THE NEW DEMAGOGUES

Edited by
Joshua M. Roose

First published 2021

ISBN: 978-1-138-36469-1 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-138-36470-7 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-0-429-43119-7 (ebk)

Chapter 4

MALE SUPREMACISM

Joshua M. Roose

(CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)

This OA chapter is funded by Deakin University.

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

4

MALE SUPREMACISM

Introduction

The third thesis explored in this book requires an exploration of how displays of populist hyper-masculinity, irrespective of the local context, are indicative of deep-seated social injury and wounded masculine pride. In framing masculinity, it argues that alienation of and anxiety amongst working and, increasingly, middle-class men are key contributors to new populist movements, resulting in misogyny and resentment toward women amongst a small, though potentially increasing, segment of the community. This is reflected in the political discourse of the new demagogues. The chapter commences by outlining contemporary scholarly approaches to the intersection of masculinity and the new populism, followed by an exploration of the role played by anxiety and alienation in shaping the attraction to new populist movements. I then explore contemporary developments, focusing in particular upon the emergence of targeted political violence directed towards women on the basis of gender. I develop the concept of ideological masculinity, which may go some way to explaining the phenomenon of male supremacism, and explore important clues as to its prevalence in the wider community.

Masculinity and the new populism

The concept of masculinity, understood here as 'the social construction of what it is to be a man' (Kimmel & Bridges 2011), invites us to view actors who have been cast in the public imagination as inherently malevolent and fanatical as both human and subject to social processes. It enables reflexivity and removal from pre-formed opinions, such as embedded narratives about 'radicalisation', in order to address deeper-seated factors, such as emotional drivers. Importantly, the concept of masculinity also enables us to explore why the conception of 'what it is to be a man'

might be different amongst those attracted to the populist groups compared to the wider community in which they are situated.

In the context of the populist epoch, policy makers, scholars, and commentators alike have scrambled to make sense of why men are joining or affiliating with groups that express anti-social political messages grounded in ethno-nationalism, religious extremism, and radical social change as well as whether they are likely to lead to violence. As Anderlini makes clear, the 'control, co-option, coercion, and subjugation of women are central features of VE [violent extremist] movements today' (2018: 28).

It is important to look at what we already know and where we might start to conceptualise developments. Raewyn Connell's conception of hegemonic masculinity suggests a relationship between masculinity (as power) and ideology (Duerst-Lahti 2008: 159), and her scholarship is arguably the 'central reference point for many, if not most, writers on men and masculinity' (Wetherell & Edley 1998: 156). Connell's *Masculinities* exposits the concept of hegemonic masculinity, an ideal type of masculinity dominant in any given society. Drawn from the Gramscian analysis of class relations, which refers to the 'cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life', hegemonic masculinity explores how 'one form of masculinity is culturally exalted' at any one point in time (Connell 2005: 77). Connell states that hegemonic masculinity can be 'defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy' (Connell 2005: 77). In a re-evaluation of the text ten years after its initial publication, Connell and Messerschmitt differentiated between hegemonic and subordinated masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity 'embodied the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men' (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005: 832).

Despite the salience of concepts, masculinities are often overlooked in attempts to understand the attraction of men to far-right movements (Lewis et al. 2017). Capturing this sentiment, populism scholar Cas Mudde asserted recently 'it is time we take masculinity more seriously in discussions of the far-right and right-wing politics' (2018). Standing argues that young white men in situations of precarious employment are readily mobilised by 'neo-fascist messages' of the kind increasingly played out in major cities (Standing 2011: 250, Peucker & Smith 2019). Yet since it is clear that not all precariously employed young men are led to the far-right, that cannot be a complete explanation. Kelly (2017) proposes that far-right affiliation represents 'reactionary rehabilitation' for 'white' masculinity at a time when the certainties of historical patriarchy are being challenged.

Michael Kimmel asserts that it is not possible to understand violent extremist movements without analysing gender and understanding how masculinity is 'deeply and intimately enmeshed' in participants' experience (Kimmel 2018: 9). He argues for the existence of a gendered political psychology of extremism grounded

in a sense of 'aggrieved entitlement' and masculine compensation for what is lost (Kimmel 2018: 10). The notion of 'aggrieved entitlement' is problematic and essentialist. It overlooks how class, race, religion, and sexuality (amongst other contributing factors) shape the attraction to violent extremism. However, the sense of shame and humiliation is significant. Vieten and Poynting conclude that, '[t]riggered by processes of globalisation and Europeanisation, "status loss" and the fear of it, is what draws increasingly larger scales of populations, in particular, of male and working-class background, to far-right populism' (Vieten & Poynting 2016: 537). Galston argues that the right-wing populist agenda resonates especially with 'less-educated citizens' who feel threatened by technological changes in a post-industrial and 'more knowledge intensive economy' as they feel 'denigrated and devalued' in the face of the emerging well-educated, meritocratic urban elite that 'dominates government, the bureaucracy, the media, and major metropolitan areas.'(Galston 2018: 23).

The concept of 'meritocracy' is a particularly important component of citizenship. As previously discussed, Shklar talks in the American context about the 'two great emblems of public standing' – the 'right to vote' and the 'opportunity to earn' – as marks of civic dignity (Shklar 1989: 388; Shklar 1990: 3), whilst for Mead, equal citizenship in America 'comforts' inequality (Mead 1997: 199). For generations a core element of the dignity of work has been the notion that hard work (earning) results in an upward social trajectory and, by contrast, poor work, laziness, or ineptitude lead to negative consequences and downward social trajectories. Littler (2017: 8) argues that meritocracy should be 'unpacked as an ideologically charged discourse' that simultaneously serves as a social system 'based around the idea that individuals are responsible for working hard to activate their talent' and serving as an 'ideological discourse' that 'uphold particular power dynamics' (Littler 2017: 9):

> The dominant meaning of meritocracy in circulation today might therefore be broadly characterised as a potent blend of an essentialised and exclusionary notion of 'talent', competitive individualism, and the need for social mobility. Neoliberal meritocracy promotes the idea of individualistic, competitive success, symbolised by the ladder of opportunity.
>
> *(Littler 2017: 8)*

When this neoliberal form of meritocracy frames our understanding of work and reward (or lack thereof), wealth inequalities are 'naturalised' in mainstream political discourse and media as indicative of hard work and talent rather than any deep-seated structural inequality. Those who have been at the coalface of industrial change and lost the most, including their public standing as citizens through having been brutally 'expelled' from the economy (Sassen 2014), and those whose children have witnessed and been directly impacted by such change are the first to have to carve out a new place without the dignity and belonging that comes with being a member of a solidaristic work-based community.

The successful transition to employment is ‘a key element of the establishment of an acceptable version of manhood’ (McDowell 2003: 58) across the contexts discussed in this book. Hegemonic working-class masculinities grounded in roles represented as ‘heroic, with punishing physical labour that involved different degrees of manual skills and bodily toughness’ (Ward 2013: 4) have been undermined. In the context of neoliberalism and the ‘new economy’, they have been subordinated to masculinities equipped with the requisite cultural capital and bodily dispositions to achieve in a world where manual labour is less valued, particularly in the absence of the valorisation of the ‘working-class man’ by blue-collar unions.

Alienation and anxiety: Structural contributions

Anger, anomie, anxiety, and alienation undermine traditional working-class notions of masculinity bound up in self-reliance, strength, and the ability to provide for one’s family (Standing 2011).

It very often these alienated working men (or sons of working men) who form the base of contemporary populist movements whose narratives promote empowerment, honour, belonging, and, most ominously, revenge. The experience of working- and lower-middle-class masculinities is grounded in real-world struggle defined by alienation from labour, anxiety due to the precarious nature of their work, anger due to downward social trajectories, and anomie based in a deficit of moral guidance and social bonds (Standing 2011). One need only look at the crowds at many populist events or online propaganda videos for groups, such as the Islamic State, to see that such men form the base of support for the new demagogues, a representation also supported by numerous statistical sources (Tyson & Maniam 2016; Shanahan 2019; Statista 2016). Many of these men demonstrate hyper-masculinities that belie their subordinate status. They are driven by humiliation, social injury, a lack of respect and recognition, and a perceived stripping of honour and dignity. Hage (2011) refers to this process as ‘misinterpellation’, the process of shattering that occurs when society’s promise that hard work will result in upward social mobility is found to be false. The process of misinterpellation is central to increased receptibility to populist narratives. A sense of victimhood functions to provide an alternate source of meaning defined in opposition to a blameworthy ‘other’ and a sense of upward social and spiritual mobility through action. In plain language, those joining these groups transform from ‘zero’ to ‘hero’ and gain an instant sense of belonging.

Barbalet claims that it is ‘through emotions that actors are engaged by others and through their emotions that they alter their relations with them’ (Barbalet 1993: 133). He argues further that subjection to arbitrary power, punishment where there should be reward, and frustrated attempts to satisfy needs are likely to evoke strong emotions including depression, fear, and anger. The current political context has evolved over a period of sustained economic and political pressure as well as degradation of social status. With the stripping of honour and dignity from work,

we are witnessing the death of working class stoicism, which emphasises endurance, self-control, and inner strength, and its replacement with a what Campbell and Manning (2014) frame as a culture of victimhood, where aggrieved parties highlight their identity as victims and emphasise their innocent suffering at the hands of a privileged and blameworthy elite. Paradoxically, the collapse of working-class masculine stoicism parallels increased displays of physical hyper-masculinity.

Middle-class resentment

To frame this only as a working-class problem, however, misses an important dimension of the issue. In a period when male-dominated employment in manufacturing, agriculture, and mining has been contracting, women have entered the white collar professions en masse. With a suite of hard-won protections relating to childbirth and child care, combined with delayed fertility by older women, they have held down positions that in previous generations would have been impossible. Although there is a glass ceiling in many professional occupations, men are forced to compete for jobs previously regarded as their inherited birthright, and mediocrity is no longer tolerated (Besley et al. 2017a; Besley et al. 2017b). Men who do not perform at the requisite standard are increasingly expelled into short-term contract work (Besley et al. 2017a; Besley et al. 2017b). For many more young men, this form of work is all that they have known.

No fault divorce in the United States, Australia, and a multitude of other Western countries enables women to leave unhappy marriages. Legislators and courts alike have become increasingly attuned to enforcing child support payments and requiring salaried divorced men to continue to economically support their children through to adulthood by taking funds directly from their wages. This even looks likely to emerge in the United Kingdom as well with the introduction of a relevant bill in Parliament in early 2020. These developments, which are commonly understood to have provided a semblance of balance in the power relations between the sexes, are seen by some men impacted by them as a root cause of resentment and incivility.

In addition to class, an obvious dimension of the problem appears, on the surface at least, to be related to race. Much has been written on 'white privilege' and the emergence of 'white populism'. Sally Robinson argued compelling at the turn of the century that white men have been 'conflated with normativity in the American social lexicon' and have not been understood as 'practicing identity politics because they are visible in political terms, even as they benefit from the invisibility of their own racial and gender specificity' (Robinson 2000: 2). For Robinson, anxiety over loss of this privilege 'competes with a desire to forge a collective identity around claims of victimisation'

> in order for white masculinity to negotiate its position within the field of identity politics, white men must claim a symbolic disenfranchisement, must

> compete with others for cultural authority bestowed upon the authentically disempowered, the visibly wounded.
>
> *(Robinson 2000: 7 & 12)*

The intersection of white masculinity and social class may well lead to different forms of political practice. For white working-class men, it may well lead to anger, to seeking out the collective, and to participation in hyper-masculine political rallies and groups. For white-collar men a perceived sense of victimisation may lead to expressions of a more pernicious form of slander, professional undermining, and vindictive behaviour in anonymous online forums, which require not only access to computers, but a generally high level of online literacy.

To ground contemporary developments only on white masculinity, however, would risk overlooking a significant multicultural dimension of the emergence of contemporary populism. To this extent, Nira Yuval-Davis has written of the autochthonic politics of the far-right, where the claim 'I was here before you' can be applied in any situation. A flexible concept, it 'combines elements of naturalisation of belonging with vagueness as to what constitutes the essence of belonging' (Yuval-Davis 2019: 73). This may go some way to explaining recent diversity in the far-right and the emergence of far-right Jewish and gay activists, both traditionally reviled by the far-right. Many of the most militantly Christian, anti-Muslim, and anti-secular activists in Western contexts come from Christian minorities in the developing world, including Africa and South Asia.

The new demagogic strongmen

In this context defined by anger, anxiety, and anomie, a new class of global strongmen emerged from the margins of the political establishment: Donald Trump in the United States (2016–), Nigel Farage in the United Kingdom, Viktor Orbán in Hungary (2010–), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey (2014–), Narendra Modi in India (2014–), Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines (2016–), and Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil (2019–), to name but a few. These demagogic figures have sought to appeal directly to men, and to do so they employed misogynistic, divisive language as a core element of their communications.

Trump attracted primarily male support. A December 2015 poll conducted by the *Washington Post* and ABC News during the Republican primaries found that Trump's supporters were primarily male (47% of Republican voters) rather than female (28% of overall Republican voters) (Ross 2016). Importantly, 50 per cent of Trump supporters had incomes under $50,000 a year, and less than one in three (29%) possessed a college degree (Ross 2016). Exit poll data from the time of the election indicated that race played a decisive role, with 62 per cent of white men voting for Trump and 52 per cent of white women (CNN 2016). The election was just eight years after the sub-prime housing disasters that triggered the global financial crisis and decimated the assets of large swathes of lower-income Americans. Trump successfully captured a sizeable segment of white working-class men

who felt alienated, angry, and resentful about their marginalisation in political debate.

Trump's appeal to men at the margins was based in his simultaneous focus on economic growth at any cost (discussed in Chapter 6) and his hyper-masculinist posturing. Whilst campaigning for president, tapes emerged of Donald Trump boasting openly that 'when you're a star, they let you do it. You can do anything … Grab 'em by the pussy. You can do anything' (New York Times 2016). His comments were described by Nigel Farage, the UKIP interim leader and key Brexit protagonist, as 'ugly' but excusable as 'alpha male boasting' (Martinez 2016).

Gender politics were less visible in the vote to leave the European Union, yet they remained important. Nigel Farage, speaking after posing on a tank at the Heywood Tank Museum in Lancashire, admitted the party was 'blokeish' and had a 'women problem' (McSmith 2014). Farage admitted further:

> The problem with female voters and UKIP is that, over the last 5 to 10 years, at times, on a very bad day, we've looked a bit blokeish, a bit like a rugby club on a day out and I'm probably the most guilty person of all … The pub and everything else. It's true, it was a very male dominated party in every aspect.
>
> *(McSmith 2014)*

He added, 'What do you want me to do? Go sell flowers?' (McSmith 2014). A breakdown of the Brexit vote would reveal that 45 per cent of men chose to remain compared to 55 per cent of male voters who chose to leave the European Union. This is compared to the 51 per cent of women who voted to remain compared to 49 per cent who voted to leave the EU (Statista 2016). A study by Green and Shorrocks, which drew on the British Election Study Internet Panel, found that the impact of gender and gender-equality-related economic and social change had not only been overlooked, perceived discrimination against men (found particularly in older working men) was a 'significant predicator in voting Leave at the EU Referendum':

> This perhaps indicates that men who hold gender-based resentments may be a group that becomes particularly frustrated over delays and compromises in the Brexit process as it continues. More broadly, the results also suggest that there is a significant minority of men who may vote in British elections on the basis of anger and resentment about the unfair treatment of men in society.
>
> *(Green & Shorrocks 2019)*

An examination of the emergence of Trump, the 'Brexit' vote, and the electoral momentum of populist parties appears to confirm that Western Liberal democracies, particularly those in the 'Anglosphere', have in some way, shape, or form given rise to a population of men who feel disenfranchised and who are alienated, resentful, and angry.

This is not limited, however, to white working-class or professional men. During the 2014–16 period, the messaging of self-proclaimed Islamic State Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, relayed in English to Western Muslims through a sophisticated propaganda apparatus, resulted in approximately 6,000 Western foreign fighters, out of approximately 15,000 total foreign fighters, joining the Islamic State movement (Briggs & Silverman 2014: 9). The vast majority were men (see Chapter 7).

It is clear that a proportion of men in Western contexts are attracted to the messaging of the new demagogues, resulting in global changes to the political landscape as the new demagogues achieve political and, in the case of the Islamic State, military success. Arguably, there is little particularly new about the use of fear and hatred for political mobilisation. Indeed, parallels between such leaders often lead to simplistic comparisons between demagogues from different historical epochs. It is important to consider more closely the issue of masculinity and, in particular, new formations of masculinity that have to some extent developed, grown, and evolved in parallel with the rise of the new demagogues.

It is my argument that these amorphous groups, which are difficult to physically pin down, operate primarily online, yet with real world consequences. The politicisation and weaponisation of masculinity are at the base of what I term 'ideological masculinity', which centres on the reassertion of men's control of the public and private domains, and which uses physical, verbal, and symbolic violence to achieve its ends. As will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters, anti-women attitudes do not emerge from interviews with blue-collar men in working-class towns, indicating they lie elsewhere. The following examines ideological masculinity on a graduated scale from established pillars of gender inequality and prejudice through to the new anti-women activism, anti-women violence, and anti-women terrorism.

Evangelical men's movements

The centrality of manhood to traditionalist conservative religion is not a new development. Men have long been posited as the head of the household, the leader of prayer, the earner of a salary, and the representative of the family in public life. In the same context, women have long been confined to the domestic sphere. Movements seeking equal rights for women, such as feminism, have been viewed with hostility. What is of particular interest here, however, is the renewed hostility toward feminism and women's rights and an accompanying willingness to engage with political actors who demonstrate behaviour traditionally antithetical to Christianity. Whilst the appeal of Donald Trump will be explored in detail in Chapter 6, it is worth considering the work of Kristin du Mez, who demonstrates how, beginning in the 1970s and over several generations, a cohort of authors and faith leaders in the evangelical movement began to frame Christianity and Jesus in hyper-masculine terms:

> Trump appeared at a moment when evangelicals feel increasingly beleaguered, even persecuted. Issues related to gender – from the cultural sea change on gay

> marriage to transgender bathroom laws to the Hyde Amendment and the contraceptive mandate – are at the centre of their perceived victimisation.
>
> *(Du Mez 2017)*

The domination of organised religion by men, whether it is labelled 'patriarchy' or 'male supremacist' (I gravitate toward the latter), is grounded in an understanding of inherent gender inequality as reflecting God's 'truth'. Such inequality and beliefs are likely to be particularly pronounced in the practices of fundamentalists, whether Catholicists or Islamists. Both refuse to contemplate the notion that women might lead prayer or become imams or priests, as if women are spiritually or physically deficient and bereft. Whilst demonstrating the natural ease of fit between hyper-masculine demagogic strongmen and fundamentalist religion, it is not a new development. It may be understood as an established pillar of gender inequality. To understand the formation of new pillars of contemporary hegemonic and what I term 'ideological masculinity' centred on the control of women under threat of violence, we must look to the Alt-Right, Manosphere, and Incel movements.

The 'alt-right' and spin-off groups

The self-proclaimed 'alternative' or 'alt' right originated primarily in the United States before spreading globally. It represents a new trajectory in far-right politics. The term was originally coined by far-right activist Richard Spenser. Those self-identifying as 'alt-right' assert a particularly vitriolic form of white identarian politics that emphasises both white supremacy and seeks to vigorously attack the political left.

Seeking to differentiate themselves from traditional representations of the far-right, such as ultra-masculinist, tattooed, neo-Nazi skinheads, the 'alt-right' have simultaneously developed an online and physical presence by using passive aggression, sarcasm, and meme culture and by adopting a more refined version of far-right masculinity that can still translate relatively easily to extreme violence.

Evidence of the violent possibilities of the alt-right was demonstrated at the August 2017 'Unite the Right' Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. Organised to symbolise resistance to the removal of Confederate monuments, the protest resulted in clashes with counterprotesters that left dozens injured. One far-right activist drove his car into a group of counterprotesters, killing activist Heather Heyer. Other groups broadly associated with the alt-right have also captured international attention. The 'Proud Boys', formed by Vice Media co-founder Gavin McInnes, were initially situated within the broad definition of alt-right before adopting what McInnes labelled 'Western chauvinism' (as opposed to concern primarily with race) and distancing themselves from the 'alt-right' label. Posited as a men-only drinking club, the group has an initiation process referred to as obtaining 'four degrees'. It includes a loyalty oath stating pride in being a 'Western chauvinist', a beating by fellow club members, a tattoo and an agreement not to masturbate, and, finally, participation in a fight 'for the cause'. Members wear yellow-trimmed black Fred

Perry polo shirts. They sport what have been referred to as 'fashy' (short for fascist) 'high and tight' haircuts. The group's website stipulates that members of all religions and races can join, though not women, confirming a deeper-seated dislike of women.

McInnes stated on his YouTube program: 'Maybe the reason I'm sexist is because women are dumb. No, I'm just kidding, ladies. But you do tend to not thrive in certain areas – like writing' (McInnes 2017). McInnes, like many others actively asserts that women's roles are defined by their genetic predispositions, a position that conveniently returns the sphere of paid employment back to men:

> Women are forced to pretend to be men. They're feigning this toughness. They're miserable. Study after study has shown that feminism has made women less happy. They're not happy in the work force, for the most part. I would guess 7 percent [of women] like not having kids, they want to be CEOs, they like staying at the office all night working on a proposal, and all power to them. But by enforcing that as the norm, you're pulling these women away from what they naturally want to do, and you're making them miserable.
>
> *(Huffington Post 2013)*

In a follow-up interview stemming from controversy over his remarks, McInnes asserted that having children 'made me religious', and he became 'a God-fearing Catholic because of the miracle of life' (May 2013). McInnes is a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic fraternal order discussed in Chapter 3 that plays a significant role in funding fundamentalist, right-wing Catholic think tanks. Demonstrating further the crossover between the alt-right, related groups such as the Proud Boys, religiosity, and the Manosphere, McInnes stated in a 2015 interview that 'women earn less in America because they choose to', they are 'less ambitious', and the gender pay gap is 'sort of God's way – this is nature's way – of saying women should be at home with the kids' (Mazza 2015).

The Proud Boys actively advocate for political violence against their opponents, particularly those to the left of the political spectrum. After one such act of violence, a street brawl in New York, McInnes commented, 'I want violence, I want punching in the face. I'm disappointed in Trump supporters for not punching enough' (Daily News Editorial Board 2018). In a 2017 episode of the 'Gavin McInnes Show', he said, 'We will kill you. That's the Proud Boys in a nutshell. We will kill you. We look nice, we seem soft, we have boys in our name … we will assassinate you' (McInnes 2017). The Proud Boys group was designated as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, and it attracted considerable scrutiny form law enforcement in the United States. However, numerous international affiliates have been formed, including in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Whilst the relationship between the amorphous, primarily on-line grouping known as the alt-right and formal religion is, at best, ambiguous, the shared

emphasis upon 'reclaiming' masculinity from political correctness and feminism is clear cut. Like many sub-cultures before them, the alt-right and those that have branched off from it have developed a specific vocabulary designed to vilify perceived opponents whilst further solidifying the link between them. In an examination of this linguistic development, the central role of anxiety, alienation, anomie and their intersection with masculinity come to the fore. Terms such as 'Chad' (a pejorative word for handsome men who are sexually successful with women) and 'cuck' (a shortened form of 'cuckold', a man whose wife has cheated on him, used to describe weakness and emasculation) provide powerful insight into the extent to which masculinity is a key element of the self-definition of the alt-right. The concept of the 'red pill', derived from the film *The Matrix*, refers to taking a pill than enables users to see the truth about society, including the apparent emasculation of men.

Contemporary literature does not adequately delve into the largely under-explored dimension of animosity in the new populism, which extends beyond hatred of foreigners and, in particular, Muslims. Hatred and/or deep-seated resentment of women is pervasive throughout populist political discourse, from alt-right backyard sheds to presidential and prime ministerial dining rooms. Masculinity, in this context, has become a political identity in and of itself. It intersects with key populist messages targeted at supporters. It is linked to alienation of and anxiety amongst working-class men and, increasingly, middle-class and white-collar men. Understanding this dimension of populism enables us to connect the dots to identify what has contributed to the strength of populism in the world at this particular point in time, linking to the same political agenda the rise of textualism and hard-line fundamentalist religion and hatred and resentment of women.

The 'manosphere': Men Going their Own Way (MGTOW)

One individual or group (it is not clear) launched the *MGTOW: Men Going Their Own Way* website as a way of cohering the movement. The site is significant in size and scope, containing several million individual contributions and an active, up-to-date discussion forum. It is instructive to quote at some length from the website's definition of the 'manosphere', which ties to key themes prevalent in this chapter:

> Play or be played: That's the world the vast majority of men wake up to in the present day. For these young men, it's not a philosophy or an attitude; it's reality.
>
> The companies they work for demand loyalty, but will fire them or lay them off without a second thought if profits dip one tenth of one percent.
>
> *(MGTOW 2020)*

The definition moves seamlessly from precarious work grounded in the neoliberal economy to a complaint about women, depicting them as materialistic, superficial, and demanding:

> The women they encounter demand attention, loyalty, resources, and undue privilege, while offering very little in return. The natural hypergamous nature that once served them well in their quest to secure the best possible mate is now a sustained lifestyle bringing an endless pursuit of bigger and better. The average young woman today is less concerned about the number of quality men who would commit to her than she is about the number of men who retweet a photo of her breasts.
>
> *(MGTOW 2020)*

Religion in the 'manosphere' is a facet of life, however churches are not fundamentalist enough to subordinate women:

> Young men today attend churches with pastors who demand they '*man up*' and support the church and its female parishioners, but that same church does nothing to cultivate an environment that encourages feminine strength. Sunday after Sunday they listen as the same Bible used to preemptively absolve women of all past, current, and future transgressions is used to condemn men.
>
> *(MGTOW 2020)*

Women are represented as controlling, deceptive, and exempt from the unsatisfying life that the reader is invited to identify with:

> They have best friends from childhood who disappear six months after the wedding, because the new bride doesn't want her hubby hanging out with single losers.
>
> They have to pick up the tab for dad's dinner, because his [sic] going broke trying to support mom, her new live-in boyfriend, and a 12 year old he's not certain is even his. The young man watches as middle-management dad making $70k per year tries to crank the engine in his 11 year old car to no avail, and then has to give him a ride back to his apartment on the seedy side of town. The young man shudders as he realises the father who 'did the right thing' by sacrificing his life for his family can fit everything he owns into a 580 sq. ft. apartment with plenty of room to spare.
>
> The young man has finally learned that men and women share the same inherent character flaws, but not the same consequences. He has sinned, and he has paid dearly. She has sinned, and she has been exalted.
>
> *(MGTOW 2020)*

In summary, the member of the manosphere is righteous, rational, and a victim of forces bent on his subordination. By linking with others, he gains a solidaristic bond denied to him in other areas of life and forges his own destiny:

> He doesn't hate his corporation; he hates the system. He doesn't hate God; he hates what the church does in God's name. He doesn't hate women; he hates

> the unforgiving female support machine. He doesn't hate feminists or White Knights; he hates navigating the environment they create.
>
> That's why there's a Manosphere, and that's why it's growing.
>
> *(MGTOW 2020)*

In addition to developing a reasonably cohesive narrative of victimhood and promoting hatred of women, by definition the MGTOW movement also implies avoiding participation in conventional or violent political activity. Other elements of the men's rights movement, however, do not do so.

Incitement to physical violence

The scale of the manosphere, for some, has proven relatively profitable. Speaking via videoconference at the 2018 International Conference on Men's issues in London, Paul Elam, the founder of *A Voice for Men*, a key for-profit men's rights website and one of the highest profile 'men's rights' groups in the world, claimed:

> We've become part of a philosophy that opposes longstanding and intense social programming to ignore men's issues in the name of forever putting women and all other groups first. The ideas we embrace are healthy, functional, and corrective to social problems, yet are viewed by the general population as pathological and even dangerous.
>
> *(Elam 2018)*

Elam framed men's rights activists as victims of a society intent on belittling them:

> Thanks in part to the fake news media, we've been labelled as haters, even though our work demonstrates that we are in fact rejecting hatred and hateful ideology. That's life for MRA's and more broadly red pill people, and its often marked by loneliness, isolation, and varying degrees of frustration.
>
> *(Elam 2018)*

In contrast to his depiction of his group as peaceful, Elam previously advocated violence against women, proclaiming a 'Bash a Violent Bitch Month' for male survivors of domestic violence, albeit in the name of satire (a common tactic used by alt-right actors to bypass criticism and laws):

> I don't mean subdue them, or deliver an open handed pop on the face to get them to settle down. I mean literally to grab them by the hair and smack their face against the wall till the smugness of beating on someone because you know they won't fight back drains from their nose with a few million red corpuscles. And then make them clean up the mess … To all the men out there that decided to say 'damn the consequences', and fight back, you are heroes to the cause of equality; true feminists. And you are the honorary Kings

> of Bash a Violent Bitch Month. You are living proof of just how hollow 'don't fuck with us', rings from the mouths of bullies and hypocrites. And then make them clean up the mess.
>
> *(Elam 2010)*

Gavin McInnes, previously discussed, also advocated violence against women:

> This woman, yes, I'm advocating violence against women, this woman, should be punched in the face. It shouldn't be by a man. Maybe by another woman. Maybe her twin sister should just punch her in the face. Or maybe mace her.
>
> *(McInnes 2016)*

Whether satire or otherwise, the incitement to violence against women is clear and not unusual. In the manosphere, it also extends to sexual violence.

Incitement to sexual violence

The 'neomasculinity' of Daryush 'Roosh V' Valizadeh valorises traditional sex roles, the nuclear family, a binary sex model, and an understanding of women as being programmed to seek the 'highest possible value male' (2015a). Valizadeh asserts that patriarchy was a 'superior societal system that catered to the innate abilities of the sexes and provided them with roles that not only furthered their own abilities and interests but that of civilization as a whole' (2015a). His social Darwinist depiction of the 'sexual marketplace' has proved particularly resonant with his followers, emphasising as it does that women are programmed to seek 'high value males' and that in the context of the modern dating market (now as 'fluid as the job market'), that men at the top can attract many females whilst those at the bottom 'struggle to attract even one' (Valizadeh 2015a).

Valizadeh argues that 'neomasculinity' is 'a superior ideological alternative for men who reject the poison pills prescribed by the modern political and cultural elite' (2015a). Given the seriousness with which Valizadeh has developed his ideology of neomasculinity, it is worth considering both his repeated guidance on 'negging' (treating women with no respect in order to keep them interested) and his argument for the legalisation of rape if it takes place on private property. In 'How to Stop Rape', labelled a 'satirical thought experiment', he asserts:

> Consent is now achieved when she passes underneath the room's door frame, because she knows that that man can legally do anything he wants to her when it comes to sex. Bad encounters are sure to occur, but these can be learning experiences for the poorly trained woman so she can better identify in the future the type of good man who will treat her like the delicate flower that she believes she is.
>
> *(Valizadeh 2015b)*

Valizadeh was subsequently banned from a number of countries, including the United Kingdom and Australia. However, his website and books remain freely available.

In 2019, Valizadeh very publicly joined the Armenian Apostolic Church, stating that 'God' was the final pill (Burton 2019a). He has since embraced chastity, and many of his former blog posts can no longer be found. At first instance this may appear to signal a rejection of his former work. However, as theologian Tara Burton notes, religion offers an alternate source of meaning lacking in such men's daily lives:

> The conversion of Roosh V highlights another, even more vital, truth about the anti-feminist and alt-right movements: They already function as quasi-religions. These movements gain adherents precisely because they tap into young men's existential hunger for the kind of things that also underpin religious observance.
>
> *(Burton 2019a)*

The 'manosphere' is clearly defined by a deep-seated resentment of women and the advances made in women's rights. Marriage, increasingly unobtainable to working men (Lichter et al. 2019), is represented as a form of modern-day slavery designed to trap men in a sexless financial trap. In other words, they 'don't want it even if they could have it'. Women and, in particular, feminists are blamed for subverting the natural order of male power and for making themselves sexually unavailable. To gain access to women, men must manipulate them into compliance or 'train women' through legalised sanctions, such as rape for promiscuity, and by ensuring that men are at the top of the 'value chain'.

Anxiety, anomie, and alienation from wider society are clearly evident in the primarily online sphere of men's rights advocacy and the collective assortment of sub-species of misogynistic activists. Rather than engaging with the structural factors shaping the 'expulsion' of working people from the global economy, gender has become the key defining feature and lens through which these activists form their worldview. Protagonists frame this variously as their 'philosophy' or 'ideology', a key point which I will return to later. They give members a 'meaningful account of why the world is the way it is' and 'provide them with a sense of purpose and the possibility of sainthood. They offer a sense of community' (Burton 2019b).

Utilising violent and hateful language firmly situated in depictions of victimhood and having shed all dignity and honour, these groups are largely an online phenomenon. In recent years the online community has changed with the evolution of the 'involuntary celibate' or 'incel' subculture from a relatively benign subculture based on sharing stories about the inability to find sexual partners to a radicalised outlook that advocates a range of measures, including online deception, killing women on the basis that they deny sex, and violence against those men who are successfully 'accessing them'.

Incels: Graduation to terrorist violence

'Incels' (involuntary celibates) are broadly self-defined as those that have not had sex for more than six months, despite a desire to do so. The term was first coined in 1993 by a Canadian university student who founded the group 'Alana's Involuntary Celibacy Project' to capture the experiences of those who had not experienced a relationship or intimacy for an extended period of time (Kassam 2018). In the online environment, 'incel' evolved from a community of mutual support to one based on mutual debasement and self-loathing, which was particularly active on message board sites, such as *4chan* and *Reddit*. In November 2017, *Reddit* banned the r/incels subreddit discussion page, which at the time had up to 40,000 members.

The incel movement (broadly defined), is in some ways a logical outgrowth of the 'manosphere'. Incels embody the angst, alienation, and self-flagellation of men who not only consider themselves to be emasculated by the rejection of women, they feel anger, rage, and a desire for revenge against those perceived to be holding them back. The subculture developed its own neologisms, such as 'heightcel' (a man rejected by women due to his height) and 'ethnicel' (a man excluded on the basis of ethnicity), amongst many others.

Even a cursory examination of online forums finds many examples of incels bemoaning their association with violent attacks. Indeed, many may be happy to remain anonymous in online forums. However, others branch out into attacks on women, whether online or the real world, ranging from deception to terror attacks. In the case of violent incels, the goal of terrorist actions is less about the restoration of lost masculinity and more about the nihilistic and misogynistic destruction of women and the men who have enjoyed access to women.

In a manifesto written before committing a violent attack on his housemates and a female sorority house in Isla Vista, California, Elliot Rodger claimed he was seeking a day of retribution against men who have 'pleasurable sex lives' and a 'war on women', which would 'punish all females for the crime of depriving me of sex', in order to 'deliver a devastating blow that will shake all of them to the core of their wicked hearts' (Rodger 2014). It is important to consider that, in the manifesto, Rodger disclosed that he was seeing both a psychiatrist and a counsellor. Speculation remains strong about whether he suffered from a mental illness. In the attack Rodger killed six people and injured fourteen others before killing himself.

Rodger's manifesto explained his planned 'day of retribution':

> Women don't care about me at all. They won't even deign to tell me why they've mistreated me. This just shows how evil and sadistic they are. Oh well, they will realise the gravity of their crimes when I slaughter them all on the Day of Retribution. How dare they reject a magnificent gentleman like me!
>
> *(Rodger 2014)*

Whilst the majority of the manifesto was about Rodger's personal hatred of women and the men with access to them, he also outlined a program for the

extermination of women and the 'ultimate and perfect ideology of how a fair world work', wherein sexuality and women would not exist:

> In order to completely abolish sex, women themselves would have to be abolished. All women must be quarantined like the plague that they are, so that they can be used in a manner that actually benefits a civilised society. In order to carry this out, there must be a new and powerful type of government, under the control of one divine ruler, such as myself. The ruler that establishes this new order would have complete control over every aspect of society, in order to direct it towards a good and pure place. At the disposal of this government, there needs to be a highly trained army of fanatically loyal troops, in order to enforce such revolutionary laws.
>
> *(Rodger 2014)*

Women in this world would be 'quarantined' and 'deliberately starved to death', with a 'few women spared' for 'the sake reproduction'. Such a state of affairs – a 'pure world' – would enable men to 'expand' their intelligence and 'advance the human race to a state of perfect civilisation'.

Subsequent violent actors have cited Rodger's 2014 attack as an inspiration. In 2018 in Toronto, Alex Minassian, who killed ten people with his van and injured 16 more, referred to 'overthrowing' promiscuous attractive men (the 'Chads') and women (the 'Stacey's') (Beauchamp 2018). In Tallahassee, Florida, 40-year-old Scott Beierle posted videos online, including 'The Rebirth of My Misogynism' and 'The American Whore' in which he discussed the crucifixion of promiscuous women, before he attacked a yoga studio, shot and killed two women, injured four other women and a man, and killed himself (Beierle 2018). In May 2020, a Toronto 17-year-old became the first person charged with terrorism in an attack allegedly motivated by the incel movement (Toronto Police 2020).

Political violence against women: The most worrying development of all?

Reports of sexual and physical violence against women in Western contexts are increasing. In Australia, for example, intimate partner violence is the greatest health risk factor for women between the ages of 25 and 44, and reported rates of sexual assault have been climbing nationally for the past five years (AIHW 2019). Reports are increasing in wealthy global cities in particular, such as London, Paris, Toronto, and New York. Some have attributed increased reporting to the success of the #MeToo movement, though in the absence of quality data, it alone cannot explain what is occurring.

Globally, international institutions have identified violence against women as a 'global pandemic' (World Bank 2019), as 'one of the most widespread, persistent, and devastating human rights violations in our world today' (United Nations 2019), and as a major public health problem (World Health Organisation 2017).

Such definitions draw on epidemiological terminology, as though such violence is an illness that can be directly treated through controlled interventions. In this context, factors such as poverty, lack of education, and even natural disaster are considered key contributors to physical and sexual violence against women and, increasingly, they inform where governments direct both domestic resources and foreign aid aimed at improving women's rights.

However, for this analysis to be complete, a question must be asked: Why are rates of violence increasing in places where poverty is lower, rates of education are higher, and women are more engaged in public life than ever before? I argue that a new paradigm, 'ideological masculinity', is required for understanding the increase in violence against women in Western contexts (in particular) and its links with demagoguery, masculinity, religion, and the new populism.

Hatred and resentment of women: An evolution

This new paradigm is geared toward gaining an understanding of ideological masculinity as a virulent, increasingly potent form of violent extremism, which requires intervention by the state. However, before addressing the paradigm, it is important to outline some obvious, yet not always overtly recognised, facts. Hatred of and prejudice toward women extends well beyond the current populist epoch and deep into history. What I believe is different in the contemporary context, however, is the relatively recent phenomena that have emerged online. Increasingly, real world acts are linked directly to the emergence of the new demagogues, social media, and online forums alongside the discernible shift in the economy from traditionally male roles to roles that are favourable to women's participation – and success – en masse.

The new demagogues appeal to a sense of loss of status and power amongst their support bases, which is echoed in the manosphere and amongst religious conservatives (often they are intertwined). The simultaneous growth of the alt-right and manosphere, the reinvigoration of hard-line religious fundamentalists, and the emergence of newer phenomena, including incels, has been accompanied by anti-women movements seeking the (re)subordination of women as a desirable and urgent goal in and of itself. In this context, masculinity becomes ideological, and violence to enact it is framed as being both desirable and necessary.

Conceptualising anti-women activism

Feminist scholars have developed a toolbox of terms for understanding the relationship between violence and power. The noun 'femicide' is used to describe the 'killing of a woman or girl, in particular by a man and on account of her gender' (Oxford Dictionary 2015). Caputi and Russell define 'femicide' as 'the murder of women by men motivated by hatred, contempt, pleasure, or a sense of ownership of women' (Caputi & Russell 1990: 1). Later they termed it simply 'sexist terrorism against women', citing Marc Lépine's December 1989 murder of 14 women in the

engineering faculty at the University of Montreal during which he screamed 'You're all fucking feminists' (Caputi & Russell 1992). Lépine's three-page suicide note blamed his life failures on women (Pitt 1989: 9).

Opposition to men's domination over women and the subordination of females has existed on record since at least the twelfth century. It took particular flight in the fourteenth century in France. The term 'feminism' was devised during the nineteenth century and simultaneously paralleled (and in some cases was deeply enmeshed in) the global development of movements for working-class equality growing out of the industrial revolution, most notably Marxism. Feminism was also linked to political liberalism. It is, at its core, an ideology that has withstood the test of time, asserting the need for equality of the sexes. Despite its very broad diversity, the feminist movement has had, at its heart, the common goal of achieving equality of the sexes across the political, economic, legal, and social spheres. Duerst-Lahti asserts:

> Unlike patriarchy – which can be used to mean a system of rule, a way to organise households, an ideology, and more – feminism has always been recognised as a political ideology. It is marked by the suffix 'ism', and indisputably has sought more political power for women, two dimensions of ideologies. It also was recognised as ideological because it challenged the ideology of masculinism that was both unnamed and made largely invisible due to its hegemonic position.
>
> *(Duerst-Lahti 2008: 165)*

This central idea has shaped different forms of political action, from those seeking to reform the political system to those calling for the abolition of capitalism and class society. Such politically driven activity, which challenges dominant power structures, has not only produced verbal and structural repercussions, it has often resulted in physical violence against its advocates. Some scholars have framed a competing ideology grounded in antifeminism that seeks to return women to the domestic sphere and a subordinated status. Arthur Brittan asserts that masculinism is this competing ideological frame:

> [Masculinism] [i]s the ideology that justifies and naturalises male domination. As such, it is the ideology of patriarchy. Masculinism takes it for granted that [1] there is a fundamental difference between men and women, [2] it assumes heterosexuality is normal, [3] it accepts without question the sexual division of labour, and [4] it sanctions the political and dominant role of men in the public and private spheres.
>
> *(Brittan 1989: 4)*

Blais and Dupuis-Déri explore the concept of antifeminism, which they assert is generally 'posited on the existence of a higher order, be it the will of God, human nature, national destiny, or social stability' (Blais & Dupuis-Déri 2012: 22).

Developing the concept of 'masculinism' to reflect contemporary developments in antifeminism, they argue: 'Masculinism asserts that since men are in crisis and suffering because of women in general and feminists in particular, the solution to their problems involves curbing the influence of feminism and revalorising masculinity' (Blais & Dupuis-Déri 2012: 22).

To the extent that masculinism captures a small group of politically motivated actors (men and women) who assert that women's rights have gone too far and that men have been victimised and thus need to reclaim their manhood, the concept works reasonably well. The argument that it is grounded in a belief in the 'existence of a higher order' makes the important link between fundamentalist religion and the manosphere. Yet a key challenge is how to identify people who subscribe to these beliefs (or elements of these beliefs) unless an individual self-labels (rather than being labelled). Like feminism, it may be argued, masculinism works on a spectrum, with contested versions of what constitutes the ideal man and the root causes of their 'crisis'. Furthermore, masculinist activity, as abhorrent as it may seem, is not illegal. Nor does the concept capture new developments that demonstrate a vociferous and holistic hatred of women made evident through the targeting of women for terrorist violence. The same may be said for the concept of 'toxic masculinity', which has evolved from psychology. It is used to describe socially constructed aspects of masculinity, including sexism and violence, that can be harmful to both men and women. The concept has become particularly prevalent in contemporary discourse, yet it does little to shape public policy.

Ideological masculinity: A new paradigm

Whilst the concepts of femicide and masculinism draw attention to the possibility of 'sexist terrorism' and masculinism as 'the ideology of patriarchy', neither is framed or developed appropriately to have the necessary impact on public policy. In particular, they are not addressed by the field of countering violent extremism, which is pertinent to the allocation of resources for challenging this new threat.

The emergence of the 'manosphere' and the apparent increase in angry men congregating online and hiding behind a veil of anonymity to vent (at best), threaten, and degrade women are historically unprecedented. In 2018, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) designated two organisations run by individuals examined in this chapter as hate groups: 'A Voice for Men' run by Paul Elam and the 'Return of Kings' run by Daryush Valizadeh. The organisation commented: 'The vilification of women by these groups makes them no different than other groups that demean entire populations, such as the LGBTIQ community, Muslims, or Jews, based on their inherent characteristics' (Southern Poverty Law Center 2019).

In defining male supremacist groups, the SPLC, which has decades of experience in identifying and working to challenge extremist groups in the United States, stated:

> Male supremacy misrepresents all women as genetically inferior, manipulative, and stupid and reduces them to their reproductive or sexual function – with sex being something that they owe men and that can or even should be coerced out of them. Driven by a biological analysis of women as fundamentally inferior to men, male supremacists malign women specifically for their gender. A thinly veiled desire for the domination of women and a conviction that the current system oppresses men in favor of women are the unifying tenets of the male supremacist worldview.
>
> *(Southern Poverty Law Center 2019)*

The SPLC's recognition of male supremacist groups as 'hate groups' is a key step toward shifting the terrain. The organisation outlines key elements of an ideology centred on the subjugation of women. However, it does not extend its logic to the individuals and small groups emerging from male supremacist circles who may seek to forcibly enact their subscribed ideology through threatening or actually killing women. We must, as Duerst-Lahti (2008: 192) argues, recognise gender ideology (in this case male supremacy) as an inherently *political* ideology centred on social change.

This form of *ideological masculinity* is radical. It seeks to promote a return to a perceived period of male supremacy 'lost' to women's rights and self-effacing men. Those who subscribe to this ideology believe that women's empowerment has left men victimised and discriminated against. They stand vigorously against the notion of gender outside the female-male binary and, more broadly, against LGBTIQ communities.

They play out their anger and resentment through violent acts and justify their actions as a reclaiming of what they believe is rightfully theirs. Demagogic actors draw on elements of ideological masculinity, including beliefs that powerful elites have conspired to suppress men, that women must be forcibly consigned to the domestic sphere, and that a return to a past era of perceived male supremacy is the only path forward.

Understanding male supremacy as a political and ideological orientation is key to shifting the public policy and legislative inertia. However, it will very likely result in an increase in violent extremism and terrorist action directed against women and girls on the basis of their gender.

Ideology and violent extremism

Ideology is a key element of how we understand violent extremism and terrorism. As a concept, violent extremism (and Countering Violent Extremism or 'CVE') has emerged at the fore of policymaking across Western governments, despite the difficulty in gaining consensus on a universal definition. Striegher distinguishes the term from terrorism by noting that extremism is an 'ideology or viewpoint' that does not necessarily reach the threshold of an act of terrorism (Striegher 2015: 76). An act of terrorism requires an act of intimidation, coercion, or physical violence.

As the below indicates, however, ideological motivation is a key element of definitions of both violent extremism and terrorism.

The United States Department of Homeland Security developed a Countering Violent Extremism Task Force with a particular emphasis upon enhancing engagement with communities, building expertise, and countering extremist narratives (Department of Homeland Security 2016). An August 2011 policy, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*, defines violent extremists as 'individuals who support or commit ideologically-motivated violence to further political goals' (Department of Homeland Security 2011). The United States Code of Federal Regulations defines terrorism as the 'unlawful use of force and violence' to further social or political objectives (United States 2019). Key elements of the US government, including the Department of Defense (DoD) (United States Department of Defense 2019) and the United States National Counter Terrorism Center, refer to an ideological or philosophical motivation for the act of violent extremism (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2010).

The UK House of Commons has noted that it is important that the ideology behind violent extremism be clearly understood and challenged (United Kingdom House of Commons 2010), whilst the United Kingdom Terrorism Act (2000) defines terrorism as the use or threat of an action designed to influence the government or intimidate a section of the public *and* the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause (United Kingdom Government 2020).

In the Australian context, the Federal Attorney-General's Department, the agency responsible for countering violent extremism, defines it as 'the beliefs and actions of people who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious, or political goals' (Australian Government 2015). Similarly to the United Kingdom, the Australian definition under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) identifies a 'terrorist act' as an action done or threat made with the intention of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause *and* it seeks to coerce or influence by intimidation a government or intimidate the public or a section of the public (Australian Government 2020).

Incels, pick-up artists, and others in the so-called 'manosphere' regularly encourage extremes of physical and sexual violence against the women they believe have deprived them of their 'rights' to reproduction and sexual pleasure. Many others attack feminists on the basis of their argument for gender equality. Violent extremism has already escalated to terrorism. If these acts were carried out by the same men under the guise of a religious or specifically far-right agenda, they may well have been labelled as terrorists.

The violent language and actions of ideological masculinity fit neatly into the definition of violent extremism, which involves 'the beliefs and actions of people who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals'. It includes terrorism and other forms of politically motivated and communal violence. It also includes the language and symbolic behaviours that threaten or support such violence.

To this extent, processes of radicalisation leading to male supremacist terrorism might be considered to have much in common with other violent extremist groups, including alienation, anxiety, and misinterpellation (Roose 2016). In the aftermath of a May 2020 terror attack in Toronto, the Toronto Police stated: 'Terrorism comes in many forms, and it's important to note that it is not restricted to any particular group, religion, or ideology' (Toronto Police 2020).

Assessing the prevalence of ideological masculinity and male supremacism

The final section of this chapter draws upon research conducted with Ipsos Public Affairs, a global social and market research firm. Developed as a collaboration between Ipsos, Professor Bryan Turner, and myself, the data is based on a global online survey of the Ipsos panel. The research was carried out in June and July 2019. The survey generated responses from over 19,000 respondents across 28 countries on topics including attitudes to democracy, the rule of law, women's rights, and trust in institutions.

Drawing on the dataset, I explore the prevalence of extreme anti-women attitudes across the countries studied, comparing the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia though responses to two key propositions:

1. Women deserve equal rights to men; and
2. Rights for women have gone too far.

The first proposition measures a baseline for notions of gender equality, or what might be considered 'hard-line misogyny' (hard prejudice), which encompasses the concept, already touched upon in the discussion of the manosphere, that women can be prejudicial to women. The second proposition captures what might be considered 'soft misogyny' (soft prejudice), the notion, common in the 'manosphere', that there is now an imbalance and women have more rights than men. The difference between the propositions allows us to capture the 'I'm not sexist but' proposition that defines contemporary misogyny.

Citizens from all three countries (amongst others) contribute to the 'manosphere'. Thus, grouping them together offers an insight into the multinational dimension of the online space and its potential influence. Female respondents were adjudged to be appropriate comparators to men for the purpose of determining the extent to which anti-women attitudes exist in the wider community, therefore, they are included in the data tables (Table 4.1 and Table 4.2).

Young men under 35 years of age were the demographic most likely to disagree with the statement that women deserve equal rights to men (Table 4.1). Their numbers were highest in the United States (5.53%) and lowest in the United Kingdom (2.93%). Importantly, disagreement with the statement fell significantly as men got older, a pattern also evident in women, suggesting that exposure to the struggles of second-wave feminism in the 1970s had a marked and continued

TABLE 4.1 Women deserve equal rights to men (percentage of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree), by gender, country, age (Great Britain, United States, and Australia)

	18–34	*35–54*	*55+*	*Total*
Great Britain (M)	3.98	2.93	2.43	3.13
United States (M)	4.97	5.53	0.60	3.57
Australia (M)	5.90	5.48	1.98	4.71
Great Britain (F)	1.82	1.07	1.23	1.35
United States (F)	1.83	0.96	1.20	1.32
Australia (F)	4.12	1.53	0.58	2.16

Source: Ipsos-Roose-Turner Global Masculinity Index, June 2019 (Ipsos et al. 2019)

Great Britain base n = 817; United States base n = 753; Australia base n = 976

TABLE 4.2 Rights for women have gone too far (percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree), by country, gender, age (Great Britain, United States, and Australia)

	18–34	*35–54*	*55+*	*Total*
Great Britain (M)	27.28	25.91	29.01	27.30
United States (M)	36.29	25.22	18.46	26.52
Australia (M)	36.93	30.19	28.17	31.97
Great Britain (F)	14.52	11.42	18.23	14.06
United States (F)	21.83	26.03	25.39	13.28
Australia (F)	26.83	22.47	17.09	22.38

Source: Ipsos-Roose-Turner Global Masculinity Index, June 2019 (Ipsos et al. 2019)

Great Britain base n = 806; United States base n = 737; Australia base n = 951

impact on individuals, though it could also suggest that as men marry and have children, including daughters, their attitudes may change.

Australian women under the age of 35 (4.12%) were more than twice as likely to disagree with the statement that women deserve equal rights to men as their counterparts in Great Britain and the United States (2%). Australian women in the 35–54 and 55+ age groups were also more likely to disagree.

The table above is significant for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that embedded anti-women prejudice is particularly evident amongst younger men, it may decline with age, and it also exists amongst some young women. Second, it also reveals a potential constituency for violent extremist views grounded in masculinity. Whilst on the face of it the charts reveal that a small percentage of the community subscribes to anti-women views, across an entire population the notional number of approximately

1 in 26 men adds up to a significant number (in the millions) who do not agree that women deserve equal rights to men. It is likely that those potentially drawn to violent extremism against women would be located within this group. Further, as indicated by the size and scope of manosphere websites, such as *MGTOW: Men Going Their Own Way* with is more than 30,000 members, the online environment has allowed like-minded men to find one another and develop ideological strands and sub-strands centred on the subjugation of women.

In a similar manner to hard misogyny, young men under the age of 35 led the way on the measure of soft misogyny. They agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that women's rights have gone too far (Table 4.2). The numbers were highest amongst men in Australia (36.93%) and the United States (36.29%), and they were lowest in the United Kingdom (27.28%). Similarly, apart from in Great Britain, where there was a slight rise in the 55+ age range, agreement with the statement fell as men got older, which suggests that older men have historic context on women's political struggle for equality, and they may be less exposed to the hard edge of the labour force where protections for women, such as maternity leave, are legislated and embedded in organisational culture.

Importantly, women were likely to agree with the proposition that rights for women have gone too far in numbers much higher than anticipated. Agreement was highest amongst women aged 18–35 in Australia (26.83%) and the United States (21.83%), while it was lowest in the United Kingdom (14.52%).

The percentage of the population agreeing with the statement that rights for women have gone too far is significant – more than one in three men in Australia and the United States, and more than one in four in Great Britain. Many of these men agreed with the statement that women deserve equal rights to men. They likely perceive themselves as somehow challenged or disadvantaged by the extension of women's rights, despite a continued gender pay gap, under representation of women in government and corporate leadership, women's greater burden when it comes to household labour, and a higher prevalence of poverty amongst women across the life course. This may demonstrate that 'manosphere' rhetoric has successfully infiltrated mainstream political discourse and that there are increasing levels of anxiety and anger about job security and declining status amongst men in both the blue-collar and professional workforce.

The fact that women subscribe to the perspective that rights have gone too far may speak simultaneously to the symbolic violence of contemporary misogyny, whereby women adopt the very ideas that subordinate them, and it may indicate that women are members of socially conservative groups or religious denominations that have traditionally exhibited hostility toward both rights and women's empowerment.

Conclusion

Anti-women attitudes and violence against women are not new developments. They have been deeply entrenched in religion and key social institutions

throughout history. Even the Marshallian conception of citizenship has been accused of focusing primarily on working men and relying on the domestic subordination of women. The rise of neoliberal economics has opened pathways for women into the workforce whilst simultaneously entrenching a gender pay gap. Yet, despite persistent inequality in the workforce, the combination of women achieving success in non-traditional areas of the work and the feminisation of the service economy, particularly at a time when blue-collar, manual-labour jobs are becoming increasingly insecure and precarity is increasing in white collar professional work, has led to anxiety, alienation, anomie, and, most tellingly, anger and resentment.

On the spectrum of anti-women prejudice, it is possible to start at the 'soft' end with anti-women institutions, such as the Catholic Church. Throughout its history the Catholic Church has denied women the possibility of spiritual leadership. Evangelical men's movements exhibit a modern, distorted form of hyper-masculine muscular Christianity. Similar developments are evident in Islam, Judaism, and the majority of faiths. These groups provide a logical base receptive to the new populist demagogues' regurgitation of notions of 'traditional family values' and their engagement with select religious leaders who share similar values. However, the combination of the collapse of key social institutions driven by neoliberal economic policies and the emergence of social media as a key organising tool for activist groups has led to the birth of vociferously anti-establishment and anti-women political agendas. They are embodied in loose clusters and groups, such as the 'alt-right' and MGTOW, which seek to portray a hegemonic hyper-masculinity that belies their status as subordinated men operating on the fringes of society. For the new populist demagogues, such individuals and groups offer a ready-made constituency and a fast-track to political power.

As alarming as these developments might appear, they are minor compared to the ideologically driven movements that explicitly seek to cause psychological and physical harm to women. Influential individuals incite physical and sexual violence through couched language and 'satire'. Online activists threaten to rape and murder feminists. Incel terrorists are motivated to kill women on the basis of their gender. The development of ideological masculinity, whereby gender becomes a political identity and a base of violent action, must be viewed, not as being isolated from, but as being closely linked to the rise of the new demagogues, who display the same anti-women behaviours and deploy the same religiously and politically inflected rhetoric professing to restore a long-lost period of male supremacy.

References

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare). (2019). *Family, Domestic, and Sexual Violence in Australia: Continuing the National Story*. Canberra: Australian Government.

Anderlini, S.N. (2018). Challenging Conventional Wisdom, Transforming Current Practices: A Gendered Lens on PVE. In B. Austin and H. J. Giessmann. (Eds.), *Transformative Approaches to Violent Extremism* (pp. 21–36). Berlin: Berghof Foundation.

Australian Government. (2015). *Living Safe Together: Preventing Violent Extremism and Radicalisation in Australia*. Canberra: Attorney-General's Department, Australian Government.

Australian Government. (2020). Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth), Part 100.1: Definitions. *Federal Register of Legislation*.

Barbalet, J.M. (1993). Citizenship, Class Inequality, and Resentment. In B.S. Turner (Ed.), *Citizenship and Social Theory* (pp. 36–57). London: Sage.

Beauchamp, Z. (2018). Incel, the Misogynist Ideology that Inspired the Deadly Toronto Attack, Explained. *Vox*, 25 April.

Beierle, S. (2018). All videos by Tallahassee Yoga Shooter Scott Beierle/'Scott Carnifex'. *Youtube*. Retrieved 20 August 2019 from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ca00hcOND8.

Besley, T., Folke, O., Persson, T., & Rickne, J. (2017a). Gender Quotas and the Crisis of the Mediocre Man. *LSE Business Review Blog*. Retrieved on 20 June 2018 from https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2017/03/13/gender-quotas-and-the-crisis-of-the-mediocre-man.

Besley, T., Folke, O., Persson, T., & Rickne, J. (2017b). Gender Quotas and the Crisis of the Mediocre Man: Theory and Evidence from Sweden. *American Economic Review*, 107 (8), 2204–2242.

Blais, M. & Dupuis-Déri, F. (2012). Masculinism and the Antifeminist Countermovement. *Social Movement Studies*, 11 (1), 21–39.

Briggs, R. & Silverman, T. (2014). *Western Foreign Fighters: Innovations in Responding to the Threat*. London: Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

Brittan, A. (1989). *Masculinity and Power*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Burton, T. (2019a). A Notorious Pickup Artist Found God: Lots of Angry White Radicals Do. *Washington Post*, 31 May.

Burton, T. (2019b). The Religious Hunger of the Radical Right. *The New York Times*, 13 August.

Campbell, B. & Manning, J. (2014). Microaggression and Moral Cultures. *Comparative Sociology*, 13 (6), 692–726.

Caputi J. & Russell, D.E.H. (1990). Femicide: Speaking the Unspeakable. *Ms.*, 1 (2), 34–37.

Caputi J. & Russell, D.E.H. (1992). Femicide: Sexist Terrorism Against Women. In J. Radford & D.E.H. Russell (Eds.), *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing* (pp. 13–21) New York: Twayne Publishers.

Connell, R. (2005). *Masculinities*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Connell, R. & Messerschmidt, J.W. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender and Society*, 19, 829–859.

CNN. (2016). Exit polls. *CNN*, 23 November. Retrieved from https://edition.cnn.com/election/2016/results/exit-polls.

Daily News Editorial Board. (2018). Profile in Rage: Too Late, New York Republicans Distance Themselves from Gavin McInnes. *NY Daily News*, 16 October. Retrieved from https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-edit-mcinnis-20181015-story.html.

Department of Homeland Security. (2011). *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*. Washington, DC: United States Government.

Department of Homeland Security. (2016). *Department of Homeland Security Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism*. 28 October. Washington, DC: United States Government.

Du Mez, K. (2017). Donald Trump and Militant Evangelical Masculinity. *Religion and Politics*, 17 January. Retrieved from https://religionandpolitics.org/2017/01/17/donald-trump-and-militant-evangelical-masculinity.

Duerst-Lahti, G. (2008). Gender Ideology: Masculinism and Feminalism. In G. Goertz & A. Mazur (Eds.), *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology* (pp. 159–192). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elam, P. (2010). If You See Jezebel in the Road Run the Bitch Down. *A Voice for Men*, 22 October. Retrieved from https://avoiceformen.com/feminist-violence/if-you-see-jezebel-in-the-road-run-the-bitch-down.

Elam, P. (2018). Men's Movement: Personal and Political (ICMI'18 Speech). *A Voice For Men*. Retrieved on 20 January 2020 from https://avoiceformen.com/featured/mens-movement-personal-and-political-icmi18-speech.

Galston, W.A. (2018). *Anti-Pluralism: The Populist Threat to Liberal Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Green, J. & Shorrocks, R. (2019). The Gender Backlash in the Vote for Brexit. *SSRN*. Retrieved from https://ssrn.com/abstract=3429689.

Hage, G. (2011). Multiculturalism and the Ungovernable Muslim. In R. Gaita (Ed.), *Essays on Muslims and Multiculturalism* (pp. 165–186). Melbourne: Text Publishing.

Huffington Post. (2013). Gavin McInnes Launches Expletive-laden Tirade About Women in the Workplace. *HuffPost*, 6 December.

Ipsos, Roose, J.M., & Turner, B.S. (2019). Global Masculinity Index Survey Developed and Conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs, Joshua Roose, and Bryan S. Turner. June.

Joint Chiefs of Staff. (2010). *Joint Pub 3–07.2: Antiterrorism*. Washington, DC: United States Government.

Kassam, A. (2018). Woman Behind 'Incel' Says Angry Men Hijacked Her Word 'As a Weapon of War'. *The Guardian*, 26 April.

Kelly, A. (2017). The Alt-right: Reactionary Rehabilitation for White Masculinity. *Soundings: A Journal of Politics and Culture*, (66), 68–78.

Kimmel, M. (2018). *Healing from Hate: How Young Men Get Into – and Out of – Violent Extremism*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Kimmel, M. & Bridges, T. (2011). Masculinity. *Oxford Bibliographies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press Online. doi:10.1093/OBO/9780199756384-0033.

Lewis, J., Lewis, B., Cameron, R., Pond, P., Ghumkhor, S., & Mohamud, H. (2017). *Mediating Extremist Violence: A Report on the Role of Media, Far-Right Politics, and Gender in Extremist Violence and Social Cohesion in Victoria*. Melbourne: RMIT.

Lichter, D.T., Price, J.P., & Swigert, J.M. (2019). Mismatches in the Marriage Market. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82 (2), 796–809.

Littler, J. (2017). *Against Meritocracy: Culture, Power, and Myths of Mobility*. London: Routledge.

Martinez, D. (2016). Nigel Farage on Trump's Sexist Comments: 'This is Alpha Male Boasting'. *The Independent*, 9 October.

May, C. (2013). 'Godfather of Hipsterdom' Gavin McInnes: Feminism Makes Women Miserable. *Daily Caller*, 23 October.

Mazza, E. (2015). Gavin McInnes, Fox News Guest, Says Women Are 'Less Ambitious' and 'Happier at Home'. *HuffPost*, 15 May.

McDowell, L. (2003). *Redundant Masculinities: Employment, Change, and White Working Class Youth*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

McInnes, G. (2016). The Gavin McInnes Show 165. *Compound Media*, 16 June.

McInnes, G. (2017). The Gavin McInnes Show 171. *Compound Media*, 28 June.

McSmith, A. (2014). UKIP's Women Problem. *The Independent*, 8 October.

Mead, L. (1997). Citizenship and Social Policy: T.H. Marshall and Poverty. *Social Philosophy and Poverty*, 14 (2), 197–230.

MGTOW. (2020). *MGTOW: Men Going Their Own Way*. Retrieved from https://www.mgtow.com.

Mudde, C. (2018). Why is the Far Right Dominated by Men? *The Guardian*, 17 August.

New York Times. (2016). Transcript: Donald Trump's Taped Comments about Women. *The New York Times*, 8 October.

Oxford Dictionary. (2015). Femicide. In A. Stevenson (Ed.), *Oxford Dictionary of English* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Peucker, M. & Smith, D. (2019). Not a Monolithic Movement: The Diverse and Shifting Messaging of Australia's Far-right. In M. Peucker & D. Smith (Eds.), *The Far-Right in Contemporary Australia*. New York: Palgrave.

Pitt, D.E. (1989). Montreal Gunman Had Suicide Note. *The New York Times*, 8 December.

Robinson, S. (2000). *Marked Men: White Masculinity in Crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ross, J. (2016). Who Really Supports Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Ben Carson, Marco Rubio, and Jeb Bush – in 5 Charts. *The Washington Post*, 15 December.

Rodger, E. (2014). My Twisted World: The Story of Elliot Rodger. Retrieved from https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/1173619/rodger-manifesto.pdf.

Roose, J.M. (2016). *Political Islam and Masculinity: Muslim Men in the West*. New York: Palgrave.

Sassen, S. (2014). *Expulsions*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Shanahan, R. (2019). Typology of Terror – The Backgrounds of Australian Jihadis. *Lowy Institute*. 21 November.

Shklar, J.N. (1989). *American Citizenship: The Quest for Inclusion*(The Tanner Lectures on Human Values). Delivered at the University of Utah, 1–2 May.

Shklar, J.N. (1990). *American Citizenship: The Quest for Inclusion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Southern Poverty Law Center. (2019). Male Supremacy. *SPLC*.

Standing, G. (2011). *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury.

Statista. (2016). Share of Votes in the Brexit Referendum of 2016 in the United Kingdom, by Gender. *Statista*. Retrieved from https://www.statista.com/statistics/567922/brexit-votes-by-gender.

Strieghe r, J. (2015). *Violent Extremism: An Examination of a Definitional Dilemma*. The Proceedings of [the] 8th Australian Security and Intelligence Conference, Edith Cowan University Joondalup Campus, Perth, Western Australia, 30 November – 2 December (pp. 75–86).

Toronto Police. (2020). Media Release: Terrorist Activity and Attempted Murder – Terrorist Activity, Homicide #12/2020. *Royal Canadian Mounted Police/Gendarmerie royale du Canada*. Retrieved from https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/dufferin-and-wilson-avenue.

Tyson, A. & Maniam, S. (2016). Behind Trump's Victory: Divisions by Race, Gender, Education. *Pew Research Centre*, 9 November.

United Kingdom Government. (2020). Terrorism Act (2000), c. 11, Part 1, Section 1, Terrorism: Interpretation. *legislation.gov.uk*. Retrieved from https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/section/1.

United Kingdom House of Commons. (2010). *Preventing Violent Extremism: Sixth Report of Session 2009–10*. London: House of Commons.

United Nations. (2019). Why We Must Eliminate Violence Against Women. *United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women: 25 November*. Retrieved on 30 November 2019 from https://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday.

United States. (2019). 28 CFR Section 0.85 – General Functions. *Code of Federal Regulations*.

United States Department of Defense (DoD). (2019). DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. *DoD*. Retrieved from https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/dictionary.pdf.

Valizadeh, D. (2015a). What is Neomasculinity. *Roosh V*, 6 May. Retrieved from https://www.rooshv.com/what-is-neomasculinity.

Valizadeh, D. (2015b). How to Stop Rape. *Roosh V*, 16 February. Retrieved from https://www.rooshv.com/how-to-stop-rape.

Vieten, U.M. & Poynting. S. (2016). Contemporary Far-Right Racist Populism in Europe. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37 (6), 533–540.

Wetherell, M. & Edley, N. (1998). Gender Practices: Steps in the Analysis of Men and Masculinities. In K. Henwood, C. Griffin, & A. Phoenix (Eds.), *Gender and Psychology. Standpoints and Differences: Essays in the Practice of Feminist Psychology* (p. 156–173). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

World Bank. (2019). Gender-based Violence (Violence Against Women and Girls). *World Bank*, 25 September. Retrieved on 20 October 2019 from https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/violence-against-women-and-girls.

World Health Organization. (2017). Violence against women. *WHO*, 29 November. Retrieved on 20 November 2019 from https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2019). Autochthonic Populism, Everyday Bordering, Construction of 'the Migrant'. In G. Fitzi, J. Mackert, & B.S. Turner (Eds.), *Populism and the Crisis of Democracy: Volume 3: Migration, Gender and Religion* (pp. 69–77). London: Routledge. 69–77.