

Abstract

The rise of online extremism is a well-documented phenomenon with real-world implications; a growing number of hate crimes and mass violence events all have their roots in the complex, multi-faceted and intertwined online communities of the misogynistic Manosphere and the far-right. While some prefer to think of these communities as characteristic of the fringes of the internet, the presence of key individuals such as Andrew Tate on mainstream social media platforms demonstrates that this is no longer the case. The overwhelming popularity of this individual on TikTok is indicative of a growing acceptance of misogyny and misogynistic extremism in the mainstream lexicon. This dissertation worked to explore how the TikTok content of Andrew Tate aligns with misogynistic extremist ideologies within a framework of ontological (in)security theory. The research methods used consisted of a broad literature review of relevant background materials, coupled with thematic analysis of TikTok content featuring Andrew Tate. The latter was based on a dataset of 100 videos gathered from the platform. The findings of this research demonstrate that the TikTok content featuring Andrew Tate creates themes of insecurity and security through narratives that align with ontological (in)security and hegemonic masculinity. These narratives largely overlap with those prominent and characteristic of the Manosphere and some far-right communities. These findings validate the fear that popular influencers within this space may serve as a gateway to more extreme content.

Keywords: ontological security, misogyny, TikTok, hegemonic masculinity, far-right, gender, Manosphere.