



The lack of looks

A study on the Incel ideology of Incelism during the 2010s–2020s and its relation to historical and contemporary ideologies particularly within far-right milieus

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Abstract

The Incel milieu is known for its high level of misogyny, self-hate, and hate towards society. In recent years, it has received more and more scholarly attention and one topic which is often mentioned but rarely deeply discussed is if there is such a thing as an Incel ideology. This thesis argues that such an ideology exists, the ideology of Incelism, and this thesis strives to answer the question of how Incelism is constructed, and what relationships it has to other ideologies, particularly far-right ones. To answer this question the thesis has through a qualitative content analysis employed Michael Freedén's morphology of ideologies which states that an ideology is constructed similar to a semantic field. Freedén's approach, together with the theoretical frameworks of Eva Illouz's research on how love and relationships have changed since the dawn of modernity, and the field of collective victimhood, has been used to analyze discussion threads pulled from the website www.Incels.co, the at the time largest Incel-exclusive online community. The results show that the ideology of Incelism contains five core concepts labeled "Hierarchy", "Misogyny", "The natural", "Alienation", and "Direct action", eleven adjacent concepts could also be found as well as one peripheral. What was also found was that Incelism constitutes a thin ideology, meaning that it lacks certain aspects which needs to be borrowed from other ideologies, or that it needs to be hosted within a larger ideological construct. Through comparing Incelism to other ideologies it was found that it views macro-Liberalism, -Socialism and -Conservatism as ideological foes. It is instead within the milieus of the far-right Incelism finds ideological allies, potential host ideologies, and from where it has borrowed the concepts itself lacks. The results of this thesis show that Incelism is an ideology that is vast enough to support its own ideological field of core, adjacent and peripheral concepts, but that it still lacks certain concepts. An issue which is resolved by finding support from ideologies found within far-right milieus.

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Keywords: Incel, Incels, Far-right, Michael Freedén, Masculinity, Manosphere, Incelism, Ideology, Ideological analysis.

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1. A lack of love, but plenty of hate

In May 2014 Elliot Rodger stabbed and shot six people to death before committing suicide in the community of Isla Vista, California. In April 2018 Alek Minassian killed ten and injured sixteen by driving a van into unsuspecting pedestrians in Toronto, Canada. In November 2018 Scott Beierle shot two women in a Yoga studio before taking his own life in Tallahassee, Florida. Before Minassian's attack, he posted a status on Facebook stating: "The Incel rebellion has already begun! We will overthrow all Chads and Stacys! All hail the supreme gentleman Elliot Rodger!"¹ The reason these three men committed these acts of terror was, according to themselves, their non-existent love life. As stated by Rodger at the end of his 140-pages long manifesto published before the attack:

All I ever wanted was to love women, and in turn to be loved by them back. Their behavior towards me has only earned my hatred, and rightfully so! I am the true victim in all of this. I am the good guy. Humanity struck at me first by condemning me to experience so much suffering. I didn't ask for this. I didn't want this. I didn't start this war... I wasn't the one who struck first... But I will finish it by striking back. I will punish everyone. And it will be beautiful. Finally, at long last, I can show the world my true worth.²

The first line of the excerpt from Rodger's manifesto provides a rather good summary of what constitutes the central experience of people who identify as Involuntary Celibates (Incel/s). The members are men who long for romantic and sexual relations, but who are not successful in establishing such relations. This experience is often referred to as Inceldom. These men often understand their failures as stemming from unfair beauty standards, only reached by a small number of men, standards created and upheld by society, and in particular by women and their actions. This view that the reason for their predicament is not what they do and do not do but an "unnatural" situation created by the women they long for which leads some of them to adopt ideas of rabid anti-feminism and viral misogyny. The level of misogyny in large parts of the Incel community is extreme. Women are often referred to by derogatory terms such as "femtards", "feminazis", "cunts",³ or "femoids", a portmanteau of female and humanoid which serves the purpose of claiming that women are not really human but simply resemble humans.⁴ Within the Incel milieu there is also a difference between Incel and Incel. There are the Elliot Rodger's, Alek Minassian's, and Scott Beierle's, but there are also those who experience Inceldom and use the milieu as a way to find support and to cope with their oftentimes very tragic life experiences.⁵ These

¹ Hoffman, Ware, & Shapiro 2020, pp. 569–570; Jaki et al. 2019, p. 1; Zimmerman, Ryan, & Duriesmith 2018, p. 1.

² *My Twisted World: The Story of Elliot Rodger*, p. 137.

³ Ging 2019, pp. 646–647; Jaki et al. 2019, p. 20.

⁴ Chang 2020, p. 6.

⁵ Donnelly et al. 2001, p. 167; Jaki et al. 2019, p. 4.

people who would never commit any acts of violence are probably the vast majority of the members. However, while the act of violence is rather uncommon, the encouragement of violence, particularly rape, against women is relatively common.⁶ Fernquist et al. in a study done for the Swedish Defence Research Agency, estimates that people with connections to or members of the Incel community have perpetrated around ten deadly attacks. To this should be added potential Incel suicides as well as cases of sexual harassment and violence committed against women by members of the community.⁷ Attacks with distinct Incel motives and probable Incel motives have caused up to 50 fatalities since 2014.⁸ While not everyone inside this milieu is capable or willing to commit acts of violence some members clearly are.

In research done on the Incel milieu one question is often debated; does there exist an Incel ideology? This thesis argues that this is the case and that an ideology, which here will be called Incelism, exists and is not an ideology created in a vacuum. Instead, it seems to be a part of a wider sphere; a sphere of far-right milieus and ideologies. The Incel milieu and Incelism seem to be contemporary forms of organizing and a way of understanding feminism, degeneracy, capitalism, masculinity, and many more aspects of life during the era of high-modernity and late-stage capitalism. The roots of their ideas reach deep into the soil of the far-right. From the interwar *Freikorps*, Fascist ideals of masculinity, Reactionary Modernism, leaderless resistance and lone wolf tactics all the way to a mythicized “past” which is understood as having been uprooted and despoiled by certain aspects of modernity. A similar understanding of the phenomenon is expressed in a policy brief written by Zimmerman et al. for *Women In International Security*. It states that Incelism consists of a mythicized view of relationships pre-1960s, hardened misogynistic notions of traditional gender roles and that an extremist ideology exists which needs to be treated like other violent extremist ideologies like Jihadism and neo-Nazism.⁹ The previously mentioned study by Fernquist et al. on the other hand does not share this understanding, but instead argues that there is no such thing as an Incel ideology or an organization; it is a subculture with online meeting spaces for men who have never been accepted, only rejected, by women. The cases of Incel violence are explained as extreme reactions to said rejection when it is combined with a feeling of entitlement to what they are being rejected from, i.e., sex.¹⁰ There thus seem to be two camps. The first argues that there exists a violent and extremist ideology of misogyny within these Incel spaces. The second argues that there exists a subculture with online spaces filled with rabid misogyny, but no distinct ideology. Interestingly, this discussion regarding whether or not Incelism is an ideology, echoes the debate in Fascism studies in the 1990s where one camp argued that Fascism was not an ideology in the same way as traditional ideologies like Conservatism, Liberalism

⁶ Ging 2019, pp. 646–647; Jaki et al. 2019, p. 20.

⁷ Fernquist, Pelzer, Cohen, Kaati, & Akrami 2020, p. 2.

⁸ Hoffman et al. 2020, p. 565.

⁹ Zimmerman et al. 2018, pp. 1–3.

¹⁰ Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 1–2, 4–5.

or Socialism, but merely a negation of them, and the other that it was an ideology in its own right. Just like Roger Griffin and others argued then when it came to Fascism, this thesis here claim that Incelism cannot be understood properly if one does not realize that it offers its adherents something positive, a sense of purpose and community and above all a self-understanding as victims of an unjust system. This thesis thus argues that Incelism is an ideology and that it permeates the online meeting spaces where Incels congregate. An ideology that must be understood and studied in the context of its relationship to other ideologies, and not only far-right ones. Because while it seems that the far-right is to where Incelism mainly relates, Incelism understands and positions itself to other ideological constructs as well.

Before we move on to the next chapter, a short presentation of the structure of this thesis is in order. Following the introduction is a chapter on the historical context as well as previous research within the fields of study. As the field of Incel studies is a young one it is more prudent to present the historical context in conjunction with the previous research. This chapter is divided into three parts discussing what Incels are, how Incels seem to think, and how they seem to act. After that, the thesis of this paper is presented as well as the questions which are used to operationalize the analysis. After the thesis follows a discussion on the source material and following that is a chapter on the methodological considerations and the method employed. This chapter is placed after the chapter on the source material as there exists a need to discuss the methodological specificities of using an online source, the employed method also heavily dictates how the analysis is constructed, and performed, and therefore should be discussed close to the source material. Following the chapter on methods is the chapter on theories. The analysis of this thesis is divided into one main chapter, with two sub-chapters and seven subheadings. In the first sub-chapter, each subheading will focus on one core concept each and its relating adjacent and peripheral concepts which have been found. Some other ways to present the analysis which have been contemplated was either to divide the analysis into each specific thread, sub-forum, or themes which the threads discuss. Dividing the chapter in any of those ways would however have put the focus on something other than the ideological analysis. Therefore, subheadings focusing on core concepts were chosen as the best way to divide the analysis. The following chapter will then discuss Incelism's connections to other ideological constructs were one subheading focuses on ideologies which Incelism finds itself in opposition to, and the other subheading focuses on those constructs that Incelism has positive relations to. Lastly, there will be a chapter that presents and discusses the results of the analysis and what can be derived from these. There will also be discussions on what has been learned, and what is yet to be learned from these results.

2. Chads, Stacys, Beckys, Normies, pills and looks – Previous research on, and the context of, Incels

To get as clear of a picture as possible of the Incel milieu the discussions on the relevant research fields will be divided into three parts. The first will answer the question of what an Incel is, the second will focus on the thinking and belief-system in the milieu, and the last part will discuss how the milieu acts and why some types of actions are taken. Thus, previous research will be used not only to discuss the current field of studies regarding Incels and Incelism but also to paint a picture of the milieu as such and the belief-systems found within it.

2.1. Incel?

The core reason for why someone might identify as an Incel, or be understood as one, is if a person is unsuccessful in finding a sexual partner, at least according to Incels themselves as argued on the Incels.wiki website.¹¹ One of the studies which are used to substantiate the claim that being an Incel is only a life circumstance is often referred to as the “Donnelly study”. It is a research article written by Denise Donnelly et al. titled “Involuntary Celibacy: A life Course Analysis”. The “Incel” in the Donnelly study is very different from its modern counterpart. An Involuntary Celibate is anyone who for six months has been actively looking for, but ultimately failing, in finding a willing sexual partner. This means that the definition used by Donnelly et al. includes people in relationships, men, women, and LGBTQ+ people.¹² Today the term Incel is used more or less exclusively for men. Some online spaces dedicated to Incels are male-only, such as the web forum Incels.co.¹³ A central theme regarding Incels’ views of themselves and the world is the concept of beauty, most often referred to as looks. Looks simply refers to attractiveness and is rather than a trait more similar to a resource which is genetically and biologically ordained in large quantities to some, and in unfairly low quantities to others. Here a fiercely rigid hierarchical understanding of society is formulated in the Incel milieu, the men and women who were born with an abundance of looks capital, consisting of only a small minority, are the alphas of the world. Labeled “Chad” if it is a man or “Stacy” if it is a woman, these people can sleep with or have a relationship with whomever they want because of their looks. In this understanding of the world being attractive is understood as being intimately connected to being successful not only in the sphere of relationships but socially, career-wise, and economically. Great looks open doors. The people who are positioned on the attractiveness scale anywhere between “rather beautiful” and “average” are understood as

¹¹ *Incel*, Incels.wiki.

¹² Donnelly et al. 2001, p. 159.

¹³ *Rules and FAQ*, Incels.co.

“Normies”, or in the case of women “Beckys”, these two categories constitute the vast majority of people. At the bottom of this hierarchy is the male-exclusive category of Incel, the ones who were born with the smallest quantity of looks capital and who therefore are doomed to suffering at the bottom of society. This looks-based discrimination is what Incels refer to as Lookism, a form of looks-based oppression and discrimination which is understood as dooming Incels to an existence at the bottom of the social hierarchy forever, according to Baele et al. and Fernquist et al.¹⁴

This perceived existence at the bottom of society and the suffering which it entails is, according to Baele et al, furthered by women’s actions on the so-called sexual marketplace. There is also the idea that women are hypergamous, which means that they are biologically wired to only be attracted to, and attempt to have intercourse, with the most “alpha” of men. This results in the “unfair” sexual deficit for most men and an abundance of sexual encounters for others. This is often referred to as the 20/80 rule, that 20 percent of all men have sex with 80 percent of all women and that the 80 percent of men who do not belong among the top percentage have to fight to gain access to the last 20 percent of potential female partners. Baele et al and Menzie shows that the creation of this situation is understood by Incels as being the cause of mainly feminism, but also Liberalism and Progressivism. With the sexual revolution of the 1960s–1970s and women achieving greater bodily autonomy, the Incel-understanding is that the laws, traditions and societal norms which had earlier stopped women from solely offering their sexual value to “Chads” has been removed. The perceived loss of these checks and balances has resulted in the situation becoming more and more extreme through what is understood as the erosion of long-term relationships and the culture of love having transformed into a “Chad”-centric hook-up culture as Beale et al. puts it. These developments are understood within the Incel milieu as making Incels’ societal position even more intangible, leaving violent action the only possible action for some to take.¹⁵

2.2. How can we understand how Incels think and their belief-system?

According to the Incels.wiki webpage, there is no such thing as a shared understanding of the world or belief system, it states that being an Incel is simply a common life circumstance and that there, therefore, exists no subculture, no Incel movement, and no shared ideology or belief system.¹⁶ This claim is substantiated by references to a skewed set of examples, such as the previously mentioned “Donnelly Study”. Women who identify as Incel, most often referred to as Femcels, are rare and most often not accepted within the Incel community. They are seen mainly as Volcels, voluntary celibates, as there is more or less always some man out there who would want to be with that woman.¹⁷ Incel should in most regards be understood as a male-exclusive term, and that is how

¹⁴ Baele, Brace, & Coan 2019, pp. 8–12; Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 3–4.

¹⁵ Baele et al. 2019, pp. 13–17; Menzie 2020, pp. 5–8.

¹⁶ *Incel*, Incels.wiki.

¹⁷ *Femcel*, Incels.wiki.

this thesis will employ it. What the definition of an “Incel” should be is however a rather debated topic within the Incel milieu itself, a discussion which will be returned to later. Not only will Incelism and the Incel milieu be discussed as well, but Incelism’s points of intersection with the far-right and the milieus which Incelism relate to or is found within. First however, the key aspects of what constitutes an Incel needs to be addressed.

As has been established, to be an Incel first you have to be a man. But what does it entail to be masculine, to truly be a *man*? George L. Mosse argues that since the emergence of modernity masculinity has mainly been based in physical values. Mosse states that in the modern era manhood became stereotyped in a way that it had not previously been, and emphasis was placed upon visual perceptions, the solidified masculine ideals of strength and beauty that in some cases became a symbol for society and nation.¹⁸ In the early nineteenth century some philosophers such as Guts Muth argued that body and soul were dependent on each other, but that the body had primacy. Physical awkwardness, poor health, and weak nerves meant that the persons’ mind was weak as well, meaning that manly beauty was a sign of moral worth.¹⁹ At the climax of modern masculinity and its conjunction with the state during the rise of Fascism in the interwar years, people like Giovanni Papini argued that men must become more unromantic, more brutal and to free themselves from bourgeois icons like family, school, and the love of women. To love women was to become their servants.²⁰ Here ideas similar to the modern Incels obsession with “looks” can already be found. These ideas of physical prowess and beauty as the primary indicator for a “real man”, combined with a love for the man next to you are key aspects in Klaus Theweleit’s study of the *Freikorps* of interwar Germany. While some “bourgeois icons” such as marriage and family are present among the masculine ideals of the *Freikorps*, such things are secondary to the men. Paul Von Lettow Vorbeck in his diary never mentions his wife by name, the *woman* is quietly placed in the margins whereas the men are mentioned by name and are discussed in depth, she is quietly taking care of the children and supporting the husband, nothing else.²¹ In other words, there are no mentions of love towards her, love and affection is instead only shown towards the fellow soldier. Other *Freikorps* members write in their diaries and letters about how they cannot live without the corps and the troops, their fellow soldiers are described in vivid detail as beautiful and majestic, the men or the manly organizations totally dominate the discourse.²² When women are discussed they are primarily understood as enemies. Working-class women are understood as the “red-sister”, a female body that is sexualized but not available to the members of the *Freikorps* only to their male enemies, something that increased the rage against the women. The women’s greatest

¹⁸ Mosse 1996, p. 23.

¹⁹ Mosse 1996, p. 41.

²⁰ Mosse 1996, pp. 155–157.

²¹ Theweleit 1995, pp. 22–25, 28.

²² Theweleit 1995, pp. 65, 71–73.

crime was that they teased and aroused the men which caused chaos among the men who did not have any outlets for those emotions. For the men, the logical conclusion was to act in self-defense by terrorizing the women who did not fit the normative female image of the mother or the white-sister.²³

The modern ideals of manhood which Mosse discusses, and the homosocial relationship of the *Freikorps* which Theweleit analyses are formalized clearly in the modern phenomena of the Manosphere. The Manosphere, a loose online confederation of different men's-rights activist groups, has received some scholarly attention not least by Chang, Ging and O'Malley et al. All groups within this confederation stresses the notion that feminism is brainwashing modern society. This idea is combined with a belief system adopted by most members of the Manosphere which they have labeled the redpill. The redpill is a reference to the movie *The Matrix* in which the protagonist is offered to take either a blue pill that allows him to continue a life of ignorance and bliss or a red pill that would bestow him the true knowledge but also the misery that knowledge entails.²⁴ According to studies by Chang, Fernquist et al., Ging, Hoffman et al., and O'Malley et al., the "truths" contained within the Manosphere's redpill are the ideas that feminism contains structural misandry, that men are oppressed, and that genetic determinism is the main cause for one's successes or failures. Successes or failures not only in the realms of love and sex but intimately related to all of one's potential professional, economic, and social progress. To accept these "truths" is referred to as "taking the redpill" and those who have "taken the pill" are referred to as being "redpilled".²⁵ The redpill together with the shared goal to fight feminism and keep women out of perceived male online spaces is the key reason for the cooperation between the different constellations within the Manosphere.²⁶ The opposite of the redpill is the bluepill which consists of the beliefs that women are oppressed, that society is patriarchal, and that personality is more important than looks. To have taken the bluepill is seen, as Hoffman et al. puts it, to live in a world of illusion.²⁷ There is a wide set of different groups and men within the Manosphere which Ging categorizes into three wider fields of masculinities: Alpha-, Beta- and Zeta-masculinity. Alpha masculinity is understood within the Manosphere as the type of men women want to have sex with, the "[...] bad boy thugs who make their [women's] pussy tingle".²⁸ To be "alpha" seems to adhere to what Mosse argues is the ideal male in the modern era, beautiful, self-confident, and with no physical awkwardness. They also seem to agree with the idea of not showing love to women, but only using them for sex. However, Ging shows that some within the Manosphere view alpha

²³ Theweleit 1995, pp. 162, 185–187.

²⁴ Chang 2020, p. 2; Jaki et al. 2019, p. 7.

²⁵ Chang 2020, pp. 2–3; Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 12; Ging 2019, pp. 639–640; Hoffman et al. 2020, p. 568; O'Malley, Holt, & Holt 2020, p. 7.

²⁶ Ging 2019, p. 640.

²⁷ Hoffman et al. 2020, p. 568.

²⁸ Ging 2019, p. 650.

masculinity as having been hijacked by feminists and adopted into the “gynocentric establishment”. Therefore, according to some men should instead strive to transcend biology and become “Zeta-males”, e.g., males who do not fit into the current hierarchy and who is a type of sociosexual warrior who tries to find their legs through helping and being helped by other emergent zetas online.²⁹

The beta males have chosen another strategy of dealing with the perceived domination of women within society and feminisms brainwashing of it, and it is here we find the Incels. Jaki et al. define beta masculinity as men who rail against the alpha males for being “normies”³⁰ and instead sees themselves as victims of feminism and political correctness, themes that have spread across all of the Manosphere. Incels create an ingroup identity through very negative self-portrayal, with most viewing themselves as being ugly, anxious, etc.³¹ Incels seems to understand themselves as being outside of society, and at the same time being the lowest of the low in the social hierarchy. According to Witt however, it would probably be more accurate to understand them as being the “losers” in the hierarchy of hegemonic masculine ideals, ideal which can be characterized as that male subjects should show sexual ability and hold the capacity to enact violence on other bodies.³² Incels also seems to believe in a mythologized view of the past which entails the idea that up until the 1960s sexual revolution every man had access to a female partner. The female empowerment and increase in female bodily autonomy are seen as having caused a profound injustice leading to a failure of society to provide all men with the female partner they are more or less seen as entitled to, according to Zimmerman et al.³³ Women’s actions are therefore understood as the cause for these men’s suffering. What we see is the idea that *women*, this mass collective of individuals, are understood as acting as an individual and with a specific agenda. This is similar to Keskinen’s portrayal of Breivik’s’ understanding of “Cultural Marxism”, an imagined plot with the goal of destroying the west in which women are understood as playing the leading role by employing feminism as a tool to reach a status of victimhood and then to use said victimhood as a way to penalize western men.³⁴

While there are vast differences between Breivik and the far-right milieu of which he is a part of and the men within the Incel milieu, there are also important similarities between them in how they understand the world and causation, in that they share the usage of conspiracist thinking. As argued by Dyrendal and Emberland, when clear boundaries are created between “us” and “them” humans are inclined to look at “them” in solely black or white. “They” are a homogenized being acting with a single will, while “we” are a heterogeneous group consisting of individuals.³⁵ While

²⁹ Ging 2019, p. 650.

³⁰ “Normal” and/or plain people. “Normie” often also implies someone that is bluepilled.

³¹ Jaki et al. 2019, pp. 3, 16–17.

³² Witt 2020, pp. 678, 685.

³³ Zimmerman et al. 2018, p. 1.

³⁴ Keskinen 2013, p. 225.

³⁵ Dyrendal & Emberland 2019, p. 44.

everyone engages in conspiratorial thinking to some degree, a full-blown conspiracy theory however consists of worked-out trains of thought of conspiracies characterized by faults in logical reasoning, factual evidence, and in the relation between the facts. There are different types of conspiratorial thinking. Bakrun divides them into three categories based on range, style, and content: conspiracies about *events*, *systems*, and *super* conspiracies.³⁶ The Incel community seems to adhere to a form of system-conspiracy theory, believing women to conspire to stop some men from entering the sexual market. Hofstadter also argues that people who have utopian ideals are often more prone to engage in conspiratorial thinking,³⁷ something the Incel community share, a world where every man has a female partner which is his match in looks. Furthermore, believing in one conspiracy theory seems as well to be a gateway for believing in a plethora of different theories and conspiracies.³⁸ The use of conspiracy theories and usage of conspiratorial thinking thus unite the far-right and the Incel milieu.

While many Incels are not, or will never become, far-right extremists, Incel communities such as Incels.co and Incelism might act as distinct pathways for radicalization into far-right ideologies. The concept of fringe fluidity concerns an individual and their transition from one form of violent extremism to another and is discussed in an article by Gartenstein-Ross and Blackman who have studied the half dozen reported cases of people transitioning from neo-Nazism to violent Islamic extremism. Many potential reasons for why this have happened are suggested, such as an extremist personality, that the threshold for embracing extremism is lowered once someone has embraced one form of extremism or that it might occur if two different forms of extremism share a common enemy.³⁹ While most theories on radicalization can be defined as either having an emphasis on the progression to extremist behaviors or views, fringe fluidity acts as a pathway for both extremist views and behaviors. This entails that some men who have previously adhered to exclusively far-right ideas or a specific ideological position can transition from that to Incelism or vice versa. Fringe fluidity seems to imply a rather complete transition from one form of extremism to another however, while it within Incelism seems completely possible that someone can be both a white nationalist and an Incelist. Some users seem to drift between, and engage within, a multitude of different socially unorthodox political and cultural positions such as Incelism, Fascism, White Nationalism, the Alt-right, and more. This is what Kaplan and Löow refers to as the cultic milieu, an oppositional zone in a society where groups propagating forbidden and proscribed knowledge resides. Within this milieu there exists the seekers, people who travel from one group to another within the cultic milieu and seek this hidden knowledge.⁴⁰ Like an urban landscape with

³⁶ Dyrendal & Emberland 2019, p. 34.

³⁷ Dyrendal & Emberland 2019, pp. 23–24.

³⁸ Dyrendal & Emberland 2019, p. 26.

³⁹ Gartenstein-Ross & Blackman 2019, pp. 1–2.

⁴⁰ Kaplan & Löow 2002, p. 3.

neighborhoods, the citizens of the milieu can visit, move between or fully reject adjacent neighborhoods. While seekers might try and sample different groups and ideas, they will reject such which are fully incompatible with their worldview.⁴¹ The cultic culture, as envisioned by Colin Campbell, consists of items that are both deviants to orthodox religion as well as orthodox science within society, with orthodox science having perhaps a bigger importance in defining truths and errors.⁴² This oppositional position to science does seem to be a central aspect of the Incel belief system labeled the blackpill.

The blackpill is the continuation of the redpill, it is the redpill taken to its extreme and it is more or less exclusive to the Incel community. While the red- and blackpill share the core “truths” of feminism’s misandry and men’s oppression, believers of the redpill argue that those truths can be manipulated and exploited. The blackpill however, argues that it is over for those men who lack looks. No amount of plastic surgery, money, or status can ever free an Incel from his status as a beta-male at the bottom of the social hierarchy. If you are an Incel it is over, as you have been doomed by genetic determinism to suffer. An Incel can never escape Inceldom, implying that their suffering is for life as argued by Fernquist et al. and Hoffman et al.⁴³ Similar to the redpill, those who have “taken the pill” and accepted the “truths” of the blackpill are called blackpilled. Both the red- and the blackpill must be taken gradually, it is not only one “pill“ that must be swallowed, instead it is a process through which one takes many pills by gradually accepting certain aspects of the belief system until one becomes fully “red/blackpilled”. This centrality of truth-finding in a society that has some set forms of acceptable and orthodox truths can also be related to Rasmus Fleischer’s understanding of multi-fascism and its counter intellectual tendencies. It is not simply about being anti-establishment or against a perceived liberal order, but it believes in and argues for many types of “alternative” knowledge which combines into a conspiracist worldview.⁴⁴

As the research presented in this part of the chapter has shown, many far-right groups and ideologies do not seem to be alien to ideas shared by the Incel milieu and the ideology of Incelism. Not only from Papini’s ideals of the brutal unloving man to the *Freikorps* strong homosocial relations leading to modern male-group alliances within the Manosphere. But also, the misogyny and anti-feminism found within Breivik’s idea of the cultural Marists, the *Freikorps* disdain for any woman who did not fit the narrative of the mother or the white-sister, to the modern misogyny and anti-feminism found within the Manosphere and the shared usage of conspiratorial thinking by far-right milieus and Incels. There seem to exist many similarities between these two milieus in how they understand the world and themselves, but as will be discussed below, similarities also exist in how they organize and how they act.

⁴¹ Kaplan & Lööw 2002, pp. 5–6.

⁴² Kaplan & Lööw 2002, pp. 16–17.

⁴³ Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 3, 12; Hoffman et al. 2020, p. 568.

⁴⁴ Fleischer 2014, p. 60.

2.3. How can we understand how Incels act?

Incels are *online*, and this cannot be understated. As the study by Fernquist et al. argues the Incel “movement” is best understood as a series of toxic online meeting spaces,⁴⁵ an argument with some merit to it. Already with the Donnelly study of 2001, Incels have been understood as an online community that has congregated on several different online forums and subforums.⁴⁶ What these online spaces are used for is both similar and dissimilar from other groups who congregate within such spaces. While those online spaces provide a sense of belonging and community for many of its members, many of the members still see themselves as completely alone, as lone wolves. This idea of being a lone wolf is also found in the attacks of large scale Incel violence, like the attacks perpetrated by Rodger, Beirle, and Minassian. Those attacks followed the tactic of lone wolf terrorism, a tactic which they were not the first to employ.

Anders Behring Breivik also chose to act according to the tactic of lone wolf terrorism. In his manifesto he discussed the Knights Templar and states that he is a member of a decentralized autonomous organization. Gardell argues that one should not read it as if Breivik is a member of a Knights Templar organization, but instead that it serves a performative role of inspiration.⁴⁷ This implies that Breivik was probably acting by himself as a lone wolf terrorist, but within the tradition of right-wing violent “resistance” in Norway.⁴⁸ Gardell, Löow and Dahlberg-Grundberg defines a lone wolf terrorist as someone who commits an act of terror without being part of an organization, but this does not mean that they act in a vacuum. It is predominantly within Radical Nationalist and Salafist milieus lone wolf tactics have evolved into a revolutionary strategy. The strategy is spread through the propaganda of the deed, social media, online videos, video games, articles, and more,⁴⁹ and even though Gardell et al. does not mention it specifically, in the age of social media it is safe to assume it is also spread through memes. The use of leaderless resistance and lone wolf tactics are not simply definitions applied afterward to terrorists, but is a tactical and strategic choice, mainly used when there is a lack of popular support for the ideology meaning that there are no possibilities of creating large-scale resistance forces like guerilla groups. This lack of a formal organization does not mean that such terrorists act alone. They are inspired by specific political contexts and act per set out strategies.⁵⁰ The violence done by these lone-wolf terrorists are understood by Gardell et al. as either following the McVeigh-model (large scale, spectacular, and often one-time off attacks) and the Franklin-model (smaller continuous attacks that can go on for

⁴⁵ Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 1–2.

⁴⁶ Donnelly et al. 2001; Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 1; Ging 2019, p. 640; Jaki et al. 2019, p. 1; Witt 2020, p. 676; Zimmerman et al. 2018, p. 2.

⁴⁷ Gardell 2014, pp. 132, 147.

⁴⁸ Gardell 2014, p. 148.

⁴⁹ Gardell, Löow, & Dahlberg-Grundberg 2017, pp. 90–91.

⁵⁰ Gardell et al. 2017, pp. 91–92.

a longer period of time).⁵¹ The ones who commit acts of violence or terror receive inspiration, encouragement, and potential targets from ideologues and other followers of their ideology. These prompts to action are often vague and not directed towards something specific. A fictional message on an online forum could be along the lines of “I wish that someone would finally deal with the mosque at x location”, or “Won’t someone please do something about all these immigrants who commit rape!?” A more concrete example of an online space where such prompts and encouragements have happened is the Facebook-group “No to asylum accommodations in Sweden”,⁵² an anti-immigration group that lacks any clear political and party affiliations.⁵³ The group is ripe with posts and comments from members with sweeping and concrete encouragement of violence and hate towards immigrants and places such as asylum accommodations.⁵⁴ Through these concepts of leaderless resistance and lone wolf tactics which combine individuals acting autonomously and who find their inspiration and encouragement from indirect prompts for violent action, we can more clearly understand how the Incel-community can spawn violent terrorists and be a source of inspiration for violence.

From the Incel milieu there have been attacks and harassments which fits both the McVeigh- and Franklin-model. Attacks following the Franklin-model have been perpetrated particularly online against women, particularly outspoken feminists, who are journalists, video game journalists and video game developers. Ging has studied such attacks that have mainly taken the form of harassment, consisting of threats of sexual violence and death, hacking, and doxing webpages, stealing information, and altering pornographic content to look like the targeted victim.⁵⁵ There does seem to exist a lack of statistics on how many attacks of sexual violence that has been inspired by the Incel milieu online and that has then been perpetrated by Incels towards women offline. Fernquist et al. states that such attacks should not primarily be understood as directed against specific individuals, but as retribution against an entire gender.⁵⁶ The reasoning for using online harassment as examples of smaller-scale continuous attacks stems from the extremely online nature of the Incel community, where those assaults against women are part of a deliberate strategy of trying to scare women away from those perceived male spaces. This should also be seen in the context of the massive growth of the online and its ever-larger centrality in people's work and private life. This thesis therefore argues that such actions should, at least in the context of Incel-violence, be understood as a type of online terror used as a tactic and strategy to strike fear into anyone who identifies as female to further the agenda that the realms of the internet and video games are male-centered spaces.

⁵¹ Gardell et al. 2017, p. 121.

⁵² Authors translation, the original title of the Facebook group is: *Nej till asylboenden i Sverige*.

⁵³ Gardell et al. 2017, pp. 213–214.

⁵⁴ Gardell et al. 2017, pp. 215–218.

⁵⁵ Ging 2019, p. 656.

⁵⁶ Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 2, 12.

The three most famous acts of Incel motivated McVeigh-model (large one-off attacks) violence are, as mentioned in the introduction, Elliot Rodger, Alek Minassian, and Scott Beierle. Those three attacks are also the ones most clearly motivated by an extremist Incel ideology, according to Hoffman et al. In all three cases this can be derived from the victims they attempted to attack, women in the case of Beierle and Rodger and “Chads” in the case of Minassian. During Beierle’s shooting he was attacked by another man whom he could easily have shot, but he instead chose to only incapacitate him by striking him with his pistol grip, which Hoffman et al. argues is further proof that Beierle was targeting women specifically.⁵⁷ There are also attacks and murders committed where the motives are probably a mixture of Inceldom and other motives, such as attacks perpetrated by self-professed Incels but where the motive for the attack does not seem to be Incel-related per se, but also attacks where the Incel community has retroactively adopted the attacker into the ranks of Incel heroes such as Elliot Rodger. One example is the *École Polytechnique de Montréal* attack where the antifeminist Marc Lépine murdered fourteen women.⁵⁸ These attacks, except for the attacks that have been “appropriated” by the Incel community, have probably gotten their inspiration in the hateful language and violent rhetoric which permeates the Incel spaces. During the period between November 2017 and April 2018, Jaki et al. saw that 2 percent of all messages posted on the Incels.me forum (at the time one of the biggest forums for discussions related to Inceldom) contained common references to violence, i.e., words such as *kill*, *shoot* and/or *rape*. During that period around 350 messages/comments were posted each day. What users derive from a forum such as Incels.me is approval, and the way to gain approval on that forum was to spread ideas which were seen as “high IQ”, and those ideas were mainly misogynistic or tried to incite violence. By posting many “high IQ” posts and comments one could reach the informal status of an “alpha-poster”, meaning inclusion into the highest tier of members on the forum. To achieve success and recognition on Incels.me the discourse used had to be violent, hateful, and deeply misogynistic. The idea that your situation could only improve if you strike back against the enemy, meaning in particular women and “Chads”, was also widespread in the forum as well as the glorification of Incel-related violence according to Jaki et al.⁵⁹ The connection between lone wolf strategies, propaganda of the deed, and using social media as a way to spread ideas and strategies are clear on Incels.me, similar to the anti-immigration Facebook group previously discussed. Euphemism and Incel-specific vernacular also seem to be employed to make it obvious for the ingroup what is being discussed and to weed out and muddle the meaning of the discussions for outsiders. It makes it clear what the view of the poster is when the word “femoid” is used instead of woman, which refers to the idea what women are simply humanoid-looking beings, non-

⁵⁷ Hoffman et al. 2020, pp. 569–570.

⁵⁸ Hoffman et al. 2020, pp. 570–572.

⁵⁹ Jaki et al. 2019, pp. 5, 18–21.

humans, semi-animals with monstrous tendencies as Chang's study shows.⁶⁰ The "hero-Incels" who are seen as breaking free from their perpetual beta-male status and ascend beyond it have specific titles used by many users on the discussion forums. Scott Beierle is often called "Saint YogaCel", and there is also the use of the term "Go ER" and the capitalizing of the letter's ER in words (such as hERo) to refer to Elliot Rodger and uphold his attack as a source of inspiration.⁶¹ Beierle and Rodger are examples of Incels who took part in the imagined "Beta Uprising". An idea that one day the Incel betas will rise up against the women, men, and society which is seen as the root of their suffering, and to finally become "someone" through violence and to not simply remain as a beta forever.

Rodger has in ways been mythicized and adopted by the Incel community in a way that is similar to how Breivik used the idea of the Knights Templar. The Knights Templar was employed as a romanticized image of anti-Muslim violence and as an idea to create the mood-setting and direction desired by Breivik.⁶² After his death Rodger has become a conceptual semiotic object, as Witt refers to it, consisting of a patchwork of feats and traits within the Incel community. The Rodger post-May 2014 is used as an inspiration to the community as well as a representation and fetishization of Incel violence. This representation of Rodger offers a collection of beliefs, moral systems, and idealized behaviors as well as a path for men to reclaim their masculinity through violence.⁶³ He has been recreated and sanctified following his death and terror to be used as a guide for anyone who wants to "ascend".

What is clear by looking at how Incels understand themselves and the world, and how they act in accordance with that vision, is that they seem to follow a tradition of far-right thinking, beliefs, and even strategies. They accept the ideals of masculinity studied by Mosse which are bound in beauty, physical strength, and sexual prowess and understand their position as at the bottom of the social hierarchy based in their self-understanding of lacking these masculine ideals as shown by Baele et al. and Fernquist et al. This relegation to the bottom is explained by themselves both through biology, i.e., their lack of beauty, and through conspiratorial thinking which Incels can be seen to use, through the work of Dyrendal & Emberland, by viewing a global collective of individual women as acting like one individual with an agenda to stop them from entering the sexual market and thereby ending their chances of climbing the masculine hierarchy. A process which Baele et al. shows is understood as having accelerated since the 1960s–1970s leaving Incels without the women they seem to view themselves as entitled to according to Zimmerman et al. Many Incels therefore argue that the only possible way to move up the ladder, is to use violence, as argued by Menzie and Witt. Violence which Jaki et al. has shown is spread across their

⁶⁰ Chang 2020, pp. 6–7, 13–14.

⁶¹ Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 4–5; Jaki et al. 2019, p. 18; Witt 2020, p. 676; Zimmerman et al. 2018, p. 2.

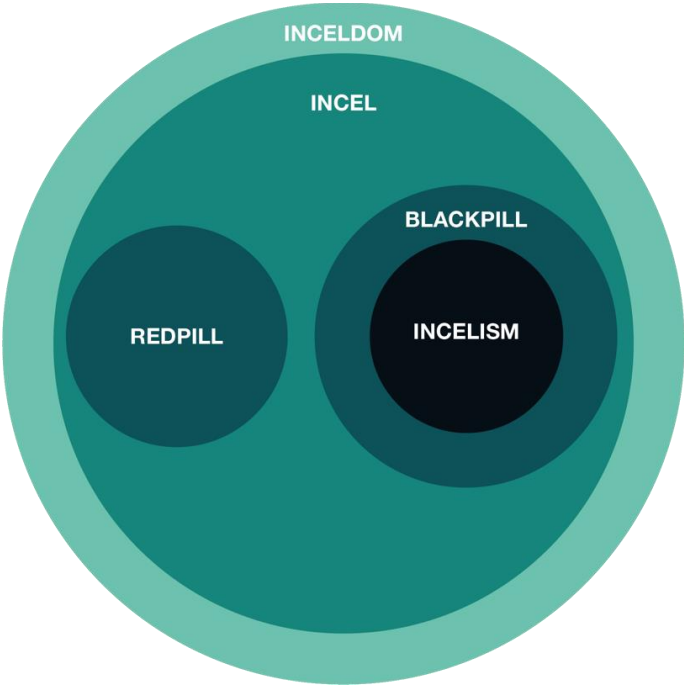
⁶² Gardell 2014, pp. 146–147.

⁶³ Witt 2020, pp. 682, 687.

communicative spheres online and is uplifted and praised by members of the community. Violence might take the form of either online harassment, physical harassment, and/or sexual violence or, as Gardell et al. calls it, McVeigh-model large-scale spectacular attacks such as Beierle, Minassian and Rodger are examples of. Those attackers, particularly Rodger according to Witt, are recreated into embodiments of the Incel experience and are viewed as guides for a way out from a lifetime of damnation at the bottom of society. The solution becomes to wield violence against the enemy to regain one's masculinity.

Since the Incel milieu and Inceldom has developed a language of its own some definitions of the most important concepts are necessary. Inceldom refers to the life experience of involuntary celibacy, to unwillingly experience celibacy. This implies that any type of person who seeks sexual encounters and is unsuccessful in having such encounters may be labeled as experiencing Inceldom. Incel refers exclusively to heterosexual men who experience Inceldom and who self-identifies as Incel. These men understand themselves and their fellow Incels as either redpilled; believing that there are some chances of escaping Inceldom, or blackpill; that their suffering is forever. That it is over. The only time someone is referred to as bluepilled within these forums it is used as an insult, therefore Incels are exclusively understood as red- or blackpilled by this thesis. It is among the blackpilled group of Incels where the adherents of the ideology Incelism are found, meaning that it is only a specific sub-set of Incels who can be defined as followers of Incelism or Incelists. However, everyone who is defined as an Incel can take part in the formulation of, and discussions on, the ideology as it is conducted openly on Incel online spaces.

Figure 1. The relation between Inceldom, Incel, Redpill, Blackpill, and Incelism.



3. Incelism and its place in the ideological spheres – A thesis

As has been discussed and shown with research from the fields of study on Incels, masculinity, conspiratorial thinking, and the historical and contemporary far-right, there seems to exist an overlap between the milieus of the far-right and Incels. Not only in a potentially shared membership but in core beliefs and understandings of the world. This leads to this paper's thesis; that Incelism is not a unique creation transcending previously established ideological frameworks. It is instead a contemporary articulation of some specific aspects which stem from the thinking of the far-right, aspects that have come into existence through processes of change stemming as far back as the 1920s and which have taken their shape and form due to the specific characteristics of high-modern society. It should here be stated how this thesis understands and employs the term far-right. It is somewhat borrowed from the definition made by Elisabeth Carter regarding right-wing extremism/radicalism: "Authoritarianism, anti-democracy, and an exclusionary and/or a holistic kind of nationalism are defining properties of right-wing extremism/radicalism."⁶⁴ The term far-right will therefore refer to any movement, ideology, group, or political party which can be said to encompass some or all of these concepts. The reason for using far-right instead of extreme-right or right-wing extremism is because far-right implies a wider range. As comparisons will be drawn from some of the most extreme cases of far-right ideological thinking such as National Socialism, to less extreme cases such as some contemporary Conservative movements. Therefore, a more inclusive and wide range term has been chosen.

Given the similarities and connections identified between Incelism and the Incel milieu on the one hand and far-right milieus and ideologies on the other, this thesis argues that Incelism should be seen as belonging to the far-right ideological milieu and aims to ascertain whether Incelism is best understood as a far-right ideology with male-dominance and misogynistic characteristics or as an ideology of male-dominance and misogyny with far-right characteristics. In order to find this out Micheal Freedens model (presented below) for analyzing ideologies will be used and the following questions answered:

- How is the ideology, defined as Incelism, constructed and what are its core, adjacent and peripheral concepts?

Following the main question two sub-questions regarding the Incelist ideological construct's relation and position to some, particularly far-right, ideological constructs will be answered:

- How does Incelism's core, adjacent and peripheral concepts correlate to historical, particularly far-right, ideological constructs?
- How does Incelism's core, adjacent and peripheral concepts correlate to contemporary, particularly far-right, ideological constructs?

⁶⁴ Carter 2018, p. 175.

4. Where do we find Incels? - The sources

One of the few things Incels and researchers seem to agree on – it is potentially the only aspect on which the members and the researchers agree at all – is that Incels are a milieu which are found more or less exclusively online. As discussed previously the study conducted by Fernquist et al. argue that the milieu is nothing more than a subculture consisting of a network of online meeting spaces.⁶⁵ Therefore, to study the Incel milieu with the intent to give a coherent and concise picture of their ideology, Incelism, an online source material is needed. There are two main fields or formats in which Incel-related discussions occur: videos and forum posts/comments. It is from these two different fields a large number of research articles written have gathered material for their analyses.⁶⁶ This has led to the conclusion to use an online source material. Since this thesis is interested in analyzing the discussions between a larger number of members of the community, an Incel-focused web forum has been chosen as the source as it allows for more communication between members than online video sharing allows. That communication is of utmost importance as Incelism is a communally created ideology which, while only adopted by a certain blackpilled core of Incels.co users, is produced by a vast number of users on a forum through the discussions performed within that online space, a space such as Incels.co.

4.1. Incels.co – A Incel safe haven and source for studying Incelism

The forum from which the source material will be gathered is www.Incels.co, which consists of 12.597 members, 248,414 different discussion threads and 5.730.956 unique comments.⁶⁷ Incels.co has previously existed under different domain names (notably Incels.me) but has since April 2019 been under its current monicle. It is the biggest active digital environment for Incels according to Fernquist et al. In their study, they also employed Google’s neural-network BERT to compare 17.000 different posts on the three biggest platforms dedicated to Incel and Incel-related discussions and found that Incels.co contains the highest level of hate. 33.7% of each post contains some type of hate, particularly towards women, themselves, and society (in that order).⁶⁸ Incels.co is an exclusively male forum, where any female users found are banned instantly. Its structure is such that it consists of four sub-forums: “Must-Read Content” consisting of the most “noteworthy and thought-provoking threads”, “Inceldom Discussion” where users can discuss their experiences

⁶⁵ Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 1–2.

⁶⁶ See: Baele et al. 2019; Chang 2020; Fernquist et al. 2020; Ging 2019; Hoffman et al. 2020; Jaki et al. 2019; O’Malley et al. 2020.

⁶⁷ As of December 10th, 2020.

⁶⁸ Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 5–6, 10–11.

related to Inceldom, “The Lounge” where users can discuss a wider array of topics regarding everyday life and “The Sewers” which is described as “A toxic wasteland of spam”.⁶⁹

This forum is thus the biggest arena for men who self-identify as or are leaning towards self-identifying as Incel to discuss their shared life experiences, worldviews, and reasoning for their life situation. This makes it an excellent source for a study of Incelism, since it gives access to an insider understanding of how Inceldom is experienced, what it constitutes, and who can and should be called an Incel. Furthermore, as indicated in previous research and something that also became clear from a pilot study conducted by the author to ascertain its usefulness as the main source for this study, it contains discussions about society, politics and, and thus some of the foundational concepts of Incelism. In the pilot study plenty of blatant references and adherence to far-right ideologies and movements such as white supremacy and National Socialism were also found.

Incels.co is everything Incel. Something which will not be found is female, gay, or trans experiences as women are completely banned from creating an account, and site rules state that one is not allowed to post gay or trans content of any kind.⁷⁰ This implies that the opinions and shared experiences which will be found and analyzed are most likely solely cis- and straight-male ones. While the rules stating that only cis- and straight men are allowed on the forum seems to be followed, probably because of the extremely toxic environment and tone towards anyone perceived as an outsider, not all rules are followed. Anti-Semitism and racism are stated to be prohibited on the site,⁷¹ but as this thesis will show these two topics are found throughout the forum, another clear indication of the right-wing characteristics of Incelism. Incels.co can hopefully also show which ideas exist within this online community that is not inherently connected to Inceldom. For example, what types of politics are discussed, and ideological frameworks promoted.

The subject of study is a political ideology grown from discussions within the Incel community and later adopted by a subset of blackpilled Incels, this means that anyone active on the forum may engage knowingly or unknowingly in the creation of, or discussions regarding, Incelism without necessarily adopting it. Many Incels seem to have adopted a non-political position. “All politics is coping specifically economic politics. welfare programs or no women will still go for Chad.”⁷² the user *Blackcel right wing* who describes himself as “19yrs Apolitical (politics is cope)”⁷³ and:

If you were realistic about your place in the hierarchy you wouldn't be a stormfrontcel [Far-right/fascist Incel] massive copier, you would be looking out only for yourself and the people close to you, and you wouldn't give one fuck about politics cuz your [sic] a fucking incel.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ *Incels.co*, Incels.co; *Rules and FAQ*, Incels.co.

⁷⁰ *Rules and FAQ*, Incels.co.

⁷¹ *Rules and FAQ*, Incels.co.

⁷² *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

⁷³ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

⁷⁴ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

This means that in most cases it does not matter if the user propagating a specific opinion seems to be a follower of Incelism or not, as that is not a requirement for someone to be an active participant in the formulation of Incelism as an ideological construct. Rather, the source material is understood as a form of open-source ideological text where anyone who is considered to be a member of the Incel ingroup is allowed to contribute to it, and the community at large may theoretically at any time adopt a new position on a topic and revise even a core concept of Incelism. Incelism can thus be understood as the ideological equivalent of Wikipedia.

As argued, it is reasonable to assume that Incels.co is the largest online Incel space, but it is still only one node in a larger network. This becomes apparent upon entering Incels.co. At the top of the website there is a toolbar with links to the Incels.co forums, its member page but also to the websites www.Incel.blog, www.Incel.wiki and www.Theporndude.com.⁷⁵ Both the Incel.blog and Incel.wiki pages are directly connected to the community of Incels. Incel.wiki states that it is intended as an encyclopedia about the manosphere at large and a repository of academia, memes, folk theories, people and art associated with involuntary celibates.⁷⁶ The Incels.blog webpage has as its stated aim to provide answers to important questions such as: What is Incel culture like, how do Incels behave and why, and if Incels are a threat to society or are simply misunderstood people.⁷⁷ The webpage Theporndude.com sticks out from the other links at the top toolbar as it is not explicitly related to either the manosphere or Inceldom. It is a website which acts as a database of different pornographic websites which has been ranked and put into specific categories.⁷⁸ Even though that website is not specifically Incel or Manosphere related, it fits well into the broader theme and life experiences of Inceldom, of loneliness, failures in finding a sexual partner and for many that life is primarily experienced online. None of these other websites will however be used as source material for this thesis, the reasoning follows the same argument as for not employing video material, it is the ingroup discussions which are of importance. Discussions which all other webpages lack. This is not an issue as the amount of material which can be gathered from Incels.co is massive as it contains hundreds of thousands of discussion threads. The Incels.wiki page will however be employed as a resource for explaining Incel terminology and vernacular which needs explaining. The reason for using Incels.wiki is that while it can be argued that Incelism is the ideological equivalent of Wikipedia, Incels.wiki is the Wikipedia for everything Incel. On the wiki-page it is possible to find an explanation for, almost, every Incel-specific terminology or theory employed by the Incels.co users, something which is needed to fully understand the language used within the Incel milieu. Now let us discuss the webpage of Incels.co.

⁷⁵ *Incels.co*, Incels.co.

⁷⁶ *Incel Wiki:About*, Incels.wiki.

⁷⁷ *About*, Incel.blog.

⁷⁸ *Theporndude.com*, Theporndude.com.

The theme of loneliness is in many ways front and center as soon as you enter Incels.co. The logo of the website is of a stick figure with his hands in his “pockets” sullenly looking down at his feet with his back arched. Just below the discussed toolbar is an encouragement for people to sign up as members on the site which reads: “Welcome to Incels.co – A forum for involuntary celibates. Are you lonely and wishing you had a significant other? Join our community and talk to people just like you.”⁷⁹ That the users of this website are lonely and seemingly have failed in achieving any type of romantic or sexual partner is therefore not something which is swept under the rug or a topic which is avoided. It seems to be a core theme, a type of badge worn by these men

The discussion threads which have been gathered for the study are from the two categories “Must read content” and “Inceldom discussion” as these two categories are specifically focused on Inceldom-related discussions. Three different criteria have then been employed in choosing which threads to focus on in the study. Threads with the most page views, with the most replies, or which through sampling have been found to contain discussions that are of relevance for this thesis. All studied threads have then been downloaded as PDFs, and all in all 22 different discussion threads have been studied, with a total PDF page count of 931 pages. When choosing the material, no considerations have been taken for temporal aspects. This is because the focus of this thesis is not the study of a specific period of time, it is instead a freeze-frame of how the ideology of Incelism was constructed at the time of the writing. The threads analyzed have been created between November 2017 and March 2021.

The threads which will be analyzed in order of publishing are: “[Tinder Experiment] 5⁷ incel gets more than 40 cute matches in Asia in 1 day” from the 26/11, 2017. The threads discuss a “Tinder experiment” where the mobile dating app Tinder is used as a “research tool” for experiments to validate or debunk aspects of the “science” within the blackpill. It was chosen as it is one of the most viewed and commented threads on the forum. “[Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH]” from the 14/1, 2018. This thread is also a “Tinder experiment” thread and was chosen because of the same criteria as the previous thread. “Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER” from 8/6, 2018. The thread discusses the experiences of the previous Incels.co user *itsOVER* finding sexual partners in Thailand. Chosen based on the same criteria as the previous threads. “Life is barbaric suffering / prolonged torture, for us” from 18/7, 2018. A thread that states that Incels life only contains suffering. Chosen as a good example of how Incels suffering is understood. “Response To: “You’re Not Entitled To Sex””, from 16/12, 2018. A thread revolving around the perceived “misconception” that Incels feel entitled to sex with women. Chosen as it provides a good insight into how Incels.co users understand their own perception by other groups. “Social media and dating apps have killed more men than both world war combined” from 18/2, 2019. Revolves around the thread creators claim

⁷⁹ *Incels.co*, Incels.co.

that Incels are victims of a new Holocaust. Chosen as it clearly shows Incels self-understanding as victims. “Women are insanely powerful” from 28/11, 2019. Discusses the topic of women’s power which is mainly understood as emanating from men who have been coerced into being subservient. Chosen as it provides discussions on male–female power relations. “Whats [sic] your most controversial Blackpilled opinion?” from 16/4, 2020. Where users discuss their most controversial opinions in regard to the blackpill. Chosen as it contains clear-cut discussions on the blackpill. “Rejection&Isolation [sic] is way worse than Holocaust victims“ from 18/4, 2020. A thread which puts forward the argument that Incels suffer a fate worse than the victims of the Holocaust. Chosen as it clearly shows Incels self-understanding as victims. “The Nazis Were Not Our Friends” from 20/4, 2020. A thread in which the thread creator argues against users on the forum who have shown support for the Nazi regime. It was chosen as it provides clear-cut discussions regarding the far-right from users who are both supporters and opponents of it. “This is what every foid thinks about ugly men” from 2/5 2020. Contains discussions in regard to a text supposedly written by a woman that states that women hate ugly men. It was chosen as it is one of the most viewed and commented threads on the forum. “Whats [sic] your opinion on ER?” from 5/5, 2020. Users discuss their opinions on Elliot Rodger. Chosen as it focuses on Elliot Rodger and the view of employing violence towards the perceived enemies. “Therapists are the capitalists equivalents of the KGB informants” from 24/5, 2020. The thread discusses how “Liberal-capitalism” has socially alienated Incels and then uses therapists as state agents to keep an eye out for seditious thoughts. Chosen because of its discussions on alienation, views of the state, and life under capitalism. “Dumb bitch who rejected me died today” from 15/6, 2020. A user describes how he harassed a woman on her deathbed in hopes of making her die quicker due to stress and make her last days alive more miserable. Chosen as an example of how harming women is discussed and viewed on the forum. “Racism is natural & anti-racism is inherently cucked” from 29/12, 2020. The thread revolves around the discussion of racism and whether or not racism and xenophobia are natural instincts, and if racism is contra-productive in the struggle against the enemies of Incels. Chosen as an example of ingroup discussions on racism. “Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming” from 4/2, 2021. Discusses the topics of “slut shaming” and “virgin shaming” and the argument that “virgin shaming” is a major cause for rape and sexual assaults. Chosen as an example on discussions regarding virginity, understood mainly as an Incel-trait, contra promiscuity, understood mainly as a female-trait. “Most retarded Arguments on this forum” from 12/2, 2021. The thread creator provides some examples of “retarded arguments” found on Incels.co and these and other arguments are discussed. Chosen as it provides discussion on central ideas and of different users understanding of the blackpill, as well as ingroup disagreements. “Should Blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?” from 14/2, 2021. A thread containing a poll on if men who are blackpilled, but not Incels, should be allowed on the Incels.co forum and discussions around the topic. Chosen as an example of how Incels understand

similar, but different groups and how the ingroup is defined and discussed. “Why billionaires finance the left? Are they retarded?” from 20/2, 2021. The thread discusses why certain billionaires, such as George Soros, have provided economic support to perceived leftist groups and movements. Picked as it provides a good example of discussions on “the left” as well as conspiratorial thinking regarding the creation of the post-Cold War social order. “How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?” from 4/3, 2021. In which the discussion focuses on if one can be, and if so how, an Incel as well as a socialist. Chosen as an example of discussions regarding Incels position to ideologies, specifically on “the left”.

This semi-random approach in selecting threads to study is to be able to study both threads which do not specifically refer to discussions on politics but with a high level of engagement from the users on the forum, but also threads that specifically refer to ideology and politics. With the massive total amount of threads that exist and are created each day, a completely random approach could have resulted in discussion threads with almost no engagement or which only discuss other aspects of Inceldom and the Incel-community which is not of relevance for this study.

Lastly, it needs to be addressed that on the 22/3 – 2021 the web domain Incels.co was shut down. The entirety of the website including all data such as threads, users’ profiles and comments, were instead moved to a new web domain: www.Incels.is. As all the source material for this thesis had been gathered and downloaded before this move occurred all references will be made to Incels.co, because as while Incels.is and Incels.co are the same website with just different domains names, it is Incels.co from where all the material was gathered and therefore is the subject of study. This does however mean that every thread, as long as it has not been taken down by the moderators of the website, should still be reachable by simply switching .co to .is.

5. Approaching the study of an online ideological milieu – Methodological choices and discussions

At this point it might be to beat a dead horse to state that whatever perspective or understanding you might have regarding Incels, it is in many ways primarily understood as something intrinsically online. In this section it does however need to be stressed again, because this onlineness implicate specific methodological approaches, questions and problems. These will be addressed by the adaption of some specificities of nethnography. While this study is not a study of ethnography, the field of nethnography have constructed tools and perspectives which fit very well and provide ways of analyzing this specific source material.

The main methodological approach which this thesis employs is Michael Freeden’s methodology for comparative ideological analysis, which will be discussed in greater depth below. It should be stated that with the vast material which can be gathered from Incels.co, a quantitative methodological approach could also have been employed to great effect. Many of the studies which

have been referred to, and will continue to be engaged throughout this thesis, have used such approaches with great results.⁸⁰ However, albeit the quantitative studies have mainly focused on the language of the forum or community. Incelism as an ideology has not been at the fore. To do so, i.e., to study the worldview shared by the Incel community and from it discern how the ideology of Incelism is constructed a method specifically focused on the analysis of ideologies is necessary. Since the Incel milieu shares a very specific ingroup language and terminology a close reading is furthermore needed to fully understand what is said as every comment in a discussion thread must be read in its specific context. One set of methods that make this possible are found in the rapidly growing field of nethnography.

5.1. Nethnography – A framework for employing an online source material and some ethical considerations

To even dare to begin a study using material gathered from the internet the researcher must present a clear definition of how they define and understand the internet. Is the online a clearly distinct space cut from the offline where people can leave behind their real-world features and traits and become someone completely new or is the online and the offline two integrated spheres of lived life and communication. The understanding of the internet this thesis employs is partially borrowed from sociologist Martin Berg, who argues that the offline and online are somewhat integrated and serves as a continuous dimension of human life.⁸¹ As more and more aspect of daily life is moved to the online, a process which the Covid-19 pandemic seem to have kicked into overdrive, the integration between the online and offline has increased. However, the interconnection between the offline- and online-worlds should not be overstated. Especially when it comes to such internet forums like Incels.co built around a specific theme and where one is anonymous. Who we are, what we experience and what happens in either the offline or online realm will have repercussions of how people act or understand themselves in the material as well as the digital world.

There are always peculiarities with using any one type of source. A specific aspect regarding online materials is that there is a vast difference between different online communities. Incels.co in many ways seem to be a form of “older”-type of website. Its main purpose is to facilitate discussions for bodyless anonymous users about the specific theme of living in Inceldom, which is a rather different core user experience compared to the more “ego-centric” online networks such as Facebook where interhuman interaction is at the core. In such “ego-centric” networks it does seem that the physical body is of more importance than in these “older” types.⁸² Contrary to the idea of anonymous bodyless users, on Incels.co discussions on the physical is a central discussion

⁸⁰ See for example Jaki et al. 2019 & Fernquist et al. 2020.

⁸¹ Berg 2015, p. 40.

⁸² Berg 2015, p. 27.

topic and sharing pictures of oneself is also rather common. It therefore seems that our understanding of Incels.co should be that it embodies both some specifics of the old with the new. When studying a community or sphere one also has to remember to not only take into consideration the social context, but also any silent knowledge which might exist within the community and to turn that knowledge into an analytical tool.⁸³

There are mainly three categories of sources which are used in nethnographical studies: Archival data, data which is collected from earlier conversations which the researcher has not been a part of; Induced data, data which the researcher has been a part of creating such as interviews or discussions the researcher has participated in; and field notes from the researcher regarding the digital sphere which should be considered as empirical material.⁸⁴ This thesis will employ only archival data, meaning that the author will not participate in any way, a practice often referred to as lurking.⁸⁵ Lurking is a rather contested approach as nethnography is, strictly defined, a participative approach.⁸⁶ However, a participative approach has been ruled out for some specific reasons. Firstly, the rules of the Incels.co forum state that members must either be Incels, i.e., actively experiencing, or if someone follows a specific set of conditions.⁸⁷ One of those terms is being indistinguishable from other Incels and any mention that you are a not an Incel results in an instantaneous ban from the forum. Participation would therefore entail either trying to become an Incel – which seems a bit over the top – or actively lying to the users. The latter is ethically far worse than the rather innocent lurking. The most important ethical aspect is to maintain the anonymity of the people studied. As the forum is centered around users as anonymous bodies with self-chosen usernames and in the vast majority of cases no way of identifying the user's personal information, that should not be an issue. It should be stated that the texts, images and memes shared are intended to be read at the very least by the online community, or the internet at large.⁸⁸ This thesis therefore approaches the users not as specific actors and individuals, but as authors and creators of texts and media products,⁸⁹ as co-producers of Incelism. It is their views of the world, society and politics that is studied in order to understand the ideology. Approaching the users as co-producers of a shared ideology instead of individuals and referring to their online handles should entail no major issues with invading the privacy or anonymity of any one person. There are occurrences where people state their country or city of residence or share pictures of themselves on the forum, or pictures of other people whose approval seem to be lacking. This is a trickier question for which no definitive answer about what course of action is the correct one has been found. The text may come to refer to such threads as the discussion regarding the pictures and the

⁸³ Berg 2015, p. 72.

⁸⁴ Berg 2015, p. 119.

⁸⁵ Næss 2017, p. 107.

⁸⁶ Næss 2017, p. 107.

⁸⁷ *Rules and FAQ*, Incels.co.

⁸⁸ Berg 2015, p. 130.

⁸⁹ Berg 2015, p. 126.

threads in which they are found may be of relevance for this study. No images of anyone whom willingly or unwillingly are posted on the forum will be shared within this paper, however. This reasoning is twofold, both to try and maintain the integrity and privacy of these people, but also as this thesis is not about individuals. It is about a milieu and an ideology.

5.2. Studying ideology – Michael Freeden’s morphology of ideologies

The study, and understanding, of ideology, has changed greatly since its beginnings. Ideology is a contested concept that generations of historians, sociologists, anthropologists, linguists, and political theorists have grappled with.⁹⁰ Michael Freeden is one of them. Freeden has studied ideologies and the morphology of ideologies, and one of his major contributions to the field is the idea that ideologies constitute a semantic field in which all components of an ideology interact with each other.⁹¹ However, all components are not of equal value within an ideological field, of vital importance to any analysis of ideology, according to Freeden, is that ideologies are characterized by a morphology displaying core, adjacent and peripheral concepts. To use an example from Freeden; in observed Liberalism the concept ‘liberty’ is at the core of the ideology, human rights, and equality are adjacent and nationalism is in the periphery.⁹² Central to Freeden’s understanding of ideology is the claim that each ideology is logically coherent and consistent on its premises – something that Roger Griffin also claimed in his pleading for understanding Fascism as an ideology in its own right – and has a cluster of core concepts that all relate to each other. Similarly, the cluster of core concepts should also be understood through the context that is reproduced by each ideology.⁹³ The core concepts, therefore, take a position of extra importance within the semantic field, the adjacent concepts help in making it clear what the core concepts entail and the peripheral concepts are of either no importance or are actively avoided by the ideology as argued by Stenfeldt in his book *Renegater*.⁹⁴ Stenfeldt’s research on Nils Flyg’s and Sven Olov Lindholm’s transition from far-left to the far-right and vice versa during the interwar years is a great example of how Freeden’s morphology of ideologies can be used to not only study ideologies of the far-right, but also to study how ideologies relate to each other and to conduct comparisons between them. To return to the core, adjacent and peripheral concepts, it will be mainly the core concepts and the adjacent concepts which help solidify and emphasize the core concepts that will be presented and discussed in the analysis of Incelism. However, some peripheral concepts might be discussed as well when comparisons are made between Incelism and other, particularly far-right, ideologies.

⁹⁰ Freeden 1996, p. 13.

⁹¹ Freeden 1996, p. 67.

⁹² Freeden 1996, p. 77.

⁹³ Stenfeldt 2019, p. 27.

⁹⁴ Stenfeldt 2019, p. 27.

Freeden's research have also contributed with further considerations and observations which will affect how the analysis is done as well as the conclusions. Freeden for instance stresses that thanks to new and faster forms of communication the creation of ideologies in the 21st century is not simply done vertically, but horizontally as well. The same advancements in communication have also made the creation of new ideologies delocalized. While the local and familiar is often stronger than the distant, with the ability to communicate easily across the globe similar patterns which are found across space can now form new types of foundations for ideological construction, and increases the variety of members in an ideological family.⁹⁵ This means that while some users on the Incels.co forum might be more prolific and found more often in the source material, the construction of Incelism as an ideology is a collective endeavor spanning both space and time. Comments and statements made by users which at first might sound simply as banter or as unserious political commentary should, if the context so indicates, be understood as a form of ideological discussion, as the post-cold war era has brought with it a dumbing down of political language resulting in enriched communicative and linguistic forms in which such discussions can occur.⁹⁶ This allows, and this thesis argues for, that a reading of the material gathered from Incels.co should regardless of who the author of a comment is be taken seriously and with weight in regard to the creation of a shared ideology. Incelism seems to be a textbook example of both the delocalization and "dumbing down" of the language in the creation of contemporary ideological constructs.

From Freeden's work, the idea of a thin ideology has also been brought into this paper. By thin ideologies Freeden refers to ideological constructs which themselves lack comprehensive plans of political action. Instead, they challenge the baggage of or adopt the patterns of, other ideologies.⁹⁷ It is in a sense an ideology that can be adopted by, or hosted within, other ideologies. While Incelism exhibits its own core, adjacent and peripheral concepts, the understanding seems to be that one can be an Incel and adhere to a(nother) political ideology as well. Similarly, it seems that users who could adhere to Incelism express other ideological affiliations as well. As Incelism is not a concept or ideology whose existence is stated by the community itself, the fact that they show other political and ideological affiliations show that Incelism seems to be possible to connect to both historical and contemporary ideologies. It especially, as indicated, seems to be connections to the far-right milieu.

What Freeden's morphology of ideologies lack however is a specific approach for analyzing a source material. He provides the tools for analyzing the concepts, but not how one finds them. Stenfeldt argues that Freeden seems to implicitly use two principles of selection: frequency and

⁹⁵ Freeden 2005, pp. 257–258.

⁹⁶ Freeden 2005, p. 254.

⁹⁷ Freeden 1996, pp. 485–487; 2005, p. 255.

interdependence. Meaning that some themes and concepts occur more often and that those tend to help define each other.⁹⁸ To find and define such themes and concepts Freedén's morphonology of ideologies will be employed as a methodological tool used through a qualitative content analysis. Through the qualitative content analysis, this thesis will analyze and hash out what is often referred to as themes or codes in the material. By defining these themes and codes while reading through the material, it allows for continual discovery, comparison, and re-discovery, and re-comparisons of old and newly found themes within the material.⁹⁹ By combining Freedén's model for analyzing ideologies with the approach of qualitative content analysis this thesis understands the themes and codes as core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts. This constant discovery, comparison, and re-discovery, and re-comparisons of core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts make it possible to describe and analyze Incelism. The sources will thus be read in *extenso* in order to identify common topics and perceptions of the world and the concepts used to describe and characterize them which are discussed and shared by many users and are found in many places. The result will then be compared to other such topics found in the source material and their relations to each other will be analyzed. Below a short example of how the analysis will be performed follows.

For this example, we will use a quote that has been lifted from the source material and will be used in the analysis chapter. "Racism = subset of lookism. We don't like people who look different from us."¹⁰⁰ In this quote, some things are instantly clear. Lookism (looks-based prejudice and oppression) is seen as the cause for racism (race-based oppression and prejudice). The sentiment put forward in this short quote is that looks is a bigger reason and cause for injustice than race, and that racism is simply a symptom of a larger problem. From this, we can derive the importance of looks as a concept. However, to define if looks in this example should be understood as a core or adjacent concept this example needs to be compared to other sentiments and put into a larger context. Does the concept "looks" play a similar role in more sentiments found in the material? Is it used as a core to build further understandings from, or does it take the place as a way to understand or explain an even larger concept? If we are to apply this method to only this quote, we could see that looks, as the core component of lookism, would serve as the core concept. Lookism and racism would serve as adjacent concepts as they help in defining the centrality of looks as they are both understood as ways in which discrimination is performed based on looks. No peripheral concept is found within this quote. However, the way in which this thesis understands core and adjacent concepts is in the form of umbrella concepts which can hold more than only a single term or word. This is because of the vast ingroup vernacular used within the Incel milieu, which one could argue borders on a language. Because of this, many words do not act

⁹⁸ Stenfeldt 2019, pp. 31–32.

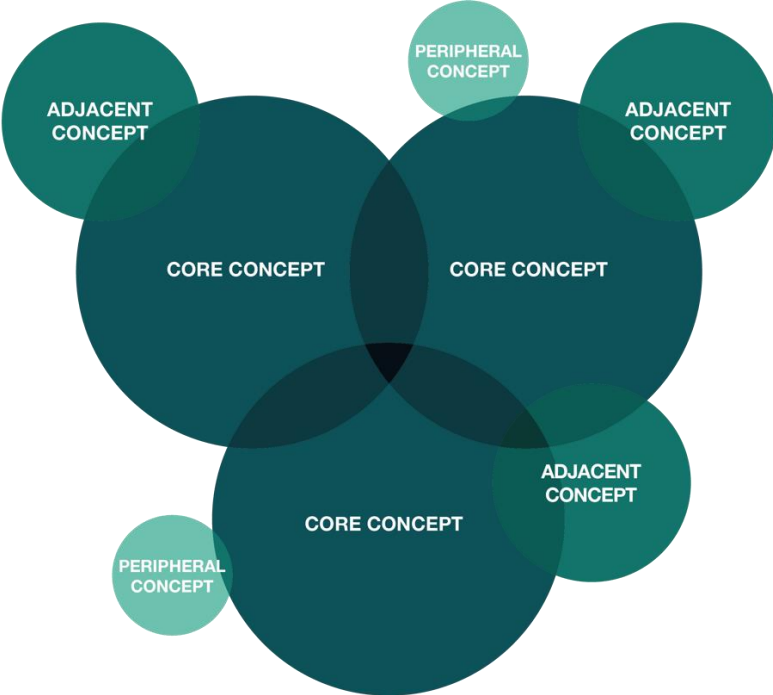
⁹⁹ Bryman & Nilsson 2018, pp. 677–680.

¹⁰⁰ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

as a core concept in itself but relates to and circles in on a core concept instead, and the same can be said about adjacent concepts. This means that contained within a hypothetical adjacent concept labeled “race” could be words such as ”white”, “black”, “racism”, “JBW”¹⁰¹ etc.

This means that comparisons made between the concepts which will be found will in turn make it possible to understand which concepts that are at the core, which that help define the core as adjacent concepts, and which lie at the periphery of Inceldom. Below is a short example of how a graphic interpretation of how a semantic field might look like.

Figure 2. Graphic example of a ideological field.



6. Modern relationships and collective victimhood – Theoretical keys for understanding Incels view of the contemporary world and its creation

The central experience, the essence of Inceldom, has to do with relationships, sex, and love. According to some Incels, the only thing they have in common is the lack of those experiences.¹⁰² There are of course other contextual aspects, but this is a fundamental and key ingroup understanding of their homosocial relationship and sense of solidarity with each other. This almost chronic failure in finding a romantic or sexual partner has resulted in the Incel milieu understanding themselves as a victimized collective. They are not simply single men; they are a victimized group.

¹⁰¹ Short for ”Just Be White”, a Incel theory which argues that white men have the best looks in general.

¹⁰² *Incel*, Incels.wiki.

To understand the Incel milieu ideas of their predicament and thus their ideology an understanding of how love and relationships operate in modernity compared to its pre-modern forms is necessary, especially since the milieu often hails either the pre-modern or pre-1960's as being fairer and more just to men regarding the realm of love. This understanding of their high-modern hardships caused by female hypergamy and sexual liberation is expressed in the collective understanding of victimhood. Furthermore, to be able to understand this milieu, it is imperative to explore and define what is meant when discussing love in the high modern era, as well as the Incel milieu's understanding of their collective victimhood. Both of which are central in shaping how Incels make sense of the world and act within it, e.g., in shaping Incelism.

To understand how love and relationships in the high-modern era and the perception of being a victimized group affect how the Incel milieu understand the world and other groups and thus to make sense of Incelism this thesis needs some further theoretical underpinnings, some heuristic devices. In total four different theories have been tested during the writing process of this thesis: Eva Illouz's research on why love hurts in the high-modern era, theories on collective victimization, as well as post-feminism and theories on reactionary modernism. Post-feminism and reactionary modernism, while contributing interesting aspects, could not provide satisfactory frames of interpretation. Illouz theory of love in the high-modern era and theories on collective victimization could. They also fit Freeden's morphology of ideologies since they both require a deep understanding of the context of the source material. The reason that a theoretical perspective that is explicitly gender focused has not been employed is because, almost, all frameworks and research employed in this thesis are in some way focused on gender. Incels themselves are hyper-focused on gender with the idea that there has existed a "good" gender order, a patriarchal one, which has flipped into a "bad" order, a matriarchal one. The gender perspective is therefore at the very core of this thesis and which is why research such as Mosse's studies on masculinity, Theweleit's on homosociality, and research on the Incel milieu such as Chang, Ging, and Jaki et al. are employed, because to understand Incels and Incelism the perspective of gender is central. Illouz's research is also centered on the topic of gender, specifically on how men and women act and react to the norms which regard love, relationships, and sex. This is why no specific section of this thesis will discuss the topic of gender, as it is present throughout all of this paper. Now, let us learn more on the topic of why love hurts, and why love has changed with society's transition into modernity.

6.1. Love and sex in the modern era – Capitalism, individualization and the free market of love

Love is hard. It has been described as an experience stronger than our wills, which cannot be contained.¹⁰³ Love and relationships seem to be ever-present in human life regardless of *who* we

¹⁰³ Illouz 2013, pp. 13–14.

are, *where* we live, or *when* we have lived. Perhaps the most important of those three W:s for this paper is *when*, because love has changed. Up until the mid-1800s in the English-speaking world, there were multiple factors in play in deciding the middle and upper class's love interests. Social, moral, public, and private mechanisms acted at the same time for when a partner was to be chosen. The courting throughout the pre-modern era was taken very seriously as its end goal, marriage, was the most important economic event in many people's lives. When a person had chosen a partner or a partner had been chosen for him or her, the individual was expected to play his or her part, keep their promises and feel the (real) emotions prescribed by the role.¹⁰⁴ This is what Eva Illouz understands as the pre-modern experience of love. Illouz calls this a performative system of feelings where ritualized actions and other people's proclamations of feelings were what would trigger the individual's feelings. The emotions connected to love was therefore always triggered by other people's emotions. Today we instead have a system of emotional authenticity, which demands that the actors know what they feel, make choices based on those feelings, acknowledge these feelings in themselves and follow them. This is what has been described as the victory of romantic love, the individualization of issues associated with love through their disconnection from collective moral and social structures.¹⁰⁵ The experience of love has thus shifted from its pre-modern form to what Illouz calls a high- or hyper-modern form which has meant a radicalization of the earlier societal tendencies as well as a change of the culture of love and the economy of gender identities. Modernity has often been understood as representing the victory of science, capitalism, secularization, and democratization. But it is also the time of the creation of the emotional "self", a "self" that primarily defined and defines itself and its identity in emotional categories.¹⁰⁶

We now know that love has changed. But how should one understand and study love, especially in collective forms instead of simply the psychology of individuals' experiences? Illouz argues that the science of love has been tied to psychology for all of the 20th century and still is today. The idea that love is connected solely to the individual and that any failure in that field of life is a failure caused by one-self has been dominant. Illouz instead argues that love and the issues connected to it are not caused by dysfunctional childhoods or a lack of psychological self-evaluation, but in social and cultural tensions which has structured the modern "self" and its identity. Illouz claims that love is created and formed by concrete social relations, on a market where the actors compete on different terms, a market where some people are in a better position to dictate the terms for how they are loved than others,¹⁰⁷ a market in which Incels are struggling. Illouz also provides a way to understand emotions not only as a physiological and private entity but as a social and cultural one.

¹⁰⁴ Illouz 2013, p. 60.

¹⁰⁵ Illouz 2013, pp. 64–65.

¹⁰⁶ Illouz 2013, pp. 21, 23.

¹⁰⁷ Illouz 2013, pp. 13–18.

It is a way to enact cultural definitions of personhood; they are reflexive and internalized aspects of action, not because they lack society or culture, but because they have too much.

Sociology has been very good at studying collective suffering and trauma caused by war, illness, discrimination, and similar events Illouz argues. But it has been unwilling to study the emotional suffering which she views as reflecting the vulnerability of the late-modern self. Love is one of those emotions. In characterizing psychological suffering, Illouz argues that there are two central aspects: First it is a result of one's imagination, desires, expectations, and the ideals and images which make up our memory. Second, suffering usually cause a loss in the ability to see meaningful context, resulting in complaints about suffering occurring blindly and arbitrarily. Emotional suffering also causes even more suffering when people are not able to understand where the pain is coming from. Because not only is someone already suffering emotional distress, but they cannot be certain where this distress has its roots.¹⁰⁸ When it comes to modern romantic and sexual connections what is at stake is the recognition of one's self and one's inner emotions,¹⁰⁹ someone who lacks love and sexual connections therefore in a sense lacks recognition by other people. Incels are a group that congregate around the shared experience of lacking love and sexual connections, and it can therefore be assumed that many of them suffer a loss in the ability to see a meaningful context. Through the preliminary reading of the source material psychological suffering seem to be a central and shared emotion in the community and is the reason for the aggravated self-victimization and perception of being a victim within the Incels.co community.

One of the things which the Incel community does provide for its members is a framework and explanations for why they are suffering in the market of love. A good example of this is found in the discussion thread "The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It's Over and Answers". The creator of the thread repeatedly mentions how "scientific research" has proven that women that have had more than one sexual partner are less likely, or completely lacks the ability, to form meaningful romantic relationships after their first partner (sexual or romantic, there is a lack of distinction between the two in the thread). Therefore, he praises the pre-modern forms of love and relationships where his view is that women were expected to be virgins until they were married and thereafter were expected to fulfill their role as good wives by solely being with their husbands sexually. This arrangement regarding love has been ruined by a loss of checks and balances linked to earlier societal norms.¹¹⁰ In other words, men would harshly punish women who did not obey or adhere to the role of the "good wife". These train of thoughts are prevalent throughout Incels.co, although normally not as clearly formulated as in this thread. From this example there are ideas and experiences which seems to, somewhat, correlate to what Illouz has argued in her work. That relationships and the act of selecting one's spouse has shifted from a pre-modern

¹⁰⁸ Illouz 2013, pp. 28–32.

¹⁰⁹ Illouz 2013, p. 175.

¹¹⁰ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It's Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

collective to a high-modern individualized form. What can also be extracted from the thread by applying Illouz's analysis is the prevalence of psychological suffering caused by romantic and sexual rejection. The tone of the thread is one of hopelessness caused by what the thread creator perceives as constant rejection and suffering of which all Incels will suffer for the eternity of their lives. This sentiment is presented in the thread's opening comment's last header: "IT'S OVER, WHAT CAN I DO NEXT?".¹¹¹

As stated, love is hard. The lack of receiving or failure in finding it can cause deep and profound suffering for an individual. However, failures in the realms of love and sex cannot solely explain the Incel phenomena. Interpersonal romantic and sexual relationships are a key aspect and would by many Incels be stated as the only aspect, but it alone cannot explain the context of the Incel milieu and their understanding of their position within a high-modern society. It is the combination of these men's experiences of the high-modern romantic market and a strong belief that Incels constitute a group of victimized men, victimized by society, culture, and, particularly, women, that is at the core of the Incels' world view.

6.2. "WE'RE THE VICTIMS OF THE NEW HOLOCAUST MY FRIENDS."¹¹² – The perceived victimhood within the Incel milieu

The quote in the header provides a hint regarding the self-understanding in the Incel milieu; they are not only victims but victims of a crime comparable to the Holocaust. This self-identification will be studied through the lens of collective victimization, collective victimhood and self-victimization as defined by Johanna Ray Vollhardt. Collective victimization refers to the process and act of targeting or doing harm to a specific group based on for example gender, race, or ethnicity. It is the wielding of destructive power by one group towards another resulting in the hindrance of the targeted group to fulfill goals and needs. Collective victimhood refers to the subjective experiences of a victimized group and how they construct the understanding of their harm-doing.¹¹³ In short collective victimization is referring to the act of a group victimizing another group by doing some form of harm to them, whereas collective victimhood is a group's subjective understanding of their position and role as victims. That form of a subjective understanding of being part of a victimized group seems to be a vital aspect of the ingroup understanding of what constitutes being an Incel and the Incel milieu. In a discussion thread titled "Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victims [sic]" the suffering experienced by Incels is described as worse than the suffering experienced by Holocaust victims. It thus expresses the idea of collective victimhood very clearly. Statements such as "Holocaust victims had a decent life before [death]"

¹¹¹ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It's Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

¹¹² *Social media and dating apps have killed more men than both world wars combined*, Incels.co.

¹¹³ Vollhardt 2020, pp. 4–5.

while Incels never did”¹¹⁴, “[...] the long run of suffering is way more worst [sic] than execution because execution ends suffer tbh [to be honest] being alive means suffer.”¹¹⁵ and “yes majority of those men [Holocaust victims] probably fucked and had kids, while we rot in a fucking room”¹¹⁶. These users argue that the life experience of Inceldom is an existence that is worse than the suffering during the Holocaust was. How does this self-understanding affect a group and its dynamics and positioning in relation to others, and how can it help us understand the Incel milieu and its ideology?

Research on collective victimhood and victimization has primarily focused on societies where mass violence, genocide, war, or similar mass events of trauma has occurred. A majority of visitors to Incels.co does not seem to live in a society that have recently suffered from any such events. 64.6 percent of the traffic to Incels.co, according to Fernquist et al., come from the USA; Germany; Bulgaria; Sweden; Canada; Switzerland; Brazil; Mexico; UK, and France.¹¹⁷ However, mass violence and occupation are not the only reasons why groups develop a sense of collective victimhood. Central to the Incel milieu is discrimination, which is also one of the experiences that can be understood as a form of collective victimization. Genocide is a form of direct violence, while discrimination is a structural violence.¹¹⁸ One might ask; are men in the countries listed above really experiencing structural discrimination simply because they are men? While some anti-feminists might espouse that claim, there is no evidence to substantiate. The male is still the norm in Western society and men as a group are privileged in comparison to women as a group.¹¹⁹ But the subjective understanding of many Incels is not that they are discriminated against because they are men, but because they are ugly men. With both high-tier men within the looks-hierarchy and the hypergamous women discriminating against these lower-tier men an understanding of how Incels subjectively understand their perceived victimization, their collective victimhood,¹²⁰ starts to arise. They view themselves as victims of lookism, a form of looks-based discrimination, which is understood as being allowed to run rampant in high-modern society. Social psychology has defined two of the central motivators for an individual’s adaptation to vast change, particularly societal, as self-esteem and control. Susan Fiske has named five basic motives which drive human behavior: belonging, self-entertainment, trusting, understanding, and controlling.¹²¹ On a collective level, one of the most central motivators is the need for a positive ingroup distinction from other groups. Adaption through an intergroup perspective is most effective when there exist peaceful relations

¹¹⁴ *Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victimts*, Incels.co.

¹¹⁵ *Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victimts*, Incels.co.

¹¹⁶ *Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victimts*, Incels.co.

¹¹⁷ Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 5.

¹¹⁸ Nair, Okuyan, & Curtin 2020, p. 253; Vollhardt 2020, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Anderson 2015, pp. 76, 80–81.

¹²⁰ Vollhardt 2020, p. 7.

¹²¹ Bilewicz & Liu 2020, pp. 120–121.

and possible cooperation between intergroups' which allows these groups to collectively face challenges.¹²² Through these motivators, it is possible to understand why people who are experiencing Inceldom are drawn to the Incel milieu. It provides belonging, a sense of community where they can trust their fellow Incels to be allies in their everyday struggle, developing a collective understanding for why their life is a struggle and thereby achieve some form of control – at the very least over the discourse about themselves and the world around them – and in extreme cases feeling like they have regained their agency by committing acts of violence towards the people whom they understand as responsible for their victimization. Self-entitlement within the Incel milieu seems to work in a negative instead of a positive sense. It is to accept that you are scum, that it is over, and that you will probably never amount to anything. This intergroup in a sense does not strive for cooperation with other groups to gain the strength needed to face possible societal challenges. Instead, they aim for hostile relations as a way to cement their positive group distinctiveness. They seem to rather want to be hated than simply disliked and victimized. The perceived collective victimhood of Incels has manifested itself in a form of “siege mentality” where they must always be vigilant and distrustful of other groups. They view themselves as the truest victim in late modern society, something that highlights another aspect of victimhood, namely its highly competitive nature.¹²³ This desire to distinguish their ingroup from other such groups is heightened when they feel under threat leading them to rally around defensive collective identities.¹²⁴ The siege mentality in the Incel milieu thus results in even more rallying around the collective identity of the ingroup, being a true Incel (a truecel)¹²⁵ becomes even more ingrained in the milieu.

Within the Incel milieu many members also seem to exhibit a high tendency for interpersonal victimhood (TIV), referring to the individual’s interpersonal vulnerability. Rahav Gabay et al. defines four dimensions which encompasses TIV: the need of one’s suffering being recognized, moral elitism, lacking attentiveness and empathy to the suffering of others and rumination over negative thoughts and feelings in relation to interpersonal offenses.¹²⁶ These tendencies constantly recur in the discussion threads. “Holocaust victims had people coming to save them. Nobody is interested in helping us so we're left to rot.”¹²⁷ In this quote both the need to have one’s own suffering validated and recognized as well as the lack of attentiveness and empathy to others are apparent. A similar concept to TIV is Perpetual Ingroup Victimhood Orientation (PIVO), the belief that one’s ingroup is constantly victimized and persecuted by enemies and other ingroups.¹²⁸

¹²² Bilewicz & Liu 2020, pp. 122–123.

¹²³ Bilewicz & Liu 2020, p. 124.

¹²⁴ Gabay, Hameiri, Rubel-Lifschitz, & Nadler 2020, p. 266.

¹²⁵ *Truecel*, Incels.wiki.

¹²⁶ Gabay et al. 2020, pp. 361–362.

¹²⁷ *Rejection & Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victims*, Incels.co.

¹²⁸ Gabay et al. 2020, p. 367.

The result of studies using both PIVO and TIV shows that a high sense of victimhood, collective or individual has the strongest effect in ambiguous situations. Because those leave room for personal interpretation. Individuals and collectives who have stronger tendencies to victimhood attribute more malicious intent to other groups and individuals outside their own group than people with low such tendencies.¹²⁹ This seems to imply that in ambiguous situations not only will those with a high TIV and PIVO react stronger but will also perceive the alleged offender as more malicious. “If you are using social media without knowing that they are specifically suited for women and Chads, then i’ m sorry for you, but you deserve to suffer.”¹³⁰ The core of this argument is that Incels should not use social media because it is designed as a domain for women and Chads. The ambiguous situation of using social media and not having the same success on such platforms as other people is rationalized as a deliberate malicious offense by either the creator of the platform or Chads and women towards Incels. That such ambiguous situations are interpreted as more or less attacks and what seems to be a high TIV among many Incels fits with Illouz’s discussion on the individualization of love. Love and relationship have become hyper-focused on the individual and one’s emotional self, meaning that if your emotions are not recognized your inner self is not recognized. Incels seem to view themselves as victims because they are not recognized, they do not succeed on the market of love, and the suffering from those failures is not recognized by others, failures which entail that their emotional self is not recognized. This could either stem from, or be a cause for, a high degree of TIV and PIVO amongst the members of the Incel community at large, and perhaps an even higher degree among the members who take it the furthest and adopt the ideas of Incelism.

By applying Illouz’s concepts and ideas regarding how love has changed and operates in its high-modern form as well as the concepts of collective victimhood, collective victimization, and self-victimization a framework for how to understand the Incel milieu is established. It is through this framework that the two key ideas in the milieu, the smallest common denominator that unites redpilled, blackpilled, and Incelists seem to be that the market of love is unfair and unjust and that Incels are a victimized group.

¹²⁹ Gabay et al. 2020, pp. 367–368.

¹³⁰ *Social media and dating apps have killed more men than both world wars combined*, Incels.co.

7. Incelism – Anger, loneliness, sadness and hate

The empirical part of this thesis is divided into two sub-chapters and seven subheadings. The first sub-chapter focuses on the primary question regarding Incelism's construction and has 5 subheadings. Each subheading has one core concept each as its focus and in line with Freedén's model, on the adjacent and potential peripheral concepts which relates mainly to that core. As the core is the DNA of an ideology it is best to start at the very foundation and work outwards towards the periphery. The second sub-chapter focuses on the two secondary questions which focuses on Incelism's relation to historical and contemporary ideologies, with a focus on far-right ideologies. The second sub-chapter contains two subheadings with one focusing on ideologies that are viewed negatively, and the second subheading focusing on ideologies that are viewed positively.

7.1. The construction of Incelism – Core, adjacent and peripheral concepts

7.1.1. *Hierarchy – Looks Money Status, Just Be White, Cucks and Truecels*

The Incel milieu is an inherently non-hierarchical collection of online communities. There are no leaders, no party structure, and its online communities are centered around a form of anarchistic discussions where everyone is allowed to comment and discuss each topic. While Incels.co does have seven users who act as administrators and moderators with the power to give warnings and ban users who do not follow the site rules and terms, they do not wield any extra discursive power, and do not have a privileged position when it comes to explicating the ideology. While the organizational form follows a non-hierarchical structure, many of the shared concepts and understandings of the Incel milieu are constructed with strong hierarchical understandings regarding human nature and society. The concept of hierarchy, therefore, takes the place as one of the core concepts within Incelism. The centrality of hierarchy will be proven by discussing some of its adjacent concepts, and we will start by discussing the adjacent concept which will be referred to as “race”.

Some of the clearest examples of the discussions on race are found in the thread “give it up for @itsOVER”. Its focuses on ex-Incels.co user *itsOVER* who unlike most Incels have found success on the “sexual market”. The opening comment by user *13k* is a rather long text and starts with: “He is gonna [sic] be a father to a 3rd child from yet another foid. Truly a success story and a life and hope fuel for Incels.”¹³¹ In responding to a user's comment that *itsOVER* is acting selfishly by bringing three “subhuman Incel children” into the world *13k* writes:

¹³¹ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

he is serving the justice. those deathnic [ethnic] whores would rather put a bullet in their heads before giving a decent ricecel [Incel of south-east Asian decent] a chance. in stead [sic] they throw themselves and their virginity to white sexpats. itsover is serving justice by making them think he would be a good father then ditching those sluts¹³²

Following the opening, and a few following, comments the discussion becomes centered around a few central themes. One of them is on the Incel theory of “Just be white”- (JBW) that argues that if you are white in a non-majority white country your chances to escape Inceldom are massively increased. This is a central topic within the thread, with the words “white” and “JBW” mentioned 158 and 72 times respectively through the thread.¹³³ Regarding the topic of whiteness and JBW, there are three main lines of discussion: Being white is such an advantage that you can more or less not be an Incel if you are white; being white is at most a small advantage on the sexual market but it is still very possible to be white and an Incel; and people who wish that they were white. A good representation of the comments stating that being white makes you more akin to be a volcel [voluntary celibate] than an Incel is posted by the user *BlkPillPres*:

JFL [Just fucking lol] at anyone who denies JBW- There are so many white volcels on this forum alone, even guys that are fucking 6'5" that could- EASILY outdo what @itsOVER has done, but they only want white women and they don't want to travel- But "were all on the same team bro, were all incels". No, were not all on the fucking same team, the majority of white incels on this site could slay if they'd simply go to SEA [South East Asia], but they CHOOSE not to, its [sic] not the same thing as having no options at all.¹³⁴

The user *TigerFestival* provides an argument for the idea that being white is an advantage, but not a “cure” for Inceldom:

I'm not denying that, being white gives you an advantage, what annoys me about JBW spammers is they think ONLY being white will get you laid, when being white is merely an advantage, just like being tall. That's all really, if JBW spammers would say being white is just an advantage that's fine, I agree being white is advantageous, but simply being white alone won't get you laid. Same with being tall for that matter.¹³⁵

Throughout the thread, there are also many users who have posted comments stating their wish that they were white. JBW should therefore be understood as a term which exists within the adjacent concept of “Race” as it helps solidify that adjacent concept.

This thread shows how race, something which Incels often claim is irrelevant for their life situation, actually plays a rather central role within both the Incel milieu at large and for Incelism. There are clear understandings of different race’s chances of success on the sexual market and therefore rankings of the races and discussions of which race is “objectively” better are rather common. This race-hierarchy is built around looks, i.e., which race has the males that are the most

¹³² *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

¹³³ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

¹³⁴ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

¹³⁵ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

sought after on the sexual market. The theory of JBW and the advantages of being white for finding a partner have been illustrated with this one forum thread but these ideas are prevalent throughout Incels.co. The centrality of establishing hierarchies can also be found in the idea of looks and the concept of the decile scale where a person's beauty is ranked on a 1 to 10 scale. Someone ranked as a 1/10 is one of the most hideous of humans ever and a 10/10 is a perfect specimen, most often referred to as a Chad, if male (or Tyrone if a black male), or Stacy if female.¹³⁶ In the world view of Incelism, almost everything follows a strict hierarchical division. Your abundance or lack of looks places you in a specific slot in the hierarchy of beauty. This in turn determines your sexual market value and status in society at large.¹³⁷ A key tenant of the blackpill is that these hierarchies are fiercely rigid to the point that it is more or less impossible to change one's place within them. Because of this Incelism understands Incels placement as, indefinitely, at the bottom of the societal hierarchy because of their lack of looks as well as the shallowness and hypergamy of women.¹³⁸ One of the few arenas in which Incelists understand their position as not being at the bottom of the hierarchy is in regard to intelligence and gender. When male intelligence is compared to female, women are understood as having both lower IQ scores and overall lower levels of intelligence than men.¹³⁹

Even a concept as engrained socially as racism is understood by many users on Incels.co differently than in society in general:

In conclusion: Whites hate ethnics, and ethnics hate whites. All races hate each other. There will never be peace, and that is neither desirable. Only one race, the most superior one, can ultimately have all the power. Which race it will be, will be determined by the race war. Might makes right. This forum is just a temporary coalition between men of different races based on our shared hatred of females and our involuntary celibacy. It is not a brotherhood. If you have ever had this delusion, you are a naive bluepilled idiot who knows nothing about human nature.¹⁴⁰

The view of an inevitable future race war is a rather old-school racist idea. It can be found in the writings of William Luther Pierce and his novel *Hunter* where Pierce imagines a race war erupting between white and black Americans.¹⁴¹ This white-supremacist view of an inevitable race war, while shared by some users, seems to not be the dominant view of the relations between people of different races on Incels.co. A good example of what can be defined as the majority line of thinking in the Incels.co community is provided by another user:

¹³⁶ *Decile*, Incels.wiki.

¹³⁷ Hoffman et al. 2020, p. 567; O'Malley et al. 2020, pp. 11–12.

¹³⁸ Baele et al. 2019, pp. 9, 13; Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 11; Witt 2020, pp. 685–686.

¹³⁹ Chang 2020, p. 8.

¹⁴⁰ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

¹⁴¹ Pierce 1998, pp. 251–259.

[...] in reality we're all societal outcasts. Whether you like it or not, you're not elite enough to be racist to anyone, your racism has no consequence to anyone whatsoever. Count your miserable days until death comes to you. I'll count mine.¹⁴²

Being racist in the worldview shared by a majority of Incels is understood as a counterproductive position to take. Incels regardless of race are all at the bottom of society, and therefore to hate another person based on race is foolish. It is not about race; it is about looks. This rejection of racism by some users could also be a strategy to try and uphold and maintain the ingroup cohesion, and their positive ingroup perception. As discussed in the theory chapter, keeping a positive image of ones' ingroup is one of the most important aspects for humans on a collective level.¹⁴³ As many in the Incel milieu understand the Incel as the ultimate victim, to argue against inter-Incel racism should most likely not be read as a rejection of racism as a whole, but rather as a way to maintain positive ingroup relations. However, arguments like this could also show how Incels, and particularly Incelists, argue for their victimhood and low status existence. “[...] you’re not elite enough to be racist to anyone, your racism has no consequence to anyone whatsoever.”¹⁴⁴ Even if an Incel was to be racist that does not really affect anyone because they wield no social power. Not only does this show their perceived victimhood but by positioning themselves as fully powerless Incelism gives its adherents the ability to go after whomever as they can never strike downwards, only upwards against their oppressors. Many users do seem to agree with the view that racism and xenophobia are embedded in human nature. The explanation for the causes of racism is also distinctly colored by the central idea which permeates the Incel-worldview, lookism. User *gigacel123* argues that: “Racism = subset of lookism. We don’t like people who look different from us.”¹⁴⁵ This shows both the centrality of lookism in Incelism and how it acts as a central node for the creation of many other hierarchical structures. In this understanding of the world, which is widespread in the Incel milieu, and central in Incelism, lookism is the cause not only for Inceldom but for racism and more systems of oppression as well. What can be derived is that racism, as a part of a wider understanding of race, while of importance within the ideology of Incelism is not at its core. It helps explain, and is understood as occurring because of, the importance of different hierarchies which lies at Incelism’s core. Racism is therefore a part of the wider adjacent concept of race, as it helps define the core concept of hierarchy. However, lookism and the centrality of looks will be discussed more below.

The experience of Inceldom is not in any way understood as a pleasant experience. As have been discussed it seems to entail the idea that the ones who suffer from Inceldom are the ultimate victims in high-modern society. While it is seen as a brotherhood of suffering and oppression,

¹⁴² *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

¹⁴³ Bilewicz & Liu 2020, pp. 122–123.

¹⁴⁴ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

¹⁴⁵ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

being a part of the Incel milieu and its communities also includes a feeling of exclusivity. It is a band of brothers bound together by their shared pain and their, almost esoteric, knowledge. Comments such as “Getting tired of seeing fakecel [Fake-Incel] shit like this”¹⁴⁶; “dude [*itsOVER*] looks like a normie. low normie tier but still. fakecel to the core”¹⁴⁷; “He [Elliot Rodger] was a fakecel.”¹⁴⁸ and

I'm just here to cope with my fellowcels, not some Chad with 100+ bodies. This place is going to be tainted forever if something like this becomes a thing, the forum is already chalk-full with larpers. [Live action role-players] If this shit happens I'm honestly done with this forum.¹⁴⁹

To claim to be an Incel, and especially to claim to be a “truecel”, seems to be something that can and is heavily debated. It is a title which can be revoked by the community if someone exhibits anything which can be interpreted as experiences or traits which only normies or Chads would have. “Fakecel”, “truecel”, and “normie” should all therefore be understood as being part of a wider adjacent concept of “exclusivity” which relates to the core concept of hierarchy. Incels and Incelists do not have much, but what they do see themselves as having which other people lack is the knowledge of the truths found within the blackpill. This, combined with their ingroup understanding as being the ultimate victims, makes exclusivity an important aspect of Incelism. Because hierarchy is at the core of Incelism everything and everyone must be situated at its “correct” position within each hierarchy. Therefore, men who are not real-Incels, “truecels”, must be weeded out to maintain the core understanding of the worlds all-encompassing rigid hierarchization. This resentment is not solely focused on “fakecels” but also against the “masses”. A central experience of using forums such as Incels.co is to spread Incel related ideas and to blackpill or make “people swallow the blackpill” i.e., indoctrinate other men into the blackpill world view.¹⁵⁰ Not only to bolster the rank of men who might adopt the identity of Incel but to “awaken” men to the dangers of female hypergamy, lookism, feminism, and to actualize the struggle of men, and particularly Incels, in high-modern society. At the same time, there seems to exist a disgust towards the women and the male “normies” of society, which consists of the vast majority of people. Here traces of the duality which exists within Fascist movements’ perception of the masses are found. Theweielt argues that Fascism which while trying to mobilize the masses regards the same masses as being a filthy mob, a stark contrast when compared to the perceived closed and elevated masses who have accepted the dogmas of Fascism. The filthy masses much be reached and elevated but is at the same time frowned upon, and here lies a duality between the members of the Fascist mass movement and the “other masses” which becomes the lower standing

¹⁴⁶ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

¹⁴⁷ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

¹⁴⁸ *Whats your opinion on ER?*, Incels.co.

¹⁴⁹ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

¹⁵⁰ Jaki et al. 2019, pp. 19–20.

massenmensch.¹⁵¹ One of the reasons for the alleged decadence and filth of the “other masses” are that they still believe in the sickness of lust, that there can be a “heaven on earth” consisting of a life in lust. It is this longing for lust that makes them an easy prey to the “Jew” and the “Jewish decadence”. To combat human lust Fascism thus coded the attributes of the “illness” as female, Jewish, and Bolshevik.¹⁵² It does seem that similar ideas of the illness of lust that permeates the Fascist perception of the *massenmensch* exists in the Incelist worldview and ideological understanding of “bluepilled normies” in contemporary society. These men have not yet realized the truth that looks, decided solely by biology, is everything. The idea of a “heaven on earth”, as Theweleit labels it, can be understood through Incel-terminology as being part of the bluepill and to an extent even the redpill. This entails ideas that seem ludicrous for many believers of Incelism such as the existence of “true love”, or that personality matters, or that women are not completely shallow and does not only want to be with Chads. While some members on Incels.co might argue that many of these issues stem from “the Jew” the main culprit in Incelism is instead women, the nefarious cabal that acts with the intent to ruin men. But there is also a mistrust against modern Liberal society that just like “the Jew” in Fascism is understood as something infiltrating the masses to lead them astray. In the thread “Therapists are the capitalist equivalent of KGB informants” this idea is visible. A user comments that “[...] ‘the west’ (a.k.a the American Empire) is an extremely religious society with progressivism as its state religion.”¹⁵³ He follows this comment by stating that the media, academia, and the psychiatric industrial complex all play roles similar to the role of the clergy in earlier societies in maintaining state religion.¹⁵⁴ Not only does it seem that women are to blame for leading men in modern society astray, it is also described as self-evident that the state plays an active role in promoting a state religion of Progressivism. This alleged “religion” is seen by a vast number of users as being maintained by therapists who preach “bluepill nonsense”¹⁵⁵ in a bid to keep the masses unknowing and stupid. The masses therefore remain as the lower standing unelevated *massenmensch*.

This exclusivity can and should be understood as a way to maintain the positive ingroup view and its moral elitism as a group suffering from the perceived collective victimhood. But it should also be discussed as an adjacent concept in connection to the core concept of hierarchy. In a thread containing a poll labeled “Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?” one can find that, as of February 15th, 2021, 100 users had voted no, and 39 users voted yes.¹⁵⁶ Users argue for their position in the thread where many share the idea that if you have had sexual relations you should not be allowed into the forum even if you have fully taken the blackpill. “It’s a perspective

¹⁵¹ Theweleit 1995, p. 505.

¹⁵² Theweleit 1995, pp. 508, 512–514.

¹⁵³ *Therapists are the capitalist equivalents of KGB informants*, Incels.co.

¹⁵⁴ *Therapists are the capitalist equivalents of KGB informants*, Incels.co.

¹⁵⁵ *Therapists are the capitalist equivalents of KGB informants*, Incels.co.

¹⁵⁶ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

thing, which they will lack. You can't deprogram someone who has gone through the ABCs of life, make them understand what it's like to not have a pre-determined path to follow.”¹⁵⁷, ”That's fucking INCELS.co not Blackpill.co normalFUCKS [sic] have the whole other internet.”¹⁵⁸ These two arguments together show the connection of the question regarding non-Incel blackpilled people and the core concept of hierarchy. Incels are below “normal” people as they lack certain life experiences, and they are excluded not only from those experiences but also from other online spaces. This can be understood by defining these experiences as a adjacent concept of exclusivity. It is an interesting, and rather unique, understanding of one’s position in far-right milieus. Breivik viewed himself as a heroic Templar knight who fought for the women (most of whom did not want to be saved) and against the evil forces of multiculturalism who wanted to destroy his homeland.¹⁵⁹ Incels instead view themselves as antagonistic against society as a whole, not simply the “cultural Marxist”, multi-culturalists or feminist elements of it. Here lies a key difference between the wider sphere of the far-right milieu of which Incelism is a part of, and the ideology as such. The enemy, the “other”, is in the Incelist case a much larger group than in many other ideologies and far-right groups. As stressed above, Breivik fought against what he perceived as hostile invading forces and their allies in Norway, he fought the external and the internal enemies. In Finland, white identity groups struggle to stop the alleged Islamisation brought about by the enemy.¹⁶⁰ The *Freikorps* analyzed by Theweleit saw the enemy as the proletariat, and especially its women.¹⁶¹ The use of violence against the enemy is justified according to James Aho by placing oneself as a victim of persecution. Thereby the violation of another human group becomes legitimate since it is seen as a fair response when that group is understood as having done wrong against yours.¹⁶² For the followers of Incelism, it is in many ways all women and all of society that has done them wrong, justifying violence against all of society. While similar sentiments of a complete rejection of society exists in some far-right movements, it seems to be a notion shared by most members of the Incel milieu, and at least by the followers of Incelism.

When discussing hierarchies and what one should and should not be one thing becomes abundantly clear, namely that you should never be a “cuck”. What then is a cuck? Contrary to what might be expected, it does not refer to the sexual fetish of cuckoldry which refers to deriving pleasure from one’s partner engaging in sexual acts with someone else. Instead, it is used by many Incels, and also in wider Conservative and far-right wing circles, as a derogatory term against men who are seen as spineless, unmasculine, or who support leftist or progressive ideas. “Cuck” should therefore be understood as an adjacent concept to hierarchy, as it is used to define ideas and people

¹⁵⁷ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

¹⁵⁸ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

¹⁵⁹ Gardell 2014, pp. 132, 136–137, 140.

¹⁶⁰ Keskinen 2013, p. 228.

¹⁶¹ Theweleit 1995, pp. 77, 166, 187.

¹⁶² Aho 1994, p. 11.

who Incels despise and relegate to an inferior position. It is a way to differentiate the good from the bad and to establish someone, or something's, place in a specific hierarchy. Another similar term that refers to the idea of someone being not masculine enough is the term "soy" or "soyboy",¹⁶³ which should be understood as included within the wider adjacent concept of "Cuck". Something or someone that is cucked is therefore weak and inherently bad. "Whoever created the term "slut shaming" is a fucking idiot and a massive cuck"¹⁶⁴, "'I don't hate women because they don't have sex with me" then you're basically a cuck. that means she sees you as a inferior being and not worthy for her. and you're supporting her. just like a little cuck"¹⁶⁵, "Socialism is cucked because you are serving interests of others (cucked)."¹⁶⁶, "Although there are a few fascistic or far-right groups that are cucks for women, they are not all and not even a majority."¹⁶⁷ While this might seem like a rather individualistic way of thinking, which it is, it should also be understood in relation to the perceived enemies of Incels. Paying taxes to a society that oppresses and is in opposition to Incels is "cucked". Socialism is understood as serving others and because of their status as non-Incels this implies that they are privileged, which makes it "cucked". The worst part about paying taxes to any society with a welfare state and with Socialisms ideas of universal welfare, is that it entails support for women, which is also "cucked". As previously stated, "cuck" therefore acts as an adjacent concept to hierarchy as the main way in which people, systems or aspects of a system which facilitate the relegation of Incels to the bottom of, almost, all hierarchies are referred to and understood in terms of.

The most important hierarchy in Incelism is however looks, which takes the form of the fourth adjacent concept to hierarchy. Looks should be understood as an adjacent rather than a core concept since it relates to a much wider way of thinking in which rigid hierarchies dictates most interaction between humans. But looks play the role of the most important hierarchy when it comes to inter-human relations. "the blackpill suggests that looks are the primary driving force, and that even looks will determine how much money you will most likely make",¹⁶⁸

You said you looked like shit and are short but then start coping by comparing yourself to other races. This is a way for you to feel like you are not genetic shit and that kind of cope makes you look low iq. As far as not being incel in a far right world, once again you show your cope and not coming to terms with the fact that you are dogshit genetically. What women would realistically ever want someone of your looks and height.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ *Cuckoldry*, Incels.wiki; *Soyboy*, Incels.wiki.

¹⁶⁴ *Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming*, Incels.co.

¹⁶⁵ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

¹⁶⁶ *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

¹⁶⁷ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

¹⁶⁸ *Whats your most controversial blackpilled opinion*, Incels.co.

¹⁶⁹ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

The game is rigged. Average looking guys have to gymcel¹⁷⁰ for years and get minor surgeries and have extremely low levels of body fat all year round, worry about bloat all the time [...] and on top of that get rich all of that just to match and date some non virgin 28 year old ready to settle roastie [Woman who have had a lot of sexual partners]. JFL [Just fucking lol] meanwhile an average women just have to EXIST. Just Exist, click selfies and try tinder. It's that fucking easy for them. This is the most brutal part of the Blackpill. Men spend 1000+ hours looksmxing [Maximizing one's looks] just to get 5% of what women gets with just exist mode.¹⁷¹

The hierarchy of looks is used to explain historical events as well, such as the Holocaust which is understood by some Incels as a genocide mainly rooted in lookism and anti-non-Chad sentiments.

the reason Nazis targeted ethnic and Jews was because of their LOOKS. If jews looked like big stocky blonds, do you think the Nazis would have gone after them? [...] Germans hated these groups and were led on by propaganda preciously because these people are UGLY. [...] For second, the Nazis were extremely Chad-centric and HATED non-Chads.¹⁷²

Odd as it may seem, the comment is not completely off the mark. As Mosse points out, the modern masculine ideal, the national body that was taken over by Fascism was defined in contrast to “the Jew” and “the Homosexual”, e.g., the stereotypical antisemitic and antigay representations.

In a sense, while looks should be understood as an adjacent concept to hierarchy it has primacy over exclusivity and race in its importance. It is the Incels' lack of looks that have created their exclusive ingroup, and there exists the view that a hierarchy of races can be based upon physical attractiveness. Through looking at how Incelism understands looks there are also clear examples of the rigid hierarchization which is used to understand the world. Often people are reduced simply to numbers and values: “Many of these femoids are all solid 7/10 and in their SMV [Sexual market value] prime.”¹⁷³, “actually it was pretty unanimous around here that he was a 4/10. after the thailand [sic] thread and all this shit he is now a 5.5-6/10 in the eyes of copers.”¹⁷⁴, “The gymcel is way below 4/10 but IMO [In my opinion] all 3 of the girls that I posted are above 7/10 (Olivia is a legit Stacy).”¹⁷⁵ One of the defining aspects of the Incel milieu and Incelism is its constant debate between users and members These constant debates concern fundamental issues such as what it means to be an Incel and if someone who succeeds in finding sexual relations can identify as an Incel. However, the importance of looks is also reflected in what might seem like more mundane discussions like if someone is a 4/10 or a 5/10 on the decile scale. Discussions such as those are however of utmost importance for understanding both Incelism and the Incel milieu at large. There exists a complete and total fixation with the concept of looks within the milieu and it is often times discussed through such ways, arguing for someone being a “4/10” or what one could improve

¹⁷⁰ The act of trying to “ascend” by gaining muscle mass.

¹⁷¹ [Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH], Incels.co.

¹⁷² *The Nazis Were Not Our Friends*, Incels.co.

¹⁷³ [Tinder Experiment] 5'7 incel gets more than 40 cute matches in Asia in 1 day, Incels.co.

¹⁷⁴ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

¹⁷⁵ [Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH], Incels.co.; Stacy refers to a woman at the top of the Looks hierarchy.

about themselves to rise on the decile scale. Most often no consensus about any topic is reached, but there is one exception with one topic that is universally accepted and needs no debate: That women equals bad.

7.1.2. Misogyny – The hardcore core

When most people hear the word Incel they probably think about misogyny in one way or another, and they would not be wrong. “Not raping a woman when you could with ease due to her inferior strength is a form of mercy and kindness they are not willing to show us.”¹⁷⁶ “[...] I hate women for that exact reason it's innate for them to be hypergamous ...its not necessarily male nature to kill or rape ..more so it's male nature to protect and spread their seed ...sometimes consensual sometimes not.”¹⁷⁷ “We'll have to agree to disagree, women get off on mentally torturing, belittling, insulting, or nagging men, it gives them personal satisfaction boosting their egos.”¹⁷⁸, “If you're ugly, women are as likely to be attracted to your muscles as they're likely to be attracted to a dog's muscles.”¹⁷⁹ and, “I wouldn't mind destroying a noodlewhore's [woman of south east Asian descent] tbh ngl ded srs [to be honest not going to lie dead serious] i [sic] still hate them”.¹⁸⁰ All these quotes come from different threads from the material gathered from Incels.co to prove a point; that a majority of discussions contain these types of violently misogynistic opinions. The results from Jaki et al.'s study which employed Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning methods supports this statement. They show that on the Incels.me forum (the precursor to Incels.co) over 50 percent of all threads contained misogynistic discussions.¹⁸¹ Misogyny and the idea that women are a major enemy are not uncommon in the far-right milieu either. However, there does seem to be a difference in how it is employed and understood within Incelism and the extent to which misogyny plays within the ideological field. Furthermore, in the far-right the same kind of distinction is made between women as between men, a distinction based upon race/culture and ideological affinity; thus, the far-right recognizes good women, female allies in the struggle, Incelism does not.

There exists a paradoxical duality within the concept of “women” both in the Incel milieu and in Incelism. It is a similar duality and paradox to how Pierce understands the “Jew” in his novel *Hunter*. The “Jew” is presented and understood as extremely cunning in the art of scheming and as being in control of almost all facets of Western society. However, at the same time, they are

¹⁷⁶ *This is what every foid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

¹⁷⁷ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

¹⁷⁸ *Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming*, Incels.co.

¹⁷⁹ *[Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH]*, Incels.co.; Relevant to this quote is the Incel “theory” of the “Dogpill” which argues that women are more likely, and prefer, to have sex with dogs over ugly men.

¹⁸⁰ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

¹⁸¹ Jaki et al. 2019, pp. 6, 10.

unintelligent and can be outsmarted by superior people, in Pierce's case, white people.¹⁸² Similar to this idea of the both cunning and stupid "Jew", the "Woman" on Incels.co is discussed in similar ways. An example is the argument that:

Females acquire power by proxy, they manipulate loser type beta males into defending them whenever someone disagrees with them or similar. Women would not have the power they have if all men simply decided to become faggots tomorrow. Not that I'm recommending that of course.¹⁸³

Another user takes this similarity between the "Jew" in the world of *Hunter* and the "woman" on Incels.co further in a post stating that:

They straight up passively dominate any social dynamic and have entire institution ready to bend to their whim. The average woman has so much power, no matter if she realizes it or not its [sic] mind-boggling. It actually seems impossible that as much as half of population can have so much power. It doesn't add up. You'd think it'd be like 10% of population at most. If at least it was actual tangible power, and not some nefarious jew tactic about crying foul endlessly. I'd have some respect for that at least. Society bends to their every whim but they still think they're oppressed and have it harder. Can you imagine?¹⁸⁴

This comment itself brings forward the analogy between the concept of the "Jew" and the "woman" as the user argues that women are not aware of their domination and massive power. Women are powerful, but they are also unintelligent. Much more so than men according to many users. This idea of female unintelligence is expressed in quotes such as: "Surprisingly women share human DNA and have the same (albeit much less) cognitive ability that human [sic] possess."¹⁸⁵, "This is LARP [Live Action Role Play]. Foids aren't intelligent enough to write something this complex."¹⁸⁶ said regarding an article written by a woman on the topic of ugly men, and "i [sic] can't take science or any work seriously anymore ever since women LARP as workers and scientists tbh".¹⁸⁷ In this world view, women have a profound sexual power which if left unchecked will ravage and cause havoc to the males of the world, a power that they are both aware and unaware of, and a power that must be controlled by men for the benefit of society.

It is in these two different forms of perceptions of "women" that some adjacent concepts to the core concept of misogyny start to become formulated. There exist two separate concepts in the word and understanding of the "woman". It is the powerful female and the female humanoid, or the "femoid". The "femoid" is women when they are understood as unintelligent and bestial, a form of non-human creature. Chang explains this construction of women as: "Their relegation as

¹⁸² Pierce 1998, pp. 214–218.

¹⁸³ *Women are insanely powerful*, Incels.co.

¹⁸⁴ *Women are insanely powerful*, Incels.co.

¹⁸⁵ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

¹⁸⁶ *This is what every foid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

¹⁸⁷ *Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming*, Incels.co.

“subman” and “subhuman” suggest secondariness to men, the implied center of humankind. Women are positioned as the partially formed, “empty” Other in opposition to the fully formed Man.¹⁸⁸ While the “femoid” is an empty “low-IQ” shell of a human, women are at the same time powerful. Especially in the sexual marketplace. As one user argues: “The same liberal order that empowers women with infinite value in the sexual marketplace is the same liberal order that enables our country to be filled with these bitter shitskins.”¹⁸⁹ Power in the marketplace of sex should in the context of the Incel milieu and Incelism be understood as a major advantage in life. It is the failures to enter and/or succeed in that marketplace that is the key life experience for anyone who claims the designation as an Incel on the Incels.co forum. This power emanates from women and it is something that is understood as a danger to men, not least because women are seen as inherently hypergamous. In the Incel world view women cannot control themselves from trying to engage in sexual acts with Chads. One user argues that women will have sex with men for two reasons, finding the man attractive or wanting something from him, such as financial provisions, fame, or advancing her career.¹⁹⁰ Because many Incels believe that women only find 20 percent of all men even attractive¹⁹¹ – a “theory” often referred to as the “Sub8 theory”¹⁹² – a large portion of men must degrade themselves or accept being cheated on to find a female partner. Here the two constructions of the “woman” are combined and reveal what is understood as a failure by society, particularly Western societies and its men: The failure in controlling women and their sexuality. This is seen as necessary because women are both “low-IQ” and hypergamous as well as the gatekeepers to the sexual marketplace. This means that the freedoms which women have gained in modern societies compared to early modern one’s are understood as the reason for the creation of the Incel milieu as we know it. In a sense the issue is not female, it is male. Interestingly hypergamy has a completely different meaning in Illouz’s studies compared to the Incel understanding of it. Illouz argues that because of capitalism’s discrimination of women by gender coding lower-paid jobs as female, marriage became a way to secure economic and social survival. Therefore, most heterosexual women have employed homogamy, choosing a man with a similar educational level (meaning a similar socioeconomic status) or hypergamy, choosing a man with a higher level of education, as the two main strategies for marriage. Since the 1980s, the educational level of men has risen more slowly than women’s, and the wage gap has decreased. This means that women have a smaller pool of men with a similar socioeconomic status to choose from, resulting in a deficit of suitable men to marry.¹⁹³ The Incel idea of the “biological woman’s” innate desire to only be with the most good-looking men seems to stem from the fact that most women have had to

¹⁸⁸ Chang 2020, p. 7.

¹⁸⁹ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.; “Shitskins” refers to brown or black people.

¹⁹⁰ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It’s Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

¹⁹¹ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It’s Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

¹⁹² *Sub8 Theory*, Incels.wiki.

¹⁹³ Illouz 2013, pp. 118–119.

marry a specific set of men who have been able to secure their wellbeing in capitalist society. However, as previously discussed, the idea in Incelism is that better looks provide better chances to have a successful career and become wealthy. This means that what should be understood as a survival strategy employed by mainly middle- and upper-middle-class women is reduced to biological desires and natural instincts in Incelism, and as something the allegedly weaker female-gender cannot keep in check.

Therefore, while women, in general, are often deeply hated by users on the forum, the main reason for this hatred seems to stem from the failures of men in high-modern societies to control women. This is because of the alleged characteristics of women which are particularly hated, characteristics such as hypergamy and their innate lookism, which are understood to be mainly natural instincts based in women's biological and cognitive abilities. That the situation for the contemporary Incels stems from a societal failure to control and contain these natural urges by women is an often-recurring topic and every quote which follows here is from a different user and discussion thread: "Hypergamy and lookism is natural too."¹⁹⁴ "slut shaming prevents rape. if chastity was prized like it used to be women would behave, speak, and comport themselves in a way that precludes 'rape' in the majority of cases."¹⁹⁵ "If she's not a virgin she will never love you. You might think she loves you, she might think she loves you, but as we have already established, the love she had for her first romantic partner is different, it's 'pure'.¹⁹⁶ "Women gain power because they're worshipped. If we went back to treating women as property we wouldn't have this problem."¹⁹⁷ "This. This is where it all went wrong. Letting women into college, letting women get jobs."¹⁹⁸ "Mildly unrelated but anything after the 18th century was a mistake."¹⁹⁹ An adjacent concept is here found to misogyny, "anti-modernism", or more correct would be "anti-high modernism". These anti-high modernist sentiments have their roots in misogyny and in the "failure" of the capitalist neo-Liberal order in controlling the "natural" woman. A romanticized image of the past shines through in many of the quotes, and in many of the threads which have been and will be discussed in this thesis as well. "If we went back to...". "This is where it all went wrong.", "If chastity was prized like it used to be..." et cetera. Illouz argues that the change between the pre-modern and high-modern forms of marriage has transformed from being mainly marriages based on obligations to marriages primarily based on emotional authenticity. The latter implies that marriage is grounded in the individualized emotional self and the constant maintaining of the relationship's preconditions whereas marriages based on obligation do not focus on the self's emotions but instead on social roles and the emotions connected to them. The romantic love's

¹⁹⁴ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

¹⁹⁵ *Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming*, Incels.co.

¹⁹⁶ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It's Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

¹⁹⁷ *Women are insanely powerful*, Incels.co.

¹⁹⁸ *This is what every foid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

¹⁹⁹ *Why billionaires finance the left? Are they retarded?*, Incels.co.

“victory” therefore, according to Illouz, mainly means that individual choices in questions of love have been removed from the social and moral structures. No longer are the criteria dependent on collective morals but instead on the individual subjects.²⁰⁰ Incelism’s opinion on the romantic victory is hard to discern. As discussed, the past and especially pre-modernity and its social norms and morals which guided love and marriage are hailed as something positive, something that should return. At the same time however, the individual forum users’ personal feelings seem to play a major part in many of the reasonings and arguments found in the material.

The feelings of hate and existential sadness form the basis for many of the Incels arguments and actions. This existential sadness and fatalistic view that their life situation will never improve are encapsulated by the mantra-like phrase “it’s over”. Showing any optimism that the future will not entail the bleakest possible ending are also oftentimes met with the simple, and condescending, reply; “cope”. The feeling of hate particularly is the key reason for users to encourage people to “go ER”. “This is why men go ER.”²⁰¹ “Dude I can’t even look at these pictures for one more second. The urge to go ER is at an all-time high.”²⁰² The second quote comes from a user’s reaction after looking at images of his “oneitis”, a person which one is deeply in love with without being in a relationship with that person.²⁰³ This comment provides a good example of when hate and fatalistic suffering intersect. The blackpill argues that it’s over and that “real” love and sexual experiences are forever out of reach for Incels, and the concept of “oneitis” entails that the longing for those experiences becomes connected and projected onto a single individual. Here the anger, sadness, and loneliness which this person feels transforms into hate, a hate so strong that, while “go ER” is a rather common phrase on the forum, he is explicitly stating that he wants to commit mass violence because of these emotions. Love hurts, and here the lack of reciprocal love has resulted in someone wanting to murder others. These calls and encouragements between users on Incels.co to “go ER” shine a light on a central understanding and concept in the world of many Incels, and particularly Incelists: All chances for love are gone because of the nature of women, a nature that is not kept in check anymore. Instead, it is now accepted by the “cucked” society and its political representatives and they do nothing to help the Incels. Instead, they often simply make it worse. To alleviate the suffering, users are often said to either chose between coping (trying to find a reason for continued living or believing that it’s not yet over) or roping (suicide).²⁰⁴ A third option does however exist. To take things into your own hands, to cathartically externalize your pain onto your perceived enemies. To strike back, take direct action, to “go ER”.

²⁰⁰ Illouz 2013, pp. 62–65.

²⁰¹ *This is what every foid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

²⁰² *[Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH]*, Incels.co.

²⁰³ *Oneitis*, Incels.wiki.

²⁰⁴ Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 4.

7.1.3. Direct action – Rope, going ER and rejecting society - Taking it into your own hands

Next to its misogyny, the thing that the Incel milieu is most likely known for are the cases of Incel- and Incel-related mass violence. The aforementioned attacks by Rodger, Minassian, and Beierle are the most well-known, and most clearly motivated by the worldview of the Incel milieu. There have been cases of violence where the perpetrator has espoused Incelist views beforehand, but the attack itself does not seem to be an attack done in the name of Incelism. One example is the Parkland shooting perpetrated by Nikolas Cruz who killed seventeen people in 2017. There are also attackers pre-dating the Incel milieu which have been adopted into the milieu's pantheon of attackers. The antifeminist Marc Lépine who went on a shooting spree at the *École Polytechnique de Montreal* in 1989 resulting in the death of fourteen women is a notable example of this.²⁰⁵ Once again: most Incels and Incelists have not and will most likely not commit any form of physical violence against other people. Fernquist et al. states that around a total of ten deadly attacks globally have been perpetrated by people fostered in the Incel milieu.²⁰⁶ Deadly attacks are thus rare, and while we do not know the extent to which sexually related violence and other types of physical violence have been committed by Incels, one can assume that such attacks are also rare. However, this does not mean that this type of direct action against perceived hostile forces, and especially its encouragement, is not a central aspect of Incelism. When users on Incels.co voice their wish to strike against the enemies which have done them harm it is most often referred to as "Going ER", following in the steps of Elliot Rodger. Rodger is understood by many in the milieu as a hero and inspiration for how to reclaim one's masculinity as an Incel, and references to him are widespread in the milieu. Oftentimes these references take the form of capitalizing his initials in words such as "hERo".²⁰⁷ It is through the term "go ER" which users on Incels.co formulate their wish to regain their masculinity through violence, and within Incelism it has a unique meaning and position compared to more common words such as "kill" or "murder". Therefore, "go ER" acts as an adjacent concept to the core concept of direct action, as the way in which Incelists can unleash violence unto others to regain their lost masculinity, punish the enemy and inspire fellow Incels to adopt Incelism. While the encouragement to "go ER" is an often-recurring part of discussions on the forum, it is not the only frequent call for a direct action of violence. The other form is to enact violence unto themselves, to "rope", meaning to commit suicide. In a similar sense to "going ER," it is also a way to regain agency, inspire and gain martyrdom as a victim of the hostile society in which Incelists view themselves as existing. "Rope" will therefore also take the form of an adjacent concept to direct action, as that is how violence against the self is referred to and understood in the community.

²⁰⁵ Hoffman et al. 2020, pp. 569–572.

²⁰⁶ Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 2.

²⁰⁷ Witt 2020, p. 676.

While direct violence towards women is rare, occurrences of it do pop up on the forum in some instances. One example is the user *BummerDrummer*, a very prolific user with over 18.600 posts on the forum²⁰⁸ who also argues that Incels.co should transform into: “a more misogynistic brand of fascism.”²⁰⁹ In his thread “Dumb bitch who rejected me died today” he explains how he harassed a woman, which he claims bullied and rejected him, during her last days alive while dying from cancer. He writes: “I called her and held up the line, and I emailed her spam from all my accounts so that any email condolences would be buried and any person who tried to call her would have the line held up so yes.”²¹⁰ His story and the woman’s fate are met with cheers of encouragement and happiness from other users. “This is the best lifefuel”²¹¹, “good riddance, nothing of value was lost. Rest in piss”²¹² and it is also seen as something funny to some users: “What the fuck is wrong with you. Do you get enjoyment from people dying? That’s sick. Just kidding. Have fun in hell whore.”²¹³ These types of encouragements and positive reactions to an action like this should be read through the context of self-victimization. As has been shown when discussing their ingroup comparison Incels view themselves as victims, some users even claim that they are victims of a new Holocaust.²¹⁴ During the post-war era when Jewish communities created narratives to understand and process the experiences of the Holocaust and how it could be allowed to happen, the dominant narrative reduced Jewish responses to the Holocaust to two binaries, as either sheep going to slaughter or armed resistance.²¹⁵ A similar narrative can be partly found within Incelism. The understanding of the Incel as the ultimate victim suffering a treatment worse than the Holocaust makes harassments of enemies like in the example above, and attacks such as those committed by Rodger and Beierle, justified as the choices are either resistance or death. Narratives of resistance as the only path to act against oppression aren’t found simply in collectively victimized groups. Similar narratives of resistance are also found in Breivik’s manifesto where he describes himself a resistance fighter and argues that the only meaningful resistance left is military force.²¹⁶ However, while the narrative of the Incel victim is a major one, it is not the only one.

The Incelist main hypothesis is that because of the perpetual lookism which guides the actions of not only the individuals in society but society at large they should not have anything to do with society. Since every “real” Incel is found at the absolute bottom of the looks-hierarchy many Incels and Incelists view themselves as a *persona non grata* everywhere in society. However, for many users,

²⁰⁸ As of 8/3 – 2021 17:13.

²⁰⁹ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

²¹⁰ *Dumb bitch who rejected me died today*, Incels.co.

²¹¹ *Dumb bitch who rejected me died today*, Incels.co.; Lifefuel refers to something seen as positive, “making the person regain their faith in humanity”, *Lifefuel*, Incels.wiki.

²¹² *Dumb bitch who rejected me died today*, Incels.co.

²¹³ *Dumb bitch who rejected me died today*, Incels.co.

²¹⁴ *Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victims*, Incels.co.

²¹⁵ Yablonka 2003, p. 5.

²¹⁶ *2083 – A European Declaration of Independence*, pp. 4, 25.

it seems to be no love lost. “If I am not accepted by the society, then I will contribute nothing to it. I will be a leech that drains as much resources as possible.”²¹⁷ “Maybe society should stop absolving them [women] of any responsibility. (Like you)”²¹⁸. “Your genetics put you here, you’re not the same species, you’re [sic] a genetic deviant and as such cast out from society.”²¹⁹ and “All non chads are entitled to sex with their looksmatches, or they shouldn't pay taxes. If the system treats them unfairly then they shouldn't support it.”²²⁰ To actively reject society and its institutions, to not pay taxes or encourage other users not to do it, becomes a form of direct action and a tactic that can be employed by Incelist to voice their disgust of the perceived degenerate gynocentric society in which they reside. To be a NEET, an abbreviation of Not in Education, Employment or Training,²²¹ is by some seen as being a failure and by others as a defiant stance against society. This rejection of society and living as a “leech” to drain the system’s resources seem like a form of coping, of finding a reason to live through punishing society. This is a theme which will be returned to later in the analysis. But for some users no form of existence can alleviate their pain leaving “roping”, committing suicide, as the only option to take action to regain some sense of agency.

No statistics on how many Incels which have actually committed suicide exists, but what is known is that suicidal tendencies are widespread across the milieu’s online spaces.²²² “should I just rope boys? His face looks just like mine only he has less scars and a better jaw.”²²³, “Seeing this literal subhuman get more matches in the west in a week that I've got in my whole life is pure ropefuel thought [sic].”²²⁴, “Then to contemplate roping. Then to realize you’re just as scared of roping as you are of living.”²²⁵, and “Incels could always just rope?”²²⁶ Differently from the other adjacent and core concepts which have been found the concept “rope” seems to be mainly propagated through user’s online handles and users’ signatures which shows up next to their handle when they leave a comment on a thread. Users such as *RopeIsHope* and his handle “No hope – only rope”²²⁷, *rope2cope*²²⁸, and *Ropemaxx*.²²⁹ The concept of “rope” seem to play a major role in the milieu’s self-understanding, but it is not as widely discussed in the material as had been expected. One could assume that it is has to do with users not wanting their fellow Incels to commit suicide,

²¹⁷ *Reponse To: “You’re Not Entitled To Sex”*, Incels.co.

²¹⁸ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

²¹⁹ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

²²⁰ *Response To: “You’re Not Entitled To Sex”*, Incels.co.; Looksmatch means a person’s “match” of the opposite gender relating to looks, sharing the same decile scale rating.

²²¹ *NEET*, Incels.wiki.

²²² Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 1–2.

²²³ [*Tinder Experiment*] *Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH]*, Incels.co.

²²⁴ [*Tinder Experiment*] *Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH]*, Incels.co.; Ropefuel means incentive to commit suicide

²²⁵ *Life is barbaric suffering / prolonged torture, for us*, Incels.co.

²²⁶ *Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victims*, Incels.co.

²²⁷ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

²²⁸ *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

²²⁹ *Whats your opinion on ER?*, Incels.co.

and that sentiment has been found, “I know u [sic] and I have had our differences, but I’ll miss You [sic] if u [sic] go, please don’t.”²³⁰ However, the opposite sentiment is also found in the material. As a response to the previously presented quote where a user asks, “should I just rope boys?” he receives the answer: “If sex is your main goal in life, then you probably don’t have a chance unless you become a betabux provider or escort.”²³¹ A response which insinuates that if his main goal is to have sex, he will not succeed unless he degrades himself through either of those two options and therefore maybe he should “rope”. While the discussions regarding the concept of rope are not as widespread as the other adjacent concepts found are, it still seems to play a central role with its many mentions in online handles and signatures and the times it pops up in discussions. It is also a constant in the few options Incels and Incelists view themselves as having in life. “We can’t do anything except cope or rope or become hERoes.”²³²

Related to direct action as a peripheral concept is “democracy” which will play a part in comparing Incelism to other ideological constructs. The concept of democracy is in Incelism at best at the periphery and does not have any significant part in defining Incelism. Neither has for that matter anti-democracy. What is “cucked” is taxes and Progressivism, but not democracy as such. It is the progress in women’s rights that has been done through the ballot box, not the ballot box itself that seems to be what is understood as something bad. However, using democratic processes to stop Progressivism, Liberalism, or feminism are never suggested. Only direct action is ever proposed, a fact that could be explained by the Incels rejection of modern Western society in general. A society which Incelism views as having become “unnatural”.

7.1.4. The natural – “Nothing about this is natural.”²³³

The idea of what is and what is not natural permeates many discussions and understandings in the Ince-milieu. It runs at the very core of the Incel worldview, regardless if the person is an Incel or an Incelist, redpilled or blackpilled. The redpill understanding is that genetic determinism dictates male and female behavior,²³⁴ the same idea is found in the blackpill but with the added notion that it is impossible to transcend from Inceldom. Lookism prohibits transcendence, and this is understood as natural. In high-modernity, lookism has been allowed to turn rampant, but it is at its core still understood as something natural. Incels view themselves as at the bottom of society because of their genetics, which make them ugly and more or less subhuman.²³⁵ Biology dictates

²³⁰ *This is what every fooid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

²³¹ [*Tinder Experiment*] *Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH]*, Incels.co.; Betabux provider means finding a partner who is with you for only monetary reasons

²³² *This is what every fooid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

²³³ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

²³⁴ Ging 2019, p. 649.

²³⁵ Baele et al. 2019, pp. 8, 10; Fernquist et al. 2020, p. 3.

everything. Incelism does however have some aspects which, while understood as natural, are immensely gender-coded as either male or female:

The only thing they [Men] have to do is to watch national geographic or animal planet. In almost all social mammals the females are hypergamous. The soys will say god doesn't exist but they refuse to believe that human female sexuality is not hypergamic. Then they come up with outliers or pre 90s born non Chads that found gf's [Girlfriends] as proof the [sic] blackpill is wrong even though they know damn well those foids weren't as sexually/economically liberated and as free from social cultural stigmatization as 90s (and later) born western foids.²³⁶

most controversial on here is that women aren't [sic] at fault for our incelism. They can't be blamed. No one person or group can be blamed. It's the universe unfolding [sic] as it does, and foids are insentient NPC [Non-player character] children so you can't hold them responsible for anything. I still hate them though. if you were a foid with the infinite SMV [Sexual market value] that having eggs grants, and every guy on the planet wanted to fuck you, and getting fucked by chads is the biggest source of happiness chemicals possible, wouldn't you also get fucked by gigachads all day long? If u [sic] were a foid, you'd be a whore/toilet/sex slave for chad, regardless of what people think.²³⁷

“Foids on the other hand are irredeemable because of their hypergamic nature and after several millenia [sic] of forced looksmatch monogamy they still evolved.”²³⁸ “Females will behave the way society wants them to behave. You can love or hate their nature (or be neutral about it like I am).”²³⁹ Here we can see how the core concept of misogyny relates to the core of the natural and how the idea of what is “natural” is used to explain why Incels’ life experiences are what they are, and why they hate women. Women are perceived as acting according to their natural instincts stemming from their biology. It is that very nature that is hated. This illustrates two key aspects of the deep-seated misogyny in the Incel milieu at large. Men are “high-IQ” and capable of rational thought, while women are more akin to animals or children lacking any form of control over their natural instincts. Secondly, the perceived “natural” woman is a nymphomaniac who derives her happiness from sexual encounters with “objectively” handsome men. A potential reason for this view that Incels are fully sexless and women are fully sex-crazed can be found in Incelism’s collective identity as victims. The desire to distinguish the ingroup from hostile outgroups is a zero-sum game, and groups highlight aspects that results in positive ingroup relations by perceiving those aspects as superior whereas the outgroup’s aspects are filtered to be understood as inferior.²⁴⁰ The lack of sex is the main ingroup attribute in the Incel milieu. Hence their victimizers – women – become their antithesis and given the complete opposite attribute, an abundance of sex. Because of this belief that it is biology and genetic determinism which is the cause for the Incel predicament they abstain themselves from any blame for their life situation, they are simply victims of biology and the natural

²³⁶ *This is what every foid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.; Soy is similar to “cuck”, weak and/or stupid bluepilled men.

²³⁷ *Whats your most controversial blackpilled opinion*, Incels.co.

²³⁸ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

²³⁹ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

²⁴⁰ Jankowitz 2018, p. 266.

world. As Illouz argued, psychological suffering usually causes one to lose the ability to see and interpret meaningful context making the suffering appear arbitrary and random. Therefore, the one suffering often creates a “rational” explanation to not have to experience both the suffering in of itself, but also the suffering from not knowing where that pain stems from.²⁴¹ This is one possible explanation for the existence of the blackpill and Incelism, but it seems to have also resulted in a paradoxical and hypocritical duality in which the Incels are victims because they are slaves under their biology, but at the same time, the women they see as the perpetrators of their suffering are so because they are also slaves to biology. Even though women are seen as having no control because of their genetics they are still understood as evil, whereas Incels hating women are understood as justified because of their position which is determined through genetics and biology. This duality is an indicator that shows that while Incelism has roots in an understandable pain, stemming from the lack of certain social experiences, it has evolved into a highly misogynistic ideology removed from being simply a reaction to said pain. This belief that the social order stems from extra-human origins is however not something which is exclusively Incelist.

Freeden argues that the use of extra-human origins for permanent social orders is a common explanatory paradigm that has been used by Conservative political ideologies. Some examples are God, history, nature, and biology. Another common denominator between different Conservative ideological constructs is the idea that there is *unnatural* and *natural* change. Natural changes implies that it stems from continuous (slow) organic growth whereas the unnatural change consists of disjointed leaps, rapid and sudden change, threatening the allegedly natural social order. Only natural change is regarded as legitimate.²⁴² These two aspects of macro-Conservative thought are prevalent in the core concept of “the Natural” in Incelism. (Freeden uses the term “macro-ideology” to refer to the vast ideologies of the 20th century that offered solutions to all political issues confronting society, ideologies like macro-Liberalism, macro-Conservatism, and macro-Socialism.)²⁴³ These beliefs are visible through quotes such as:

In these modern times the social contract is no longer functioning, expecting men not to regress and go back to the days of rape and violence when the contract is no longer being enforced and/or adhered to, is what is truly outrageous, and not the acts themselves.²⁴⁴

“Women gain power because they're worshiped. If we went back to treating women as property we wouldn't have this problem.”²⁴⁵ Here similar ideas relating to the core concept of misogyny are also visible. Modernity, particularly high-modernity, has resulted in unnatural changes which have wreaked havoc on male-female and male-male relations and have allowed lookism and hypergamy

²⁴¹ Illouz 2013, p. 30.

²⁴² Freedon 2003, p. 88.

²⁴³ Freedon 2003, p. 78.

²⁴⁴ *Response To: “You’re Not Entitled To Sex”*, Incels.co.

²⁴⁵ *Women are insanely powerful*, Incels.co.

to go rampant. That this is happening is in a sense understood as natural because those aspects are seen as being a part of female nature, but the change in the social order is unnatural since men have grown weak and given women too much power by not treating them like property, which has allowed women to use their sexual market value to control men. The power dichotomy between men and women has unnaturally changed society from being androcentric to gynocentric.

Yes, it is male nature. The difference is that those things are not promoted or accepted by society. If males could do them without fear of repercussions, they would. We live in a gynocentric soyciety [A degenerate/"cucked"/bluepilled society] so females are allowed to display their nature with little restraint, that's all there is to it.²⁴⁶

This should be understood in the sense that the adjacent concept of anti-high modernity which was discussed in relation to the core concept of Misogyny is also an adjacent concept to the core concept of the natural: both core concepts coalesce heavily through this notion of anti-high modern sentiments.

7.1.5. Alienation – The rejected ones

Central to many, if not all, of the men in the Incel milieu, seem to be deep feelings of alienation, from society at large, but more centrally from the romantic realm. Loneliness, rejection, and isolation are common topics found throughout the threads which have been analyzed. “Isolation go hand to hand with rejection after many rejection [sic] you are FORCE [sic] by Society to isolate yourself to not lose your mind completely.”²⁴⁷, “[...] however, just thinking at the constant rejection and bullying incels receive daily from foids make me think otherwise.”²⁴⁸ A longer comment on this topic is posted by a user stating that:

Society rejects us by denying us the opportunity to experience one of the most basic pleasures that majority of people gets to experience, by structuring society in such a way that it benefits women at the cost of average/below average men, while expecting us not to reject society back? If society doesn't accept us, they shouldn't expect us to accept society. If there is no personal benefits in our civil obedience to society, then there should be no reason for us to maintain civility.²⁴⁹

Alienation is one of the key experiences of the contemporary Incel milieu, and it also takes the place as a core concept in the ideology of Incelism. These feelings of alienation from social and romantic life plays a key part in forming Incelism’s understandings of the world: “It's a perspective thing, which they will lack. You can't deprogram someone who has gone through the ABCs of life, make them understand what it's like to not have a pre-determined path to follow.”²⁵⁰ It is also seen

²⁴⁶ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

²⁴⁷ *Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victims*, Incels.co.

²⁴⁸ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

²⁴⁹ *Reponse To: "You're Not Entitled To Sex"*, Incels.co.

²⁵⁰ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

in the mantra of “it’s over”, there is no use in trying or hoping for something better because Incels believe that they will always be alien to these experiences.

The feelings of loneliness seemingly run deep. Many users have adopted the topic of loneliness into their usernames, something that indicates how these users understand and want to present themselves. Examples are *SadLonelySingle*, *Mogged Loner*, *Loner94*, *Antisocialloner*, and *Loneycel*. Therefore “loneliness”, a product of the feeling of societal and romantic alienation, takes the form of an adjacent concept to alienation. This loneliness should be understood as a part of the self-victimization and the self-understanding of the Incelist ingroup as a group suffering from collective victimization. Incelism is an ideology for the rejected, the ones who will never experience love and affection from people of the opposite sex. These conclusions are drawn by accepting the blackpill fully and believing that it is over for them. This does however also provide a framework for understanding the world and at the same time creates a sense of comradeship and strong homosocial ties between these men who have adopted the blackpill view of the world. However, accepting the blackpill and its “truths” seems to be a double-edged sword when it comes to alienation and loneliness. Someone acknowledging the ideas and thoughts in the blackpill understanding of the world will most likely self-alienate as the main idea is that it is already over. “Marrying in today’s day and age is cucked and any of you that happen to ascend in the future who do get married while knowing the blackpill, you deserve everything you’ll get.”²⁵¹ “No it’s not because “you haven’t met the right one” – it’s because you’re subhuman. When will ugly men realize?”²⁵²; “Lack of perception is why blackpilled normies will never be able to fully relate with us. We’ll never see things eye to eye, because a hint of bluepill will always be present within them.”²⁵³

That's not the blackpill. The blackpill is not an ideology you ignorant fuck! It's a scientific theory that explains human social dynamics objectively and based on observable evidence. It doesn't tell you what you should do, it tells you how things are.²⁵⁴

These are all examples of how the blackpill acts in a way that solidifies the experience of alienation and loneliness within the Incel milieu and for the followers of Incelism. When someone has awoken to the “truth” and fully accepted the blackpill as the basis for how the world and its inhabitants operate, it seems to be almost impossible for the user to find fulfillment within, or relate to, his society. At the same time, it does provide the person experiencing Inceldom with a guide for how to explain his feelings and experiences and provides both something to identify with and access to the Incel milieu. The acceptance of the blackpill therefore both closes the door to any acceptable forms of living in or experiencing society for the blackpilled but makes them a part of a closed ingroup community. There is a gnostic aspect in this extremely dualistic worldview and the blackpill

²⁵¹ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It’s Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

²⁵² *This is what every foid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

²⁵³ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

²⁵⁴ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.

should most definitely be seen as a form of esoteric knowledge. However, it is esoteric not in the sense that people must painstakingly work their way to the higher echelons of knowledge but rather in the way it demands the abandonment of all hope (and in its “biological” nature).

This feeling of alienation also results in a form of anti-capitalist and anti-Progressivist sentiments which both takes the form as separate adjacent concepts. Sentiments which were touched upon with the earlier discussion on “NEETs” which can be understood as a form of anti-capitalist and anti-Progressivist action and is therefore placed within the wider adjacent concepts of anti-capitalism and anti-Progressivism. People who work are often held in contempt and referred to as “wageslave” or “wagecuck”, derogatory terms for the dominant form of labor in capitalist societies, wage-labor. “Average man is a crippling lonely wagecuck with two childhood friends and a 7 year long dryspell [sic].”²⁵⁵

Foids most important qualities are youth and beauty. What do foids want? Provision (food, shelter). Protection (security, safety). Intimate relationships (with males that have the best genes a.k.a Chads). With the first two, for the most part taken care of the police and government (with your tax dollars cuck) leaves us with 1 thing – intimate relationships with Chads.²⁵⁶

In a city you see a woman with a nice ass walk by, she doesn't even notice you, you look at it, you smile a bit (not visibly enough for anyone to notice), you take it all in, you THINK about how good it would be to fuck her, then you go about your day, head off to your office job to wagecuck and treat it like a regular passing, WHEN IT ISN'T NORMAL AT ALL²⁵⁷

Here we return to an adjacent concept of hierarchy, the cuck, which finds its place next to not only hierarchy but also relates to anti-capitalism, anti-progressivism and alienation. The core concepts of alienation and hierarchy seem to coalesce here. Incels are alienated, oppressed, and at the bottom of the hierarchy. The collective group of victims as they understand themselves continues to be pummeled by the cruel state and society through not only alienating Incels from society and human experiences such as love, but expecting them to continue to produce and contribute to a society that gives nothing in return. By acting like a “cuck” one becomes a traitor to one's fellow Incels. The process of naming or giving something or someone a defamatory label brandishes them as enemies and makes them possible targets for violence.²⁵⁸ The “cuck” in relation to the adjacent concept of anti-capitalism and anti-progressivism is such a label to be put on those men, normies, and Incels, who are alienated from the lavish sexual lifestyle of the Chads and who are excluded or severely struggling in the sexual marketplace because of the actions of women. The modern welfare state which is understood as being run through Progressivism, female emancipation, and taxation indirectly makes this oppression possible. Being a “wagecuck” or “wageslave” does not only mean to act as a traitor to other Incels, but also that one is facilitating one's own suffering. In short, to

²⁵⁵ *Women are insanely powerful*, Incels.co.

²⁵⁶ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It's Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

²⁵⁷ *Response To: “You're Not Entitled To Sex”*, Incels.co.

²⁵⁸ Aho 1994, p. 28.

pay taxes is “low IQ”. Some users are very clear with their disdain and critiques against Liberalism and capitalism as the reason for their feelings of alienation and loneliness: “As social alienation has increased due to the dislocations wrought by liberal-capitalism, people have naturally become less capable of resolving disputes between themselves, and so have outsourced conflict resolutions to police officers and therapists and the like.”²⁵⁹

Truth is that Capitalism is one of the big reasons for our problems. Capitalism also promotes shallow women and their consumer culture. Capitalism exploits us. Socialism is when you get what you work for. Unlike capitalism where you get a part of what you work for and rest all is given to the "owner" Who are mostly chads and don't do any real productive work unless they are involved in marketing or something but even then they don't deserve to loot us. If society is being controlled by Chads, then capitalism is a big part enabling it. Capitalism also makes our life miserable and alienates us and also makes us feel useless. Soviet Union and China etc are just state capitalists. Welfare isn't socialism. Although welfare will be a part of it.²⁶⁰

Interestingly, the last quote provides one of the very few cases found of outspoken support for left-wing politics that are not simply about socialist-coded imagined redistribution of sexual resources (i.e., women). One user argues for why someone could be both blackpilled and socialists with the argument “Maybe because of NEETbux? [Unemployment payments] Or the principle of redistributing resources to those who have least, pussy being just another resource?”²⁶¹

Progressivism, or “the left”, has a similar role as capitalism in the Incelist understanding of their alienation. It is progressive social reforms, pushed forward by the left, which has caused many of the conditions under which Incels suffer. “Some ideas of the left are alright, you just have to remove them from the cancer that is their social views.”²⁶² “Far-left is the new standard, hence, wanting women to be stay-at-home-mothers is far-right.”²⁶³,

All this murderous fury of the BLM has its origins in the instruction of the Soviet dictator who, in the 1930s, ordered to give any racial conflict the meaning of an class struggle. When he instructed American communists to put aside the proletarians and instead try to win the support of the rich and the *beautiful* [authors italics] people, he created the world we live in today.²⁶⁴

While the argument that Stalin has direct influences over modern social strife’s within the US is not a mainstream argument within Incelism, the quotes above do however provide a good synopsis of the reasoning for how “Leftism” and “Progressivism” has played a part in creating the current anti-Incel society. The “social views” of the left can be analyzed through the term of political correctness, referring to the “ecoleftist” or “awareness raisers”, particularly when those are women or female politicians. Critiques against political correctness embody critiques against anti-racist,

²⁵⁹ *Therapists are the capitalist equivalents of KGB informants*, Incels.co.

²⁶⁰ *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

²⁶¹ *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

²⁶² *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

²⁶³ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

²⁶⁴ *Why billionaires finance the left? Are they retarded?*, Incels.co.

queer, and feminist politics.²⁶⁵ These seem to be the same aspects that Incelism focuses on, with feminism being the major source of critique. These types of critiques are found in other milieus and ideologies as well, such as the white identarian movements within Finland which Keskinen's article focuses on. The next part of the thesis analysis will now shift the focus from Incelism's construction to its relation to other ideologies.

7.2. You've got a friend in me? – Analyzing Incelism's relations to historical and contemporary ideological constructs

The attention now turns to Incelism and its relation to other ideologies and ideological milieus. The following chapter is devoted to the thesis sub-questions:

- How does Incelism's core, adjacent and peripheral concepts correlate to historical, particularly far-right, ideological constructs?
- How does Incelism's core, adjacent and peripheral concepts correlate to contemporary, particularly far-right, ideological constructs?

The comparison with other ideologies will be based upon previous research. Freedden's work will also here be used heuristically, and since not all previous research perceive ideologies as semantic fields the way Freedden does, this thesis will when possible reframe the cited works to fit the Freeddenian vocabulary in order to make the comparison more systematic, and thereby the differences and similarities clearer. The following discussion will be divided into two subheadings focusing on negative and positive relations respectively between Incelism and other ideological positions.

7.2.1. The "cucked" systems – Socialism, Liberalism and Conservatism

The three macro-ideological constructs of Socialism, Liberalism, and Conservatism are the three main ideologies that Incelism opposes. The similarity between the three of them, from the perspective of Incelism, is that they represent the ideologies of the "status quo", or the establishment. Socialism and Liberalism are, as indicated in previous chapters, regarded as the main ideological foes of Incelism. In the following, the reasons for the hostility against Liberalism will be discussed, and then what in Socialism Incels object to and loathe. To conclude an analysis of Incelism's relationship to Conservatism will be performed.

Liberalism and the results of its many victories in the Western world after the Cold War are in Incelism understood as a major reason for their suffering. In most strains of Liberalism individualism, liberty, and progress serve as mutually dependent core concepts. The individual is

²⁶⁵ Keskinen 2013, pp. 228–229.

the main unit of analysis.²⁶⁶ Illouz argues that it is similar ideas to these, the individual as the central unit, that form the basis of modern love and relationships, and that the market of love has become de-regulated just as the financial market and the economy in general.²⁶⁷ The concepts that forms the core of Liberalism thus goes against what Incelism stands for and the triumph of Liberalism is for many Incelists the explanation for their life experience and societal position. Examples are found in previously discussed quotes such as “Women gain power because they’re worshipped. If we went back to treating women as property we wouldn’t have this problem.”²⁶⁸ “This. This is where it all went wrong. Letting women into college, letting women get jobs.”²⁶⁹ “Mildly unrelated but anything after the 18th century was a mistake.”²⁷⁰ Progress is in this context understood as something negative, resulting in a deviation from tradition and what is “normal”. It is the realization of Liberal ideas and ideals that have caused the perceived collective victimization of all Incels. The rejection of and hostility against the Liberal core concepts place Incelists and Incelism in direct conflict with Liberalism and its results. In Freeden’s understanding of thin ideologies such ideological morphologies can be sheltered within larger host ideologies, Nationalism for instance often finds refuge in Conservative or Fascist ideologies.²⁷¹ Incelism cannot, and does not want to, find refuge within Liberalism since the very cores of both ideology's semantic fields are in conflict. It also seems unlikely that someone would be both a Liberal and an Incelist given the fact that the two ideologies have such incompatible cores. This incompatibility of Incelism and Liberalism should be read through Campbell's concept of the cultic milieu and his description of the seekers in that milieu and their interrelationship where seekers are willing to sample ideas from the unorthodox knowledge from different groups as long as those groups' core beliefs do not differ too much from the seeker's own core.²⁷² With the major differences between the cores of traditional Liberalism and Incelism, such sampling between the groups seem improbable if not outright impossible not least because the incompatibility and vastly oppositional cores of the two ideologies implies that Liberalism most probably views Incelism as a foe as well.

The second macro-ideological construct that Incelism has a strong oppositional and hostile relationship to is Socialism. However, its core seems to have more in common with Incelism and the understandings of a number of societal phenomena in the Incel milieu than with Liberalism. The emphasis on the collective rather than the individual, the focus on class as a group experiencing alienation from social and material goods, as well as a passion for equality, are all common features between the two ideologies.²⁷³ In Incelism, there is a hatred of the individualization of the romantic

²⁶⁶ Freeden 1996, pp. 144–145.

²⁶⁷ Illouz 2013, pp. 79–80.

²⁶⁸ *Women are insanely powerful*, Incels.co.

²⁶⁹ *This is what every foid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.

²⁷⁰ *Why billionaires finance the left? Are they retarded?*, Incels.co.

²⁷¹ Freeden 2003, p. 99.

²⁷² Kaplan & Lööv 2002, pp. 3–6.

²⁷³ Freeden 2003, p. 83.

and sexual market where individuals' desires have come to surpass love and sex for everyone regardless of their looks. This aversion to the deregulation of the market for sex and romance resembles the Socialist aversion to the deregulation of the economy and its consequences. Furthermore, Incels regard themselves as a collective where ingroup support and identification with the larger Incel collective is important. Alienation and equality are also concepts that play an important role in the morphology of Incelism. However, the similarities are superficial; the above-mentioned concepts are understood in vastly different ways in Socialism and Incelism respectively. While alienation in Incelism does relate to material factors as well, it revolves primarily around social, romantic, and sexual interactions with people of the opposite sex. Ideas of equality exist, but it is male-exclusive equality where every man should show solidarity towards their fellow (Incel) man by controlling the "female resources" to make sure to divide these resources fairly between themselves. It is thus a solidarity based upon an exploitation of another group and although there are examples of this phenomenon in labor history these phenomena were not theoretically justified in the Socialist tradition. In Incelism, however, they are. Male solidarity is explicitly meant to subjugate the women. Similarly, the main collectives differ greatly. Both Socialism and Incelism focus on the haves and the have nots but this is also where the similarities end. The Socialist division goes between capitalists and workers and concerns the control and the lack of control of the means of production,²⁷⁴ whereas in Incelism there is a division between women, their willing subservient men, Chads, and Incels. Incelism is thus a completely different ideology than macro-Socialism. Welfare, one of the core concepts within macro-Socialism, is also perceived as something vehemently "cucked" by Incelism.

Foids most important qualities are youth and beauty. What do foids want? Provision (food, shelter). Protection (security, safety). Intimate relationships (with males that have the best genes a.k.a Chads). With the first two, for the most part taken care of the police and government (with your tax dollars cuck) leaves us with 1 thing – intimate relationships with Chads.²⁷⁵

But lets [sic] say just for arguments sake socialism works like its [sic] supposed to. Most of these entitlement and welfare programs are overwhelmingly beneficial to foids. Its super cucked to expect the taxpayer to support these degenerate whores while they ride the cock carousel. The only way I can see supporting socialism as a incel is if you just want to accelerate the downfall of soyciety.²⁷⁶

All forms of Socialism entail the ambition to achieve some sort of high standard of welfare for all humans,²⁷⁷ meaning that it is in direct conflict with the Incelism understanding. The main difference here has to do with Incelism's understanding of two interrelated aspects discussed above, namely where the conflict lines in society are found and to whom solidarity should be extended. While

²⁷⁴ Freedden 1996, p. 442.

²⁷⁵ *The Blackpill Manual – Reasons Why It's Over and Answers*, Incels.co.

²⁷⁶ *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

²⁷⁷ Freedden 1996, p. 427.

being a NEET and accepting welfare in the form of unemployment benefits as a way to reject society and drain its resources makes it unproblematic for Incelists to accept welfare, contributing to other people's welfare is seen as something "cucked". Incelists do not want to cooperate with every worker, nor with every man. They can only cooperate with those who adhere to the enlightened red- or blackpill understandings of the world as the bluepill brainwashes men from seeing the "truth". Therefore, the ideas about a collective of workers in Socialism make it incompatible with Incelism, and, similarly to Liberalism, it is understood as a macro-ideological construct that is oppositional to Incelism and its ideological core. If we return to Campbell's theory of the cultic milieu and Freedden's understanding of thin ideologies the incompatibility between Socialism and Incelism becomes clearer. Incelism rejects borrowing ideological concepts from Socialism, more than in name, nor is it willing to use it as a host. The incompatibility is further showcased by the fact that there are hardly any outspoken Incel-Socialists.

The core worldview of any blackpilled Incel is that female hypergamy and lookism combined with the emancipation women have experienced in the Western world have created the situation where it is over for Incels. Therefore, the core of both macro-Liberalism and macro-Socialism goes against the Incelists worldview as well as the core of Incelism. If we are to look at these ideologies on a left-right scale it seems like everything in the center or left of center is completely rejected by Incelists as viable ideological allies or ideologies to borrow concepts or plans of action from. While macro-Conservatism is understood as an ideology in opposition to Incelism, there does seem to exist some overlaps in concepts between the two ideological morphologies.

While the macro-ideologies of Socialism and Liberalism are cut off from Incelism because their cores are too different, Incelism's connection and adaptability to Conservatism seem to be a contested subject in Incelism. Conservatism, sometimes referred to as Traditionalism, is for sure critiqued throughout the forum discussions. "Progressives aren't the only blue pill simpes, trad [traditionalists] cucks are also bluepilled."²⁷⁸ "how can you be Incel and beleife [sic] in the "just pull yourself up by your bootstraps bro" Ideology. Conservative Ideology is just a giant blue pill. it makes zero sense for an Incel to believe in that."²⁷⁹ and

Also, you're conflating conservatism with capitalism. One is a political ideology with the focus on traditionalism (blue-pillled cope), the other is an economic system (blackpilled because it recognizes that we are unequal).²⁸⁰

Criticism against Conservatism and its alleged focus on "tradition" seem to originate in the notion that its followers are "bluepilled". They have not been awoken to the harsh truths of the red- and, particularly, blackpill. However, there does not seem to be a complete incomparability between the

²⁷⁸ *Racism is natural and anti-racism is inherently cucked*, Incels.co.; Most often spelled "Simp/s", used in similar ways as "cuck".

²⁷⁹ *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

²⁸⁰ *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

cores of Incelism and Conservatism as is the case with macro-Liberalism and -Socialism. The core concept of the “natural” in Incelism reveals the existence of some overlap between the cores of Incelism and Conservatism. Conservatism is not primarily an ideology of maintaining the status quo, but an ideology that argues for “naturally ordained change” meaning that it has occurred without human interference. “Unnatural change” is understood as being caused unnaturally by human actions.²⁸¹

In these modern times the social contract is no longer functioning, expecting men not to regress and go back to the days of rape and violence when the contract is no longer being enforced and/or adhered to, is what is truly outrageous, and not the acts themselves.²⁸²

The idea cherished in Incelism is that an unnatural change has occurred, resulting in the collapse of the social contract between men, as argued in the quote above, which has resulted in the creation of the gynocentric society.

Yes, it is male nature. The difference is that those things are not promoted or accepted by society. If males could do them without fear of repercussions, they would. We live in a gynocentric society so females are allowed to display their nature with little restraint, that's all there is to it.²⁸³

The idea of “male nature” is also a common denominator between macro-Conservatism and Incelism. The use of “extra-human” explanations for the social order, explanations that transcend the human such as religion, biology, history, etc., is common in Conservatism.²⁸⁴ This understanding of an “extra-human” origin of the social order is deeply rooted in Incelism, with both the redpill and blackpill worldviews putting forward the argument that genetic determinism explains female and male behavior, especially in sexual selection.²⁸⁵

While similarities exist between Incelism and macro-Conservatism they are still in opposition. Incelism argues for a radical change of society, and the only way which is advocated in order to achieve such change is through direct action and violence such as “going ER”. Elliot Rodger and Alek Minassian hoped that their attacks would invoke inspiration and ultimately lead to a “beta uprising” where the oppressed men of society would rise, resulting in either a return to the perceived golden age of the pre-modern era or at least the pre-1960’s or the creation of a new male-supremacist society.²⁸⁶ It might sound hypocritical that an ideology that rails against “unnatural” human-induced change would also see such change as the only way to “fix” society, and in a sense it is. But it should be understood through the idea that radical action is the only way to turn society “natural” again. It is here that macro-Conservatism comes to clash with Incelism. Conservatism is

²⁸¹ Freedden 1996, pp. 332–333.

²⁸² *Response To: “You’re Not Entitled To Sex”*, Incels.co.

²⁸³ *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

²⁸⁴ Freedden 1996, p. 334.

²⁸⁵ Ging 2019, p. 649.

²⁸⁶ Baele et al. 2019, p. 17; Hoffman et al. 2020, p. 575.

in many ways an ideology that contains reactive techniques to maintain the current social order. Firstly, it is mainly a dormant ideology but is awoken when confronted by opposing ideologies. Secondly, it develops a counter-set of conceptual configurations to direct against whatever is seen as threatening the social order. For example, when Fascists resorted to street violence in the 1930s, Conservatism (although not all Conservative politicians or parties) fell back on the constitution and rule of law.²⁸⁷ While similarities exist between the core of macro-Conservatism and adjacent concepts and Incelism's semantic field, there are also core-differences.

This oppositional relationship primarily concerns Incelism and what can be labeled mainstream- or neo-Conservatism. Within the Conservatism of the 2000s more radical movements have formalized. Angela Nagle argues that in modern Conservatism contemporary neo-Conservatives are often shunned as “cuckservatives” by the Alt-right. Furthermore, Nagle argues that the creation and establishment of the Alt-right should be understood as a direct reaction to establishment US Conservatism.²⁸⁸ It seems that Conservatism is seen as not doing enough, and this could also explain Incelism's opposition to macro- or mainstream Conservatism. While their core concepts in some ways align, those Conservative ideological movements are not doing enough. This has resulted in Incelism leaning towards and agreeing more with the radical articulations of contemporary Conservatism. In the following chapter, the connections and relationships of Incelism to the Alt-right and the far-right milieu at large will be discussed further.

7.2.2. The “based” systems – The Alt-right, Fascism and National socialism – Incelism and the far-right

The contemporary concept of the Incel has always had a rather close relation to contemporary forms of far-right thinking and ideological organization. The signifiers that characterize the contemporary Incel milieu such as its beta-masculinity, hate towards Chads, virulent misogyny, perceived victimhood, and self-deprecation were formulated on the same online forums on which the Alt-right movement constituted itself and found its form and expressions, particularly the web forum 4chan.²⁸⁹ The language used in Incel-communities, and the Manosphere at large, is also shared with the Alt-right movement. The concept of the blue- and redpill exists in all of these movements and are of vital importance for their understanding of the world, but the blackpill is more or less exclusively Incel-related.²⁹⁰ However, sharing an online space and terminology does not necessarily imply a correlation between the two. A monarchist and a Jacobin having separate ideological discussions in the same coffee-house in Paris during the 18th century would not imply

²⁸⁷ Freedden 2003, pp. 88–89.

²⁸⁸ Nagle 2017, pp. 59, 66.

²⁸⁹ Ging 2019, p. 650; Nagle 2017, pp. 13–16.

²⁹⁰ Ging 2019, p. 645; Hoffman et al. 2020, p. 568; Munn 2019, p. 4.

that there existed a relation between them other than that space. Incelism and the Alt-right do however share key ideological concepts, for instance, anti-feminism which most probably acts as an adjacent or core concept within the Alt-right's ideological field.²⁹¹ Furthermore, there are organizational similarities between the ideology of Incelism and the Alt-right. Incelism is an online community with shared beliefs, and according to Main the Alt-right can be described in a similar way. It constitutes a form of ideological construct rather than a singular political movement, an ideology that is centered on white racialism, vitriolic rhetoric, shifting white people's allegiance from the USA to the white race, and the rejection of liberal democracy.²⁹² Incelism does however not only share connections and similarities with contemporary ideological constructs of the far-right but also older such constructs.

Mosse argues that with the rise of Fascism, the history of masculinity reached its climax. Manliness transcended everyday life and was turned into a national symbol. Fascism did not reinvent masculinity, it only embellished and expanded aspects of masculinity that had always been present, giving it a vital role in all Fascist regimes as a living example of the nation.²⁹³ There also exists a preoccupation within Fascism with the human, and especially the male, body. The cultivation of the male body is a hallmark of masculinity in modernity when compared to earlier forms of masculinity, which also reached its climax with Fascism. As Mosse puts it; "The new man's body represented his mind as well."²⁹⁴ These Fascistic ways of thinking about masculinity and the male body are present within Incelism and the blackpill, but with a different hue. Lookism, as has been discussed at length, is understood as the key cause for Inceldom. The male body is therefore of great importance as it is from the body that looks, good or bad, are derived. This often results in discussions of what is the most central feature of the male body for attracting women. Muscles, skin color, face, height, hand size, wrist size? A common way in which Incels.co users try to argue for their perspective is through "Tinder experiments" which entails using the online dating app Tinder to "match" with as many women as possible as a case study for proving what is the most important feature for attracting women. An example of this is the user *Framecel222* who created a Tinder profile with a single image of a very muscular man but who the user argues has an unattractive face. "2.5/10 face, [...] If you TRULY believe that physique doesn't matter, you will expect him to get zero matches".²⁹⁵ This experiment sparked heated discussions with users taking vastly different positions, but with two main camps forming which can be summarized by the two quotes: "If there is one thing this does prove is that stacies value masculinity over facial harmony."²⁹⁶ and "Gymceling is cope. The only humans obsessed with muscles are homosexual

²⁹¹ Main 2018, pp. 4, 8; Munn 2019, p. 8; Nagle 2017, pp. 16, 59.

²⁹² Main 2018, pp. 7–8.

²⁹³ Mosse 1996, p. 155.

²⁹⁴ Mosse 1996, p. 160.

²⁹⁵ [Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH], Incels.co.

²⁹⁶ [Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH], Incels.co.

men. Just lol @ your pathetic matches including one specifically making fun of the gymcel's face."²⁹⁷ What is present within both camps, regardless if they believe in the supremacy of the masculine body over the masculine face or vice versa, is the centrality of the masculine. Incelism does not care about the nation, manliness is the symbol of Incelism. Because of female hypergamy which is allegedly allowed to run rampant in the high modern progressive capitalist society where the Incels are rejected as romantic and sexual partners because of their body's lack of masculine traits, the masculine becomes of utmost importance within Incelism. There is also an argument to be made that Incelists themselves in a way believe in the concept that a strong body is proof of a strong and righteous soul, but mainly in the sense that other people believe that. "Attractive men have a halo that prevents them from anyone thinking they can do wrong, just like women. Only ugly men can do wrong."²⁹⁸ This quote highlights a sentiment that is found in a plethora of the discussion threads analyzed. That if you reach a certain threshold of good looks people, particularly women, will perceive you as being an intrinsically better person. Because Incels and Incelists believe that it is their lack of looks that makes women fully reject them and view Incels as horrid creatures, while at the same time longing for the beautiful men which Incelists believe are more often bad people: "As usual foids engage in mental gymnastics to shift the blame to low status men for the bad behaviors of high-status men."²⁹⁹ This implies that Incelism seems to hold the belief that looks, masculine looks that is, holds the key to a good life. Because not only do women want to have sex with the most traditionally masculine good-looking men but also because those men are seen as possessing a better mind. Therefore, Incelism seems to have accepted the conclusion that better looks communicates a higher inner worth as Mosse argues it is perceived.³⁰⁰ Men will be viewed as a person of higher inner and moral worth if they are masculine and beautiful. "the blackpill suggests that looks are the primary driving force, and that even looks will determine how much money you will most likely make".³⁰¹ Incelism does not only theorize on and discuss the topic of the masculine and masculinity, but it also focuses on masculinities counterpart; femininity.

One user argues that the reason Incels hate most women is because of their femininity. "You hate most females because they're feminine. Or in other words, you despise femaleness itself. Unless you're a cuck."³⁰² This is a plausible argument for why Incelists have a seemingly innate hatred for women. What defines any Incel is the lack of sex and love, stemming from their position at the very bottom of the male looks-hierarchy. A position that is pre-determined because of their lack of masculine looks. Similar to how Mosse argues that masculinity plays a key role in Fascism as a national symbol, it also plays a key role in Incelism as the masculine physique refers to success

²⁹⁷ [Tinder Experiment] Ugly gymcel gets hot Tinder matches! [Spicy thread] [GTFIH], Incels.co.; Gymceling means the act of trying to "ascend" by gaining muscle mass.

²⁹⁸ *Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming*, Incels.co.

²⁹⁹ *Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming*, Incels.co.

³⁰⁰ Mosse 1996, p. 27.

³⁰¹ *Whats your most controversial blackpilled opinion*, Incels.co.

³⁰² *Most retarded Arguments on this forum*, Incels.co.

in general. The antithesis to masculinity is femininity and it seems that Incelists might be afraid that their lack of masculinity will make them be viewed as feminine. They must therefore viciously and violently reject femineity in its entirety to prove that they are masculine. That they are men. Sometimes paradoxically even rejecting the idea of relations with women altogether to make sure that this rejection of all femininity is abundantly clear. “I’m not interested in toilets and I don’t think a gf [Girlfriend] is needed to live a fulfilling life.”³⁰³ Here a comparison can be made between Incelism and the *Freikorps* which Theweleit have studied. Even though Incelism has as its focus the want for women, that often seem to be of secondary importance. What is instead often most important is the fellow man, the fellow Incel. The ingroup in of itself is more important than the shared goal, and this importance and obsession with the fellow man, the fellow soldier in the *Freikorps*,³⁰⁴ is a stark similarity between the two different movements. Women are only discussed in mainly vague terms, whereas the discussion on men are profound and deeply explore male beauty and similar topics. Similar to von Lettow Vorbeck,³⁰⁵ Incelism often puts the women in the margins whereas the men are put at the forefront. The rejection of femininity could also explain why homosexual men are not welcomed on the forum. It could be that their rejection of heterosexual love is understood by Incels as removing them from the sphere of masculinity altogether, resulting in the risk that they will be understood as feminine. Turning them into a group which Incelism cannot ally with as that could result in the risk of being viewed as feminine by association A risk which becomes especially pungent with the Incel focus on male-beauty, which is understood by themselves as strictly homosocial, never homosexual.

Similarities are not only found between Incelism and the *Freikorps*, but also with the Italian Futurists of the interwar years. The Futurists were a political and avant-garde art movement that embraced nationalism and ideas of inherent virtue in fighting for the fatherland, while at the same time embracing modernity fully and seeking to tear manliness, violence, and anger lose from its historical connections of which more conventional nationalist movements has bound them to.³⁰⁶ Men, it were argued, should also free themselves from the icons of the bourgeoisie such as family and the love of women, as loving them meant becoming their servants.³⁰⁷ While it is in high-modernity in which the pain and suffering of Incels are understood as having reached its current climax, it is not modernity per se that is to blame. Some aspects of modernity should be changed, such as the social relation between men and women and the political and social emancipation that women have gained, as well a return to the norm of monogamy and re-instating virginity as a trait which should be praised; “and neither men nor women should be shamed for being virgin; they

³⁰³ *Whats your most controversial blackpilled opinion*, Incels.co.

³⁰⁴ Theweleit 1995, pp. 65, 71–73.

³⁰⁵ Theweleit 1995, pp. 22–25, 28.

³⁰⁶ Mosse 1996, p. 156.

³⁰⁷ Mosse 1996, p. 157.

should be praised for it.”³⁰⁸ The aspects of modernity that are truly hated are female rights and what Illouz has described as the individualization of the romantic market. The call for a return to tradition is not related to God, king or country, it is a call for stronger male dominance over women. A good summary of what Incelism’s main goal constitutes is provided by the user *CrackingYs*:

If inceldom grows exponentially over the next 100 years and causes the collapse of society, civil wars, nuclear holocaust, it's entirely possible that inceldom could become a pseudo-religion [sic] and political ideology. Imagine the kind of change that would be possible if a majority of men were incels and elected an incel to be the president and a neo-incel-fascist movement sweeps the country and they abolish women's rights and restore peace and order.³⁰⁹

The idea is that women must be controlled by abolishing their rights. From that, peace and order will follow that could then lead to an era where the degenerate and out-of-control world can be restored to its former glory. Modernity is not in opposition to those goals. It is instead a central aspect of the Incel milieu. It is through modernity’s technological advancements which this milieu has been created and can continue to congregate. Incels are *online*, and as it has been discussed the Incel phenomena are by some understood as only a set of online meeting places for a global audience.³¹⁰ The issues which Incelism has towards modernity are not about modernity in itself, but against how it is employed. Social media for example is not understood as problematic because it is some “unnatural” space of interaction disconnected from the “real” life. Instead, the problem revolves around the perception that it is created for women and Chads, with Incels being excluded.³¹¹ When modern technology is used for Incels, as Incels.co is an example of, it is good as it provides a safe haven for Incels compared to the rest of the internet which is perceived as, mainly, a space for the bluepilled of the world.³¹² These views of technology as something good, but being tethered to and dominated by the enemy, are also present in National Socialist and *völkisch* traditions. National Socialism is dedicated to the liberation of technology from Jewish materialism and monetary domination and also contains a form of selective anti-capitalism.³¹³ These are similar ideas and arguments found within Incelism where modern technology is also perceived as being under the domination of the enemy, the “bluepilled” society; “What would be the point of logging onto a forum for incels and hearing about guys getting laid and comparing how attractive they are? If I want to see shit like that I'll go on literally any other website.”³¹⁴

In continuing with the comparison between Incelism, the Futurists, and what Jeffrey Herf labels Reactionary Modernism, it seems that Incelist’s share the Futurist’s want to tear violence from its

³⁰⁸ *Virgin shaming causes way more rape, sexual assault and rape culture than slut shaming*, Incels.co.

³⁰⁹ *Whats your opinion on ER?*, Incels.co.

³¹⁰ Fernquist et al. 2020, pp. 1, 5.

³¹¹ *Social media and dating apps have killed more men than both world wars combined*, Incels.co.

³¹² *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

³¹³ Herf 1984, pp. 192–194.

³¹⁴ *Should blackpilled non-incels be allowed on the forum?*, Incels.co.

historical and pre-modern connections. Not only does this deepen Incelism's connections to the Futurists but also furthers the divide between Incelism and macro-Conservative thought. The Futurist ideas of speed and acceleration are clearly in an oppositional nature to macro-Conservatism and particularly the idea to tear violence from history to hopefully reach rapid radical change, within macro-Conservatism "Revolution is criminalized, utopianism ridiculed."³¹⁵ Within Incelism the 18th- and 19th centuries seem to encapsulate the image of a more "natural" social order and the relation between women and men, but not all of those aspects from the 18th and 19th are brought into Incelism. The aristocratic tradition of the chivalric duel between two men, ritualized during the 1500s and with a revival during the 1800s, contained ideas of honor, individual standing, and dignity. It was used as a way to symbolize ideal masculinity and show one's honor.³¹⁶ Incelism's understanding of modern violence and how it should be performed aligns more with thinkers within the German Reactionary Modernist tradition. Ernst Jünger's appraisal, and combination, of intellectualism and nihilism through statements such as "to live is to kill" (not very far away from notions found in threads on Incels.co arguing that "to be born is to suffer."³¹⁷) and that technology was the instrument for nihilistic engagement, arguing that it is something obeying the "laws of the bloods" not laws of physics.³¹⁸ Technology was for Jünger bound with destiny and sacrifice, providing material for the great modern spectacle of martyrdom and sacrifice.³¹⁹ In the Incel milieu technology seems to play a similar role. It allows users to engage with each other to encourage them to try and ignite the "beta uprising" and strike back against their perceived foes. Technology is not simply a tool for a modern spectacle of martyrdom, but it is also an enabler and an arena for said martyrdom. It becomes a tool for Incelism to act according to its core concept of Direct action. Incelists tend to share a similar view on violence as justified if done to their perceived victimizers. "I like what he [Elliot Rodger] stands for more than what he was. What he stands for: Incels giving retribution to society for the many years of mistreatment and torture of ugly, sexually unsuccessful [sic] men."³²⁰ "What he [Elliot Rodger] did was self-defense, he didn't initiate anything. The day of retribution was completely avoidable, and he delayed it by an entire year to give Isla Vista one last chance. Instead they threw him off that ledge and laughed at him."³²¹ There are no preconceptions of chivalric, aristocratic, or noble violence. Incelism seems to view the usage of violence similarly to how Breivik thought it needs to be employed, that it needs to be shocking, brutal and spectacularly used against "traitors" to increase societal polarization to hopefully result

³¹⁵ Freedden 2003, p. 89.

³¹⁶ Mosse 1996, pp. 17–19.

³¹⁷ *Life is barbaric suffering / prolonged torture, for us*, Incels.co.

³¹⁸ Herf 1984, pp. 74, 76.

³¹⁹ Herf 1984, p. 84.

³²⁰ *Whats your opinion on ER?*, Incels.co.

³²¹ *Whats your opinion on ER?*, Incels.co.

in revolutionary change brought forward by more violence and war.³²² As Breivik used violence to show that he defended his perceived ideal Europe, Rodger seems to have used it to validate his masculinity and punish those who had been more successful within the gendered hegemonic power structure. It can also be seen as a way to police, punish and subjugate women in a way that has been referred to as “misogynistic honor terrorism”.³²³ This punishment done to women is not only physical but also performed through the technological realm within which the Incel milieu resides.

A good example is the previously discussed forum thread in which the user *BummerDrummer* describes harassing a woman during her last days alive as she is dying of cancer through sending countless e-mails, text messages and constantly calling her phone to make sure that no one can reach her with uplifting messages or last good-byes. “I hope I gave you extra stress so you died faster. I haven’t felt this good in years. [...] Die painfully and rot in hell.”³²⁴ For users to post their hatred, what they wish to do, upcoming actions, or what they have done seems to be a common theme among many, if not all, Incel and Incelists who commit violence. Rodger and Beierle both posted numerous videos to YouTube expressing their misogynistic world view and both Minassian and Beierele expressed their support for Rodger online before their attacks.³²⁵ These examples show how technology for Incelism is both an enabler and an arena for martyrdom and the spectacle it entails. The spectacle which comes with the violence and attacks against Incelism’s enemies seems to be just as important, if not more so, than the violence itself.

Lastly, through analyzing some of the users on Incels.co the connections between ideological positions within the far-right milieu and Incelism becomes even clearer. This will be performed with two previously discussed concepts in mind. Firstly, the cultic milieu and its class of seekers and secondly, fringe-fluidity which refers to an individual’s journey from one form of violent extremism to another. Argued to occur because of extremist personalities of the individual, that a person’s threshold for violent extremism is lowered after adhering to a form, or if two different forms of extremism share a common enemy.³²⁶ What is possible to see is that many users have adopted the language and/or symbolism of the far-right into their profiles as a way to present themselves on the Incels.co forum. Some users have chosen images of far-right individuals as their profile picture. Examples are *turbocuckcel_7000* who has used an image of Dylann Roof in April 2020³²⁷ who murdered 9 at a historically black church in a racist motivated attack,³²⁸ as well as Adolf Hitler in August 2020.³²⁹ *Pixycel* who uses the image of Sergey Taboritsky,³³⁰ a Russian émigré who

³²² Gardell 2014, p. 145.

³²³ Witt 2020, p. 686.

³²⁴ *Dumb bitch who rejected me died today*, Incels.co.

³²⁵ Hoffman et al. 2020, pp. 569–570.

³²⁶ Gartenstein-Ross & Blackman 2019, pp. 1–2.

³²⁷ *The Nazis Were Not Our Friends*, Incels.co.

³²⁸ Alperen 2017, p. 79.

³²⁹ *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.

³³⁰ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

worked for Nazi Germany's department for émigré affairs to create a corps of Russian Fascist translators and intelligence agents,³³¹ and *WaveDragon1683* who uses an image of Anders Behring Breivik and has posted a comment stating that only one form of Socialism works, followed by a large picture of Adolf Hitler.³³² These are not the only occurrences of far-right people or symbols being used as profile pictures, but examples of a wider trend. Each user can also display a short signature which is seen next to their username when commenting on a thread, which some users use to show their support for, or adherence to, far-right ideologies, groups, or individuals. Examples are the user *San Salvador* who has "U.S.T.A.Š.A_M.A.X.I.N.G.",³³³ referring to the Croatian Fascist Ustaša movement who committed numerous atrocities during the Second world war in the Balkans,³³⁴ or *ElliotRodgerHere* who simply has "National Socialist"³³⁵ as a signature. There are also many examples of users promoting or arguing far-right talking points and ideas. *BummerDrummer* is one of the most common of those users found in the source material, an example is his argument that:

On this forum, like any other forum or community, there are progressive agents of judaism present in order to dissuade white incels (and incels in general) from the far right. [...] and this is going to be a launching point into another thread about why all incels should join the bulwark against progressivism and why all incels should have far right leanings.³³⁶

Other examples are the users *ItsOver4cel* who writes in response to a thread title referencing the holocaust: "you mean holohoax?"³³⁷ or *Mountainbikecel* who has copied an entire page from the Christchurch shooters manifesto "The Great Replacement" arguing that "Green nationalism is the only true nationalism".³³⁸

What these examples of users presenting themselves through far-right iconography, descriptions, or arguing for far-right ideological goals and ideas show is that the connection between the Incel milieu at large and the far-right milieu runs deep. While not seemingly the majority of users, many users are openly advocating for or presenting themselves as far-right on the forum. In comparison the numbers of users who seem to have adopted any form of either left or far-left politics are minuscule.³³⁹ Many of the far-right users have engaged in discussions that have formed the foundation of Incelism, as well as seemingly adhered to some, or all, of the core

³³¹ Wylie 2010, p. 87.

³³² *How can you be blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co.

³³³ *Whats your most controversial blackpilled opinion*, Incels.co.

³³⁴ Dulić 2006, pp. 258–259.

³³⁵ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

³³⁶ *Biggest arguments here against white nationalism/fascism/far right ideologies*, Incels.co.

³³⁷ *Rejection&Isolation is way worse than Holocaust victims*, Incels.co.

³³⁸ *Why billionaires finance the left? Are they retarded?*, Incels.co.

³³⁹ The user *Stalin* who uses an image of Stalin as a profile picture, *This is what every fooid thinks about ugly men*, Incels.co.; The user *rabitter* having a profile picture with Soviet symbolism and the description text "Incel Blanquist", *Gentlemen, give it up for @itsOVER*, Incels.co.; and the user *Slimsbady* who argues that "Socialism is when you get what you work for", *How can you blackpill or incel and be a socialist?*, Incels.co; These three users are the few examples of users employing left-wing signifiers or arguing for left-wing politics found in the source material.

concepts of the ideology. What these shows are clear examples that the similarities between Incelism and other ideological constructs on the far-right are major enough to not only hypothetically facilitate members to sample from both groups, but that a sharing of members has already occurred. What this means is that it is very possible to be Alt-right, a Fascist, a “green Nationalist” or a White Supremacist as well as an Incelist.

8. Conclusions – The ideology of Incelism and its relation to macro-Ideologies and the far-right

The conclusions chapter will first discuss the main question regarding the ideological field of Incelism and its semantic field, what the conclusions and results are and how the field is constructed. The second part will discuss Incelism’s connections to other ideological constructs and what results can be found from that part of the analysis. Lastly, there will be some more final concluding remarks and suggestions for future research.

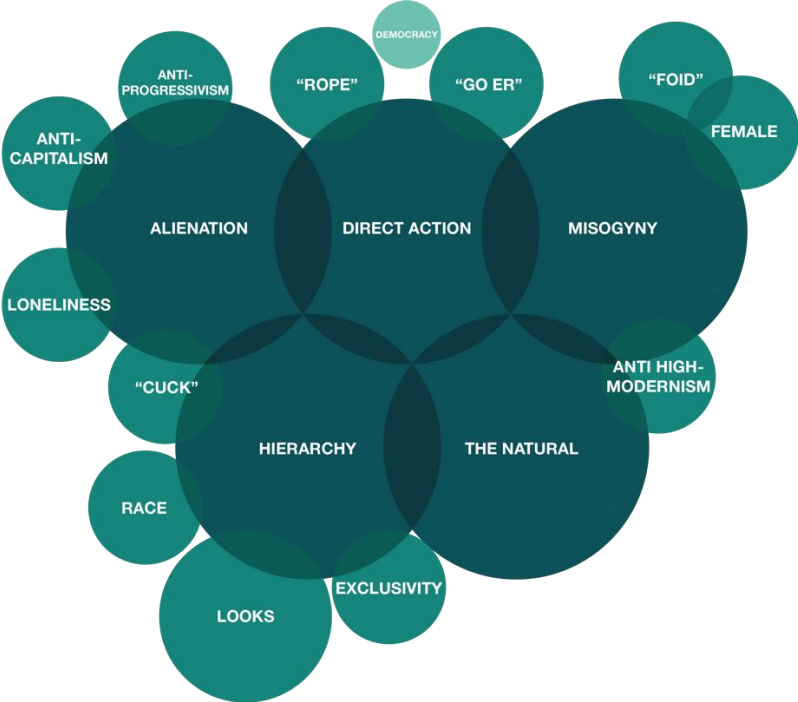
8.1. The ideological field of Incelism

The main question of this thesis concerns the construction of Incelism, understood through the morphology of ideologies designed by Michael Freeden who argues that an ideology is constructed in a similar vein to a semantic field. The question which has guided the analysis is:

- How is the ideology, defined as Incelism, constructed and what are its core, adjacent and peripheral concepts?

The analysis shows that Incelism consists of five core concepts – Hierarchy, Misogyny, Direct action, Alienation, The natural – linked to eleven adjacent concepts – Race, Exclusivity, Looks, Female, “Femoid”, Anti-Progressivism, Anti-High modernism, Go ER, Rope, Loneliness, Anti-capitalism – and delimited by one peripheral concept, Democracy. From these conclusions the ideological field of Incelism can be constructed:

Figure 3. The ideological field of Incelism.



While all of the different concepts correlate and together form the basis of Incelism the adjacent concepts correlate more clearly with specific core concepts, which is shown through their overlapping. In the case of the adjacent concepts of Female and “Foid” they also overlap as they are mutually dependent.

Within the ideology of Incelism, four emotions seem to dominate the understanding of one’s self, the world, and other humans. *Anger* over how societal change has progressed and the perceived unfair and unjust position in which Incels find themselves. *Loneliness* because of their alienation from social interaction, romantic experiences, and sexual encounters. *Sadness* as they understand themselves as barred from ever partaking in key life experiences, resulting in oftentimes deep self-hatred and suicidal tendencies, and lastly *hate*. The hatred has six main targets: The *society at large* that Incels perceive as excluding and oppressing them; *Progressivism, Liberalism, and Socialism* which are seen as the forces that have driven society to its current state; *men who refuse to believe in the truths contained within the red- and blackpill*; and particularly *women*, which are the main enemy and perceived prison wardens for Incels, who keep them locked up within their involuntary celibacy.

Inceldom is a communally created ideological construction that is not recognized by the users of Incels.co or the people who could be identified as potential Incelists. The very acknowledgment of any form of Incel-specific ideology goes against the key ingroup understanding that Incels are simply a group with a shared common life experience. However, this does not mean that such an ideology does not exist. What has been demonstrated is that clear core and adjacent concepts can be identified through a close reading of the discussions within this online community through the lens of Freedman’s morphology of ideologies to discern what types of shared understandings regarding politics, society, history, and gender roles exist between the users. Inceldom is an ideology with radical traditionalist and reactionary tendencies mixed with deep-seated distrust and disgust towards the status quo. Inceldom is however not an ideology of only negations. While it certainly is anti-female, anti-high modernist, anti-Progressivist, and anti-Liberal it still contains ideas and concepts that are perceived as positive and together form a utopian ideal. The pre-modern, as well as the pre-1960s 20th century, are hailed as fairer and more just times and are regarded as a model and as an inspiration for politics and social relations. The time and society where romantic relations were handled more fairly, according to the Incelists is the time prior to the deregulation of the market of love and sexuality, described by Illouz; it was a time of performative systems of emotions where ritualized actions triggered emotions such as love between two people, not the other way around. The act of finding love was thus more ritualized, done collectively and closely monitored in the early modern period. This changed in the modern era, and particularly the high-modern era, where the market for love and sexuality, just as the other markets, are deregulated and the focus is on the individuals and their inner emotions rather than on specific actions and rituals. This commercialized and individualized romantic market is what has created the modern Incel and is inadvertently the root for Inceldom. The anti-high modernism in Inceldom is mainly focused on the

aspect of societal relations, especially in the realm of love. The main issue in Incelism is not that society has stepped away from religion, king or country but that it has entered a state of hyper individualization and female emancipation where the good-looking Chads can hoard women during their peak “sexual market value time” and then leave the rest of the heterosexual men to fight amongst themselves to find any relations with the opposite sex at all. Women are in Incelism understood as both immensely stupid and at the same time scheming and are oftentimes referred to by terms such as “foids” or “holes” as a way to show that Incelists perceive them as barely human, as simply humanoid creatures. These “creatures”, according to Incelism, more or less lack rational thinking and only act according to their natural instincts, which is to act hypergamously. Incelism is an ideolog characterized by genetic and biological determinism where such extra-human explanations are used to understand male-male and male-female relations and interactions, hierarchies, beauty, modern society, and high-modernism. It is an ideology of reactionary and radical traditionalist sentiments regarding gender relations, male supremacy, and genetic determinism.

However, there are no explicit plans for how to politically address the issues. What is found are encouragements to strike at the enemy, such as following in the steps of Elliot Rodger or harassing women both online and offline, to leach off of society or to take one’s own life. Thus, while ideas of a utopian society exist there is no clear set of actions to make that utopia a reality. This implies that Incelism is, in Freedden’s terminology, a thin ideology, an ideology that lacks clear plans of action but might borrow ideas and concepts from other ideologies or even be hosted within other larger ideological constructs.

Some conclusions can thus be drawn regarding what and whatnot Incelism is and how it can and should be understood in the wider field of ideologies. It is a thin ideology that is robust enough to sustain its own construction of core, adjacent, and at least one peripheral concept within its ideological field. A unique aspect is that it is not regarded or described as an ideology by its followers, who prefer to see themselves as a community, united in unjust suffering. They are wrong: Incelism is an ideological construct – that becomes obvious when analyzing the source material – the (ideological) discussions on the Incels.co forum. The foundations of this ideology are, just like the people who espouse and follow the same line of thinking and ideas encapsulated in Incelism, clearly visible. Furthermore, this ideology is formulated in and by the discussions in the online forum. The ideology of Incelism does not exist in an ideological vacuum, however, and as a thin ideology, it requires other ideological constructs to borrow ideas from or to be hosted within. Those aspects were found through comparing Incelism to historical and contemporary ideological constructs, particularly to ideologies within the far-right milieu.

8.2. Incelism's relation to the far-right milieu and macro-ideologies

Inceldom and its relation to other historical and contemporary ideologies, with a particular focus on ideologies on the far-right, was the focus of the two sub-questions posed in this thesis:

- How does Inceldom's core, adjacent and peripheral concepts correlate to historical, particularly far-right, ideological constructs?
- How does Inceldom's core, adjacent and peripheral concepts correlate to contemporary, particularly far-right, ideological constructs?

Inceldom is a unique ideology with its hardline ingroup differentiation from its perceived outgroups and an ingroup identity that is based on ideas of inferiority and supremacy being evoked at the same time. The ideology also views a majority of society as its enemies, from women and their perceived subservient men to Progressivism and the welfare state which allows women to act according to their natural instincts without the previously existing fear of repercussions by either society or its men. But Inceldom is not fully detached from the ideologies constructed before it. As has been shown Inceldom uses other ideologies to position itself within the political sphere, find enemies, potential allies, borrow ideas, and potentially be hosted within another ideology.

The two ideological constructs to which Inceldom finds itself in a particularly hostile relationship are the macro-ideologies of Liberalism and Socialism. Macro-Liberalism contains the very core concepts and ideas which are understood as the reasons for Incels' suffering in the high-modern world – individualism, liberty, and progress – the dependent core concepts in most strains of Liberalism, which are also the concepts that when applied in the field of love and sex have caused Inceldom to occur in its modern form, according to Incelists. The victories of Liberalism in the northern hemisphere are also used by Inceldom as a way to understand their life experiences. Between macro-Liberalism and Inceldom there seem to be no discernable similarities, as the differences and the hostility of Inceldom against Liberalism is the key aspect in their relationship. With macro-Socialism, there exists a few similarities. Socialism's focus on the collective above the individual, the haves and have-nots as units of analysis, and the workers' alienation from the means of production have similarities with Inceldom. Inceldom, as mentioned in its relation to Liberalism, views the push for mass-individualization and commercialization in all realms of human life as the main cause for the great suffering that most men experience. They also view the world through the lens of and believe there to be a conflict between the haves and have-nots and describe men as experiencing alienation. However, the understanding of the haves and have-nots and alienation is vastly different in Inceldom compared to macro-Socialism, in the case of Inceldom, they refer to looks and sexual experiences. With the "haves" having a much higher looks capital and therefore being able to experience sexual encounters, whereas the "have-nots" are the men with next to none looks capital and who are therefore barred from social and romantic life and are alienated as a consequence of that. The differences between Inceldom and macro-Socialism are thus much more

pungent than the superficial similarities, as the ideas of class solidarity and equality go strongly against the Incelist ideals of male solidarity and male supremacy. Especially the macro-Socialist ideal to promote as high a level of social welfare as possible for everyone is in stark contrast to Incelism's ideal of welfare being "cucked", and that men should control women by restricting their access to education and money as well as removing most of women's rights.

Incelism and macro-Conservatism have some key similarities. The ideas of "natural" change, which is seen as positive, and "unnatural" change caused by negative human interference is one. Another is the claim that the social order has extra-human origins. Both these ideas are found in macro-Conservatism as well as in Incelism. Similarities thus do exist, but mainstream Conservatism is still understood as a "cope" and does not provide a satisfactory way to understand the Incel experience or plans which can lead to salvation for the Incels. "how can you be Incel and beleife [sic] in the "just pull yourself up by your bootstraps bro" Ideology. conservative Ideology is just a giant blue pill. it makes zero sense for an Incel to believe in that." The main critique by Incels and Incelists alike is that Conservatives are bluepilled, that they accept the unfair status quo and have not faced the truths contained within the red- and blackpills. That macro-Conservatism is not doing enough to alleviate the suffering experienced by Incels. Incelism seems to view macro-Liberalism, -Socialism, and -Conservatism as hostile to the Incelist cause, because their cores are either incompatible with Incelism or because they are viewed as representatives of the current status quo and the current society. Incelism seeks radical change. By applying Campbell's concept of the cultic milieu, it is also possible to conclude that Incelism and macro-Liberalism, macro-Socialism, and macro-Conservatism belong to completely different ideological milieus to Incelism since very few occurrences of sampling of ideas by Incels was found. Many examples of Campbell's theory of the seekers in the cultic milieu sampling ideas and concepts from different types of groups could however be found when comparing Incelism and its followers to the milieu of the far-right.

Incelism's relations to the far-right milieu and the ideologies and concepts within it run deep. Incelism's views on masculinity and its strong homosocial relations in its exclusive male ingroup have strong similarities to the far-right groups of the interwar years. The idea of masculinity and the importance of the masculine in Incelism has clear similarities to the Fascism that grew out of the 1920s–1930s. The masculine acts as a national symbol in Fascism, similarly to how it is used as a symbol of power and unity in Incelism. The Futurist notion of freeing men from bourgeoisie ideals such as love and women are also found in Incelism, as well the idea that violence needs to be dissociated from its historical connections, a notion that seems to have been adopted by the Incels who have committed acts of mass violence and the Incelists who praise those men. Incelism also shares ideals with the *Freikorps* groups that existed in Weimar Germany, especially regarding the stress put on homosocial male relationship. In the *Freikorps* the non-romantic love between the fellow men and soldiers was the most important and strongly felt form of love. Women were either something in the men's outlier or an enemy if she was a "red sister", belonging to the proletariat.

Incelism also stresses the love and unity felt between men, who are more or less understood as fellow soldiers involved in a herculean struggle against the foe of women and the evil society. One of the main differences between the two groups is Incelism's relegation of all women to the hostile role of the "red sister", more or less completely rejecting the notion of the existence of the good "white sister".

A field where there is a strong connection between the 1920s–1940s Fascism and Incelism regards what Jeffrey Herf has called Reactionary Modernism, the mainly Nazi German notion of using modernity to achieve the goals of turning back society to a mythical past. Specifically, Incelism seems to share similar notions of the use of technology as a tool and arena for the struggle to achieve this goal through nihilistic engagement, martyrdom, and violence.

There are thus some important similarities between interwar Fascism and Incelism. The same pattern emerges when comparing the ideological field of Incelism and the actions of Incelists to ideologies, and people, in the contemporary far-right milieu, a comparison which showed that Incelism has a rather firm connection to it. The connections to the Alt-right ideology are obvious. The fact that their ideologies were originally formulated in shared online spaces has resulted in a similar terminology and similar core assumptions and –concepts, for instance a deep-rooted hatred against feminism and the view that mainstream Conservatism is not doing enough to battle the forces of Liberalism and Progressivism. Both ideologies seem to constitute forms of radical-Traditionalism and/or harboring radical-reactionary tendencies. The profound misogyny and hatred against feminism and Progressivism is shared with several groups and individuals within the contemporary far-right. Incelism, white-Identitarianism in Finland, and Anders Behring Breivik's violent far-right ideas all share the view that "the left" and the ideas associated with it need to be combatted as they are detrimental to their cause. In the case of Breivik and the white-identitarian groups, it is the "Cultural Marxists" whose main agents are perceived to be its women that are seen as the main instigators of these treacherous acts against the white Christian population. This does however show a difference between Incelism and most far-right movements and ideologies, especially in the western world. It is within Incelism mainly all of society, not just specific sections of it, which are viewed as turning society towards degeneracy. While similar sentiments of a complete rejection of society exists in some far-right movements, it seems to be a notion shared by most members of the Incel milieu, and at least by all followers of Incelism, making it a differentiator between Incelism and the far-right milieu.

Incelism is an ideology with an ingroup obsession of being both inferior and superior at the same time. They are inferior in looks but superior because they have realized and accepted said inferiority and have furthermore found the esoteric truth inaccessible to the bluepilled majority. Incels "know" that the vast majority of society is unknowingly reinforcing the structures, e.g., lookism which cause Incels to suffer. This centrality of looks is what makes Incelism such a unique extremist ideology as it is an ideology fixated on beauty, and mainly the lack of it.

Finally, there exists a large number of shared members who are both Incels, or Incelists, and proponents or members of far-right ideologies. Many examples were found of users propagating far-right talking points and ideologies or using far-right imagery or language on their Incels.co profile to present themselves to the community. No user proclaiming the same affection for Liberal ideologies or talking points was found at all, and only three users who had any similar references to Socialism or Communism could be identified. Socialists and Liberals thus do not share milieus with Incels, but members of far-right groups do. Incels as a group and far-right groups have such a similar view of the world that seekers from one group are attracted to the other to sample each other's ideas and concepts. In short, Incelism seems to be similar enough to far-right ideologies to make it possible for such individuals to feel that Incelism is something for them.

Incelism relates to, borrows from, thinks of, and acts in relation to other ideologies, both historical and contemporary ones. A general conclusion is that Incelism has a hostile relation to the ideologies which is viewed as being supportive of the status quo, or not being against it enough. These are mainly the macro-ideological constructs of Liberalism, Socialism, and mainstream Conservatism. Both in a historical and a contemporary understanding these are to varying degrees understood as perpetrators, or at the very least enablers, for the suffering of Incels. Incelism does however have deep connections to both historical and contemporary far-right ideologies and groups. Many of the key understandings regarding masculinity and violence seem to be inherited or borrowed from interwar Fascism. Its connections to contemporary far-right ideologies are also clear. They range from shared meeting spaces and terminology to ideas of resistance and shared views on feminism as the main enemy within society. As a thin ideology, Incelism needs to borrow concepts from other ideologies or be hosted within them, and it seems that those ideologies are found on the far-right. This leaves one question unanswered; Is Incelism a part of a far-right milieu? What can be said is that Incelism at the very least is an ideology with many connections and similarities to ideologies in that milieu. Incelism does however have many unique features which make it hard to place it in any already existing milieu, at least with the limited analytical scope of a master's thesis. However, it is reasonable to say that Incelism finds strong allies and inspirations within the far-right, both in its historical and current forms. Incelism has one foot in the far-right milieu, but so far it cannot be said if both its feet are firmly planted in that milieu.

8.3. Final thoughts – What have we learned and what more could be learned

This thesis has answered the question of what the core adjacent and peripheral concepts of the ideology of Incelism are. What has been found is a thin ideology centered around ideas of Hierarchies, Misogyny, Direct action, Alienation, and a perceived Natural state which has been disturbed by human interaction. What has been learned is that the core of Incelism is robust enough to support adjacent concepts, but not big enough to encompass everything common within an

ideological core, especially lacking is plans for political actions. This thesis has also studied Inceldom's connections and relations to other ideological constructs with a particular focus on the far-right. What has been found is that it is in an oppositional nature towards ideologies that are viewed as supporters or enablers of the status quo. It has and continues to, find inspiration and concepts from both historical and contemporary far-right milieus, as well as followers from the latter. It is also within the far-right which Inceldom as a thin ideology has been either hosted within larger ideological constructs or borrowed ideas and concepts from.

This thesis is one of the first studies which attempts to study the construct of an Incel-related ideology and the author of this thesis hopes that more studies like this will follow. There are many more aspects that could, and deserves to, be focused on in the study of the Incel milieu through the lens of ideological analysis. More studies using Freedman's morphologies of ideologies should be done on source material gathered from other Incel online-spaces, as to see if the same core and adjacent concepts can be found within those materials. It is only with more studies like this through which a more concrete and deeper understanding of Inceldom can be found. Similar studies could also be done on other groups within the Manosphere to see if those groups have ideologies of themselves, lack ideologies whatsoever, or if we should be discussing an ideology of Manosphereism. Or perhaps even a Manosphere-milieu of different ideological constructs which borrows concepts and ideas from each other to create a form of supra-ideological construction of interconnected thin ideologies sharing and borrowing concepts, ideas, and plans between each other.

Lastly, this thesis hopes to have brought new insights into the debate on whether or not Incels should be understood as simply a collective of online spaces for men experiencing Inceldom with its own unique misogynistic online culture, or a group with a distinct ideology. This thesis strongly rejects the notion that no Incel-related ideology exists, while acknowledging that not all Incels are a part of the ideology. Inceldom should be studied in-depth so it can be effectively combatted. Inceldom has at its core a hatred for society, as well as a strong culture of celebrating earlier and encouraging new, perpetrators of horrendous acts of mass violence. As a historian, the author of this thesis argues that academic research should serve society, and to combat the threats imposed within Inceldom, we must first understand it. As its nihilism, self-hate, and encouragement of violence implies a threat to not only Incels themselves, but mainly the female gender and all of society.

Appendix - A short lexicon of the Incel vocabulary

Ascend – To “escape” Inceldom by finding a romantic or sexual partner

Bluepill – Refers to a worldview containing beliefs such as that women are oppressed, that society is patriarchal, and that personality is more important than looks for finding relationships. People who have not accepted the red- or blackpill. Someone who has “taken the bluepill” is referred to as “bluepilled”.

Redpill – Refers to the worldview that genetic determinism and biology determines all male–female and male–male relations, that society is gynocentric, that looks is more important than personality in procuring a partner, and that feminism is brainwashing society. Someone who has “taken the redpill” is referred to as “redpilled”.

Blackpill – A worldview which shares the main ideas of the redpill but with the added notion that you can never escape your genetic confines, that if someone is not attractive enough, they are doomed to suffer as “losers” and involuntary celibates for their entire life. Someone who has “taken the blackpill” is referred to as “blackpilled”.

Inceldom – The life experience of Involuntary Celibacy, meaning attempting to secure a romantic or sexual relation but never succeeding.

Incel – Portmanteau of Involuntary Celibate. The men at the bottom of the male looks hierarchy who experience Inceldom and who self-identify as Incel.

Incelism – The ideology created within the Incel milieu which is followed by a sub-set of blackpilled Incels.

Chad/s – The term used to refer to the most attractive men.

Normie – The vast majority of men, those whose looks are somewhere in between Chads and Incels. Also used to refer to “boring”/”plain”/”bluepilled” men.

Decile Scale – The scale through which someone’s ranking within the looks hierarchy is established, ranging from 1/10 (lowest) – 10/10 (highest).

Volcel – Voluntary Celibate.

Truecel – The “purest” Incels. Men who have never gotten close to being with a woman and that score very low on the decile scale.

Fakecel – A fake Incel. Men who claim to be an Incel but are not deemed ugly enough, not having tried finding a female partner enough or someone who might have had success in finding a partner.

Cuck/Cucked – Something or someone which is bad or weak.

Based – The opposite of cuck, something or someone who is good or strong.

“Go ER” – Short for “Going Elliot Rodger”. To commit mass violence towards perceived enemies.

Rope/Roping – To commit suicide.

Cope/Coping – Finding a reason to continue living. To cope with one’s life circumstances.

“Foid” – Portmanteau of Female Humanoid. Derogatory term used to refer to women to make the claim that they are not fully human, but beings resembling humans.

Toilet/Hole/Whore – Derogatory terms used to refer to women.

Becky – The term used to refer to “average” looking women.

Stacy – The term used to refer to the most “beautiful” looking women.

Hypergamy – The idea that women are biologically hardwired to only want to engage in sexual acts with the men at the very top of the looks hierarchy.

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