

# **The Influence of The Online Manosphere on Young Men: Exploring Masculinity Through a Content Analysis of The Red Pill Movement**

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## **Abstract**

### **Central Research Problem**

The increase in social media usage has supported the growth of the men's rights movement, specifically among young men. Although the movement is diverse and includes groups in support of father's rights and male empowerment, the most prominent and popular is the so-called "Online Manosphere". The Manosphere has a large influence on society, specifically on young men's development of masculinity and their perception of women. Online forums like /r/TheRedPill often perpetuate harmful stereotypes of women and promote a toxic form of masculinity. While this discourse is happening online, the feelings towards women that are expressed in these forums might lead to harmful behaviors in the real world. It is important to understand how and why anti-female sentiment is popularized among young men and spreading beyond men's rights groups online.

### **Guiding Research Questions:**

How does the online men's rights movement affect young men's perception of women in society?

Why is anti-feminine sentiment/ misogyny popular among young men in the men's rights movement?

### **Theoretical Argument**

The main theoretical argument is that toxic masculinity has become increasingly normalized and popular, specifically among young men, leading to an increase in misogyny. This can be attributed to many factors, including economic and political. The focus of this research however is how different forms of masculinity and gender roles have contributed to an increase in manifestations of toxic masculinity in an already patriarchal society. This will be mainly

supported by R.W. Connell's research on masculinities and conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity. Her research is essential to understanding the history and hierarchy of masculinity.

### **Data and Methods**

The method used for this research project is a content analysis. This analysis will consist of using posts made on the popular online forum Reddit, specifically the subreddit /r/TheRedPill. This subreddit is known as one of the most popular online communities for men's rights activists. Subject of the analysis will be members' posts, and comments under posts, from January 2024-January 2025. Since the forum discusses a wide variety of topics regarding masculinity, this time frame will allow for enough relevant data to be coded. Since the overarching theme of this research is anti-feminine sentiment in the men's rights movement, I will be coding data looking for content containing language describing women as sexual objects, housewives and inferior, as well as threats of violence against women. These specific codes will aid in analyzing why misogynistic content is so popular and normalized among young men.

**Keywords:** toxic masculinity, gender roles, misogyny, men's right's movement