data in our sample (see Table 1), we pursued a qualitative synthesis, which required "qualitizing" relevant quantitative data (i.e., transforming quantitative data

into narrative summaries) prior to analysis. We disaggregated data from mixed method studies by extracting qualitative findings verbatim and qualitizing quantitative findings (Lizarondo et al., 2022). Because our research questions could be answered using quantitative or qualitative data, we took a convergent integrated approach to synthesis and integration, meaning that we pooled and analyzed qualitative and qualitized data simultaneously (Lizarondo et al., 2022; Stern et al., 2020).

Notably, from a methodological perspective, quantitative and qualitative traditions represented in this area of scholarship produce distinct forms of knowledge. Quantitative studies (in this review, predominantly Natural Language Processing) help identify prevalence, large-scale patterns, and diffusion of misogynistic or sexually violent discourse across the manosphere, offering a sense of scope that would be otherwise unattainable. Despite their utility, these approaches abstract language from context, often flattening meaning in relation to power, intent, and embodiment. In contrast, qualitative research (in this review, predominantly grounded in feminist epistemologies) foreground interpretation, positionality, and lived experience. These approaches are generally more limited in scale, but they enable deeper theorization of how sexual violence is mobilized within digital cultures. Attending to the complementary strengths and limitations inherent to quantitative and qualitative epistemological approaches is crucial for capturing both the extent and nuance of sexual violence mobilization within the manosphere.

Search Strategy

We searched eight databases on April 10th, 2025: Sociological Abstracts (ProQuest), Social Sciences Citation Index (Web of Science), PsycInfo including PsychArticles (bundled through ProQuest), Criminal Justice Database (ProQuest), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global (ProQuest), Conference Proceedings Citation Index – Social Sciences & Humanities (Web of Science), Conference Proceedings Citation Index – Sciences (Web of Science). The search strategies were designed, in consultation with the researchers, by a research librarian who is coauthor on this review. We selected keywords to capture violence as well as the "manosphere" as defined by Aiolfi et al. (2024). The search strategy was designed to capture literature on violence and extremism more broadly, which we narrowed down to sexual violence during the screening stage. Depending on the database, we selected appropriate controlled vocabulary terms from each database's thesaurus. No additional limits were applied. Individual search strategies for each database can be found as online supplemental materials. The search strategy yielded 2,535 studies in total. In all, 806 duplicates were removed by Covidence, and we identified 18 duplicates by hand, leaving 1,711 studies to screen from databases and registers.

We conducted citation chaining with six articles that were identified by the team a priori to our full search as highly relevant to our research questions (i.e., focused explicitly on analyzing sexual/gender-based violence rhetoric in the manosphere), resulting in 562 studies to be screened (see supplementary materials for details). We also identified 10 studies by

Table 1. Studies included in review.

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Aiston (2022)*	Linguistics	U.K.	Qual	To investigate how the ideology of male separatism is legitimated, and the argumentation strategies used to justify withdrawing contact from women and rejecting feminism as a social movement.	Secondary	Reddit (r/MGTOW)	MGTOW	50 threads with 1300 comments
Aler (2021) ⁺	Political Science	Sweden	Qual	To understand how platform affordances enable (or constrain) the dual function of online counterpublics with anti-progressive agendas.	Secondary	Twitter (#mgtow), mgtow.com	MGTOW	~200 tweets and 75 posts from mgtow.com
Anastasio (2024)*	Criminal Justice	U.S.	Mixed	To explore factors related to incel violence and examine how the movement interacts with societal trends and events through online discourse.	Primary and secondary	incels.is, Twitter (IncelsCo), incels.net, Reddit (r/Redpillright), saidit.net/incels	Incels	3 interviews, 25 cases of violent incels, 11,041 scraped posts
Andéhn et al. (2024)	Marketing	U.K., Finland	Qual	To assess the production of affect and social cohesion within r/TheRedPill.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill)	TRP	Unspecified
Andersen (2023)	Criminology	Norway	Qual	To explore how the incel wiki serves as a site of resistance for incels in their efforts to avoid misrepresentation and maintain subcultural integrity by claiming rational status.	Secondary	Incels.wiki	Incels	1289 webpages
Ash-Houchen (2015) ⁺	Sociology	U.S.	Quant	To measure attitudes about social justice, gender role conflict, and personal responsibility among Men's Rights Activists.	Primary	Survey recruited from Reddit (r/MensRights)	MRAs	29 participants
Baele et al. (2021)	Politics	U.K.	Mixed	To analyze the worldview shared by participants in Incel online communities, particularly the cognitive-linguistic mechanisms that make it particularly conducive of violence.	Secondary	Incels.me	Incels	41,752 threads with 769,854 messages
Barber (2022)*	English, Comm. and Philosophy	U.K.	Mixed	To explore how rape and sexual assault are framed in Alt-Right and Manosphere online discourses and what similarities and/or differences these framings reveal about the ideologies of these two extreme right-wing communities.	Secondary	Chateau Heartiste, Return of Kings	MRAs	58 posts
Barnes and Karim (2025)	Public Affairs	U.S.	Quant	To describe differences in manosphere subgroups and make inferences about which subgroups may be more prone to perpetrating violence against women.	Secondary	See: https://dataverse.harvard.edu/file.xhtml?fileId=10727027&version=1.0	Manosphere	140 websites, blogs, and forums
Basu (2016)	Gender and Women's Studies	U.S.	Qual	To profile Men's Rights Activists' understandings of law, equality, and gender.	Primary and secondary	Save Indian Family Foundation, Masculist India, 498a.org, IPC 498A blog, Warning for Indian Bachelors	MRAs	~50 interview participants. Other information not specified.
Bono (2023)*	Psychology	U.S.	Qual	To inform how clinical services should be tailored for incel-identified individuals.	Secondary	incels.is, incels.net, said it.net/s/incels	Incels	450 threads with 10,040 posts
Çağlar et al. (2025) [^]	Political Science	Germany	Mixed	To map the GerManosphere by identifying the various sub-groups, their characteristics, and their narratives, and illustrating the links and interactions between the different communities and subgroups.	Secondary	YouTube, Twitch, Reddit, TikTok, Instagram, Telegram, X, Facebook, Unspecified websites and blogs, Podcasts	Incels, PUAs, MRAs, MGTOW	Over 350 websites, podcasts and social media accounts, 28 YouTube accounts

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Cannito and Camoletto (2022)	Sociology	Italy	Qual	To provide a sociologically-informed critical framework to address the (pseudo)scientific theories diffused in the manosphere about sexual relations and their effects in terms of construction of masculinities, as well as inter and intragender power dynamics.	Secondary	Il Redpillatore (The Redpillier), Forum degli Incels (Incels' Forum), and Forum dei Brutti (Forum of the Uglies)	TRP, Incels	10 blog posts, 12 forum threads
Cannito and Mercuri (2022)	Social and Political Sciences	Italy	Mixed	To explore the politics of fatherhood and masculinity that an Italian nonresident fathers' online forum engages in to assess whether the claims for fathers' rights are a move toward a new form of involved fatherhood or if they are only useful to rebuild a solid traditional male identity.	Secondary	Facebook (Mantenimento Diretto)	FRAs	953 posts, 28,307 comments
E. Carian (2022)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To investigate how straight, White men develop a collective consciousness around their high-status group identities that can be mobilized by backlash movements.	Primary	Interviews	MRAs	31 participants
E. K. Carian (2022)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To provide a detailed analysis of the logics and epistemologies men's rights activists employ on two online forums to construct and explain their belief that men are the victims of feminism.	Secondary	Reddit (r/MensRights), Men's Rights Movement forum (unspecified)	MRAs	60 posts with 1,136 comments
Caudill (2023)*	Clinical Psychology	U.S.	Qual	To gain a better understanding of incel ideology, which would result in the creation of psychologically-minded literature that can guide mental health clinicians in the objective treatment of incels.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill), The Red Pill Network	TRP	13 pinned threads, 4 articles, 1 blog
Chan (2023)	Political Science	U.K.	Mixed	To conduct a critical discourse and semantic analysis of the incels.co webpage and the Alek Minassian van attack using the Violent Extremism Risk Assessment and the Cyber Extremism Risk Assessment tool.	Secondary	Incels.co, Police interviews	Incels	Unspecified
Chang (2022)	Sociology	U.K.	Qual	To explore how discourses on r/braincels, the (now-defunct) subreddit for incels, construct women as "femoids" (i.e., female humanoid).	Secondary	Reddit (r/braincels)	Incels	14 threads
Chua and Wilson (2023)	Cyber Studies	U.S., U.K.	Mixed	To provide insights on discourse and narratives across online forums of extremist communities; specifically, addressing the opinions and overlaps in ideological discussions on the topics of political extremism, misogyny and racism.	Secondary	ExtremeBB Dataset from the Cambridge Cybercrime Centre	Incels, TRP, PUAs, MRAs, MGTOW	LDA run on nearly 44 million posts from 308,743 users; 3000 posts for qualitative analysis
Copland (2022)*	Sociology	Australia	Mixed	To understand how the Manosphere arose, why men participate, and what it provides for individuals.	Secondary	Reddit (r/braincels, r/MGTOW, r/TheRedPill)	Incels, MGTOW, TRP	171,082 submissions and 3,741,757 comments
Coppolillo (2025)	Computer Science	Italy	Quant	To analyze gendered hate speech in four openly declared misogynistic and misandric Reddit communities, examining their characteristics at a linguistic, emotional, and structural level.	Secondary	Reddit (r/Incels, r/MensRights)	Incels, MRAs	30,083 posts with 1,258,010 comments

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Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Cosma and Gurevich (2020)	Psychology	Canada	Qual	To investigate how casual sex with multiple women is positioned as a crucial requirement in accruing social status and esteem in men's online Pick-up Artist advice media.	Secondary	www.rooshv.com , lovesystems.com , www.krauserpua.com (additional sites unspecified)	PUAs	Unspecified
Dashtgard (2022)*	Psychological Science	U.S.	Mixed	To understand, define, and measure a newly emerging form of male supremacist thinking found in contemporary culture.	Primary and secondary	Reddit (r/RedPill, r/MGTOW, r/Incels, r/braincels, r/PUA, r/PUAHate), incel.co, incel.me, Return of Kings, The Rational Male, The Gorilla Mind-set	TRP, MGTOw, Incels, PUAs, MRAs	One interview, Secondary data unspecified
Davis and Kettrey (2024)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To explore the roles identity talk and cultural anchoring play in the boundary work that active and exiting extremist conduct in their respective free spaces to situate themselves inside and outside an extremist community.	Secondary	Reddit (r/IncelExt), incels.is	Incels, Former Incels	276 posts
de Maricourt and Burrell (2022)	Sociology	U.K.	Qual	To explore the narratives of two groups holding diverging views – self-identified feminist and anti-feminist men – through 13 semi-structured in-depth interviews, to gain insights into polarized masculinity politics in the #MeToo era.	Primary	Interviews	MRAs	7 participants
de Roos et al. (2024)	Clinical Psychology	Netherlands, U.S.	Quant	To examine how ongoing engagement on an online incel forum affects changes in incel comments in terms of expressed anger and sadness and use of incel violent extremist language.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	Posts made by 166 users over 3-month period
DeCook (2019)*	Media and Information Studies	U.S.	Qual	To examine online extremist groups' responses to infrastructural failure, which was defined as an event such as deplatforming and other modes of censorship, to understand how these groups manage to persist over time.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill, r/incels, r/AznIdentity), Incels.me	TRP, Incels, MRAsians	Thousands of posts, comments and screengrabs from each community
Dickel and Evolvi (2023)	Media and Comm.	Netherlands	Qual	To explore how the #MeToo debate is framed and discussed in the manosphere.	Secondary	Return of Kings, A Voice for Men (Websites)	PUAs, MRAs	12 articles and 641 comments about #MeToo
Dignam and Rohlinger (2019)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To analyze how the collective identity of The Red Pill became politicized and served as a base of collective action in the 2016 presidential election.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill)	TRP, MRAs, PUAs	8 posts and 1,762 associated comments
Dishy (2018) ⁺	Information	Canada	Mixed	To identify how misogynistic ideologies are constructed, consumed, and exchanged by Red Pills on their virtual platform, Reddit.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill)	TRP	36 posts with 6,744 comments
Dragiewicz (2008)	Criminology	Canada	Qual	To investigate fathers' rights rhetoric on the American Violence Against Women Act as an example of anti-feminist backlash.	Secondary	~50 Father's Rights websites (unspecified)	FRAs	Unspecified
Eddington et al. (2023)	Comm. Studies	U.S.	Mixed	To examine how identity is affectively organized in an online men's rights community.	Secondary	Reddit (r/thredpill)	TRP	100 posts with 35,256 comments
Ellenberg et al. (2024)	Psychology	U.S.	Quant	To distinguish between groups of self-described incels in accordance with the 3N theory of radicalization.	Secondary	Unspecified	Incels	268 self-identified incels
Eriksson (2023) ⁺	Political Science	Sweden	Mixed	To explore action framing within online incel communities.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	204 posts

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Farrell et al. (2019)	Web Science	U.K.	Quant	To assess the strength and evolution of misogynistic ideas within and across different online communities and explore which groups express the most violent attitudes and what are the most popular forms of online misogynistic violence.	Secondary	Reddit (r/MGTOW, r/badwomensanatomy, r/braincels, r/incelswithout hate, r/inceltears, r/incelsinaction, r/trufemcels)	MGTOW, Incels	6 million posts from 300K conversations
Farrell et al. (2020)	Web Science	U.K., Spain	Mixed	To identify and extract new terminology from large amounts of data from the manosphere on Reddit.	Secondary	Reddit (r/MGTOW, r/braincels, r/Trufemcels, r/IncelsWithoutHate, r/Inceltears, r/IncelsInAction, r/badwomensanatomy)	MGTOW, Incels	301,078 conversations including 5,674,303 comments 98 discussion threads
Fowler (2022)	Criminal Justice	U.S.	Qual	To decipher the language incels use to both describe their perceived worldview and reinforce their shared ideology.	Secondary	Three most popular incel forums (unspecified)	Incels	98 discussion threads
Fowler et al. (2023)	Criminal Justice	U.S.	Qual	To analyze incels' "interpretive repertoire," describing the social position of women based on "doing gender."	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill), incels.co, incels.is, incels.net	Incels, TRP	98 discussion threads
Furl (2020) ⁺	Sociology	U.S.	Mixed	To explore how male supremacist online communities foster distinct social identities, even when members engage in intense self-derogation.	Secondary	Reddit (r/incels, r/braincels, r/MGTOW, "random Reddit data")	Incels, MGTOW	Computational analyses of 272,130 texts; Qualitative coding of 1,669 titles and texts.
Ging (2019)	Comm.	Ireland	Qual	To determine how antifeminist men are positioning themselves through the manosphere's discursive practices.	Secondary	See article for full list.	MRAs, MGTOW, PUAs, Incels, TradCons, Gamer/geeks	38 websites
Glace et al. (2021)	Applied Psychology	U.S.	Qual	To describe the masculinities of the Incel community and ideologies.	Secondary	Reddit (r/braincels)	Incels	400 posts from 279 individual users
Górska et al. (2023)	Human Resource Management	Poland	Mixed	To conduct a close study of the misogynistic online content generated by Men Going Their Own Way.	Secondary	Twitter	MGTOW	28,280 tweets
Gosse et al. (2024)	Sociology and Social Anthropology	Canada	Qual	To examine how members of the most popular incel community (incels.is) perform stochastic gender-based violence by encouraging, normalizing, and legitimating violence against women.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	107 threads with 22,060 comments
Gottell and Dutton (2016)	Women and Gender Studies	Canada	Qual	To explore the role that men's rights activism (MRA) is playing in a contemporary backlash to feminist anti-rape activism.	Secondary	A Voice For Men, Canadian Association for Equality, Men's Rights Edmonton (websites)	MRAs	Unspecified
Grunau et al. (2022)	Psychology	Netherlands, U.K.	Quant	To investigate whether the degree of unwanted celibacy is associated with misogynistic attitudes among men who identify with the Incel community and those who do not.	Primary	Survey recruited from Reddit and Incel forums (unspecified)	Incels	357 participants
Haase (2021)*	Clinical & School Psychology	U.S.	Qual	To investigate enactments of virtual manhood acts on Reddit.	Secondary	Reddit (r/IncelsWithoutHate, r/MensRights)	Incels, MRAs	74 posts with 1267 comments

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Halpin (2022)	Sociology	Canada	Qual	To analyze weaponized subordination, wherein men strategically use their perceived subordinate masculine status to legitimate their degradation of women.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	9,062 comments
Halpin et al. (2025)	Sociology	Canada	Mixed	To use computational data and social science theories to analyze the misogynistic discourse of the incel community.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	3,686,110 posts
Helm et al. (2024)	Criminal Justice	U.S., Canada	Qual	To explore highly upvoted content in the r/incels subreddit in order to identify patterns in the content that receives greater engagement and promotion from the community.	Secondary	Reddit (r/incels)	Incels	1,000 comments
Hopton and Langer (2022)	Psychology	U.K.	Qual	To understand how discursive strategies used by the manosphere construct new and reinforce traditional gender stereotypes.	Secondary	Twitter	MGTOW, MRAs	1,004 tweets
Iñigo et al. (2024)	Library & Information Sciences	Spain	Qual	To study the discourses that young people embrace, what mediated environments are referring to when they speak about gender, feminism and LGBTQ+ topics, and the meaning young people give to these media content.	Primary	Ethnographic fieldwork and interviews	Barcelona teens with experience on manosphere	59 ethnographic observations, 41 interviews
Iturriaga et al. (2024)	Criminology	U.S.	Qual	To explore how the far-right produces, posts, and discusses memes related to gender science.	Secondary	4chan ("Politically Incorrect" board)	Anti-feminists	3 memes, 45 discussion threads
Jaki et al. (2019)	Linguistics	Germany, Belgium, U.S., U.K.	Mixed	To shed light on the group dynamics of the incel community by analyzing how the users of the forum create in-group identity and how they construct major out-groups, particularly women.	Secondary	Incels.me	Incels	3,500 threads
Jones et al. (2020)	Culture and Comm.	Australia	Qual	To investigate how the ideology and rhetoric of MGTOW propagates and normalizes misogynistic beliefs through online harassment.	Secondary	Twitter	MGTOW	1,688 tweets
Julien (2023)*	Sociology	U.S.	Mixed	To increase our knowledge about the Manosphere, with particular attention paid to misogynist terrorist attacks, optimal machine learning techniques for analysis, and normalization of sexual coercion.	Secondary	Reddit (58 manosphere subreddits- see study for full list)	TRP, Incels, PUAs, MRAs, MGTOW	523,160 posts
Kettrey et al. (2024)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To explore the salience and utility of Men's Rights Activists' claims about false allegations of sexual assault.	Secondary	Reddit (r/MensRights)	MRAs	2,500 comments
Krendel (2020)	Linguistics	U.K.	Mixed	To investigate how the lemmas woman, girl, man and guy are used to discursively represent and construct gender identities in an anti-feminist forum on Reddit.	Secondary	Reddit (unspecified)	MRAs, MGTOW, TRP	Corpus of 214,269 words
Lacalle et al. (2023)	Comm.	Spain	Qual	To explore misogynistic comments on the Spanish website, Burbuja.info.	Secondary	Burbuja.info	Male users of an economic forum	761 messages
Laskovtsov (2020)	Criminal Justice	U.S.	Qual	To provide an overview of the ideologies the incel movement promotes and to examine their attitudes of sexual violence against women.	Secondary	Incels.me, Incels.co, Incels.is, Incels.net, sluthate.com, Reddit (subreddits unspecified)	Incels	120 text posts, 115 images

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Levit (2020) ⁺	Criminology	Canada	Qual	To explore the communication practices and language deployed by incels and how this contributes to the formation of ingroups and outgroups.	Secondary	Incels.me	Incels	52,766 posts, 327 dictionary entries
Lindsay (2022)	Criminology	New Zealand	Qual	To provide a critical understanding of how incel networks form identity and “radicalize” new members within these counter-public spaces.	Secondary	Incels.is, Reddit (r/braincels)	Incels	250 threads with 10,773 individual posts
Lockyer et al. (2025)	International Development Studies	Canada	Qual	To explore how incels position their violence as ideological terrorism, how this violence is tied to misogyny, and the extent to which incels are (or claim to be) anti-violence.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	1,074 comments
Marwick and Caplan (2018)	Comm.	U.S.	Qual	To explore the discourse of the manosphere, specifically the term “misandry,” and its links to online misogyny and harassment.	Secondary	Usenet, early Men’s Rights websites, Reddit (r/MensRights)	MRAs	Unspecified
Maxwell et al. (2020)	Social Work	U.S.	Qual	To explore the shared experiences, sentiments, and expressions of people who self-define as incels.	Secondary	Reddit (r/braincels)	Incels	One post with 833 comments
McGlashan and Krendel (2024)	English	U.K.	Quant	To examine language used in five of the largest manosphere communities on Reddit to identify idiosyncratic language use.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill, r/braincels, r/MensRights, r/ seduction, r/MGTOW)	TRP, Incels, MRAs, PUAs, MGTOW	1,000 threads (200 per subreddit) Unspecified
Menzie (2022)	Sociology	Canada	Qual	To explore the discursive constructions of femininity and masculinity expressed by incels.	Secondary	Reddit (r/braincels; r/incel tears; r/incels without hate; r/incelistan; r/shortcels; r/incel dense; r/theincelPill), Manifesto	Incels	10 memes, otherwise unspecified
Michael (2015) ⁺	Social Justice and Human Rights	U.S.	Qual	To analyze relevant social mediums that encourage stigmatization of the friend zone utilizing Dr. Galician’s 12 Myths and prescriptions as outlined in Sex, Love and Romance in the Mass Media.	Secondary	Rollo Tomassi’s The Rational Male (book), How to Get out of the Friend Zone (book), Elliot Rodger’s manifesto, Reddit (r/TheRedPill)	TRP, Incels	
Millar (2022) ⁺	Humanities and Social Sciences	Australia	Qual	To explore incel ideology on r/braincels and how Reddit’s affordances amplify rhetorics of male victimhood, grievance, and entitlement.	Secondary	Reddit (r/braincels)	Incels	4 moderator documents, 141 posts, 177 usernames
O’Donnell and Shor (2022)	Sociology	U.S., Canada	Qual	To learn how misogynist incels talk about mass violence committed by members of their group.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	194 posts with 3,658 comments
O’Malley et al. (2022)	Criminal Justice	U.S.	Qual	To identify the norms, values, and beliefs of two online incel communities from a subcultural perspective.	Secondary	Two incel web forums (unspecified)	Incels	452 threads with 8,324 posts
Pain (2024)	Journalism	U.S.	Qual	To investigate communication around the #MarriageStrike hashtag between feminist activists and men’s movements in India.	Secondary	Twitter	MRAs	60,000 tweets
Patterson-Sterling (2024)*	Forensic Psychology	U.S.	Qual	To understand the lived experiences of self-identified incels with aggrieved entitlement to better inform deradicalization interventions.	Primary	Interviews	Incels	10 participants
Persson (2025)	Humanities and Social Sciences	U.K.	Qual	To analyze whether rape myths are reflected in the manosphere’s central hub, The Red Pill, and theorize on how this may in turn reflect myths about rape in society.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill)	TRP	14 sidebar documents
Pettersson et al. (2025)	Social Psychology	Finland, Australia	Qual	To examine identity constructions in discussions on the so-called “black pill” world view within the online community incels.is.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	1,011 discussion threads

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Prause and Ley (2024)	Psychology	U.S.	Mixed	To describe the nature of threats on r/NoFap and suggest whether the violence might be attributable to sexual deprivation or false beliefs that non-sexual targets caused their violent urges.	Secondary	Reddit (r/NoFap, r/pornfree, r/stopdrinking)	No Fap	421 posts (94.3% of which were from r/NoFap)
Pražmo (2020)	Linguistics	Poland	Qual	To analyze the language used by incels, focusing on the dehumanizing metaphors used in order to describe women.	Secondary	Unspecified	Incels	Unspecified
Preston et al. (2021)	Sociology	Canada	Qual	To describe how incels identify emerging technologies (i.e., dating apps and social media) as revealing and amplifying the gender practices that produce men who are involuntarily celibate.	Secondary	Incels.co	Incels	9,062 comments
Rafail and Freitas (2019)	Sociology	U.S.	Mixed	To examine how the Men's Rights movement frames its grievance in online spaces and related community reactions to user-contributed content.	Secondary	Reddit (r/MensRights)	MRAs	70,580 posts
Regehr (2022)	Digital Humanities	U.K.	Qual	To explore how technological affordances of the digital space facilitate the anti-feminist discourses which characterize the digital community of incels.	Primary and Secondary	Interviews, Incel.me, Incel.net, Lookism, Looksmax, Facebook group (Incelistan)	Incels	Close to 50 participants; Internet data not specified
Ribeiro et al. (2021)	Computer Science	Switzerland, U.K., U.S., Germany	Quant	To analyze the evolution of the manosphere across the Web over time.	Secondary	incels.is; Rooshv; The Attraction; MPUA Forum; MGTOW Forum; AVFM; Reddit (7 PUA subreddits; 18 incels; 12 TRP; 11 MRA; 3 MGTOW)	Incels, PUAs, MRAs, TRP, MGTOW	22,161,083 posts across 6 forums and 51 subreddits
Roberts, Jones, et al. (2025)	Sociology	Australia, U.K.	Mixed	To provide an analysis that allows for a more refined understanding of the underpinning discourses and (il)logics in the ideological bubble that is the manosphere.	Secondary	Telegram, Andrew Tate's website	Andrew Tate followers	3,178 sentences
Rothermel (2020)	Political Science	Switzerland	Qual	To provide a critical discourse analysis of online content published by six popular anti-feminist men's rights communities in Russia, India, and the United States.	Secondary	returnofkings.com, avoiceformen.com, antiwomen.ru, masculist.ru/blogs, menrightsindia.net, saveindianfamily.org	PUAs, MRAs, Anti-feminist groups	69 articles on blogs/websites
Rousis (2024)*	Psychology	U.S.	Quant	To explore the temporal processes whereby an incel goes from joining an online community to becoming deeply aligned (i.e., "fused") with the group.	Secondary	Incels.is	Incels	144,468 threads with 1,097,841 posts
Sanders (2024)*	Criminal Justice	U.S.	Qual	To examine the hostile rhetoric published by the Black Manosphere on Twitter (now X) about Black women.	Secondary	Twitter	Black Manosphere	352 tweets
Scarlott (2023) ⁺	Forensic Psychology	U.S.	Quant	To examine if there is a difference between incels, other members of the manosphere, and non-incels in their perception of and support for violence against women.	Primary	Survey recruited from Reddit (r/PurplePillDebate, r/LDAR, r/IncelSolutions, r/PickUpArtists, r/Team3dalpha) and incel.is	Incels, Manosphere	16 incels, 19 manosphere participants (non-incels)
Schmitz and Kazyak (2016)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To explore the various strategies used by contemporary men's groups designed to provide support for men in their pursuit of social legitimacy and power.	Secondary	news.mensactivism.org, ncfm.org, nationalcenterformen.org, avoiceformen.com, mensrights.com, reaxxon.com, returnofkings.com, mgrow.com, thepillroom.blogspot.com, alphagameplan.blogspot.com, angryharry.com, mattforney.com	MRAs	50 columns drawn from 12 websites

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
Scotto di Carlo (2023a)	Linguistics	Italy	Qual	To investigate how Incels create in-group/out-group discourse through the representation of women and of themselves.	Secondary	Unspecified	Incels	2,223 posts
Semenzin and Bainotti (2020)	Social and Political Studies	Italy	Qual	To analyze the role of Telegram in orienting, amplifying, and normalizing the non-consensual diffusion of intimate images (NCII).	Secondary	Telegram	Male communities for sharing NCII	4 Telegram groups
Shi et al. (2024)	Sociology	U.S.	Mixed	To explore how patterns of behavior and culture emerge as communities evolve toward extreme cultures and how interactions among community members cultivate a culture of deviance.	Secondary	Reddit (r/incels)	Incels	39,131 unique users, 1,191,797 posts
Smith et al. (2025)	Comm.	U.S.	Qual	To explore the rhetoric used by Andrew Tate and its impact on his followers.	Secondary	YouTube	Andrew Tate followers	Hour-long video and 300 associated comments
Solea and Sugiura (2023)	Criminology	U.K.	Qual	To understand the role mainstream social media platforms (TikTok) play in the “normification” and normalization of Incel ideology and discourse.	Secondary	TikTok	Incels	2 accounts, 52 videos, 1657 comments
Speckhard et al. (2021)	Psychiatry	U.S.	Quant	To explore the Incel ideology and views of potential psychopathology to better understand the potential dangers posed by this community to the public and themselves.	Primary	Survey recruited from incels.co	Incels	272 participants
Starr (2017)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To investigate the frames prevalent in the men’s right activists’ online space, including the role of anger and other emotions in the movement.	Secondary	Reddit (r/MensRights)	MRAs	435 memes
Thomas (2022) ⁺	Linguistics	U.S.	Mixed	To analyze the discourse patterns of both violent and nonviolent incels in order to determine if there are observable differences in the discourse patterns of the two, and whether or not users of “Incel language” are more likely to commit violent crimes or harm themselves than those who do not.	Secondary	Reddit (r/incels, r/braincels, r/shortcels, r/incelswithouthate, r/theredpill), Facebook, incels.is, Manifestos	Incels, TRP	~60,000 words
Tranchese and Sugiura (2021)	Language and Applied Linguistics	U.K.	Mixed	To assess the commonalities between the language of pornography and that of Incels.	Secondary	Reddit (r/incels)	Incels	13,783,206 words
Vallerga (2024)	Social Psychology	U.S.	Qual	To understand how the Red Pill and Incel communities discuss biological essentialist-related beliefs about LGBTQ people, including their discussions about lesbians.	Secondary	Unspecified	TRP, Incels	Unspecified
Vallerga and Zurbruggen (2022)	Social Psychology	U.S.	Qual	To examine discursive constructions of masculinity and femininity represented on The Red Pill and Incel message boards.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TheRedPill), incels.me	TRP, Incels	227 posts and their responses
van Geuns (2022)*	Religion	Canada	Qual	To explore the genealogy of violent misogyny, from men who call themselves “seduction gurus” to men who identify as “involuntary celibates.”	Secondary	Bulletin board systems, Usenet (alt.seduction.fast, soc.singles, alt.shyness.support), Blogs (SoSuave, Fast Seduction, Seduction 88, PUA Forum), Forums (IncelSupport, Love-shy, PUAHate, SlutHate, and Lookism.net), Reddit (r/theredpill, r/braincels), IncelWiki, Manifestos	PUAs, “Seduction” community, Incels, TRP	600+ pages of forum printouts, 3 manifests, other samples unspecified
Van Valkenburgh (2021)	Sociology	U.S.	Qual	To systematically study the contents of r/TRP’s sidebar documents.	Secondary	Reddit (r/TRP sidebar)	TRP	17 documents

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Author	Discipline ¹	Country	Qual, Quant, Mixed	Research aims	Data type	Data source	Subgroup(s) ²	Sample size ³
L. Williams (2020) ⁺	Women's and Gender Studies	Canada	Qual	To deconstruct the nature of the discourse of Incel and the ideologies and world views, both historic and contemporary, that shape it.	Secondary	incels.co	Incels	Unspecified
D. J. Williams et al. (2021)	Sociology	U.S., Canada	Qual	To explore the demographic, cognitive, and other characteristics of self-identified incels who have attempted and/or successfully completed homicide.	Secondary	Personal writings, videos, and social media postings by offenders, Law enforcement reports, News and media articles	Incels	7 individuals
D. Wright (2020)	Linguistics	U.K.	Mixed	To identify the way(s) in which "resistance" is discursively constructed and represented within one part of the PUA community.	Secondary	Seduction forum corpus	PUAs	8,988 threads with 25,788 individual posts
S. Wright et al. (2020)	Political Comm. and Journalism	Australia	Mixed	To understand the structure and content of discussion within the forum of the official Men Going Their Own Way website.	Secondary	Men Going Their Own Way website, Reddit (r/MGTOW), Twitter	MGTOW	33,863 user accounts, 49,875 threads, random sample of threads with 1012 comments
Zimmerman (2024)	Defense and National Security	Australia	Qual	To assess the discourse and narratives used by the Incels to create their unique worldview and core components of their emerging political ideology to understand how this group may justify the use of political violence as part of their political movement.	Secondary	Manifestos, Police interviews, Incels.is, incels.co; incel wiki	Incels	Unspecified

Notes. ¹Primary discipline of first author. ²Subgroups as defined by the original authors. ³Only includes data sources and sample size relevant to the current study (i.e., current or former members of the manosphere). *Denotes dissertation, +Denotes Master's thesis, ^Designated as "working paper." ; MGTO = Men Going Their Own Way; TRP = The Red Pill; MRAs = Men's Rights Activists; FRAs = Father's Rights Activists; TradCons = Traditional Conservatives; Comm.=Communication.

hand-searching conference proceedings from the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, the American Psychological Association, the American Sociological Association, the Society for the Study of Social Problems, and the American Society for Criminology. We also searched government websites for the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Romania. We screened a total of 451 studies identified via other methods (after 77 duplicates were removed by Covidence and 41 duplicates were identified by hand). After title/abstract and full text screening and removal of duplicates between the search methods, 105 studies were included in the final analysis. See the PRISMA diagram (Figure 1) for a full breakdown.

Screening and Inclusion Criteria

We uploaded all citations identified through our search to Covidence software for screening. Two study team members reviewed each study for inclusion, first via title/abstract screening and then full-text review; disagreements on inclusion were resolved through consensus with a third team member. Eligible studies were accessible, available in English, and constituted empirical research, including peer-reviewed publications or gray literature (e.g., dissertations, theses, conference proceedings). We included studies if their research objectives or questions were described as studying a “manosphere” community, including Incels, MGTOW, MRAs, Father’s Rights Activists, or other insular online spaces designed for men to discuss issues of misogyny or anti-feminism. We excluded studies focused solely on gamer communities because, although there are well-established overlaps among some gamer communities and manosphere ideologies, the gaming space is large, diverse, and not universally organized around anti-feminist aims (Ging, 2019). To be included, studies had to analyze data that came directly from the manosphere (e.g., social media posts), or from current or former members of the manosphere (e.g., public opinion research about the manosphere from the general population was not included). Finally, to be eligible, the research findings needed to describe or discuss sexual violence rhetoric within the manosphere. We excluded studies exclusively focused on another type of violence within the manosphere (e.g., terrorism, mass shootings, gender-based homicide).

Quality Appraisal

We appraised each study using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT; Hong et al., 2018) which assesses five metrics of quality based on the type of study (i.e., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods). Two team members independently appraised each study and any disagreements on the assessment were resolved through consensus with a third team member. In line with best practices for utilizing the MMAT, no studies were excluded from consideration in the final review due to methodological concerns (Hong et al., 2018). See supplementary materials for a summary of our appraisals.

Data Extraction

We extracted descriptive information about each study (e.g., study type, research aims, data source) which is summarized in Table 1. We extracted data for analysis by splitting the sample between the primary research team (the first three authors), reviewing the results section of each study, and copying content or findings relevant to our primary research question into an Excel spreadsheet. We created four columns in the extraction sheet to help organize and maintain context for data: qualitative quotes from participants (e.g., direct language from posts or interviews), qualitative researcher summaries (i.e., statements about findings in researcher’s own words), quantitative findings (e.g., statistical findings), and qualitzing of quantitative findings (i.e., our translation of quantitative findings).

Data Analysis

We analyzed the data using reflexive thematic analysis (TA) because this method goes beyond summarization of data, letting researchers tell an interpretive story about core meanings across cases that may, on a manifest level, cover disparate topics (Braun & Clarke, 2021, 2023). Further, reflexive TA recognizes the fallacy of research “objectivity,” viewing researchers’ subjectivity as a resource rather than a liability (Braun & Clarke, 2021). We used an inductive (i.e., data driven) approach to analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), though our reading of the data was shaped by feminist understanding of sexual violence (see Armstrong et al., 2018) and Pascoe and Hollander’s (2016) conceptual framework of “mobilizing rape.” Reflexive TA is a tool comprised of six recursive phases: familiarization; coding; generating initial themes; reviewing and developing themes; refining, defining and naming themes; and writing up findings (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

All three primary authors became familiar with the dataset through the processes of screening, quality appraisal, and extraction. The first two authors reviewed the extraction sheet and began memoing (proposing codes and noting interesting features) across the dataset. We presented our memo frames to each other and discussed with the third author to generate initial themes. The first two authors then revisited the dataset to apply the proposed thematic structure and discussed lingering questions, refined the coding framework, renamed and reorganized codes as needed through consultation with the third author. This iterative process among the team occurred via one to two meetings a week over the course of one month. Once the first two authors “finalized” application of our thematic framework, the third author performed an audit by reviewing 10% of the data under each code. Upon reaching consensus on code application across the team, we began to write up our findings.

Team Positionality

Our primary research team for this study (MP, JN, KC), comprised of two cisgender White women and one cisgender White man, who are experienced violence researchers and practitioners with expertise in social media research and

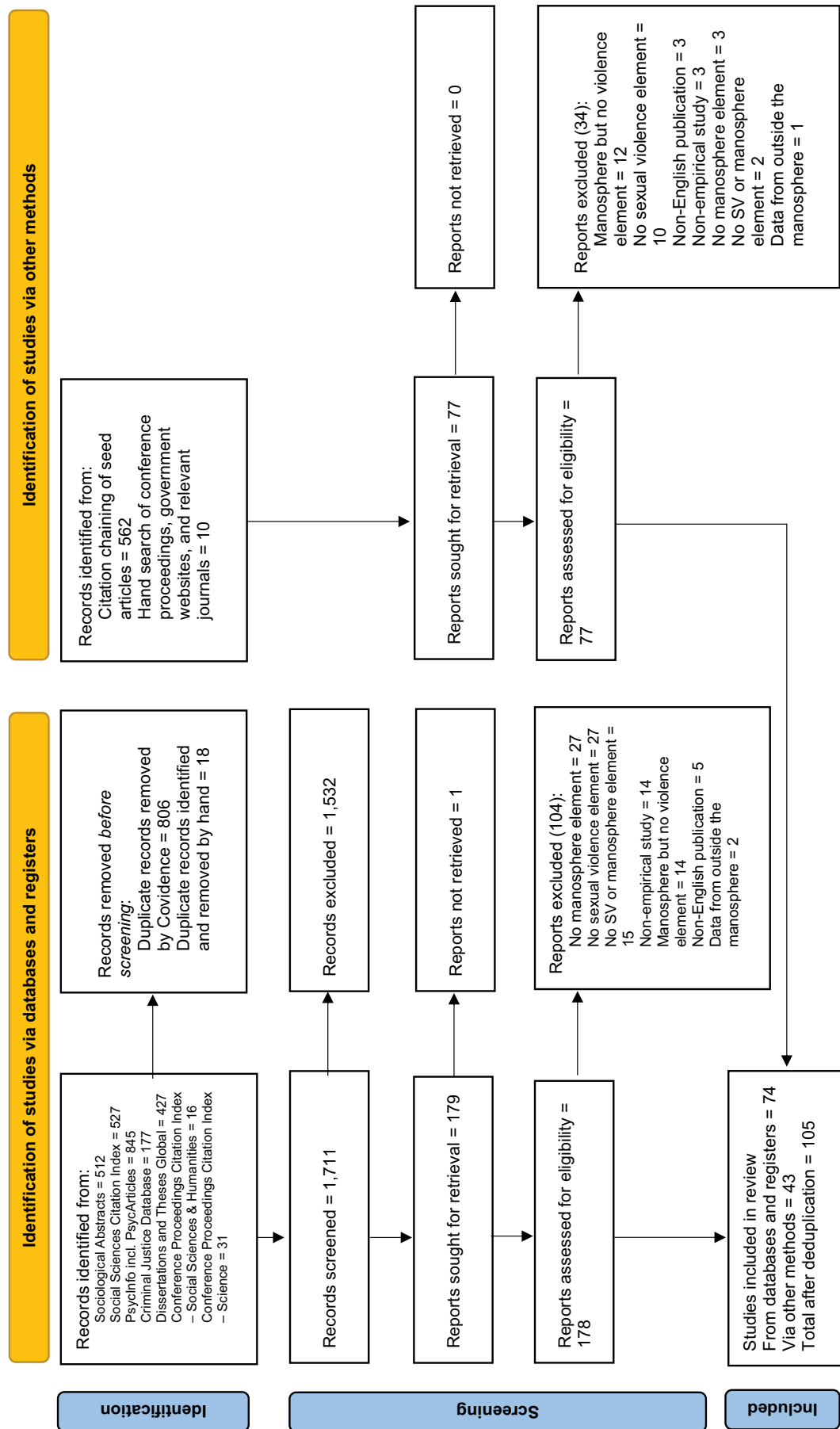


Figure 1. From: Page M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ* 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71. For more information, visit: <http://www.Prisma-statement.Org/>.

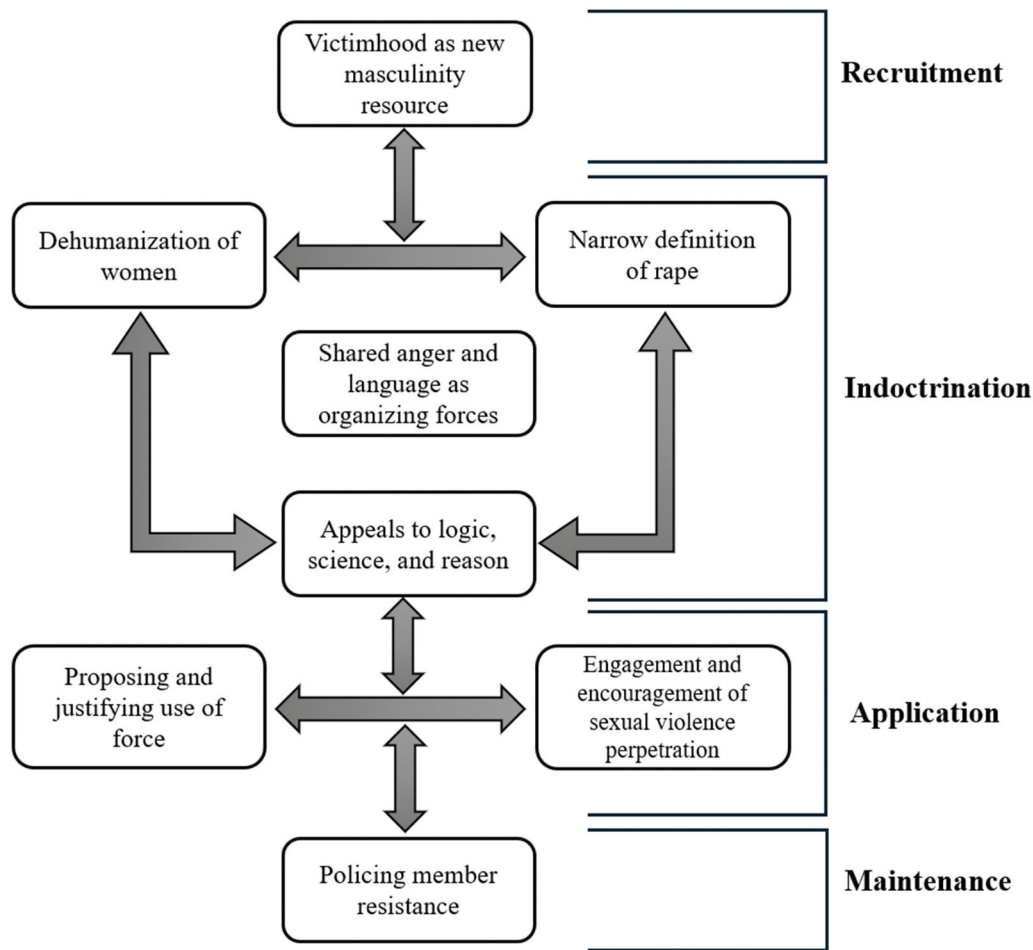


Figure 2. Framework of sexual violence mobilization within the manosphere.

masculinity studies. We are feminist scholars who recognize rigid and hegemonic configurations of gender as harmful and limiting not only to those in oppressed positions, but those in dominating positions as well. We approached this MMSR with differing experiences of harm related to the violent and gendered rhetoric deployed in the manosphere, making us simultaneously well suited to engage in this work, and highly subject to distress while immersing ourselves in these data (Harding, 2004). Team members experienced notable mental health impacts throughout the research process, which we addressed through self-care, such as limiting the amount of daily content exposure, and mutually supportive practices, such as regular check-ins and allowing for flexibility of deadlines.

Results

Our findings are organized into a conceptual framework that demonstrates how sexual violence is mobilized within the manosphere and serves as a tool for recruitment, indoctrination, ideological application, and maintenance of group cohesion (see Figure 2). There is ample evidence of engagement and encouragement of sexual violence perpetration within manosphere communities (see theme later); however, this framework is not intended to assert that all men who engage with the manosphere will move through these stages in a linear progression and ultimately commit violence. Nonetheless, in line

with Pascoe and Hollander's (2016) work, it is crucial to highlight how the mobilization of sexual violence is an iterative process intended, at all stages, to justify misogyny and excuse the behaviors of men who choose to cause harm. Given the scale of our review, we do not list in-text citations for every relevant study under each theme. Instead, we provide example citations in the narrative and provide a supplementary document with exhaustive lists of the studies where each code was applied.

Victimhood as a New Masculinity Resource

Manosphere participants frame themselves as victims of women and feminist social progress, particularly in the context of sexual relationships, with such rhetoric serving as an effective recruitment tool for engaging disgruntled men with manosphere ideologies. Men's deployment of victimhood¹ in the manosphere has roots in TRP philosophies which assert that women's "control" of the sexual marketplace places them in a position of power over men, providing opportunities for exploitation; however, the dominant narratives of *how* men are

¹Our understanding of victimhood as a masculinity resource in the manosphere does not apply to discussions of men's sexual victimization, rather their understanding of victimization that results from women's agency and feminist activism. Discussions about men's sexual victimization within the manosphere are discussed within the theme titled, "Narrow definition of rape."

victimized by women vary between groups. For example, whereas Incels position themselves as victims of women's superficiality and biological preferences for Chads, MRAs focus primarily on loss of resources or status due to women's duplicity in intimate relationships. Across manosphere communities, we argue that victimization is discursively positioned as a new masculinity resource and a way of doing hybrid masculinities (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014). Victim status, particularly in the context of interpersonal relationships and violent victimization, has historically been "feminized," with many men distancing themselves from victimhood due to concerns about failing to conform to hegemonic masculinity (Pettyjohn et al., 2023). However, men in the manosphere have discursively taken on the label of "victims" in ways that "fortify existing social and symbolic boundaries" and "work to conceal systems of power and inequality in historically new ways" (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, p. 246). Indeed, framing themselves as victims of women leverages men's dissatisfaction with their material conditions in a manner that facilitates recruitment into manosphere communities (Booth et al., 2024), and provides plausible deniability and/or justification for mobilizing sexual violence via discourse and practice.

The manosphere asserts that feminism has infiltrated all levels of society (e.g., the government, court systems, popular culture, social media) and rigged the system against men, particularly in relation to sexual violence. As one user on r/TheRedPill states: "The ongoing war against men continues. The message is clear that we are simply guests here at the mercy of those in charge. Feminism has changed the landscape to make being male a liability and risk on every level" (DeCook, 2019, p. 73). Similar rhetoric has been longstanding within men's rights communities, often spurred on by feminist social movements or political achievements (e.g., passage of VAWA in the U.S. in 1994; ruling of marital rape as illegal in India in 2022; Dragiewicz, 2008; Pain, 2024). Given its seismic cultural impact and global reach, the #MeToo Movement in 2017 has generated sustained reactionary backlash within the manosphere (e.g., Anastasio, 2024; de Maricourt & Burrell, 2022; Dickel & Evolvi, 2023). Framing #MeToo as a feminist conspiracy to further target men, manosphere groups claim that "false rape allegations" are exceedingly common, and many Incels assert that women's superficiality means that they are disproportionately subject to false accusations, "because it's human nature for society to blame uggos for all that is bad in the world" (DeCook, 2019, p. 156). Although "false allegations" are put forth by individual women, manosphere communities often focus more on the fact that resultant impacts (e.g., court cases, "cancel culture") stem from perceived societal support and validation of women, as explained by a user from r/mensrights:

To destroy a man's life, a malicious woman has a tremendous range of tools, from the [inter]net, to "victim" advocates, to ludicrous [university] procedures and kangaroo courts, to offended decorum (cf. Ansari), to false accusations of rape, false accusations of harassment, of spousal abuse, etc, etc (Haase, 2021, p. 74).

The positioning of societal institutions as biased against men and the implication that feminists weaponize sexual violence

to perpetuate "gynocentric" values not only frames most claims of sexual victimization as illegitimate but also contributes to the deification of men publicly accused of sexual misconduct. As one of the moderators for r/TheRedPill explained in a post titled, "'Sexual Assault' is Why I'm Endorsing Donald Trump for President of the United States":

When somebody accuses a powerful or famous figure like Trump of "sexual assault," I don't look the other way. I don't denounce them or their behavior. Instead I run toward them, because there is no truer signal which side somebody is on, than when they're given a bogus accusation by the establishment. This is our beacon to find allies in the war (Dignam & Rohlinger, 2019, p. 1).

To members of manosphere communities, a woman's claims of sexual violence are a badge of honor, indicating the alleged perpetrator's status as being on their side of a culture war against feminist and "blue pill" society.

Rhetoric throughout the manosphere implies that men do not uniformly experience oppression, instead asserting that social systems disproportionately target heterosexual White men while giving men of color and queer folks passes for sexual violence. A response to a nonwhite Incel talking about difficulty obtaining sex captured this by stating: "You should move to Europe, as a Brown or Black man you can literally rape white women and will get a slap on the wrist. I am being cynical and don't advocate rape but I am serious, as a non-White you can do anything" (Gosse et al., 2024, p. 14). Likewise, while discussing numerous allegations of sexual assault and human trafficking against him, a popular manosphere influencer, Andrew Tate, posted on Telegram: "If I was a transsexual the U.S. embassy would have instantly taken me out of the jail and harshly condemned Romania for being transphobic" (Roberts, Jones, et al., 2025, p. 19). Similar claims within the manosphere have been described as "aspirational oppression" (Kettrey et al., 2024), in that these men rely on false or misleading statements to construct a reality in which their perceived inadequacies can be externalized and rationalized as victimization by a gynocentric society. Counter to this rhetoric, there were isolated examples of manosphere users acknowledging racism against Black men within the criminal justice system and the history of false allegations made against Black men in the United States; notably, however, this messaging was typically limited to the context of discrediting Black women and girls who were abused by Black men (e.g., Hopton & Langer, 2022; Sanders, 2024).

Shared Anger and Language as Organizing Forces

Anger within manosphere communities is leveraged as an organizing force, with shared language and colloquialisms (often related to sexual violence) serving to indoctrinate new users to core ideologies. This theme is depicted as central to the surrounding themes in Figure 2 because members collectively express their anger and iteratively develop shared language for their grievances by dehumanizing women, narrowing the definition of rape, and appealing to logic, science, and reason.

Posts from new members demonstrate that most Incels enter the community with high levels of preexisting anger; notably, however, data suggest that cognitive engagement

decreases among members of the manosphere over time, instead relying on greater emotionality and profanity in their discussions (de Roos et al., 2024; Rousis, 2024; Shi et al., 2024). This preexisting anger gives context as to why victimhood narratives are so appealing and effective at drawing men in (Booth et al., 2024). Big data analyses indicate that manosphere rhetoric contains more references to violence and rape than other internet communities (Furl, 2020), though participants often frame this content as protected speech or innocuous jokes (Andersen, 2023; Dashtgard, 2022). Indeed, self-report data from Incels indicates that many do not characterize themselves or their community as violent (Speckhard et al., 2021); yet Incels (particularly those who are “black-pilled”) have higher levels of hostility toward women, rape proclivity, and acceptance of rape myths than their peers (Ellenberg et al., 2024; Grunau et al., 2022). Observable variations exist between communities and platforms regarding these types of speech (e.g., Farrell et al., 2019). Incel, MGTOW, and TRP discourses are generally more misogynistic and toxic than MRA discourse, which is often presented in more casual and “uncontroversial” ways (Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Farrell et al., 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Some work has found MGTOWs to be more likely to discuss sexual violence than other groups (Farrell et al., 2019; Furl, 2020). Language in these spaces have become more violent and misogynistic over time (Ribeiro et al., 2021) with spikes in the use of such language following mass violence related to manosphere communities (e.g., the Toronto van attack; Farrell et al., 2019; Julien, 2023). Some users, like this poster from r/TheRedPill, frame angry, violent language as a tool for reaching like-minded individuals:

the fastest way to grow a community is to write something deliberately provocative and make sure lefties hear about it. Then when lefties show up to virtue signal about your thought crimes, provoke them further by banning them and telling them to choke on your semen. Pretty soon lefties will tell other lefties about the injustice creating a positive feedback loop of publicity. Eventually Righties will hear about it and join your community (DeCook, 2019, p. 75).

Neologisms within (e.g., “foid” for Incels) and across groups (e.g., “misandry,” used throughout manosphere) delineate in- vs. out-group identities, fostering a sense of community amongst members and bolstering indoctrination (Booth et al., 2024). The common use of war or military metaphors to describe gendered power dynamics further supports an “us vs. them” mentality (e.g., de Maricourt & Burrell, 2022; D. Wright, 2020). This mentality leads to “groupthink” dynamics among Incel forum posters, who increasingly use plural pronouns (e.g., “we,” “our”) and adopt a platform’s semantic and syntactic patterns over time (Rousis, 2024; Shi et al., 2024). This identity fusion and sense of belongingness offered by manosphere communities becomes problematic when occurring in parallel to sexually violent rhetoric, as exemplified by a self-identified Incel:

it feels good cause. I’m able to talk to people like me interact with them. And we share the experiences. And at times we fantasize about having power over women with each other. So it feels it feels really good. Being online with my friends with people like me. (Patterson-Sterling, 2024, p. 117).

Shared misappropriations of sexual violence language and related trauma also act as mobilization discourses within the manosphere. Members commonly deploy terms related to sexual violence outside of their context, suggesting a false equivalency between the trauma of sexual violence and other plights, tactics which discursively minimize sexual victimization. For example, the term “divorce rape” is used, particularly amongst MRA and MGTOW groups, to assert that wives who “take” resources and are awarded child custody when leaving a relationship are guilty of a violation equivalent to sexual violence (e.g., Aiston, 2022; Eddington et al., 2023). It is also suggested that false accusations are more damaging than sexual violence itself: “I’d rather be raped than falsely accused” (Haase, 2021, p. 94). This shared language is used to sensationalize the perceived harms against individuals in the manosphere while simultaneously taking power away from victims. Another example from r/braincels stated, “my father rapes me every day because he was only 5’5” and chose to reproduce” (Millar, 2022, p. 72). Incels uniquely misappropriate sexual violence language by claiming that their denial of sex is as traumatic as rape. This led to users wishing to be raped as a way to escape Inceldom:

most guys who cannot “get sex” would gladly volunteer to get raped if it meant they could have regular sex later. One painful experience does not compare to a lifetime of pain, and it is insulting that people try to paint rape as the end-all be-all of suffering, especially when it involves an otherwise pleasurable activity (Maxwell et al., 2020, p. 1865).

These desires appear to be rooted in common rape myths, namely that sexual assault is about pleasure seeking, not power or violence, and that being raped is a positive indicator of being attractive (Burt, 1980). A thread posted in Incels.co discussed: “I can’t show sympathy for men who have been raped by women” [...] “Imagine having free sex but still complaining about it” (Williams, 2020, p. 88). Misappropriating language in such manners serve to mobilize and minimize sexual violence experiences in many ways, ironically including the invalidation of men and boys who may be survivors themselves.

Dehumanization of Women

Across the manosphere, women are spoken about in objectifying, infantilizing, and dehumanizing ways in the service of “legitimizing” male supremacy. Variations in dehumanizing messages and colloquialisms are observed between communities (e.g., Incels’ use of “foids” and “roasties”; PUAs’ referring to women as “cases” or “plates”) or based on the identity of the woman being described (e.g., racialized dehumanization of women of color) and can be read about more in depth from works in this review (e.g., Chan, 2023; Gosse et al., 2024; Laskovtsov, 2020; D. Wright, 2020). Across communities, women are spoken about as a homogenous, inferior group, without capacity for individuation or self-actualization, exemplified in a post from Incels.co: “[women] are toilets. Like toilets, females are not people. Like toilets, females are not individuals: that is, they do not have lives, opinions, idiosyncrasies. Like toilets, the main function of females is a repository for certain bodily fluids” (Williams, 2020, p. 83). A “sidebar”

document from r/TheRedPill (representing the core doctrine of the community) states: "... the decisions she makes based on her reality may seem like total nonsense to a man (women are crazy, right?), because she has determined her reality based on the only prime truth she knows: her emotional state" (Persson, 2025, p. 10). The positioning of "out groups" as a monolith and stripping them of humanity and the rights to self-determination lay fertile ground for the enactment of violence and denies access to any type of empathy or justice for sexual victimization (Luft, 2015; Munn, 2020). In addition to justifying violence, such portrayals of "out groups" also foster a deepened sense of connection within manosphere communities, encouraging further indoctrination (Booth et al., 2024).

Notably, the framing of women in the manosphere contradicts men's framing of themselves and the state of gendered power relations. Their primary contradiction is well captured in this quote from another sidebar document in r/TheRedPill, which states: "Remember, women are children: mentally, behaviorally, and evolutionarily. They are not like us. They don't think like us or have the same deep sense of personal responsibility" (Ging, 2019; Persson, 2025). The manosphere positions men as intellectually and physically superior to women, claiming that women are incapable of rational or organized thought. Yet, these men simultaneously position themselves as victims of women's alleged success in consolidating all social, political, and cultural power away from them.

Narrow Definition of Rape

Members of the manosphere position themselves as arbiters of which sexual assault claims are "legitimate" and which victims deserve empathy. For much of the manosphere, "legitimate" rape is an impossibility because any rape allegation is assumed to be false, or sexual violence is justified due to women's (in) actions. Outside of these bounds, users across manosphere communities flexibly shape narratives about sexual violence in reactionary ways that often defy logic (e.g., contradictory arguments). Messages within these communities are reflective of common rape myths (i.e., widely held, false cultural messages about sexual violence; Burt, 1980) observed in society more broadly, though in this context are taken to an extreme not often seen in offline spaces.

Discourse about sexual violence is constructed in malleable ways which provide exceedingly narrow, if not impossible to meet, definitions of "legitimate" victims and perpetrators. Pascoe and Hollander (2016) explained that "narrow definitions of rape allow for mobilization" such that "behaviors of coercion and dominance can be framed as 'not rape.'" The narrowing definition of rape within the manosphere should be understood as: 1) strategic backlash to feminist efforts bringing awareness to the scale and diversity of sexual violence (Dishy, 2018), and 2) discursive efforts to position perpetrators as the "other" (typically, Chads, immigrants, men of color, and queer men; e.g., Barber, 2022; Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Halpin, 2022), thereby symbolically distancing themselves and their community from violence. Notably, contradictions abound in their framing of rape, a by-product of the need to mold arguments

in ways that implicate women for their victimization regardless of circumstance.

Tied to assertions that women are driven by biological instincts, many manosphere communities (particularly Incels, TRP, and PUA) claim that women have evolved to enjoy sexual aggression: "It's part of their biology to crave being dominated. [W]omen would enjoy the process of getting rape[d], even though they don't want to get raped. Not wanting it to happen [does not equal] not enjoying it when it does" (Incels.is; Gosse et al., 2024). These messages are contradictory in whether women seek out violent sex but nevertheless achieve the common outcome of positioning any claim of victimization as illegitimate.

Some manosphere communities (particularly MRAs) imply that "real" rape victims do exist yet impose a slew of unrealistic or contradictory expectations that disallow survivors to be recognized (Kettrey et al., 2024). As a post in r/MensRights stated: "Real victims don't pride themselves as being a victim. Real victims hate the spotlight and attention" (Kettrey et al., 2024, 1624). Drawing from a similar logic, messaging throughout the manosphere, particularly in the aftermath of #MeToo, implies that any woman who comes forward as a victim is illegitimate and must have an ulterior motive, such as financial gain ("Fuck all them money hungry scamming ass leeches! #FreeRKelly," Sanders, 2024, p. 59), or attention seeking ("I have exactly zero attractive girls posting [#MeToo] on my news feeds. I noticed immediately it was only the ugly and fat ones posting it and I figure these girls are probably just trying to deal with rejection issues," Dickel & Evolvi, 2023, p. 1399). The claim that "real victims don't come forward" is an ironic contradiction to another common trope in the manosphere claiming that prevalence statistics about sexual assault are blown out of proportion because men do not know many victims, as captured in this sarcastic post from an MRA forum:

Throughout my entire life, I had never known a single woman who had been raped. I know a couple now, but I didn't know any then even though I knew around a thousand women through all my social spheres Not one of them raped even though statistically 250 of them might well have been. I could even accept that it was likely some of them had been raped and I just didn't know. Makes sense, but 1 in 4? That's AMAZING (E. K. Carian, 2022, p. 57).

Other narrowing tactics include messages that legitimate rape requires physical violence and leaves physical evidence: "Rape is forceful penetration by threat of violence. Simply lying there saying nothing because she felt scared to say anything is not rape. You say you were raped, show me your defense wounds" (Chua & Wilson, 2023, p. 349). Under such a framing, things like coercion, incapacitation, age gaps, and power dynamics are not considered problematic; indeed, PUA communities go as far as to claim that "99% of the time" women do not mean it when they say "no," and instead view lack of consent as something to overcome (D. Wright, 2020, p. 5). By framing sexual assault claims as subjective, men can simultaneously argue that women are incapable of rational thought and perceiving "reality," while also asserting that women are conniving beings who excuse attractive men's abuse behaviors (referred to as "pretty privilege") and persecute

unattractive men for benign actions. Indeed, when sexual violence is acknowledged, manosphere users often claim that women, particularly those labeled promiscuous, “exaggerate” the harm related to victimization: “why is rape ‘bad?’ [...] In our modern Western culture girls have lay counts in the double and triple digits, what does an extra dick matter” (Dickel & Evolvi, 2023, p. 1401). For more granular examples of common rape myths observed throughout the manosphere, see Gosse et al. (2024); Grunau et al. (2022); Michael (2015); Solea and Sugiura; and D. Wright (2020).

Although much less common than discussions of women’s sexual victimization, we observed messages, particularly within MRA groups, discussing men’s experiences as silenced victims of sexual and domestic violence. Many conversations focused on the legal and institutional resources provided for women who are abused (e.g., VAWA, domestic violence shelters) and the perceived inability for men to access the same services. Indeed, some users claimed that men cannot report domestic violence because women could falsely accuse them in return, and the courts would automatically believe the woman (Starr, 2017). However, others effectively push back against common male rape myths in a way that aligns with feminist advocacy in the violence field to better support men (Turchik & Edwards, 2012). One user in r/TheRedPill explained, “being hard doesn’t make you willing” (Dishy, 2018, p. 43). Other users advocated for “being forced to penetrate someone else” to be recognized culturally and legally as rape (which is measured as a form of sexual violence in the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, though categorized separate from penetrative rape; Basile et al., 2022) and argued against assuming women who self-identify as victims are lying because this exacerbates the issue of “male rape [being] vastly underreported” (Kettrey et al., 2024, 1624).

Advocacy efforts to support men as survivors are outnumbered, however, by messages mobilizing sexual violence against women through skewing/fabricating statistics and broad assertions that women’s victimizations are false, yet men’s are legitimate. Whereas men in the manosphere reject data stemming from behavioral measures of women’s sexual victimization, the same measures are used to “prove” that men and women are equally victimized (Gotell & Dutton, 2016). These posts, misleadingly, focus almost exclusively on women as perpetrators of men’s victimization. Women are the primary perpetrators for men who are forced to penetrate someone else (roughly 70% of victims), yet male survivors of penetrative rape are most often victimized by other men (77%; Basile et al., 2022). Moreover, some users falsely claim that “the majority of sexual abuses of children, especially boys will be committed by women, which is our worlds [sic] most dirty of secrets” (Dickel & Evolvi, 2023, p. 1399). In reality, the vast majority of child sexual abuse, against any gender, is perpetrated by men (e.g., Hassan et al., 2015), yet these points are used to bolster arguments of societal double standards claiming that women are never held accountable for their actions (commonly referred to as a “pussy pass”; e.g., Kettrey et al., 2024; Persson, 2025).

Appeals to Logic, Science, and Reason

A widespread practice in the manosphere is the use of logic, science, and reason to legitimize manosphere ideologies, particularly the dehumanization of women and presenting a narrow definition of rape. This is unsurprising given that logic and “scientific” language are often used as tools of indoctrination and are typically viewed as the dominant source of knowledge building within hegemonic, patriarchal, and complicit masculinities, whereas emotionality is discounted as a feminine and unreliable source of information (Booth et al., 2024; Greer et al., 2025; Seidler, 2013). TRP ideologies rely on essentialist views of sex and gender and draw on language from evolutionary biology and psychology, asserting that feminism has caused a suppression of men and women’s natural behaviors (e.g., Persson, 2025):

No one likes soft men, and no one likes a hardass foid either. What’s attractive in both genders are simply different. [...] That’s why we need to put whores back in their place, remove the cucked laws, and black pill men to give them their dominance back (Fowler et al., 2023, p. 1786).

Bio-deterministic arguments and references to “caveman times” are particularly common in Incel communities and underlying previously discussed narrowing tactics about sexual violence: that men are naturally predisposed to rape as a sign of dominance, and that women have evolved to enjoy rape as an indicator of “alpha” masculinity that can pass “superior” genes to offspring and offer protection (e.g., Anastasio, 2024; Pettersson et al., 2025; Vallergera & Zurbriggen, 2022).

The practice of “spinning statistics” is common as well, particularly among MRA communities (E. K. Carian, 2022; Kettrey et al., 2024). Behavioral measurements of sexual victimization are criticized for “inflating” the true prevalence of rape, and there is strong opposition within the manosphere to the “one in four” statistic generated from research using the Sexual Experiences Survey (e.g., Eddington et al., 2023; Gotell & Dutton, 2016; Koss et al., 1987). Yet, users in these communities will present statistical findings to “prove” their own points, often without clear reference to their source information. A common manifestation of this practice is misinterpreting low conviction rates for violence against women as indicative that false accusations are rampant, as captured in this r/ MGTOW post: “Like 90% of domestic violence accusations in court have known lies or exaggerations. Only a 1% conviction rate its always leverage in relationships and divorce. This privilege needs to b[e] removed from them” (Aiston, 2022, p. 98). These types of rationalization strategies aim to legitimize the points being made and deter further questioning amongst members (Barber, 2022).

Proposing or Justifying Use of Force

Some members of the manosphere move beyond discussing grievances to proposing or justifying the use of force, through physical violence or political means, to correct feminist “harms.” The application of manosphere ideologies within

this theme and “engagement and encouragement of sexual violence perpetration” represent bridges from cognitive exercises in asserting misogynistic dominance to action. Proposed and justified use of force was disproportionately observed within studies of Incel communities where rhetoric was particularly graphic and extreme. Several studies examining reactions to Incel-inspired terrorist attacks or mass violence found members justifying these actions by blaming women for the mistreatment of men:

If even one female had stopped to fuck [Incel who killed 10 people with his van] do you think he would have gone through with his attack? Probably not, but he is an ugly balding ethnic ogre. Females could have saved the lives that were lost in these attacks but they didn't, so they are responsible (Davis & Kettrey, 2024, p. 502).

Such a framing asserts that women's rights (e.g., access to resources and legal ability to refuse sex) have destroyed the social order that entitled men to sex and precipitated rising rates of murder and rape (e.g., Baele et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2019; Pettersson et al., 2025). These framings, then, both justify violence by members of the community and suggest that the violence could be stemmed if women relinquished their sexual autonomy.

Policy proposals for reverting women's rights regarding sex and relationships were observed throughout the manosphere, with Incel communities again inciting more violent and extreme rhetoric. One user posted in Incels.is:

You just need to cut off the escape routes [women] can use to evade their responsibilities. If we cut way back on women's ability to go to college, for example, more of them would stay in their communities, marry decent, productive local men and form families with them. And then the Incel problem would start to get better organically, without any coercion involved (O'Donnell & Shor, 2022, p. 345).

Other proposals from Incel and 4chan communities to “correct” the sexual marketplace included government-assigned partners/arranged marriages (e.g., Bono, 2023; Iturriaga et al., 2024), mandated monogamy (e.g., Copland, 2022; Halpin, 2022), sexual slavery (e.g., Gosse et al., 2024; Halpin, 2022), legalizing/subsidizing prostitution (e.g., Jaki et al., 2019; O'Donnell & Shor, 2022), legalizing sexual assault (e.g., Eriksson, 2023; Laskovtsov, 2020), banning abortion/birth control (e.g., Halpin, 2022; O'Donnell & Shor, 2022), and to “make [women] legally objects” so they could be “bred like cattle and traded as commodities” (Zimmerman, 2024, p. 173).

Other manosphere groups, particularly MRAs, focus on more “traditional” political activism and organizing, as exemplified in this post to an MRA Usenet board: “Fight misandry effectively. Fight it in the halls of government. Only when men have their own lobbying groups will this turn around” (Marwick & Caplan, 2018, p. 551). Policy proposals included requiring physical evidence for rape cases (e.g., Kettrey et al., 2024), ending marital rape laws (e.g., Caudill, 2023), allowing violence against women (e.g., Sanders, 2024), forcing women who allege rape to be identified (e.g., Barber, 2022), and creating a registry for false accusers (e.g., Kettrey et al., 2024).

Engagement and Encouragement of Sexual Violence Perpetration

Although some members of the manosphere deny culpability and claim that sexual violence discourse is “hyperbolic,” we encountered many examples of perpetration disclosures and encouragement thereof in the manosphere. This includes examples of users describing or encouraging sexual assault perpetration offline, as well as within digital spaces (e.g., harassment, threats, sharing of non-consensual intimate images). Despite all connecting back to TRP rhetoric and ideology, sexual violence manifests differently across manosphere groups based on their unique subcultures.

PUAs engage in and encourage sexual manipulation tactics, coercion and, at times, physical force to support their goal of having sex with as many women as possible. Core to their teachings is the idea of “last minute resistance” (typically abbreviated to “LMR”), which refers to women denying, resisting, or questioning whether she wants to have sex. Amongst PUAs, LMR is framed as “insincere” and related to women's desire to not “look like a slut” (commonly referred to as “anti-slut defense,” e.g., S. Wright et al., 2020). LMR thus strips women of sexual agency by framing lack of consent as a challenge that can always be overcome through coercion or force if necessary (van Geuns, 2022). Clear examples of sexual violence abound in these communities, as PUAs publish “field reports” and self-help materials to recount their exploits, ask peers for feedback, and profit off of their followers' desire for sexual success. Examples include the use of substances, “You need to think about taking her somewhere, get her tipsy or high and alone, and then hammer through any last minute resistance” (D. Wright, 2020, p. 4), as well as graphic depictions of lack of consent, “But I had to put up with her shitty screaming and get past LMR” (D. Wright, 2020, p. 4).

The nihilistic “black pill” ideology held by many Incels leads them to justify sexual assault, including of children, by asserting that rape is one of the only ways to “ascend” (Gosse et al., 2024). In an exchange where an Incels.is user described a cousin who denied his sexual advances as a teen, another member responded, “should've raped her, now [he's] gonna be a virgin for life” (Davis & Kettrey, 2024). Substance-facilitated assault is floated as an option for Incels as well: “If I somehow manage to get laid, she'd be the only one on drugs there” (Vallerga & Zurbriggen, 2022, p. 617). Some Incel communities engage in “Chad fishing” (a play on the term “catfishing”) which involves tricking women into sexual activities (e.g., sending intimate images, masturbating via webcam) by creating digital profiles using the images of “Chads.” Most PUAs discursively distance themselves from the use of physical force, whereas the Incel community more explicitly advocates for violent, forcible rape. A poster from r/braincels wrote: “I just want to punch their vaginas until they bleed. Seeing them suffer is a fantastic feeling. I want to shove my cock into a Stacy's ass, make her scream in agony” (Millar, 2022, p. 86). Although they despise Chads for their sexual success, Incels often celebrate Chads who commit sexual violence

toward women (e.g., Tranchese & Sugiura, 2021). Incels also display more support for pedophilia through the normalization of attraction to underage girls (commonly referred to as “jailbait” or “JB”) compared to other manosphere communities. Purity is valued by Incels who see young, virginal women as easier to manipulate. Users draw on rhetoric of evolutionary psychology to argue, “the union of older man and younger woman is a very natural one, one that has endured for most of human history before our culture became the poison it is today” (Laskovtsov, 2020, p. 37). Moreover, they perceive themselves as victimized for missing out on “young love” and view the violation of girls as retribution for this slight:

great feeling of taking a young 14 or 15 yr old foids virginity and breaking her hymen and being her first male that she will always remember because we are incels and we will never experience teen sex and love and this is the most fucking brutal thing to think about (Anastasio, 2024, p. 149).

MRA’s fixation on “false rape allegations” ironically shapes their engagement in sexual violence. Some users suggest, “a great way to handle [a false allegation] would be to actually sexually assault her . . . maybe even cut her face a little, not too much though” (Kettrey et al., 2024, 1628), yet others engage in organized harassment campaigns against feminists seen as fueling the crisis (e.g., Ging, 2019; Gotell & Dutton, 2016). A commonly recommended “solution” is recording sexual encounters without the woman’s consent: “I have an app on my phone called Hidden Recorder [. . .] Every time I hook up with a girl I use this because it could save my ass in court some time if she falsely accuses me of rape” (Kettrey et al., 2024, 1628).

Finally, although less common in this review, we found examples of non-consensual intimate images (NCII; Semenzin & Bainotti, 2020) and references to child sex abuse materials (CSAM) being shared in manosphere forums (though researchers did not analyze these images for legal and ethical reasons; Davis & Kettrey, 2024). Whereas the sharing of NCII and CSAM are in and of themselves sexually abusive and illegal in the United States, one user in an Italian Telegram group went further to ask, “Rape videos anyone?” (Semenzin & Bainotti, 2020).

Policing Member Resistance

The ideological integrity of manosphere communities is maintained through active policing of member resistance and managing dissenting voices from “outsiders.” Because nearly all manosphere communities are run by moderators or administrators who create and enforce community guidelines, moderators wield significant power in shaping community behaviors by “setting the tone,” censoring speech, and gate-keeping membership. This model reinforces an echo chamber, increasing the effectiveness of indoctrination and normalization of the ideals being posted in groups (Booth et al., 2024; Regehr, 2022). Across multiple manosphere forums (e.g., r/braincels, r/AznIdentity, Incel.wiki, MGTOW forums, r/TRP), we observed moderator efforts to position their groups as “non-violent” following mass violence associated with their

communities (e.g., 2014 Isla Vista killings, the Toronto van attack) through statements like: “Being Incel has no relation whatsoever with violence, aggression, misogyny, or any other negative connotation” (DeCook, 2019, p. 138). Aside from this passing mention of misogyny by the moderator of Incels.me, no moderator statements specifically discouraged sexual violence or targeting of women. Their focus was on deterring violence against *other* demographic groups, as evidenced by this MGTOW moderator:

There are no silly and childish “abuse” buttons for women to push . . . because they are not even invited to read or comment. However, we ask that you kindly remain on topic and refrain from overly-criticizing any race or religion (S. Wright et al., 2020).

We interpret these efforts by moderators as a distancing strategy that lets the community do hybrid masculinities in a way that avoids censorship while positioning themselves as more rational and “non-extremist” than the men who committed these atrocities (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014; Pascoe & Hollander, 2016). That such efforts occur alongside the discursive exclusion of women as a “protected” group is perhaps unsurprising given the pervasive dehumanization of women in the manosphere. Regardless, moderator efforts mobilize sexual violence by positioning physical and homicidal violence as a “true problem” that exists entirely outside of their community, while implicitly asserting that rhetoric and acts of sexual violence, particularly toward women, are comparatively benign.

Although moderators sometimes leveraged community guidelines (e.g., creating a list of “banned” terms) to regulate discussions of sexual violence, researchers typically saw such action as meant to avoid platform sanctions rather than deterring violent speech. For example, before its permanent ban from Reddit in 2019, researchers identified at least 18 variations of the word rape (e.g., r@pe, r-a-p-i-s-t) on r/braincels (Millar, 2022). Uninterrupted use of such language demonstrates limitations to forum moderation in that community members deploy coded language to continue using sexually violent speech (Dishy, 2018). Misalignment between community guidelines and group norms may also signal that “formal statements” by figureheads serve as a smokescreen to provide plausible deniability when sexual violence is discussed or perpetrated. Indeed, we observed evidence of some moderators (e.g., Incels.is, r/TRP, Telegram) explicitly *supporting* sexual violence perpetration within community discussions, further indicating the limited and disingenuous nature of efforts to present themselves as “non-violent.”

Beyond the work of moderators in controlling speech, community members also police each other’s behaviors, including pushing back against men who engage in bystander behaviors when discussing sexual violence. Based on the current review, it is difficult to estimate how common bystander behaviors are across the manosphere, but studies within Incel and PUA forums found them to be exceedingly rare (e.g., Julien, 2023; O’Donnell & Shor, 2022). Users seen as allies to women are denigrated and mocked as “white knights,” “moral fags,” or “fakecels” before being ostracized and removed (blocked) from the communities (e.g., Davis & Kettrey, 2024; Gosse et al.,

2024). Some communities gamify identifying, reporting, and blocking posts made by “feminized men” to foster bonding amongst members (S. Wright et al., 2020). These practices mobilize sexual violence not only by systematically blocking dissenting opinions from the group, but by incentivizing violent and misogynistic rhetoric about women and their allies as a signal of belongingness.

Discussion

The current review synthesizes a growing body of research on the manosphere and explicates how sexual violence is being mobilized in these spaces as a tool for recruitment, indoctrination, ideological application, and maintenance of group cohesion. It is evident that manosphere actors leverage sexually violent acts and rhetoric to further their ideological goal of male supremacy, though, paradoxically, they do so under the guise of personal victimization. Indeed, this review captures a widely accepted understanding amongst manosphere scholars that victimhood has been weaponized by men’s rights groups as a tool for clawing back women’s social advances. Their professed victimhood stems from aggrieved entitlement, a sense of anger and resentment among men, particularly white men, at perceived losses in status and dominance within society, which they see as rightly owed (Kimmel, 2013). This aggrieved entitlement is rooted in a “zero sum mindset,” meaning that the advancement of some people (in this case, women) necessitates and signals the disadvantage of others (in this case, men) (Roberts, Fairchild, et al., 2025). A prominent manifestation of aggrieved entitlement within the manosphere is that men should have unfettered access to women’s bodies, a belief that allows men to simultaneously position themselves as victims when sex is denied and free from blame when sex is achieved through coercion or force. The harm being mobilized by the excusal, normalization, and encouragement of sexual violence within the manosphere is inscrutable; yet the number of perpetration disclosures captured in this review hints at the impact and scale of the problem. Findings from the current review should be considered within broader discourse and research which highlight the connections between engagement in online misogyny and the perpetration of violence (Marganski, 2019; Miller-Idriss, 2025).

Our findings are particularly concerning in the context of mainstream cultural discourses legitimizing the manosphere’s claims to victimhood. Media headlines describing the current socioeconomical challenges that men are facing as “men falling behind women” (e.g., Miller, 2025) reinforces a “zero sum mindset,” while bolstering patriarchal norms that position men ahead of women. Further, discussions of the “male loneliness epidemic” commonly reference the rising number of women choosing to be single, subtly (or at times, not so subtly) pointing to women’s autonomy as the source of men’s worsening outcomes (Mwatsiya et al., 2025). Indeed, we argue that the cultural salience of the manosphere has resulted in an institutionalization of hybrid hegemonic masculinities which promulgate male supremacy while simultaneously framing men as hapless victims to societal change (Bridges, 2021). Notably missing from popular discourse about these topics is critical

acknowledgment that measures of masculine success are byproducts of patriarchal structures and expectations established and reinforced by men (Fowler, 2025; Vierra et al., 2023); nor does such discourse unpack the reasons why fewer women want to engage in heterosexual relationships now that their livelihoods no longer depend upon men (Ferrara & Vergara, 2024). We agree with Roberts, Fairchild, et al.’s (2025) assertion that the manosphere’s sense of disaffection is not entirely organic, but rather part of broader cultural and political projects which aim to reconsolidate power for far-right, capitalistic aims. This “instructed victimhood” allows for the misdirection of blame for issues like wealth inequality away from the people and systems who benefit from the exploitation of workers and onto marginalized “others,” like women, immigrants, and queer folks (Kimmel, 2013; Manning & Stefanovic, 2024; Roberts, Fairchild, et al., 2025). It is evident in this review that women’s bodily autonomy, including their safety from sexual violence and access to support following harm, are being used as fuel for misdirected rage.

Our review also highlights how certain practices within manosphere communities, and the nature of the digital landscape, mobilize sexual violence with efficiency that could not be achieved offline, complicating intervention efforts. Online communities allow for widespread dissemination of the discourses described in this review and offer low barriers to entry. Most existing manosphere literature focuses on five primary communities (i.e., TRP, Incels, MRAs, MGTOW, PUAs), but it is crucial to recognize that manosphere ideologies are not limited to these groups (e.g., Christian Men’s Movement; Barnes & Karim, 2025), nor are they confined to discrete online communities. Indeed, there is ample evidence from the current review (e.g., Çağlar et al., 2025; Górska et al., 2023; Smith et al., 2025; Solea & Sugiura, 2023) and media coverage that manosphere rhetoric about sexual violence is seeping onto more “mainstream” social media (e.g., TikTok, YouTube), a diffusion that is making it increasingly difficult to track. This not only promulgates and normalizes these viewpoints to broader audiences (many of whom are young, impressionable boys without the tools to critique information being fed to them; e.g., Iñigo et al., 2024) but also erodes the safety of other casual users existing in those social media spaces (Greer et al., 2025). The affordances of digital platforms, such as algorithms recommending similar content which create “echo chambers,” and “upvoted,” pinned or “sidebar” content that signal community support for harmful framings of sexual violence, also make the spread of these views more efficient. Further, options for anonymity and end-to-end encryption on platforms allow users to feel “secure” expressing controversial, violent, or illegal views or behaviors (e.g., Semenzin & Bainotti, 2020). Beyond mobilizing harmful attitudes about sexual violence, there are clear examples from within (e.g., PUA field reports, sharing of NCII) as well as outside the manosphere (e.g., media reports of gender-based violence) that online rhetoric can inspire “real world” harm (e.g., Chan, 2023; Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Miller-Idriss, 2025).

Many platforms have attempted to regulate misogynistic content (e.g., Reddit bans for Incel-affiliated subreddits), but there is little evidence that these efforts have stemmed the

mobilization of sexual violence; in fact, the current review suggests that these efforts may have fortified manosphere efforts in various ways. The deplatforming of communities is viewed as “blue pill” censorship and validation of manosphere beliefs that society is complicit in their oppression, strengthening the communal mind-set without modifying their behaviors. Indeed, some members of the manosphere frame bans from mainstream platforms as beneficial because it allows them to migrate to external sites which allow for more “freedom of speech” (read: more violent, extremist language; DeCook, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Deplatforming efforts have also paradoxically led to preservation and deification of sexually violent rhetoric and materials as many manosphere communities maintain archival “back-ups” of forum materials in case they are taken offline (e.g., a repository of non-consensual intimate images in a file referred to as “the Bible”; Semenzin & Bainotti, 2020).

Implications

Our findings support a need for multi-tiered intervention programs that engage men and boys at individual, interpersonal, and structural levels (Over et al., 2025). Although likely insufficient on their own, individual-level education strategies focused on socioemotional skills, healthy sexuality, critical thinking, and media literacy could help inoculate some young people to the anti-gender narratives of the manosphere (Brito et al., 2024; DeKeseredy, 2024; Men, Masculinities, and Countering Backlash Collective, 2025; Williams et al., 2021). Largely missing from the discourse currently are educational efforts involving parents, a crucial point of intervention given parents’ acute oversight of their children’s online behaviors. Furthermore, as men’s peer relations are increasingly digitized, and men are exposed to online spaces which are saturated with anti-feminist and violent sexual rhetoric, prevention and intervention programs must account for this changing landscape. Interventions must be careful to avoid framings that are counter to their goals, for example by legitimizing male victimhood narratives or discourses conflating critiques of men’s abuse with anti-male sentiment (as is the case for many existing interventions for deradicalization and in men’s health discourses; Brito et al., 2024; Roberts, Fairchild, et al., 2025; Rothermel & Kelly, 2024). Whereas deplatforming or social media moderation tools are common recommendations in response to men’s antisocial peer bonding in online communities (e.g., DeKeseredy, 2024), such actions may embolden manosphere actors and push them toward more niche, less-regulated digital spaces while failing to intervene in the trend of homosocial bonding through the mobilization of sexual violence (e.g., Iñigo et al., 2024; Semenzin & Bainotti, 2020).

Given these challenges and limitations, our findings point to a need for gender-transformative interventions aimed at shifting men’s relationships with and understanding of masculinity (Hollander & Pascoe, 2019). Such programs must encourage reimagining of masculinities through a liberatory, intersectional feminist framework while providing men spaces to express their experiences of harm (e.g., sexual victimization), unpack the role of patriarchy in causing harm, and find support and dialogue to help them meet unmet needs (e.g., for

emotional connection and expression; Brito et al., 2024; DeKeseredy, 2024; Men, Masculinities, and Countering Backlash Collective, 2025). These efforts should include modeling “alternative modes of interaction among men [...] to question the incorrigible proposition that men are innately strong, tough, and invulnerable” (Hollander & Pascoe, 2019, 1686). Such efforts, particularly when modeled by social media influencers, influential peers, or men in positions of power, would ideally demonstrate for young men a new way of being, one in which they feel less stress to be accountable to patriarchal, gendered norms (Brito et al., 2024; Men, Masculinities, and Countering Backlash Collective, 2025).

Limitations

The current review should be considered in the context of its limitations. Our findings are drawn from secondhand analysis of primary research studies, meaning that we were interpreting extracted quotes and information from the manosphere that authors of these works deemed noteworthy enough to include in their published work. This may have resulted in an overrepresentation of extreme language or greater focus on certain messages within the manosphere. Secondary analysis also presented a challenge related to many authors’ use of nonspecific terms to describe violence in relation to the manosphere (e.g., use of vague terms such as harassment, gender-based violence, and violence toward women). Thus, in some instances, and particularly within quantitative studies of language in the manosphere, it was unclear whether these umbrella descriptions of gender-based violence were inclusive of a sexual component (e.g., Rousis, 2024). We erred on the side of inclusion to capture broader references to violence against women if the specific type of violence was not clearly distinct from sexual harm (e.g., homicide/murder). Our review was limited to literature published in English, resulting in primary foci on the manosphere factions of TRP, Incels, PUAs, MRAs, and MGTOW, and only research that originated from Westernized countries. There are other online communities that are aligned with manosphere ideologies (e.g., Groypers), which were not represented due to limited research on such groups. Moreover, although the digital manosphere is a global phenomenon, reaching Eastern countries and the Global South as well, differences in language may be limiting our ability to access and integrate cross-cultural research on the manosphere (CNN, n.d.; Liao, 2025). Future work should explore how sexual violence is differentially mobilized across cultural contexts for the shared purpose of reasserting patriarchal domination.

We elected not to include any research on manosphere podcasts due to our definition of manosphere communities as insular online communities in which men can interact with one another; podcasts do not offer opportunities for interaction between producers and consumers in the same way as digital forums. We also did not analyze data from women who participate (in small numbers) in manosphere communities. Women’s participation in the manosphere and anti-feminist discourse more broadly presents an important direction for future research, particularly given a recent rise in women’s support for traditional gender roles (Peach, 2025). Just as the manosphere exists as an online space for men to spread anti-

feminist rhetoric, there has been recent growth in similar online spaces for anti-feminist women to engage, with the rise of “tradwives,” social media mommy bloggers and TikTokers who dedicate their content to advocating a return to traditional gender roles and family life (Proctor, 2022). In the future, researchers should explore how online communities of women align themselves with anti-feminist rhetoric like that within the manosphere and, as a result, mobilize sexual violence.

Conclusion

This review demonstrates that sexual violence is not incidental but central to the ideological and cultural work of the manosphere. The manosphere’s hybrid masculinities leverage sexual violence as a unifying resource that simultaneously bonds members, delegitimizes feminist progress, and diffuses misogynistic rhetoric into mainstream culture. Interventions must therefore move beyond narrow frames of deradicalization or platform moderation to address the structural, cultural, and interpersonal dimensions of how men and boys come to view sexual violence as an acceptable or even necessary expression of masculinity. Gender-transformative approaches rooted in feminist praxis, digital literacy, and alternative models of male identity are urgently needed to disrupt this cycle and to safeguard public discourse and individual well-being.

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