

## Introduction

TikTok and YouTube, two of the leading mediums in the social media landscape have seen an insurgence in hateful anti-feminist content, proliferated by so-called ‘manosphere’ influencers gathering millions of views and supporters. Incels (involuntary celibates), a subgroup of the manosphere (a network of online men’s communities), have become an increasing security concern for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners following their association with several violent attacks and cyber violence directed at women. Once mostly contained on niche men’s forums, blackpilled incel communities are gaining prominence on mainstream social media. Previous research on incels has been primarily focused on examining their manifestation on secluded, fringe and in some cases defunct platforms/forums. The present study aims to fill this gap by exploring incel creators and content on TikTok and YouTube Shorts to underpin the role mainstream social media platforms play in the diffusion and ‘normification’ of the incel ideology, discourse and stylistic tropes. This study builds upon my recent (accepted for publication) paper in which I used content and thematic analysis to investigate the multimodal modes of communication (audiovisual and linguistic content) employed by incel accounts and their respective TikTok videos. The findings uncovered that incel content creators employ pseudo-scientific evidence and emotional appeals to communicate fringe subcultural theories on mainstream social media to more heterogenous audiences.

## Data & Methods

The present talk/study represents a multi-platform, mixed-methods analysis of incel videos and their respective comments on TikTok and YouTube Shorts and builds upon my previous TikTok findings (see Table 1). Thematic analysis will be used to identify the themes and codes encountered within the videos and identify if these differ between TikTok and YouTube. To gain an overarching, “bird’s-eye” view of the linguistic patterns and trends observed within the comments sections I will employ topic modelling (LDA). The aim of this is to uncover the user reception and responses to the videos sampled and to determine to what extent the incel ideology is disputed or validated within the comments section. Lastly, the study aims to determine which type of incel videos (i.e., those that go for pseudo-scientific appeals vs emotional appeals) gather more popularity (views), support (likes, validation comments) and counter-comments (that demystify misinformation, challenge ideology, etc.)

The general aim of this paper is to assess the role technological affordances (multimodal modes of communication, visibility, large audiences, etc.) and mainstream social media platforms play in the diffusion and normalisation of subcultural misogynistic ideologies and their link with established forms of sexism.

**Table 1**

*Number of Accounts, Videos and Comments Selected and Collected per Platform*

Platform	Accounts (N)	Videos (N)	Comments (N)
TikTok	5	192	33,792
YouTube Shorts	5	449	31,430