

Connections Between Misogyny and Mass Violence

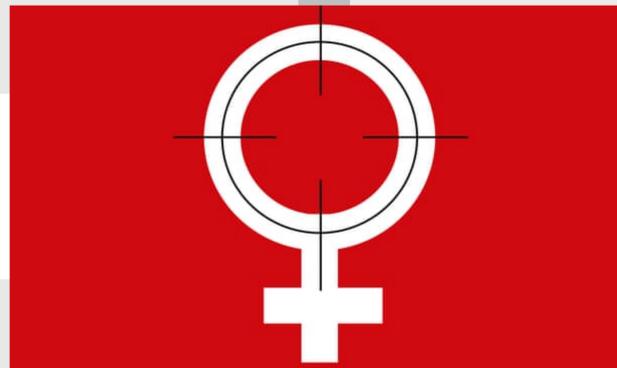
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Introduction

- “INCEL” denotes an internet subculture of self-identifying involuntarily celibate men (Ging, 2017).
- The INCEL presence has grown in online forums over the past decade (Ging, 2017).
- Predominantly white and young, the INCEL subculture is uniform in its contempt for women and feminism, and many within it espouse a belief in a conspiracy of misandry (Beauchamp, 2018; Ging, 2017; Vito, Admire, & Hughes, 2018).
- Born online in the late 1990s, INCEL initially included members of both sexes, brought together on a message board in a spirit of loneliness, a shared desire for support, and the pursuit of healthy relationships (Burgess, Donnelly, Dillard, & Davis, 2001).
- As women dropped away from the ranks, the remaining men reacted to feminism, globalism, other economic and social factors, and INCELS came to be characterized by anger, misogyny, hatred, self-pity, boasting, cruel jokes, and memes (Ging, 2017; Jane, 2014; Ohlheiser, 2018).
- In recent years, INCEL has also been increasingly linked to mass violence, with more than 7 attacks attributable to INCELS in the US and Canada in the past 6 years, claiming at least 50 lives, and injuring more than 50 (Allen, Weill, Briquelet, & Lorenz, 2018; Ging, 2017; Hankes, & Amend, 2018; Healy & Lovet, 2015; Ohlheiser, 2018).
- Although their complaints range in content and seriousness, their focus is nearly always violence toward women (Beauchamp, 2018; Ging, 2017; Jane, 2014; Ohlheiser, 2018).
- INCELS raise up perpetrators of mass violence, lauding those perpetrators as saints or heroes (Murray, 2017; Vito, Admire, & Hughes, 2018).

Forensic Applications

- Asserting the existence of a link between online misogyny and real-life violence in the INCEL community brings the forensic community one step closer to tracking and stemming mass violence by identifying signs of danger online.
- With the current generation of college graduates raised with the internet, a realistic appreciation for the dangers fomented in online forums will become essential for law enforcement in the future.



- An understanding of the consequences of a rising culture of violent misogyny online is valuable, in part because the generation currently graduating from college has always known the internet, and because social media has come to dominate public discourse (Doring, 2009).
- As such, the diction and tone of discourse on forums shapes community norms and mores (Jane, 2014).
- The potential of violent misogyny to spread and to normalize mass murder and the serial murder, rape, and torture of women is too great to be ignored (Jane, 2014; Murray, 2017; Vito, Admire, & Hughes, 2018).

Conclusion

- By exploring the intersection of misogyny and mass violence in the context of the INCEL phenomenon, we begin to discern an emerging pattern of antisocial behavior born online as it metastasizes from complaining in a tolerant community support group (Burgess, Donnelly, Dillard, & Davis, 2001), to sharing plans and threats of mass violence (Ohlheiser, 2018), to the perpetration, glorification, and perpetuation of mass violence and other violent crime (Murray, 2017; Vito, Admire, & Hughes, 2018)

- As this phenomenon of sex-driven domestic terrorism comes into clearer focus, forensic psychologists and investigators will become more familiar with INCEL.
- The clearer relationship between INCEL, misogyny, and mass violence will shed light on the nature of a growing number of mass violence episodes.
- With this work, it is hoped predictive signs of mass violence in online forums will emerge in areas of the internet frequented by INCEL groups.

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