

SPECIAL REPORT

Incels in Australia

The ideology, the threat, and a way forward

Jasmine Latimore
and John Coyne

A S P I

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Executive summary

This report explores the phenomenon of ‘incels’—involuntary celibates—and the misogynistic ideology that underpins a subset of this global community of men that has become a thriving Internet subculture. It examines how online spaces, from popular social media sites to dedicated incel forums, are providing a platform for not just the expansion of misogynistic views but gender-based violent extremism.

It is important to note that not all incels hold violent beliefs and of course not all misogynists are incels. To denote the difference, the term ‘misogynist incel’ (MI) is used to describe incels who dehumanise women, glorify violence and adhere to a male supremacist ideology. As a result of this complexity, policy and implementation responsibility for dealing with each phenomenon is dispersed so it is useful to clarify lines on responsibility. Misogyny is a threat to social cohesion but, for the most part, is a societal issue and not a security matter. Domestic violence is an abhorrent crime, but remains a law enforcement responsibility. Where violence against women involves an ideology, in this case an MI ideology, it becomes a potential national security matter.

Violence against women—a physical expression of misogyny¹—was described as ‘a problem of epidemic proportions’ in Australia’s National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children (2022–23).² Approximately one in three women in Australia have experienced physical violence perpetrated by another person, irrespective of the type of relationship between the victim and abuser.³ In addition, on average, one woman per week is killed by her intimate partner in Australia.⁴ Separately, Australia is also seeing an increased trend of hate speech towards women, and 23% of Australian men find it acceptable to use sexist or misogynistic language online.⁵

Historically in Australia, funding for programs aimed at reducing violence against women, including supporting individuals who experienced domestic violence, was limited and, by necessity, drove a focus on responding to violent acts. In recent years, there’s been an increased focus on the prevention of violence against women following heightened publicity of domestic violence and community calls for government funding to support victims and violence-prevention efforts.⁶ In the May 2023 Budget, the Albanese government announced \$589.3 million to support the national plan’s implementation, with the goal of ending gender-based violence within a generation.⁷

Separate from Australia’s endemic domestic-violence challenges, there’s evidence that misogynist ideology, beyond individual criminal behaviour, has fuelled acts of violence against women around the world (see Appendix 1). Current available, predominantly English-language, open-source data suggests that those attacks may have led to or being associated with a total of 58 deaths (63, including attacker suicides) and an additional 82 injured (see Table 1). In Australia, despite the existence of hate speech towards women, authorities have not identified any overt acts of violence driven by a specific misogynistic ideology as opposed to domestic violence that had misogyny at its core. Nevertheless, there’s evidence that misogynist hate speech in Australia, which is often driven by a view that equality for women and diverse groups means inequality and disadvantage for men, is intensifying.⁸

And it raises key questions regarding Australian efforts to counter misogynistic ideologies within our nation. If there’s a continuum that has sexist, but lawful, views on gender at one end and gendered hate speech at the other, at what point does misogynistic ideology tip into acts of gendered violence? What’s needed to prevent misogynistic ideologies from becoming violent? And how do we, as a society, avoid the epidemic levels of violence against women in Australia?

This report doesn't intend to provide answers to all of those questions. It does, however, seek to make an important contribution to public discourse about the increasing trend in misogynistic ideology through examination of a particularly violent community of misogynists, and proposes a range of policy options for consideration to tackle the threat that misogynistic ideology poses to Australia.

This report makes six recommendations designed to reduce and, where possible, prevent the risk of future occurrence of incel and similar violence in Australia. The recommendations include greater awareness raising and policy recognition that incel violence can be an ideological form of issue-motivated extremism which would provide certainty that incels could formally fall within the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO)—in addition to law-enforcement agencies—and would encourage tailored education programs focused on engaging young males at risk from indoctrination in this extreme subculture (along with their parents).

What are incels?

In February 2021, the Director-General of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) noted that:

We are seeing a growing number of individuals and groups that don't fit on the left-right spectrum at all; instead, they're motivated by a fear of societal collapse or a specific social or economic grievance or conspiracy. For example, the violent misogynists who adhere to the involuntary celibate or 'incel' ideology fit into this category.⁹

The Director-General concluded that new language was needed for these issue-motivated groups and that ASIO would adopt the term 'ideologically motivated violent extremism', including for incel groups (as well as others motivated by nationalist, racist or anti-authority ideology).

The term 'incel'—a contraction of the words 'involuntary' and 'celibate'—is used to describe a person who struggles to establish romantic and/or sexual relationships. Beyond a label of personal identity, the term also refers to a certain ideology and an online subculture, movement or community.¹⁰ Incels are a subgroup of a wider collection of online and offline communities that share overlapping misogynistic and male-supremacist ideologies—otherwise referred to as the 'manosphere'.¹¹ It's important to note that not all who identify as incels hold misogynistic or male-supremacist beliefs which is why the term 'misogynist incel' (MI) is used to describe incels who dehumanise women, glorify violence and adhere to a male-supremacist ideology.¹²

Manosphere groups are united by their adoption of the 'red pill' philosophy. As asserted by the Anti-Defamation League, different coloured pills are used as a shorthand to identify one's progress through the radicalisation process—'a handy guide to how committed you are to a particular extremist ideology'.¹³ The red pill (a reference to the 1999 movie *The Matrix*) is a metaphor for 'awakening to some previously hidden supposed reality'¹⁴ and, in the context of the manosphere, is synonymous with becoming enlightened to the misogyny of feminism.¹⁵

In Australia and elsewhere, the manosphere dates back to the second wave of feminism during the 1970s. It has experienced a recent resurgence in the form of the 'longer-standing men's rights movement that has had significant influence, despite its relatively low profile, in key areas of family policy'.¹⁶ However, the manosphere in the broad isn't the focus here. The area of security concern is MIs holding an ideology that is antagonistic to social change and which has the potential to drive violence against women. It is this ideology that potentially takes the threat from law enforcement only to a national security matter.

That is, this MI ideology, amplified by online forums, 'exhibits all the hallmarks of an extremist ideology'.¹⁷ While the incel movement has roots stemming from the red-pill philosophy, modern MIs have adopted a core 'black pill' world view in which they believe that their situation—their genetic inferiority and societal position as 'betas' (or lower)—is permanent, inescapable and dictated by 'biological determinism', female 'hypergamety' and 'lookism'.¹⁸ The combination of the MIs' nihilistic black-pill world view and self-victimisation drives the belief that their expressed misogyny, and in the more extreme cases, their violent actions against attractive women and men ('stacies' and 'chads'), are justifiable. This manifests as male supremacism, which can be observed in the video recorded by Perpetrator 4¹⁹ the day before his May 2014 attack in California (see box).

‘Tomorrow is the day of retribution, the day in which I will have my revenge against humanity ... I have been forced to endure an existence of loneliness, rejection and unfulfilled desires ... I will punish you all for it ... You will finally see that I am, in truth, the superior one, the true alpha male ...’²⁰—May 2014

The absolutist thinking and belief in impenetrable structures characteristic of the black pill offers more fertile ground for violent extremism than that of the red pill and underpins MI ideology with the highest potential radicalising power.²¹ This is because the black pill ‘typically offers only two options ... accept their fate as an incel or try to change society to their benefit—usually advocated as potentially achievable by means of mass violence and terror, not politics or other methods of change.’²²

Of those who can be classified as MIs, very few have gone, or will go on to conduct acts of violence. While it’s difficult to ascertain from open-source data how many MIs exist worldwide, at least 15 individuals have perpetrated violence in the name of MI ideology in the past, and at least an additional five have plotted attacks across North America and Europe. But among all violence targeting women, there will be incel-motivated acts of violence that occurred but were never reported to police. In addition, not all reported cases of violence are categorised by motivation, so the available data is limited by those factors.

As this extremist subculture has grown, MIs have risen in notoriety over the past decade. That has prompted researchers, government agencies and advocacy groups across the world, including in Australia, to focus greater resourcing on incels to better understand what kind of threat they pose, and whether incel violence constitutes a national-security concern.²³

The origins, trajectory and online nature of the global incel movement

The term ‘invcel’—later shortened to ‘incel’—was coined in 1997 by a (female) Canadian university student, who developed an inclusive online forum for individuals struggling with romantic and sexual inactivity.²⁴ By the 2000s, incels began to inhabit spin-off forums such as LoveShy and IncelSupport. LoveShy, with a more relaxed content-moderation policy, began to house ‘the more extreme elements’²⁵ of the growing movement. Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, the community would become intertwined with other, similar online subcultures, including alternative manosphere groups hosted by websites such as 4chan and Reddit.²⁶

By 2016, incel forums had largely moved away from the red-pill philosophy towards the black pill. That shift coincided with a sharp increase in the toxicity of the language used in these forums—a phenomenon that was measured by the Google-developed machine-learning tool, Perspective API, in 2021.²⁷ What began as a well-intentioned support group morphed into the MI movement as we know it today, associated with misogyny, male supremacism and violence.²⁸

As well as growing in toxicity, the movement has gained a substantial following. For example, the first major incel subreddit group, ‘r/Incels’, grew from 11 members in 2014 to 42,000 before being shut down in November 2017 for content that advocated rape and murder.²⁹ ‘r/braincels’, the replacement subreddit, quickly rose to prominence, amassing more than 50,000 members before being quarantined and later banned in September 2019.³⁰ There’s also been a significant migration of men from alternative manosphere groups towards the incel movement (around 8% per year since 2015).³¹ Figure 1 provides an analysis of secondary data relating to three studies of the countries of residence of members of incel social media.

Figure 1: Continents of residence of incels

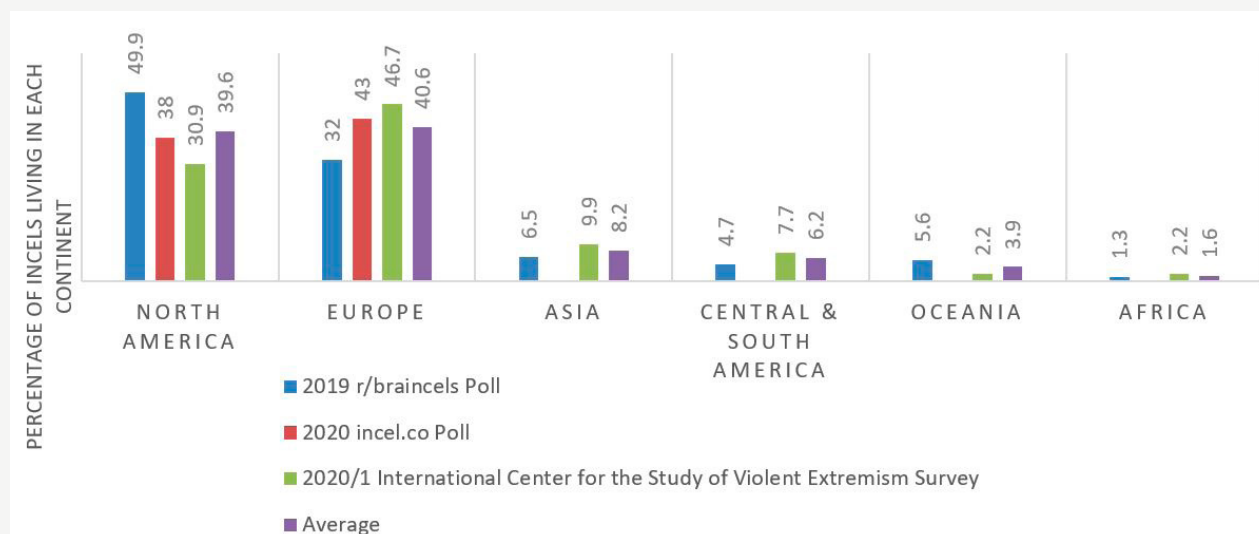


Figure 1 shows the results of three independent studies examining the continents of residence of incels:

The '2019 r/braincels poll' was conducted via the r/braincels subreddit (under quarantine at the time of survey). The survey collected 1,267 responses during a two-day period (dates unknown). While r/braincels was an incel subreddit, users frequenting the page weren't necessarily all incels. This survey was conducted by r/braincels user u/KosmicMalware, who posted the results to r/braincels. The original post (archived link³²) and the raw data³³ are accessible online.

The '2020 incel.co poll' measured the responses of 665 incel.co users during March 2020 (over an unknown time frame). The Anti-Defamation League, which published this data, didn't provide specific numbers for locations outside North America and Europe, but stated that 'small segments of respondents are from Central and South America, Asia, Oceania and Africa'.³⁴

The '2020/21 International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism Survey' measured the responses of 272 self-identified incel adults via a Google Forms survey between 7 December 2020 and 2 January 2021.³⁵

The 'average' indicates the average percentage of incels residing in each continent according to the three datasets.

It's difficult to determine exactly how many individuals now subscribe to the MI ideology globally; however, online presence on popular incel forums provides an indication. incel.is, created hours after r/Incels was shut down, is the largest incel-specific forum and currently has more than 21,000 members and more than 450,000 threads consisting of more than 10 million posts (as of June 2023).³⁶ One study indicated that, within just a two-month period between October and December 2018, incel.is amassed 1.754 million visitors globally. Within the same time frame, alternative incel websites RedPillTalk.com, Lookism.net and Looksmax.org also experienced significant online traffic, housing 329,878, 3.124 million and 424,170 total visitors, respectively.³⁷ Another study found that Australians visited an unnamed incel forum a total of 42,391 times between April and June 2022, accounting for 1.8% of the website's total traffic within that time frame.³⁸

The online nature of the MI movement facilitates the transnational nature of the ideology. Although there have only been reports of MI violence thus far in the US, Canada and the UK, there's growing concern about the spread of MI ideology throughout Europe, to Australia and Asia, as studies demonstrate that incels exist across almost every continent.³⁹ It is therefore a global issue that needs increased public awareness.

MI violence and its impact

Between 2009 and 2022, evidence suggest that at least 15 attacks were carried out in Western countries, including the US, Canada and the UK, potentially had MI ideology as a motivating factor . Current available, predominantly English-language, open-source data suggests that those attacks may have led to, or been associated with, a total of 58 deaths (64, including attacker suicides) and an additional 82 injured (Table 1). At least five interrupted plots have also been linked to the MI movement across the US and Europe (Appendix 1). This data does not account for violence perpetrated by male supremacists / misogynists outside the MI community.

Table 1: Violent acts potentially motivated by incel ideology

Year	Location	Deaths (suicide)	Persons injured	Method of attack
2009	Pennsylvania, US	3 (1)	9	Shooting
2014	California, US	6 (1)	14	Shooting, stabbing, vehicle ramming
2015	Oregon, US	9 (1)	7	Shooting
2016	Alberta, Canada	1	0	Beating
2017	New Mexico, US	2 (1)	0	Shooting
2018	Florida, US	17	17	Shooting
2018	Ontario, Canada	10	16	Vehicle ramming
2018	Florida, US	2 (1)	5	Shooting
2018	New York, US	1	0	Stabbing
2019	Ontario, Canada	0	2	Stabbing
2019	Texas, US	(1) ^	1	Shooting
2020	Ontario, Canada	1	2	Stabbing
2020	Arizona, US	0	3	Shooting
2021	Plymouth, UK	5 (1)	2	Shooting
2022	California, US	0	4	Pepper-spraying
Total (excluding suicides)		58	82	

^ = denotes perpetrator's death by law enforcement.

Note: Table shows acts of violence assessed by the authors, with external supporting data to be motivated by incel ideology to date. Only attacks with a clear link to the incel community are included. Details regarding links to incel ideology and source information are in Appendix 1. Attacks suspected, but not confirmed, to be linked to inceldom, as well as violent MI plots and hoaxes, are also in Appendix 1. For the purposes of this analysis, harassment motivated by incel ideology was not included.

This history of violent MI attacks demonstrates two points. The first is that MI violence is motivated by a particular ideology that advocates violence against women and the wider society. The dissemination of manifestos by MI perpetrators of mass violence and their arguments urging other MIs to instigate a ‘beta uprising’ seemingly constitutes what ASIO refers to as ideologically motivated violent extremism: ‘support for violence ... in response to specific political or social grievances’.⁴⁰ Although there’s no evidence to suggest that MIs are formally organised, the MI community’s subsequent glorification of these perpetrators and their ideology, including by Australian MIs (see box), further suggests that, while personal issues may be in play in MI violence, the underlying MI ideology still plays a large role in MIs’ radicalisation to violent extremism.⁴¹

Australian incel posts on 4Chan’s /pol/ praising MI perpetrators of violence

‘[Perpetrator #4] should have got them bitches ... His actions are justified as the people who let him on this path are to blame ... none of the blame should be landed on [Perpetrator #4], as life rejected him and people get what they deserve’. (Appendix 2, Figure A2.1)—January 2022

‘Incel [Perpetrator #9] killed 10 people because he is The Supreme Gentleman ... Why is he forgotten?’ (Appendix 2, Figure A2.2)—January 2022

The second point demonstrated by MI violence is that it threatens to cause death, harm and fear, as Perpetrator #4 states in his manifesto (see box).

Excerpt from Perpetrator #4’s manifesto

‘... I will punish all females for the crime of depriving me of sex ... I cannot kill every single female on earth, but I can deliver a devastating blow that will shake all of them to their core of their wicked hearts ...’
—May 2014

Beyond the death, injury and fear caused by MI violent extremism, MI activity on social media also has tangible online and offline impacts. Threats of physical violence or the use of force against women are common in incel forums. Some MIs advocate for the legalisation of violent actions against women. For example, one study found that 89% of users posting on an unnamed incel forum supported rape.⁴² Others hope to control women or strip them of their rights. Those ambitions would be achieved by several means, including forced sexual redistribution, state-mandated girlfriends, and legalising rape.⁴³ When MIs harass, degrade, objectify and encourage violence against women, this interpretation of masculinity that celebrates violence becomes both amplified and normalised.⁴⁴ That contributes to offline harms by constructing narratives in which women are legitimate objects of hostility and undermines women’s agency over their bodies as well as their equal participation in public and political life.⁴⁵ On the extreme end, the online activity of MIs justifies and openly encourages mass violence.

Often the intent behind the more extreme messaging is refuted by MIs, who claim that their posts are entirely humorous, satirical and purposefully inflammatory. While some violent posts may be motivated by fantasy and ‘humour’, there’s no way to know how such narratives are perceived by others in the online audience or the potential impact this messaging has upon the radicalisation of vulnerable individuals.⁴⁶

Pre-empting MI violence down under: determining threat and risk

In 2022, the Director-General of ASIO, when asked about issue-based radicalisation in a post-Covid era, mentioned incels as a group of interest, stating that ‘we have people with those beliefs here in this country.’⁴⁷ It was presumed that the pandemic and associated lockdowns would act as an accelerant and facilitator for various forms of terrorism across the ideological spectrum. A combination of isolation, loneliness, boredom and unprecedented amounts of time spent online is concerning because, like in other extremist movements, those factors are foundational components that can lead to MI ideology.⁴⁸ As a result of this contextual amplification, MIs may be on the rise in Australia, and could pose a threat to Australia’s national security.⁴⁹

Some academics consider Australia an ‘appealing place for the growth of incels’⁵⁰ due to our concerning number of domestic violence and sexual assault cases and the increase in nationalist extremism—with which MI ideology notably overlaps.⁵¹ But what exactly is the threat that MIs pose to Australia? To answer that question, we must look at both their intent to conduct violence and their capacity to do so.

The ambitions of MIs in Australia are broad and can range from some merely voicing their grievances about their inability to attract the kind of women they want, to venting about the misandry of feminism. In extreme cases, MIs advocate violence or even hope to incite a ‘beta uprising / incel rebellion’, as was the case with Perpetrator #9 (see box).

Excerpts from Perpetrator #9’s pre-attack Facebook post

‘... The Incel Rebellion has already begun! We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys! All hail the Supreme Gentleman ...!’⁵²—April 2018

The intended outcome of online and offline MI activity is to make a stand against feminism, effect social change and intimidate women into behaving in a way that favours incels.⁵³ The following posts by Australian users on 4chan demonstrate that sentiment across this spectrum exists in Australia (see box).

Australian incel posts on 4chan’s /pol/

‘... women should be stripped of their rights because they still have primitive minds that need to be tamed.’ (Appendix 2, Figure A2.3)—April 2022

‘... Women are an incredibly destructive, incredibly toxic group of people that must be completely controlled at all costs ... There should be a separate legal system for men and women ...’ (Appendix 2, Figure A2.4)—September 2022

‘... I don’t believe I am entitled to sex, but I do believe society should find a way for me to have sex, if the negative consequences of me not having sex outweighs [sic] the negative consequences of having to provide me with a way of having sex. Like when a certain “supreme gentleman” went on a shooting rampage, if the government paid an asian immigrant or bribed her with the option of dating/marrying him, in order to get a green card, many lives could have been saved ...’ (Appendix 2, Figure A2.5)—September 2017

‘... I might start a political movement. “BRING BACK RAPE” “RAPE IS OKAY WITH ME” “WANNA STOP BEING INCEL, TIME TO START RAPING” (Appendix 2, Figure A2.6)—October 2022

Current literature is lacking in terms of quantifying the presence of MIs in Australia, and the act of deliberately posting provocative content makes it extremely difficult to ascertain the true intent behind online activity by MIs. Also, the overtly violent nature of MI forums means that it's easy to overestimate the true intent.⁵⁴ It's also worth noting that MI motivations might not have historically been considered in domestic violence and sexual assault cases, indicating that past incidents of violence against women in Australia could have been MI motivated without being formally recognised as such.

MIs operate without any formal leadership. Instead, the community acts as a decentralised 'resistance' movement of individuals with shared grievances, and online forums act as their home base.⁵⁵ That behaviour, and the history of MI violence occurring in other Western democracies, implies that future MI violence in Australia is likely to be perpetrated by lone actors, using low-capability methods and easily accessible weapons such as knives and vehicles, which would be consistent with other forms of violent extremism. It is becoming more important for Australia's law-enforcement and security agencies to be prepared for MI threats, harassment and violence but, crucially, so too is there a need for government more broadly, civil society groups and educators to increase awareness of the risks of misogynistic behaviour, particularly in young people, and to implement policies and actions aimed at preventing the radicalisation-to-violence process and so reduce the number of individuals who ever get onto the radar of our security agencies.

Policy recommendations

In order to combat the threat that MIs pose to Australia, the following six recommendations are offered with a focus on clarifying whether, when and how policymakers should intervene, considering the need to balance priorities in dealing with violent extremism.

1. Australian federal government policy should formally recognise that male supremacist/misogynistic violence that is ideologically motivated can potentially be subject to terrorism laws.

The Australian security framework should be updated to reflect that, should they happen in future, such acts of MI ideologically motivated violence as those outlined in Table 1 could be classified as terrorism.⁵⁶ It seems clear from the remarks of ASIO's Director-General that MIs fall into the ASIO-coined 'specific-issue grievances' category.⁵⁷ There would be benefit in providing greater policy certainty that MIs, and misogynistic violent ideology more broadly, fall formally within ASIO's legislated remit. Therefore, this report proposes that Australian policy formalise the designation of male-supremacist / misogynistic violence as ideological in nature.

Such recognition of incel 'ideology' is not unprecedented. It would be consistent with a June 2023 Canadian court decision, which determined that 'incel culture' fell within the definition of terrorism with 'ideological purpose' per s. 83.01 of the Canadian Criminal Code.⁵⁸ A similar classification of incel culture in Australia would ensure that, even where the authorities are unable to ascribe a religious or political motivation, individual acts could be subject to the terrorism laws in the Criminal Code 1995.

In addition, there would be benefit in formal policy confirmation that violent acts of ideological misogyny fall within the definition of 'security' in the *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979* as either or both 'politically motivated violence' or 'communal violence'. Importantly, it's the ideological nature of the violence that separates these acts from other forms of criminal violence against women. This formalisation of the Director-General's remarks would ensure that, in the case of MI violence in Australia, law-enforcement and security agencies would have the necessary powers to intervene and prosecute individuals proportionately. It would also help increase broader awareness and potentially act as a deterrent to such violent acts, given the magnitude of the possible punishment. Importantly, this is one end of the violent ideology spectrum, and there's a need to enhance national responses to prevent and disrupt MIs and reduce radicalisation in the first place.

2. Include 'gender' and advocating violence against groups as a qualification for hate speech.

The UN defines hate speech as 'offensive discourse targeting a group or individual based on inherent characteristics (such as race, religion or gender) and that may threaten social peace'.⁵⁹ While it isn't illegal to hold misogynistic / male-supremacist views, or to express them publicly, privately, online or offline, Australia is currently limited in its ability to tackle gendered hate speech due to major gaps in legislation. The national cabinet should consider filling those legislative gaps by qualifying gender as a factor for both hate speech and for advocating violence against a group. That would enable proportionate justice responses for countering harmful online and offline MI speech and would aid social-media platforms in their ability to counter hateful content on their forums.

3. Improve the governance of online spaces through platform standard setting, coordination and improved algorithms.

At a minimum, male-supremacy/MI ideology needs to be included in social-media and online gaming platforms' hate-speech / terrorism regulations so that tech companies may be better equipped to conduct informed and proportionate content moderation. While a broader challenge than gender-based violence, standard-setting is long overdue for social-media platforms. This type of hate speech regulation should be a requirement for platforms to operate in Australia. It would improve platform cross-coordination by preventing MIs, and other violence-advocacy individuals and groups, from simply moving from one platform to another. This type of regulation would also assist in reducing the ease of users moving between incel-specific forums and mainstream social-media platforms.⁶⁰ In addition to improved content moderation, social-media companies and search engines also need to assess how their algorithms draw unsuspecting individuals to radical ideologies such as misogynistic inceldom.⁶¹ YouTube's algorithm, for example, has been found to promote incel content both to individuals who did, and did not, seek out that content themselves.⁶² Google search results for unemployment or body image issues were also found to have pointed individuals towards incel forums.⁶³ This highlights a problematic yet potentially rectifiable pathway of MI radicalisation that needs more attention from policymakers and social-media platforms.⁶⁴

4. Develop and implement preventive community education programs.

While security agencies will need to be resourced for and trained in identifying MI threats, a primary intervention for mitigating and even preventing the threat posed by MIs should be community-wide programs beginning in early childhood that intervene in the development of extreme misogynistic ideology by setting healthy social norms, encouraging social cohesion and building digital, media and information literacy within our population.⁶⁵ Community education targeting social norms and social cohesion should be informed by an understanding that MIs don't arise in a vacuum, but rather that 'the guiding ideology of deep rooted incel misogyny prompted by incels is embedded within mainstream social structures and norms.'⁶⁶ Moreover, building digital, media and information literacy within the population will enable Australians to better recognise misinformation when it's encountered both online and offline. By facilitating critical thinking skills, the population will be better equipped to challenge MI messaging and to question both the sources and the MI community's manipulation of such sources to suit its narrative.⁶⁷ Existing preventive programs for violent extremism should include reference to MI ideology and should move to inhabit online spaces where MI ideology is most prevalent.

5. Adopt MI intervention programs modelled after violent extremism deradicalisation.

MI violence occurs on a continuum of gender-based harassment and violence, so interventions should be modelled on existing programs that seek to address gender-based violence and deradicalisation from violent extremism.⁶⁸ Those interventions should aim to counter the underlying contributors to MI ideology.⁶⁹ Common deradicalisation program elements have a role to play in addressing MI ideology, including the use of credible interlocutors, assisting individuals to disassociate from extremist networks, and providing assistance in fostering community integration.⁷⁰ However, their implementation must be tailored to the MI ideology and community.

Successful MI intervention programs require significant online components, as incels and at-risk individuals are most commonly radicalised via online platforms. Similarly, the underlying contributors to the MI ideology, including social isolation, rejection by peers and poor mental health, are closely linked with increased time spent online.⁷¹ Overseas initiatives, such as the Canadian 'Next Gen Men' and the Danish 'Center for Digital Youth Care' programs, have successfully built online spaces for at-risk individuals on popular platforms to provide positive alternatives to incel forums.⁷² Online deradicalisation in conjunction with more traditional offline methods is most likely to yield positive results.

6. Develop alternative, healthy online environments for men.

Given that the incel community acts as an online support system for men, a measured response to the MI threat should include providing alternative, non-toxic online environments for men.

Civil society programs aimed towards countering violence against women should make use of popular social-media platforms to facilitate discussions about mental health and positive masculinity and should aim to instil healthy gender norms and provide emotional support for those at risk.⁷³

Glossary

Becky	A stereotype used by incels to describe women who sit subordinate to ‘Stacies’ on the social ladder and decile scale (a scale of 1 to 10 used to rate people on their looks). ⁷⁴
Beta	A term used to describe men who are subordinate to ‘alpha’ males in the social and sexual hierarchy. They’re characterised as being shy, submissive and ‘not especially physically virile’. ⁷⁵
Beta uprising/ Incel rebellion	An uprising of incels against ‘chads’ and ‘stacies’ and potentially ‘normies’, with the intent to take back power from ‘alpha’ males and to overthrow society, which incels perceive as oppressively feminist. ⁷⁶
Biological determinism	A concept suggesting that all human characteristics—physical, mental, and behavioural—are inherent and predetermined by hereditary factors passed down from parent to offspring. ⁷⁷
Black pill	A metaphor for waking up to the reality in which, despite all one’s efforts towards self-improvement, one would never be able to overcome biological determinism and ‘ascend’—to leave incelism and achieve sexual success. ⁷⁸ The black pill is a more nihilistic version of the red pill.
Chad	The stereotype incels use to refer to the typical white ‘alpha’ male; a man who sits at the top of the social and sexual hierarchy. ⁷⁹
Femoid/Foid	A combination of the words; ‘female’ and ‘android’. It’s a dehumanising word for women that equates being female with being an unfeeling robot.
Hypergamy	A sociological term used to describe the act of marrying into a higher social caste. ⁸⁰ Incels rationalise that female hypergamy causes what they refer to as the ‘80/20 rule’—a phenomenon in which 20% of men (‘chads’) monopolise 80% of women (‘stacies’ and ‘beckies’), leaving 80% of men to compete over the bottom 20% of women. ⁸¹
Lookism	A prejudice in which the attractive are favoured over the unattractive. Incels claim to be discriminated against due to lookism. ⁸²
Manosphere	A loose collection of online and offline communities that share overlapping misogynistic and virulent anti-feminist ideologies. The uniting ideological features of the manosphere are an adherence to a ‘red pill’ ideology, anti-feminist sentiment, a sense of male victimisation and advocacy of male supremacism. ⁸³
Normies	An incel stereotype denoting people who sit subordinate to ‘chads’ and ‘stacies’ but above incels in the social and sexual hierarchy. Incels differentiate themselves from ‘normies’ both on the basis of physical appearance and ‘through their belief that they have gained insights that normies do not hold, granting Incels a privileged position in understanding the world’ (that is, the red or black pill). ⁸⁴

- Red pill** A metaphor for ‘awakening to some previously hidden supposed reality’.⁸⁵ For incels and other manosphere communities, the red pill is synonymous with becoming enlightened about the misogyny of feminism. Red-pill ideology differs from the black-pill ideology in that ‘redpillers’ believe that they may overcome their genetic inferiority, for example by ‘looksmaxxing’ (improving their appearance in ways that they can control).
- Stacy** The stereotype incels use to refer to women at the apex of the social and sexual hierarchy; the female equivalent of a ‘chad’.⁸⁶

Appendix 1: Violent acts potentially motivated by incel ideology

Perpetrator reference number	Date (month and year)	Location (state, country)	Age (at time of attack)	Deaths (Suicide)	Persons injured	Weapon	Link to incel ideology	Data source type
1*	December 1989	Quebec, Canada	25	14 (1)	14	Shooting	Revered as a 'saint' by incel community and sometimes referred to as the 'original incel'.	Research papers ⁸⁷
2*	April 2007	Virginia, US	23	33 (1)	27	Shooting	Revered by incel community. Considered by some to have been an incel due to being rejected by a sex worker and harassing fellow female students prior to attack.	Incel website, ⁸⁸ research papers ⁸⁹
3	August 2009	Pennsylvania, US	48	3 (1)	9	Shooting	Despite not self-identifying as an incel, the perpetrator kept an online journal detailing his lack of sex life, exhibiting sentiment similar to other violent MIs, and frequently posted memes with references to incels on Facebook.	Media articles ⁹⁰
4	May 2014	California, US	22	6 (1)	14	Shooting, stabbing, vehicle ramming	The perpetrator's videos and his manifesto had a significant impact upon the MI movement and heavily inspired Perpetrators #9's and #10's attacks. ⁹¹	Media articles ⁹²
5	October 2015	Oregon, US	26	9 (1)	7	Shooting	Self-identified as incel. Manifesto and online posts consistent with MI ideology.	Terrorism database, research papers, media articles ⁹³
6	July 2016	Alberta, Canada	38	1	0	Beating	Considered to have been motivated by incelism.	Media articles ⁹⁴
7	December 2017	New Mexico, US	21	2 (1)	0	Shooting	Praised Perpetrator #4 in online forums.	Research papers ⁹⁵
8	February 2018	Florida, US	19	17	17	Shooting	Made comments on YouTube praising Perpetrator #4.	Research papers ⁹⁶

Perpetrator reference number	Date (month and year)	Location (state, country)	Age (at time of attack)	Deaths (Suicide)	Persons injured	Weapon	Link to incel ideology	Data source type
9	April 2018	Ontario, Canada	25	10	16	Vehicle ramming	Posted incel content online. Had an affiliation with the incel subreddit r/braincels and claimed to have communicated with Perpetrators #4 and #5 on incel message boards. ⁹⁷	Government reports, research papers
10	November 2018	Florida, US	40	2 (1)	5	Shooting	Published content online consistent with incel ideology.	Government reports, research papers, media articles ⁹⁸
11	July 2018	New York, US	21	1	0	Stabbing	Administrator of incel forum 'Darkcel'.	Media articles ⁹⁹
12	January 2019	Utah, US	27	–	–	Shooting	Arrested prior to planned attack on women's march and made online posts relating to inability to get a girlfriend.	Media articles ¹⁰⁰
13	June 2019	Ontario, Canada	28	0	2	Stabbing	Self-identified as incel.	Media articles ¹⁰¹
14	June 2019	Texas, US	22	1^	1	Shooting	Posted incel-related content online.	Media articles ¹⁰²
15	August 2019	Middlesbrough, UK	22	–	–	Bombing	Internet search history revealed browsing of incel content. Prosecuted for possession of explosives and terrorist materials intended for use in an attack against women.	Research papers, media articles ¹⁰³
16*	October 2019	Saxony-Anhalt, Germany	27	2	2	Shooting	Poor self-image and anti-feminist sentiment indicates that perpetrator probably adhered to incel ideology and identity.	Research papers ¹⁰⁴
17*	February 2020	Hessen, Germany	43	10 (1)	5	Shooting	Self-identified as incel; however, avoided sexual/romantic relationships by choice.	Media articles ¹⁰⁵
18	February 2020	Ontario, Canada	17	1	2	Stabbing	Self-identified as incel.	Media articles ¹⁰⁶
19+	February 2020	New York, US	19	–	–	Bombing	Self-identified as incel.	Media articles ¹⁰⁷

Perpetrator reference number	Date (month and year)	Location (state, country)	Age (at time of attack)	Deaths (Suicide)	Persons injured	Weapon	Link to incel ideology	Data source type
20	May 2020	Arizona, US	20	0	3	Shooting	Self-identified as incel.	Research papers, media articles ¹⁰⁸
21	June 2020	Virginia, US	23	–	–	Bombing	Self-identified as incel.	US Attorney's Office, research papers, media articles ¹⁰⁹
22*	January 2021	Edinburgh, UK	22	–	–	Shooting (crossbow), stabbing	Showed interest in incel subculture and an affinity for Perpetrator #4. Considered a hero by the incel movement.	Media articles ¹¹⁰
23	January 2021	Liguria, Italy	22	–	–		Self-identified as incel and indicated intent to conduct mass violence in the name of incel ideology.	Media articles ¹¹¹
24	August 2021	Plymouth, UK	22	5 (1)	2	Shooting	Active on incel forums and Reddit and YouTube. Posted incel-related content.	Media articles ¹¹²
25	July 2021,	Ohio, US	21	–	–	Shooting	Self-identified as incel. Law enforcement found a note by the perpetrator referencing intent to kill up to 3,000 people and references to Perpetrator #4.	Media articles ¹¹³
26	September 2022	California, US	25	0	4	Pepper spray	Self-identified as incel.	Media articles ¹¹⁴

Key:

* Perpetrator assessed to not have been substantially motivated by incel ideology (therefore not included in Table 1 statistics)

^ Death of attacker by law enforcement

– Plot

+ Hoax

Appendix 2: Australian incel 4chan posts

Figure A2.1

Elliot Rodger Elliot Rodger Fan ID:nxa/PuJ4 Tue 18 Jan 2022 [18 / 3 / 14]
14:35:01 No.356965501  [View](#) [Reply](#) [Original](#) [Report](#)
Quoted By: >>356966055 >>356966353 >>356967245 >>356968003
>>356968434 >>356969376 >>356971789

Elliot Rodger should have got them bitches, Elliot Rodger was too good for them, they didn't even deserve Elliot Rodger, yet he got denied. His actions are justified as the people who let him on this path are to blame, Elliot Rodger would be here today and awesome if he was accepted none of the blame should be landed on Elliot, as life rejected him and people got what they deserve

Figure A2.2

The Supreme Gentleman Anonymous ID:m+V9xi1r Thu 20 Jan 2022 23:20:27 No.357318788  Replies: 1 [View](#) [Report](#)


Incel Alek Minassian killed 10 people because he is The Supreme Gentleman.

What his police interview at the included timestamp as he describes his supreme gentlemanliness.

<https://youtu.be/z4Dck7J4Ks0?t=1768>

Why is he forgotten?

Figure A2.3

Anonymous ID:At6bu0Ct Wed 27 Apr 2022 21:03:21 No.374921784  [View](#) [Report](#)

>>374921394

Like I said, if I hit the gym I'd just end up being a gymcel who'd get maybe an average looking chink because I'm not a normie "bad boy" covered in tattoos. That's why women should be stripped of their rights because they still have primitive minds that need to be tamed

Figure A2.4

Anonymous ID:IkZ2c84W Sat 24 Sep 2022 11:17:39 No.396668515  [Report](#)

>>396666486

/pol/ always has very visceral reactions to any black pill out women. But eventually the board will swallow them with enough evidence. I remember when microchimerism was violently rejected on /pol/ around 2015. Now it's accepted without question.

Women and Jews are as destructive as each other. All Jews did was enable women and disarm men. Women are the backbone of clownworld, the rank and file of globohomo. And they do it because they like it. Jews are the scheming masterminds of globohomo clownworld who just manage everything from above, prod women in even more destructive directions and attack, distract and divide and conquer men to prevent men from putting women back in their place.

Women are an incredibly destructive, incredibly toxic group of people that must be completely controlled at all costs. They had a completely different evolutionary upbringing as us, and to attempt to treat them like you would a man will backfire terribly. There should be a separate legal system for men and women. Men and women should share nothing together. We are different in every way we can be different. All our ideas of love and romance are in our heads. Men are the romantic gender. Women are an angler fish that has lured in her man prey. The only men women are capable of caring about is their own sons, and even that is not 100%. A wife is just a woman that is manipulating a man with a steady stream of chemicals to make sure he keeps providing resources for her. A Husband is a man conquered by a woman's superior social abilities and skills. Trying to institute a patriarchy so we could live out our marriage fantasies without being preyed on only worked for a time before it all fell apart. We deluded ourselves about women for centuries and now it's left us off worse than before.

Figure A2.5

Anonymous ID: rNEkuJ8m Mon 11 Sep 2017 13:22:53 No.141097023  [Report](#)

Quoted By: >>141097727

>>141078992

>"Men aren't entitled to sex, you're an evil sexist, misogynist creep if you act in any way that makes it look like you want sex!"


As a 29 year old incel I often come across raosties saying this. My response?
I don't believe I am entitled to sex, but I do believe society should find a way for me to have sex, if the negative consequences of me not having sex outweighs the negative consequences of having to provide me with a way of having sex.

Like when a certain "supreme gentleman" went on a shooting rampage, if the government paid an asian immigrant or bribed her with the option of dating/marrying him, in order to get a green card, many lives could have been saved.
I am sure that the intelligent normies can come up with even better, more efficient ways to provide sex to incels, if they put their brains into it.

That's not even getting into how every feminist liberal woman feels entitled, to free birth control, free abortion, free healthcare, free apartment if she can't afford it, free food if she can't afford it etc..... I can go on.

If we lived in a medieval society where every single mother roastie and her bastard children starved to death of the street, then yeah, I could understand the whole "you're entitled" argument liberals make. But not in 2017, where every fucking person gets everything they need from the government, except white incel males.

Figure A2.6

Anonymous ID: 6KNmr3HD Wed 26 Oct 2022 23:32:44 No.401581445  [View](#) [Report](#)

>>401580789

I agree anon. I might start a political movement.

"BRING BACK RAPE"

"RAPE IS A OKAY WITH ME"

"WANNA STOP BEING AN INCEL, TIME TO START RAPING"

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ASIO	Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
MI	misogynist incel
UN	United Nations

WHAT'S YOUR STRATEGY?

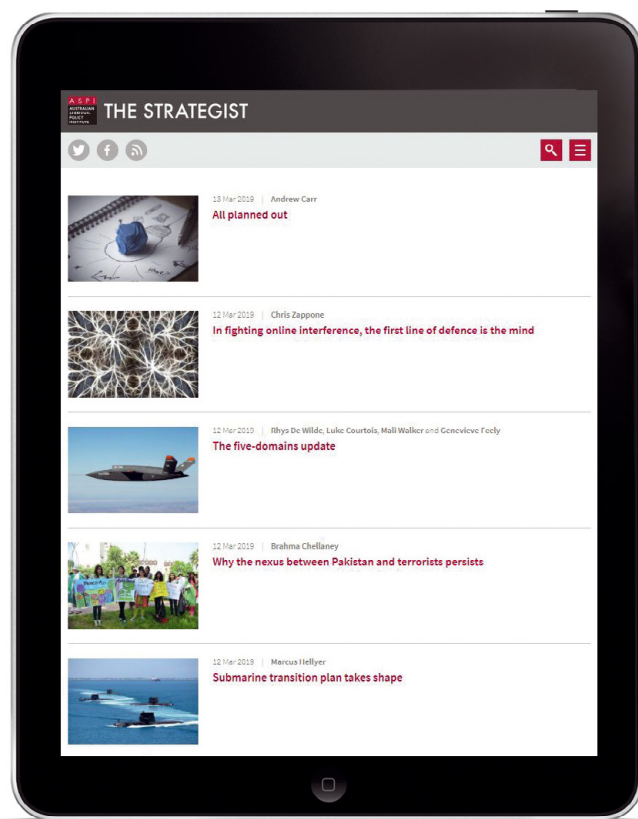


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Incels in Australia

The ideology, the threat, and a way forward