



Are You a Fascist or Do You Just Have a Praise Kink?

(Performing Hyperfemininity, Internalized Misogyny, and a Turn to the Nostalgized Past in Response to the Pressures of Feminism and Late-Stage Global Capitalism)

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Abstract

In the age of the terminally online content consumer, a subculture of alt-right women, who grasp at a sense of agency, demonstrate the enduring appeal of patriarchal hierarchies whilst perpetuating them for personal social and economic gain. Tradwifery (being a 'traditional wife') is a reactionary aesthetic defined through negation; anti-feminist, propagandic, and bio-essentialist the tradwife lifestyle is rooted in a vision of the past through the rose-tinted lense of fascistic nostalgia. The tradwife aesthetic is rooted in: 'traditional family values', and nostalgic iconography of the 1950s-60s housewife, floral print, flouncy dresses, roller-curlled hair, lipstick, and pearls. Through critical analysis of media, images, and narratives I intend to examine the semiotic meaning and indexicality of iconography, gender performance, and generation of perceived sexual power in terms of essentialism, propaganda, and fascism. This analysis seeks to identify how aesthetic uses of feminist political icons, language, and empowerment are regressively employed to perpetuate patriarchy as a function of late-stage global capitalism. Because of the intersecting interests of tradwives and feminists, the contemporary political moment necessitates accessible critical analysis of not only women's political power generally, but also an understanding of emergent trends in regressive political spaces.

Keywords: Transnational feminism, essentialism, fascism