

THE GRIFT ECONOMY

*How Young Men Are Being Sold Fake Belonging
and Fake Wealth Online*

A joint report by Reset Tech and Equimundo

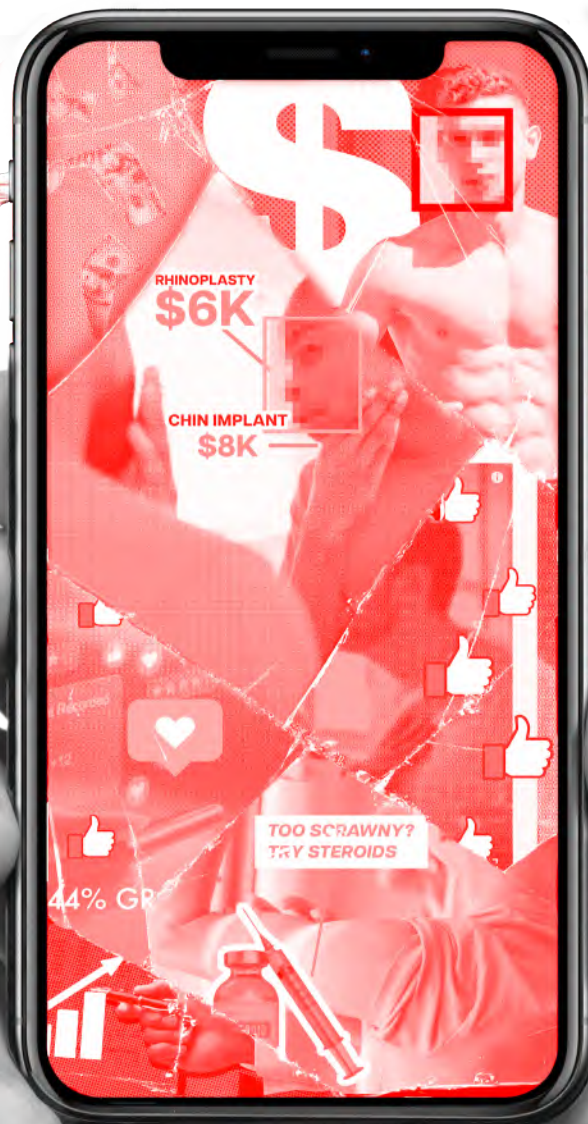




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Introduction

Many young men are in trouble, confused and socially disconnected. More than two-thirds tell us no one really knows them and nearly three-quarters say no one cares if men are okay. Feeling economically and socially precarious, many are spending more time online. On average they spend three hours weekly on YouTube, the most used platform by young men. Much of what they seek and find online is the stuff of everyday life: fitness, health, sports, gaming, places to connect, information on how to get ahead in life.

In the midst of our panic about young men, many find real connection, and build their existing IRL friendships online. In our 2025 State of American Men survey, 94 percent of men said they went online for fun, with another 80 percent seeking community and 63 percent going online to express anger and frustration. Three quarters of men surveyed told us that the internet allows them to connect to like-minded people they otherwise would not meet. They meet partners and make new friends. ***There is no single story about the online lives of young men.***

We shouldn't panic.

But we should be deeply concerned about the opportunists. In the very real moment of confusion – politicians peddling fear, uncertain job prospects, battles over the meaning of manhood – there is an industry of platforms, influencers and advertisers who are making billions off of young men's insecurities.

We step into this conversation to shed light on how the grift economy works to drive young men to harm and how it monetizes their insecurities. As the report shows, apart from the platforms who make millions in ad revenue, individual influencers earn billions of dollars on young men's anxieties. Far from a fringe or underground space, the most followed influencers in the grift economy are part of a complex financial system of affiliated networks, cross-promotional deals and stakes in platform equity. These revenue amounts are mostly out in the open. This is exploitation in plain sight.

Likewise, the biggest platforms – YouTube, TikTok, X, Instagram and others – are not just passive participants in the grift economy. They carry out inconsistent and often after the fact accountability sometimes taking down individual postings but leaving the revenue streams and ecosystem operating as it is. And they try to distract us from the harm.

It's clear that peddling harm and exploiting young men is not hidden nor is it a conspiracy. It is traceable and out in the open. And it is time we call it out. That is why Equimundo, which focuses on promoting caring manhood and achieving gender equality, and Reset Tech, which works to hold platforms accountable for the design and business-model choices that turn users' attention into harm, have joined forces in this research, and the advocacy accompanying it.

We applaud the recent attention to age verification, to limiting phone use in schools and beyond, and to reducing social media access to younger teens. Those are all necessary. But they don't get at the grift economy preying on young men.

We must call out the harm – and what it means for young men, and those who care about them. In a moment when they need our support, their clicks and screen time are bringing profits to those who do not have their best interests in mind. While we are optimistic about most young men’s ability to make their own meaning out of what they follow online, to be critical consumers, this needs all of us.

Gary Barker, PhD
President and CEO, Founder

Kristina Wilfore, Director of Global Projects
& Innovation, Co-founder #ShePersisted

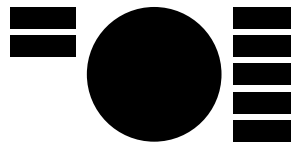
Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice works internationally and in the United States to engage men and boys as allies in gender equality, promote healthy manhood, and prevent violence. Through a research-first approach, Equimundo drives innovative solutions to shift norms, narratives, and policies – in partnership with women, girls, and individuals of all gender identities.

www.equimundo.org



Reset Tech is a public policy organization advocating for technology that protects children, consumers, and public safety. Our highly experienced team of researchers, policy experts, storytellers, and operational specialists work across the UK, Europe, Canada, and the United States.

www.reset.tech



For inquiries about this report, contact Reset Tech at hello@reset.tech or Equimundo at press@equimundo.org

The individuals, platforms, products, and operations named in this report are identified because they are the subject of public record and are engaged in commercial activity in the public sphere. The report’s characterizations, including its use of terms such as “scam,” “fraud,” “grift,” “pyramid scheme,” and “predatory,” are used in their consumer-protection and common-usage senses and represent the analytical conclusions and opinions of the authors based on the evidence documented herein. They are not statements of fact about the commission of any crime and are not legal findings or determinations of liability against any named individual or entity.

Where the report describes ongoing legal proceedings, investigations, or allegations, these are characterized as allegations and reflect the status of those matters as of publication; named parties may dispute them, and nothing here should be read as a finding that any allegation is true. Case studies, examples, revenue figures, and quotations are drawn from publicly available reporting, primary sources, and original research, and are included for illustrative, educational, and public-interest purposes.

This report does not provide legal advice and is not a substitute for it. Legal definitions, standards, and remedies vary by jurisdiction; where an action could carry legal consequences, readers should consult qualified counsel in the relevant country.

Data and figures were accurate to the best of our knowledge at the time of publication; estimated figures are identified as such, and all figures may change as underlying sources are updated. The threats and operations described here evolve constantly. This report reflects the information available as of [publication date] and should be treated as a living document.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fraud Economy for Men

There is a multi-billion-dollar industry built on the loneliness, economic anxiety, and identity of men. It does not call itself an industry. It calls itself a movement, a brotherhood, a path to success. It presents itself as the antidote to a society that has failed men – and in doing so,

it sells them the very things that keep them isolated, financially drained, and psychologically dependent on the young men profiting from their struggle.

This report documents the industry: its mechanics, its actors, its revenue, and the young men it targets. It is a report about financial predation, not culture war. It is a report about consumer fraud and how ideology is used to sell a product. It is a report that argues, with evidence, that the most important thing missing from public debate about men online is an honest account of who is making money from their vulnerability, and how.

Over the course of this investigation, [Reset Tech](#) and [Equimundo](#) mapped the commercial infrastructure of what we call the male grievance industry – the ecosystem of online creators, platforms, membership schemes, educational products, and funding networks that monetize male vulnerability at scale.



#

3 Key Findings

1. The Pipeline Is The Business Model

The online ecosystem targeting men with masculinity and self-improvement advice is not a spontaneous cultural phenomenon. It is a structured commercial operation with a predictable three-stage architecture:



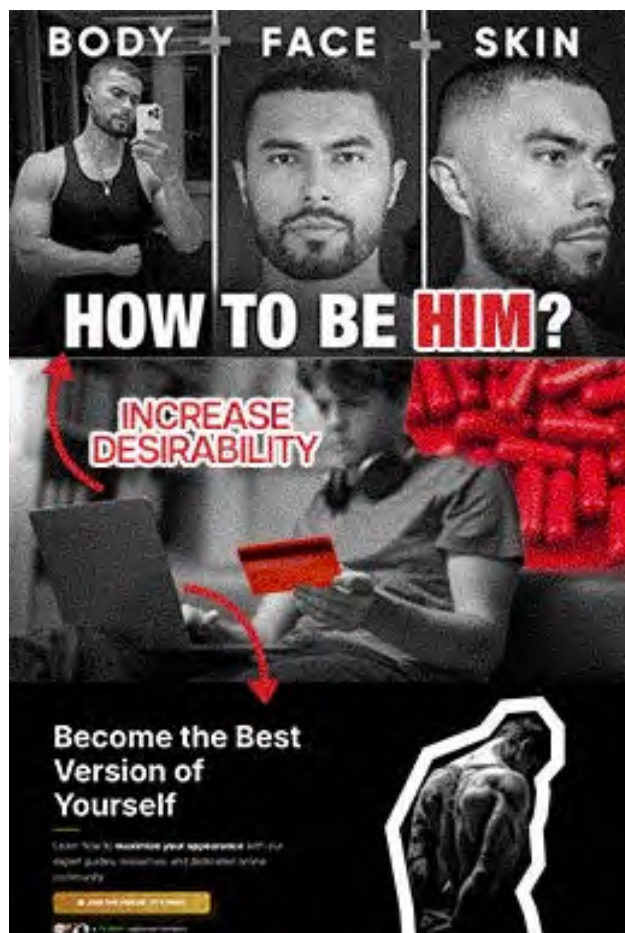
1) Recruitment through aspirational content



2) Injection of grievance



3) Monetization of trust and loyalty



Each stage serves the next.

As chapters 8-10 detail, men searching for fitness tips, dating advice, or a sense of direction get algorithmically routed into paid communities, unregulated supplements, crypto schemes, and high-ticket “coaching” programs. What they’re really buying is belonging – and digital platforms are structurally designed to monetize these otherwise natural human desires into financial manipulation.

Fitness and discipline-related media build a para-social relationship. Grievance deepens the identity investment. And then the sell begins – courses, memberships, supplements, crypto schemes, exclusive communities that promise what the online environment has convinced young men they lack.

The creators running this operation are not primarily ideologues. They are grievance entrepreneurs.

A pipeline built on attention, grievance, and trust is engineered to convert young men into revenue, turning their search for meaning into someone else’s business model.

2. The Pipeline Scale is Documented

This report provides, for the first time, a systematic account of the financial scale of this ecosystem. Among the figures documented or estimated through original OSINT-based revenue mapping:

\$184M	Estimated annual gross revenue from Andrew Tate's Real World platform, based on the creator's stated enrollment of 155,000 students at \$99/month. <i>Est. from self-reported enrollment × stated price. See Methodology.</i>
\$1.6K	Entry price for Tate's War Room – the premium membership tier marketed as an exclusive brotherhood with offline events and tactical content. <i>Documented – public pricing, verified March 2026.</i>
\$30–50K	Estimated hourly streaming revenue for top-tier streamers such as Adin Ross, who also holds an equity stake in the Kick platform. <i>Est. from platform revenue disclosures and sponsorship modeling.</i>
\$200K+	Per-appearance speaking fee for top-tier creators including Joe Rogan and Patrick Bet-David, documented through speaking bureau listings. <i>Documented – speaking bureau listings, verified 2025–2026.</i>
\$1M–10M	Estimated annual revenue range for established top-tier creators across diversified income streams: platform payouts, sponsorships, courses, memberships, and speaking fees. <i>Est. across diversified income streams. Named figures in full report.</i>

These are not fringe operators. They are a mature industry, with a documented infrastructure of affiliate networks, cross-promotional deals and platform equity stakes. A soon-to-be-released second edition of the Grift Economy will show the political dark money that has a direct financial interest in keeping young men angry and challenging them into behavior that removes them from healthy democratic participation.

3. Two Vulnerabilities Are Being Systemically Exploited

Our analysis identified two primary psychological vulnerabilities that the male grievance industry targets and monetizes:

The need to belong. Young men's genuine hunger for male community, mentorship, and identity is the raw material of the membership economy. Exclusive clubs, private Discord servers, brotherhood rhetoric, and parasocial relationships with successful men are sold as the solution to a loneliness that the content itself often deepens. The body optimization pipeline – from fitness content through looksmaxxing to gray-market supplements – runs on the same mechanism: the body as a price of admission to the in-group.

The need for economic security. Men's real economic anxiety – stagnant wages, credential inflation, a housing market that has foreclosed on a generation – is the raw material of the fake education and membership scheme economy. Courses that promise financial transformation, crypto schemes, hustle culture pipelines, and mentorship programs that charge thousands of dollars for recycled content are sold as the path out. They are not. The primary income model in most of these operations is recruiting others into the same scheme.

4. Digital Platforms Fuel the Male Grievance Industry

The male grievance industry does not exist despite digital platforms – it exists because of them. YouTube, TikTok, X, Kick, Telegram, Instagram, and Spotify are not passive distributors. They are active financial beneficiaries. Their recommendation algorithms surface this material to young men who were not necessarily looking for it. Their monetization infrastructure provides the revenue that funds it. Their inconsistent and retroactive enforcement removes individual posts while leaving the broader commercial ecosystem untouched.

The pattern of acting on individual content while ignoring the network is identical to what Reset Tech's parallel investigation, [Clickbait Cures](#), documented in the fraudulent health advertising ecosystem on Meta and Google. The same platforms that fail to deplatform repeat offenders in one domain fail to do so in the other. This is not a coincidence. It is the predictable consequence of a business model that profits from the attention generated by outrage, grievance, and manufactured community.



Pathways Out: The Legal and Regulatory Hooks Exist

The male grievance industry is not beyond the reach of existing law. It has simply not been framed in the language that activates the relevant legal frameworks and urgency among policymakers who struggle to keep up with modern media and the financial structure and revenue of information. Everything in this report is an argument that the tools already exist. The consumer-protection statutes are on the books. The platform-accountability frameworks are operating in four jurisdictions and waiting to be extended to a fifth. The enforcement precedents have already been won against businesses that ran the identical playbook before digital media took over our lives as citizens and consumers. What is missing is not authority. It is the decision to seek accountability, and the framing that makes the moral authority to use it more obvious.





Key Findings at a Glance

1

The Male Grievance Industry Is A Structured Commercial Operation, Not A Cultural Movement.

It runs on a documented three-stage pipeline: aspiration, grievance, monetization. Creators are entrepreneurs first. The ideology is the product.



Ch. 1-5

Follow



2

Men's Real Needs Are Being Weaponized Against Them.

Loneliness, economic anxiety, and identity uncertainty are genuine conditions – not manufactured grievances. What is manufactured is the idea that the solution costs \$9 a month.



Ch. 7

Follow



3

The Membership And Course Economy Is Consumer Fraud At Scale.

Recycled content, affiliate pyramids, deliberate cancellation barriers, and deceptive testimonials characterize the industry's flagship products. Consumer protection laws already exist to address this exploitation.



Ch. 5-6

Follow



4

Conflict Is A Revenue Model, Not A Byproduct.

Manufactured feuds, cancellation cycles, and alpha contests are engineered audience acquisition tools. Anger is profitable. Platforms profit from it too.



Ch. 8

Follow



5

The Regulatory Tools Exist. The Political Will Has Been Missing.

Tools needed to act on this industry are already on the books – consumer-protection law, platform-accountability frameworks, and a track record of enforcement against the same playbook aimed elsewhere. The barrier was never authority; it was framing, and naming this as fraud rather than culture war puts the existing tools within reach.



Ch. 10-12

Follow



Methodology Note

This report draws on five original and secondary research streams conducted between 2024 and 2026. A full methodology section, including source details, estimation methodology for revenue figures, and a note on limitations, appears at the end of the report. What follows is a brief account of what this research is and where it comes from.

1 *Discourse Analysis*

Ongoing qualitative monitoring of creator operations, platform ecosystems, and commercial infrastructure across YouTube, TikTok, X, Instagram, Kick, Rumble, Telegram, and Discord over approximately eighteen months ending March 2026. Produced the three-stage pipeline model, the seven-category grievance taxonomy, and the creator close-ups throughout the report.

2 *Looksmaxxing Reach Analysis*

Original quantitative cross-platform study of 216 looksmaxxing influencers across TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook, mapping reach, monetization activity, and platform migration patterns. To our knowledge the first systematic cross-platform quantification of this ecosystem. Full data available to researchers and journalists on request.

3 *Focus Group Research*

Four focus groups conducted by Lake Research Partners for Reset Tech in March 2026, with very online men across four demographic cohorts: Latino non-college men aged 25–39; white non-college men aged 25–39; white non-college men aged 18–24; and white college men aged 18–24. Groups explored masculinity, online content, commercial awareness, language, and off-ramps.

4 *Revenue And Financial Mapping*

Original OSINT-based revenue mapping of individual creators, platform arrangements, and the conflict economy, combining documented figures from primary sources with modeled estimates where primary sources do not exist. All estimated figures are presented as ranges and identified as estimates throughout the report.

5 *Secondary Research*

Published academic research, investigative journalism, regulatory filings, and platform transparency data. Key Equipundo sources: State of American Men 2025 and the IMAGES global survey (menandgendersurvey.org). Also draws on Reset Tech's Clickbait Cures investigation (April 2026) and Gallup's 2026 research on male loneliness.



Glossary of Terms

Related to Digital Platforms

Algorithm (recommendation system) – A coded set of instructions or rules that digital platforms use to automatically decide what content you see, in what order, and how often. Far from neutral, algorithms are designed to maximize engagement, attention, and profit—often by promoting content that triggers strong emotional reactions, such as outrage, fear, or division.

Bot – An automated software program that performs tasks on the internet.

Clickbait – Sensational or misleading headlines and content designed to attract attention and generate website traffic. It often exaggerates or misrepresents information to entice users to click on a link.

Echo chamber – An online environment or social network where people are exposed to information and opinions that reinforce their existing beliefs or biases. In an echo chamber, dissenting or contradictory views are often ignored or suppressed.

Engagement – Any measurable user action a platform can count: a watch, like, comment, share, or click. Because platforms are valued on how many people use them and for how long, engagement is the core metric of the business. Outrage, conflict, and grievance generate engagement efficiently, which is why the business model rewards them regardless of whether the underlying content is accurate or harmful.

Monetization – The set of mechanisms by which attention is converted into money: advertising revenue, paid subscriptions, creator payouts, tips and donations during livestreams, sponsorships, and product sales. The report distinguishes a visible layer (what creators are paid) from a larger invisible layer (the advertising revenue platforms retain).

Content moderation / deplatforming – The platform's actions of removing posts, suspending accounts, or banning a creator outright. The report's recurring finding is that these actions target individual content while leaving the surrounding commercial infrastructure intact – and that deplatforming a creator from one service typically redistributes rather than ends their revenue, as the audience follows them to a more permissive platform.

Ad revenue split / creator payout – The arrangement by which a platform shares a portion of advertising income with the creator whose content ran the ads. YouTube keeps 45% and pays creators 55%; Kick keeps only 5% and pays 95%. These splits are a design choice that shapes which platforms attract which creators – and they mean the platform, not the creator, is usually the single largest financial beneficiary of any given operation.

Related to the Masculinity Grievance Ecosystem

Male grievance industry – The report's central term, used in place of “manosphere.” The commercial ecosystem of creators, platforms, membership schemes, educational products, supplement funnels, and funding networks that monetize male vulnerability at scale. Names a commercial infrastructure, not an ideological community.



“Manosphere” – Used only sparingly and in quotation marks, as a reference to how others name this space, not as the report’s framework. Defined by others (ISD, UN Women) as an umbrella term for interconnected misogynistic online communities, the report rejects it as descriptively imprecise and analytically misleading.

The pipeline (three-stage model) – The structured commercial architecture through which the industry operates: Stage 1 Recruitment (aspirational self-help), Stage 2 Grievance injection, Stage 3 Monetization of trust and loyalty. Summarized as: attention → grievance injection → trust into monetization.

Grievance – A distortion of a real pressure – amplified, weaponized, and redirected toward resentment and consumption. Distinct from the genuine underlying conditions (loneliness, economic anxiety) it exploits.

Supply-side framing – The report’s analytical stance: locating accountability on the operators, platforms, and financial infrastructure that produce and profit from the harm, rather than on the demand side (the psychology or beliefs of the young men targeted).

The influencer as franchise – The model in which the same business structure operates at every tier (top/mid/bottom); the audience is the raw material, monetization migrates to owned infrastructure, and the followers are not the destination.

The conflict economy – The monetization of manufactured feuds, beef cycles, and alpha contests as engineered audience-acquisition and revenue tools, in which conflict is a content format with its own grammar and revenue logic.

The Guru Effect – The dynamic by which expensive coaching/mentorship programs produce dependency rather than self-reliance by design: failure is attributed to the member’s insufficient discipline, keeping them paying for more coaching.

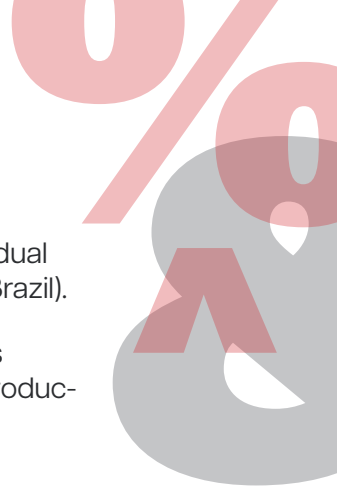
Looksmaxxing (soft-/hardmaxxing) – The body-optimization pipeline. Softmaxxing: low-risk entry-level grooming/fitness. Hardmaxxing: surgical and hormonal interventions promoted by influencers as the natural conclusion of a self-improvement journey, including “bone smashing.”

Wealth porn – (Attributed to Scott Galloway) The relentless performance of faux success – jets, cars, luxury – designed to manufacture aspiration and inadequacy simultaneously in order to sell the lifestyle as attainable.

The migration model – The mature business stage in which social media becomes the advertising/funnel layer and the monetizable product moves to owned or equity-staked platforms (Skool, Kick), so platform-level enforcement inconveniences rather than ends an operation.

The clipping economy – The paid network of operators who reformat long-form content into short-form clips across platforms, functioning as distributed amplification that circumvents individual-platform enforcement.

Inauthentic activity / coordinated inauthentic behavior – Coordinated efforts by networks of inauthentic accounts to manipulate public discourse (Stanford Internet Observatory / EEAS definitions); given regulatory standing under the DSA and the EU FIMI framework.



Platform accountability – Frameworks addressing the systemic behavior of large platforms (design, algorithmic systems, advertising infrastructure) rather than individual pieces of content – the report’s preferred regulatory lens (DSA, UK OSA, Australia, Brazil).

Systemic risk / duty of care – The regulatory model (anchored in the DSA’s Articles 34–35) requiring platforms to assess and mitigate the systemic risks their design produces, rather than removing specified content.

The Man Box – (Equimundo’s term) The rigid set of masculine norms demanding self-sufficiency, emotional suppression, and dominance; men within it are 6.3x more likely to experience suicidal ideation.

Status loss / displaced entitlement – One of two dominant narrative frames young men encounter: the claim that men are being pushed out, replaced, or silenced.

Distorted masculinity ideals – The second dominant frame: manhood defined through dominance, hierarchy, control, and emotional suppression, with empathy coded as weakness

Related to Exploitation

The terms below are used in their common-sense and consumer protection sense to describe the activities, and not to suggest or allege any criminal liability.

Scam – A commercial offering that is deceptive, misleading, or low-value relative to what is promised.

Fraud – Deceptive or misrepresentative commercial practices – fabricated outcomes, undisclosed financial interests, false efficacy claims – consistent with the categories addressed by consumer-protection enforcement frameworks.

Grift – The monetization of trust through deceptive or exploitative commercial offerings.

Pyramid scheme – A business model in which the primary income mechanism for existing members is recruiting additional members, rather than the sale of a product of independent value.



PART I: THE MACHINE



CHAPTER 1 – WHAT IS THIS REPORT?

Terminology, Framing, and What This Report Is Not



Terminology & Framing

The word “manosphere” appears in public discourse as a catch-all phrase for the online ecosystem this report documents.¹ It will be used sparingly and always in quotation marks, as a reference to how others have named this space – not as our own framework.

The term has two problems. First, it is descriptively imprecise: it groups together a wide range of actors, motivations, and business models under a single label that implies shared ideology, where the more important shared characteristic is shared commercial infrastructure. Second, and more consequentially, it frames a predatory commercial operation as a cultural movement – which shifts the analytical lens from who is profiting to what people believe, from supply-side accountability to demand-side pathology.

This report argues that the supply-side framing is both more accurate and more actionable. The male grievance industry is not a spontaneous expression of male psychology. It is a business that has identified male psychology as a market.

The dominant public discourse about men and online engagement tends toward two frames, both inadequate. The first treats young men primarily as a threat – as radicalization subjects, as vectors of misogyny, as a political problem to be managed. The second treats them primarily as a constituency to be won – as voters whose grievances must be taken seriously, as a demographic whose defection from progressive politics must be explained and reversed.

This report treats young men as something simpler and more important: as consumers being defrauded. Fraud is fraud across political lines.

That reframe is not rhetorical. It is analytical. Seeing this ecosystem from the perspective of consumer protection moves us beyond believing the culture war is to blame because it correctly identifies the causal structure of what is happening: what’s happening online is not spontaneous radicalization driven by male psychology, but a deliberately engineered commercial operation that identifies vulnerable customers, manufactures the product they think they need, and extracts money from them at every stage of the pipeline.

Men’s loneliness is real. Their economic anxiety is real. Their desire for purpose, belonging, and a viable future is real, and is important to be taken seriously. What this report documents is the industry that has decided those real needs are a market opportunity.

¹ The “manosphere” is defined by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue as an umbrella term for a number of interconnected misogynistic communities, typically organized around Men’s Rights Activists (MRAs), incels, Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW), and pick-up artists (PUAs). The term is believed to have first appeared online around 2009, though its roots trace back to the Men’s Liberation Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, with a significant shift in the 1970s toward framing feminism as the source of men’s problems. See ISD Explainer: *The Manosphere* (2022), <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-explainer/the-manosphere/>. UN Women defines the manosphere as “an umbrella term for online communities that have increasingly promoted narrow and aggressive definitions of what it means to be a man – and the false narrative that feminism and gender equality have come at the cost of men’s rights,” noting that many participants engage with it while searching for forums to openly discuss men’s issues. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/what-is-the-manosphere-and-why-should-we-care>. This report uses “male grievance industry” in place of “manosphere” because the former correctly identifies a commercial infrastructure rather than an ideological community.



CHAPTER 2 – THE BUSINESS MODEL

Digital Media in Today's Age

Before the male grievance industry can be understood as a commercial operation, the commercial infrastructure it runs on has to be understood. Most people who consume digital media have little reason to think about how it is built, who funds it, or why it behaves the way it does. That invisibility is not accidental. It is a product of design.



The Business Structure

This chapter offers a plain account of how that infrastructure works, why it produces the outcomes it does, and why the men navigating it are at a structural disadvantage that has nothing to do with their intelligence or their values.

How Platforms Are Valued – and Why That Matters

The major social media platforms – YouTube, TikTok, Meta, X – are not primarily communication tools. They are advertising businesses whose valuations are tied to a single metric: monthly active users. The more people using a platform, and the longer they stay, the more a platform is worth to investors and the more it can charge advertisers.

This creates a foundational incentive that shapes everything downstream. Platforms are not rewarded for the quality of what users encounter. They are rewarded for keeping users on the platform. Outrage, grievance, and conflict are extraordinarily effective at doing that. An angry user is an engaged user. An engaged user is a monetizable user. The business model does not distinguish between engagement driven by accurate information and engagement driven by manufactured fear – both register the same way on a balance sheet.

This is why self-regulation has a structural ceiling. A platform that aggressively rooted out fraudulent, misleading, or emotionally manipulative operations would reduce engagement. It might also lead stock market analysts to question how much the current valuation of any single company is based on inauthentic activity.² After all, bots don't buy deodorant and penis pumps. Reduced engagement reduces active users. Reduced active users reduces valuation. The incentive to maintain information integrity runs directly against the incentive to grow. When those two interests conflict, the business model wins.

The Advertising Revenue Model and the Illusion of Advertiser Control

The revenue that sustains this ecosystem comes overwhelmingly from advertising. But the relationship between an advertiser and the environment in which their ad appears is far less direct than most people assume.

In the programmatic advertising model, which dominates digital media, advertisers buy audiences, not placements. An advertiser purchasing impressions from 25 to 34-year-old men interested in fitness does not choose the specific videos, channels, or operations their ad will appear alongside. That matching is handled algorithmically, at speed, across millions of placements simultaneously. Advertisers have broad category exclusions available to them, but the granularity required to avoid every problematic placement does not in practice, exist. Major brands have repeatedly discovered their advertisements running alongside extremist material, fraudulent health schemes, and harassment campaigns – not because they chose to be there, but because the system placed them there.

² The term inauthentic activity was coined by Facebook in 2018 but has since been formalized in academic and policy literature. Stanford Internet Observatory's working definition: coordinated efforts by networks of inauthentic accounts to manipulate public discourse. Graphika and Stanford Internet Observatory. *Unheard Voice: Evaluating Five Years of Pro-Western Covert Influence Operations*. August 2022. https://public-assets.graphika.com/reports/graphika_stanford_internet_observatory_report_unheard_voice.pdf The DSA and the EU's Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) framework give "inauthentic behavior" regulatory standing independent of any platform. The EEAS (European External Action Service) definition is: inauthentic behavior as the deliberate falsification of identity, origin, or coordination to manipulate public discourse. European External Action Service. *FIMI Threat Landscape Report*. 2023. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/1st-eeas-report-foreign-information-manipulation-and-interference-threats_en

This means that the male grievance industry is substantially funded by mainstream advertisers who have no idea they are its financial beneficiaries. It also means that advertiser pressure, while occasionally effective, is not a structural solution. The architecture routes around it.

 2.5B USERS	OPEN AI  PARTNERSHIP WITH MICROSOFT	 1B+ USERS	GOOGLE  GEMINI	META  4B USERS	MUSK OWNS GROK AND X  
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A Monopoly Problem

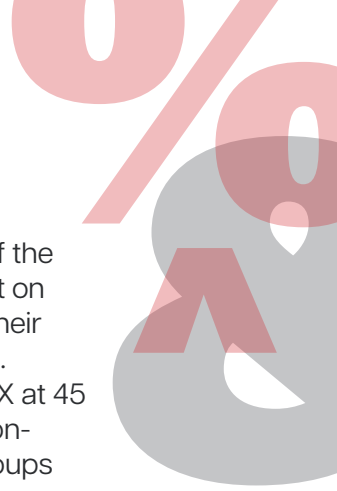
The platforms that distribute this ecosystem are not competing in any meaningful sense for the attention of men. YouTube reaches over 2.5 billion logged-in users monthly. TikTok has over a billion. Meta's family of applications reaches nearly four billion people. These are not competitive markets where a better-designed alternative can gain traction. They are monopolies with the network effects, data advantages, and capital resources to absorb or neutralize any challenger. This matters for regulation: the usual assumption that market competition will discipline bad actors does not apply when there is effectively no market competition.

AI chat applications extend that monopoly problem into new territory and concentrate it further. The major AI products are owned by the same companies or the same class of owners already dominant in social media: Google owns Gemini, Meta is building its own AI stack, Grok is owned by Elon Musk, who also owns X. OpenAI, nominally independent, counts Microsoft as its primary infrastructure partner. Anthropic, which makes Claude, is backed by Google and Amazon. This is not a new competitive market emerging to challenge the incumbents. It is the incumbents, or their allies, acquiring the next layer of the attention economy before regulators have frameworks to address the first one.

What is lost on stakeholders interested in information integrity is an understanding that the business model incentives of AI are identical to social media. Some would argue, that the incentives are, in fact, worse. A platform that knows what a young man watches is powerful. A platform that knows what a young man confides, fears, and asks for help with, and that he experiences as a trusted voice rather than a commercial product, is a fundamentally different kind of threat. That data has no adequate regulatory framework governing its collection, retention, or use – and the companies accumulating it have every financial incentive to keep it that way.

The Information Environment Men Are Actually in

The ecosystem this report documents operates in an information environment where verified, fact-based journalism is increasingly inaccessible to the men most likely to be targeted by the male grievance industry, especially younger men.



Quality journalism is behind a paywall. Independent creators producing aspirational, grievance, and product-driven operations are free. The Nerve's US24 study of the American information ecosystem found that Americans aged 18-34 are more reliant on social media for news than any other age group, with 35 percent primarily getting their news from social media platforms, compared to just 18 percent for older Americans. Among 18-34 year olds, Facebook is the top news source (53 percent), followed by X at 45 percent and YouTube at 41 percent. Across key political topics, young Americans consistently chose social media as their primary information source while other age groups consistently chose mainstream news.³

This is the information environment in which the male grievance industry operates. Its competitors – journalism, public health information, civic institutions, real role models – are being systematically deprioritized by the same platforms that amplify and monetize its operations. The playing field is not level by accident.

Reset Tech's post-2024 focus groups with "very online" independently affiliated men and women conducted to better understand how they consume information around elections, make the consequences of this environment concrete. The men in those groups were not passive consumers; they were confident ones. They described podcasts as inherently unbiased due to the format being unscripted. They treated Joe Rogan as a reputable source for "honest and accurate information" and credited him with fact-checking claims on the spot. They insisted they fact-checked what they encountered and sought out "both sides" while listening to and watching the same cluster of programs that promote one view.

The result was a striking lack of self-awareness: the men believed women were trapped in echo chambers looking at makeup and lifestyle content while they themselves received information from neutral, verified sources. They named X, YouTube, and Reddit as places to get "insider" information unavailable from

He might disagree with somebody, he'll still bring 'em on.

-White non-college man, 18-24

“

major outlets, treated full-length podcast interviews as more truthful than edited news coverage, and absorbed dangerous fabrications about politics as established fact despite known falsehoods having been debunked on and offline. Across the board, participants believed false information online was a serious problem and simultaneously believed nothing could be done about it, leaving them with a media diet defined by high confidence, low veracity, and a settled conviction that the system was unfixable.

³ The Nerve / Rappler. *US24: A 2024 Study of the United States Information Ecosystem*. Published January 30, 2025. Originally published on Rappler, October 14, 2024. <https://www.thenerve.co/story/us24-study-united-states-information-ecosystem-2024>. The study found that among Americans aged 18 to 34, Facebook was the top source of news (53%), followed by X at 45% and YouTube at 41%, while other age segments primarily got their news from local television. Across all three key political topics examined – immigration, abortion, and the Israel-Hamas conflict – Americans aged 18 to 34 consistently chose social media as their primary information source, while older age groups consistently chose mainstream news. The study also found that at least 35 percent of Americans aged 18 to 34 primarily get their news from social media, compared to 31 percent of those 55 and older who still rely mainly on traditional platforms.



The AI Accelerant

Generative AI has fundamentally changed the cost structure of fraud and distortion. Producing a convincing fake testimonial, a deepfake endorsement from a doctor, or a professionally designed supplement advertisement once required meaningful resources. It now requires a prompt and a few minutes. The Clickbait Cures investigation documented the shift toward AI-generated ad creatives in fraudulent health campaigns on Meta and Google from 2025 onward – emotionally manipulative imagery, fabricated news-style footage, synthetic doctor personas – as a documented response to platform enforcement pressure. The male grievance industry is undergoing the same transition.⁴

The United Nations and the Conscious Ad Network have raised red flags about AI adoption in advertising, which only deepens the global information integrity crisis at a time when brands face growing business risk. They are urging policymakers to strengthen transparency and accountability in the digital advertising ecosystem by putting guardrails on AI while encouraging advertisers to use commercial leverage to require stronger safeguards from platforms⁵.

AI lowers the cost of manufacturing false authority, fake community, and fabricated proof of success. It does not change the underlying fraud – it scales it.



⁴ Lake Research Partners conducted five virtual focus groups on behalf of Reset Tech on December 9, 10, and 11, 2024, with participants recruited nationally. The five segments were: independent women under 41 who are heavily online (mixed race/ethnicity); independent men under 30 who are heavily online (mixed race/ethnicity); white non-college-educated women age 50 and older; white non-college-educated men age 30 to 50 who are heavily online; and Latino men under 41 who are heavily online. Across segments, participants were recruited for a mix of region, urbanicity, marital and parental status, ideology, employment status, and (in relevant groups) educational attainment, party identification. Strong partisans and strong ideologues on either side were excluded. For all heavily-online groups, participants had to report checking social media several times a day and regularly commenting on or discussing social and political issues online. As qualitative research, these findings are directional rather than statistically representative.

⁵ United Nations Department of Global Communications and Conscious Advertising Network. *Strengthening Information Integrity: Issue Brief 2 – Advertising, Artificial Intelligence and the Global Information Crisis*. April 2026. <https://www.consciousadnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Info-Integrity-Issue-Brief-2-Final-April-2026.pdf> The brief identifies advertising as the dominant business model of the digital information ecosystem, funding content across the spectrum with platforms run by algorithms optimized to maximize user attention and advertising exposure regardless of whether content is accurate, reliable, or safe.

The Algorithm is Using People

The recommender systems that determine what a user sees next on YouTube, TikTok, or X are not neutral navigation tools. They are optimization engines designed to maximize a single outcome: continued engagement. They do this by learning, with extraordinary precision, what emotional states keep a specific user on the platform – and then feeding information that produces and sustains those states.

Eventually you are gonna get something more with higher intensity of it.

-Latino non-college man, 25-39

“

algorithmic recommendation serving a user whose emotional profile has been identified and is being optimized for retention.

This process is cumulative and self-reinforcing. Each engagement signal – a watch, a like, a comment, a share – refines the algorithm’s model of the user. When the model learns that this user responds to content about male status, economic unfairness, or gender resentment, it serves more of it. The user’s information environment narrows. The content becomes more extreme at the margins. What began as a fitness channel recommendation becomes, over months, an almost entirely grievance-organized feed – without the user having made a single deliberate choice to get there.

For men already experiencing loneliness, economic anxiety, or identity uncertainty, recommender systems tend to surface material and accounts that validate and intensify those feelings, then offer a community organized around them. The journey from a fitness video to a grievance operation to a paid membership scheme is not a radicalization pathway that users choose. It is a product of

Conspiracy theories are the biggest ones that suck me down.

-White non-college man, 18-24

“

Before I know it, I'm not even looking at what the original topic was.

-Latino non-college man, 25-39

“



Key Takeaway

The Online Journey for Men Is Manufactured

A key takeaway from this analysis - the volume and dominance of operations promoting aggressive forms of masculinity online are not the result of organic demand. It is the result of an infrastructure that rewards escalation. The impact of harmful narratives about male grievance is not shaped by the operations themselves alone. Digital ecosystems do not simply transmit information – they shape identity, culture, and community norms by design. These dynamics are intensified by the architecture of digital platforms and by offline political or social flashpoints that both feed and are fed by what circulates online.

Digital platforms create environments where harmful narratives can feel entertaining, affirming, or socially rewarded, giving men a sense of belonging or mission that can normalize violent or antisocial behavior. The platform, format, and delivery style fundamentally influence how messages are interpreted, who they reach, and how persuasive or socially validated they become.

The online mechanism of constant engagement acts as a recruitment pipeline. Gender resentment is simply the entry point, but not the aim. The destination is a broader worldview in which social decline, lost male status, and the need for so-called “strongman” leadership are the logical conclusions of the same arguments that typically start with a post about what makes for a good woman. Anti-woman messaging online is often not hateful, and it does not stay about women. Views of women, vis-a-vis male identity, is often a gateway to conspiratorial thinking, authoritarian politics, shaped by organized far right-movements that have learned to fish in exactly this water.

Given the reach and power of digital platforms architecture, the online operations documented in this report cannot be countermessaged in a vacuum. Producing better information and placing it on the same platforms does not address the structural advantage that outrage and grievance operations enjoy. A well-produced video about healthy masculinity competes on the same algorithmic terms as a rage-optimized grievance operation – and loses, because the algorithm rewards engagement, and grief, anger, and tribal belonging generate more engagement than nuance and complexity. The safeguards are not baked in. The design produces the outcomes.

Misogynistic influencers exploit commercial systems that reward the deliberate use of hostility to produce rapid surges in engagement (#ShePersisted Report, [Monetizing Misogyny 2023](#).) Such dynamics link antagonism with monetisation, creating an information environment where misogynistic or violent rhetoric is a financial incentive. These engagement signals often expose users to extremist narratives and shift them from general hostility towards explicit ideological recruitment.

-Global Network on Extremism and Tech⁶



⁶ Daniele, F., Bucher, L., Servida, G., & Gilman, R. "Monetising Misogyny: Engagement Farming and the Tactics Behind Incendiary Online Content." Global Network on Extremism and Technology (GNET), December 17, 2025 <https://gnet-research.org/2025/12/17/monetising-misogyny-engagement-farming-and-the-tactics-behind-incendiary-online-content/>

Real World Illustrations

The two close-ups that follow were chosen deliberately. The pipeline documented in this report does not operate at the fringes. It operates at every level of the information ecosystem simultaneously. It's as simple as an unattributed post that reaches a young man's feed at midnight – while he could be scrolling for financial tips – telling him his anger is justified and his enemies are real. The mechanisms in both cases highlighted below are identical: a clear role, a named enemy, and belonging conditioned on accepting the grievance.

CLOSE UP

Platform: Facebook

Type of operation: Political identity recruitment / purpose-framed pipeline

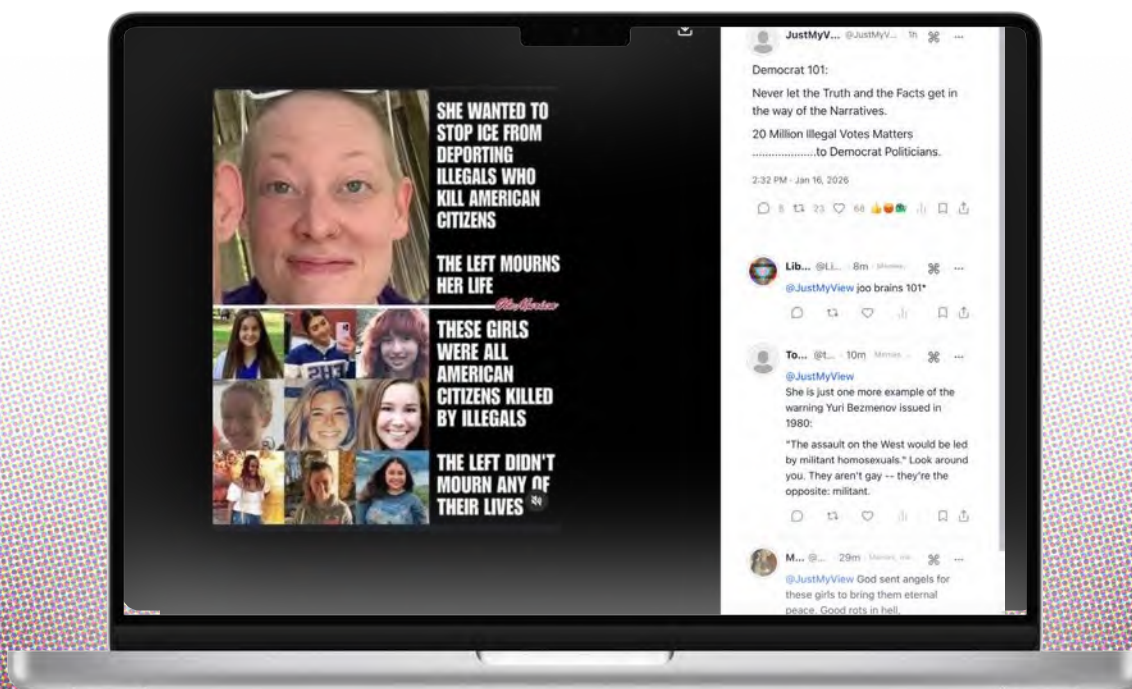
Account: [OleMurica](#)

Message: “The war is with the left and criminals. Protect girls.”

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/OleMurica/posts/pfbid02cC3yAJpf9g5BzT636iQQnWGWLLt-STiMvF7TxgwPBvKvDu82LvkhvV27CPo2dpJsTI>

What he is doing:

The “protect girls” framing converts ambient male frustration into a structured political identity with a built-in moral license. The mechanism is purpose-as-recruitment: in an environment where many men feel directionless or under attack, the offer of a clear, virtuous role and protector is more compelling than any policy argument. Hostility doesn't need to be justified because it's been rebranded as chivalry. The “war” framing collapses the distinction between political opponents and criminal threats, making aggression feel not just acceptable but obligatory. Belonging is conditioned on accepting the enemy, such as the left, criminals, anyone threatening “girls”, as real and immediate. The in-group isn't defined by what it believes so much as what it's willing to fight. This is the political form of the same belonging architecture seen in grievance-based communities: identity, enemy, role, and moral validation delivered as a single package. The feeling of enlistment is the product.



CLOSE UP

Platform: Instagram

Account: [Alpha Male](#)

Type of operation: Gender grievance as political recruitment

Message: The right woman submits. The wrong woman is the problem. This is what alpha males should expect in a woman.

Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/DSU3nqyiAyC/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

What he is doing:

The “perfect woman” post defines female value through compliance, domesticity, and deference to male authority. It is framed as preference. It functions as a political proposition. By establishing women who do not conform – independent, professionally ambitious, or simply unwilling to submit – as threats to male wellbeing and social order, the post converts romantic frustration into a grievance with a target. The personal is made political in the most literal sense: a man who cannot find the relationship he believes he deserves is offered an explanation that has nothing to do with him and everything to do with what feminism, liberalism, and progressive culture have done to women.





The Addictive Design Evidence

In March 2026, a California jury found both Meta and YouTube liable in a landmark lawsuit over the addictive design of their platforms – the first verdict of its kind.⁷ The plaintiff, a 20-year-old woman who began using YouTube at age six and Instagram at age nine, argued that specific design features engineered to maximize engagement had addicted her and exacerbated her mental health struggles. Lawyers pointed to specific features they said were designed to hook young users: infinite scroll feeds, autoplay, and notification systems. The jury was instructed not to consider the substance of what she saw on the platforms – only whether the design itself caused harm.

That distinction is precisely the point. *Unique to the United States, tech companies are shielded from legal responsibility for what users post on their platforms under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act established in 1996. But they are not shielded from responsibility for what their platforms are engineered to do.* The verdict established that algorithmic systems designed to maximize engagement at the expense of user wellbeing are a design choice, not a speech act – and that platforms can be held liable for those design choices.

The case is a bellwether trial, meaning its outcome could affect how thousands of similar lawsuits against social media companies play out across the United States and in other parts of the world where liability regimes are also strong. Some legal experts have drawn comparisons to tobacco and opioid litigation. Until the evidence and the courts said otherwise, these industries also argued for years that harm was a matter of individual choice, the human in the loop, rather than product design.

The male grievance industry did not build the platforms. But it runs on their design. And the platforms did not build the male grievance industry. But they profit from it as their tools were designed for it. That shared financial interest in a system that is now being held to account in court is the accountability gap this report is trying to close.

⁷ The broader wave of social-media addiction and product-liability litigation, of which the March 2026 California verdict is one bellwether, is being tracked and documented on an ongoing basis; for a compiled archive of trial evidence, see the Tech Oversight Project's "Big Tech on Trial," <https://techoversight.org/bigtechontrial/>. The Tech Oversight Project is a Big Tech accountability advocacy organization. Note that the decision is currently under appeal, with the final outcomes to be determined.



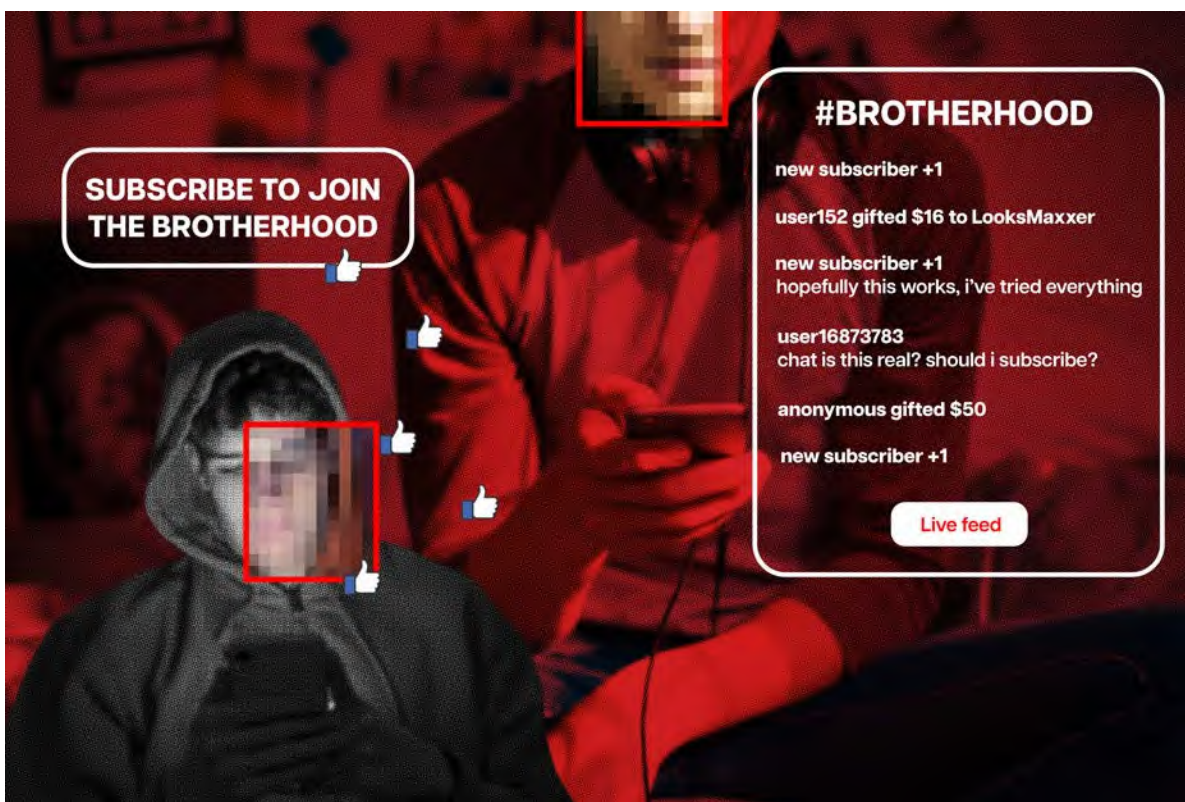
CHAPTER 3 – THE PIPELINE

How Aspiration Becomes Grievance Becomes Revenue

Across the globe, young boys and men are being systematically targeted by a rapidly expanding market built around masculinity. This market is not primarily ideological; it is fundamentally predatory and profit-driven. The ideology is the product. The product produces men oriented toward grievance, anti-democratic behavior, backlash against gender equality, and political manipulation – and then sells them the community, the course, and the supplement that promises relief from the condition the product created.

Much of the activity operates through what is, in effect, a commercial grift, swindle or scam. An ecosystem of schemes, products, and online services exploit male vulnerability, harvest personal data, or solicit payments for deceptive or low-value offerings.

From Andrew Tate’s celebrity meme-coin promotions to influencer-driven “brotherhood” memberships costing thousands, young men are literally paying for their own distortion.⁸ It’s been well documented how followers are coaxed into unregulated coins, trading bots, and luxury retreats promising “alpha success.” Even more concerning, viral “bone smashing” trends on platforms like TikTok and YouTube – where young men are encouraged to fracture their own faces to achieve a so-called “hyper-masculine look” – shows how far the pathology of online grievance meets opportunity: **turning insecurity into self-harm in the name of strength.**⁹



8 Tate has launched and promoted multiple Solana-based meme coins, including \$DADDY (Daddy Tate), \$G, and \$STATE, primarily through X and Rumble livestreams, while holding large stakes in them. Blockchain-analytics firm Bubblemaps reported in June 2024 that a cluster of wallets funded through Binance acquired a substantial share of the \$DADDY supply in near-identical amounts immediately before Tate’s promotional posts – a pattern the firm said strongly suggested coordinated insider activity, while noting it could not conclusively confirm common ownership;

Tate held roughly 40% of the supply and blocked the firm after it published. “Unmasking the \$DADDY Token,” July 2024, <https://blog.bubblemaps.io/unmasking-the-daddy-token/>; and “Andrew Tate’s DADDY Token Soars to \$300M, Sparking Scam Fears Over Pre-Promotion Purchases,” CCN, June 13, 2024, <https://www.ccn.com/news/crypto/andrew-tate-daddy-token-scam-fears-promotion-purchases/>.

9 Refer to Chapter 7 for more context on body dysmorphia trends promoted on digital platforms. “Bone smashing” is promoted within the looksmaxxing ecosystem, it involves young men striking their faces with hammers, blunt objects, or fists to create microfractures, based on a misapplication of Wolff’s Law (the claim that bone heals back stronger or more defined). Maxillofacial surgeons warn the practice risks asymmetric healing, nerve damage, and facial trauma, with no evidence it produces the claimed cosmetic result. “Gen Z Is Looksmaxxing by ‘Bonesmashing’ Their Faces,” VICE, March 2026, <https://www.vice.com/en/article/gen-z-is-looksmaxxing-by-bonesmashing-their-faces/>; “Toxic beauty: Rise of ‘looksmaxxing’ influencers,” AFP / France24, April 16, 2025, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20250416-toxic-beauty-rise-of-looksmaxxing-influencers>.



Not A Movement, A Franchise

Contrary to the perception that this ecosystem is a coherent movement driven solely by misogynistic ideology, our analysis shows that it functions first and foremost as a distributed media franchise. “Masculinity” has become a commercial category that is constructed, curated, and financially incentivized online. Influencers, platforms, and third-party vendors participate in a shared revenue infrastructure that transforms male insecurity into attention, attention into grievance, and grievance into profit.

Across our research, a consistent pattern emerges: an extreme-masculinity ecosystem that functions as a pipeline with three reinforcing stages:

THE PIPELINE:

Attention → Grievance Injection → Trust Into Monetization

The three-stage model drawn from discourse analysis research:



Parasocial Trust



Identity lock-In



Attention

It looks like help

Fitness & discipline

Finance advice

Dating guidance

Self-improvement

Parasocial loyalty

Grievance

*It becomes a
worldview*

Societal betrayal

Political resentment

Algorithm escalation

Collective identity

Enemy named

Monetization

*They pay for the
condition*

Courses & memberships

Crypto schemes

Supplements & gambling

Conflict farming

Platform cut

STAGE 1 CLOSE UP

Stage 1 – Recruitment through aspirational self-help: fitness, finance, dating advice, discipline content.

These “success scripts” fill a genuine gap for men seeking purpose and identity. They normalize the influencer relationship and the ecosystem’s tone before any explicit ideology is introduced. These gateway scripts are useful enough to keep people watching, and sticky enough to build parasocial loyalty. It normalizes the influencer relationship and establishes early parasocial attachment, creating the conditions for later ideological and commercial influence.

Platform: Instagram

Account: Men of Discipline (@menofdiscipline)

Type of operation: Aspirational on-ramp

Message: Discipline and self-improvement – but make it dark

Source: Popular culture material

What they are doing:

Practical self-improvement advice is packaged in the visual language of prestige male culture: Peaky Blinders, American Psycho, boxing. The misogyny is present but not leading. It arrives embedded in the framing, as common sense, by the time a man has already decided to trust the account. The Peaky Blinders and American Psycho references are not aesthetic decoration. They are in-group signaling – a shorthand telling a particular kind of man that this account speaks his language, before a single explicit ideological claim is made. The most effective on-ramp does not look like an on-ramp. It looks like help.



STAGE 2 CLOSE UP

Stage 2 – Grievance injection: personal struggle is reframed as evidence of societal betrayal, political resentment, cultural and democratic decline.

As grievance intensifies, parasocial loyalty deepens and identity begins to shift from individual frustration to collective belonging. Algorithms reinforce the shift by surfacing increasingly provocative material, while influencer networks reward creators who escalate grievances. Parasocial loyalty intensifies, and identity begins to shift from individual frustration to collective identity. What starts as self-improvement becomes a worldview organised around grievance.

Platform: X

Account: <https://x.com/GutFirstHealth>

Type of operation: Economic grievance framing

Message: Unemployment applies only to men

Source: Screenshotted post using Financial Times graduate unemployment data

What they are doing:

Legitimate economic data is being weaponized to construct a victim narrative. The chart is real. The interpretation is manufactured. By framing credential competition and labor market dynamics as a coordinated attack on men, this operation converts genuine economic anxiety – which is real and documented – into resentment with named targets: women, immigrants, foreign workers. The financial precarity men feel is not invented. The explanation being offered for it is.



STAGE 3 CLOSE UP

Stage 3 – Monetization of trust and loyalty.

Once identity lock-in occurs, monetization begins. Users are funneled toward paid courses, crypto schemes, supplements, gambling tie-ins, exclusive communities and donation funnels. Creators profit from conflict and clip farming. Platforms profit from the engagement that keeps users hooked. The same engagement-driven infrastructure that monetizes attention also accelerates radicalisation. Men are paying for their own radicalization while platforms quietly take a cut.

Platform: Myron Gaines (Fresh&Fit ecosystem)

Account: <https://ossarmy.com/300>

Type of operation: High-ticket community monetization / grievance-based belonging

Message: Exclusive “operator” community offering belonging, access, and coaching

Source: Publicly advertised membership tiers

What they are doing:

The OSS Army and OSS 300 convert grievance-framed identity and exclusivity into recurring revenue. The offer sells proximity to Myron Gaines and a sense of insider status rather than a defined curriculum. The OSS Army claims 6,000 members; the OSS 300 charges \$98/month for a private Telegram chat, one Zoom call, merch discounts, meetups, and vague “exclusive offers.” The coaching content is unspecified. The model monetizes belonging by packaging community, identity, and access as a premium product.





What is Meant by Grievance? A Snapshot

From this body of research, grievances are defined simply as distortions of real pressures – amplified, weaponized, and redirected toward resentment and consumption. In practice, they sound like this:



Economic Betrayal: “DEI took your job. Women get hired over you. You will never own a home.”



Dating and Relationships: “Women’s standards are impossible. You are being rejected because feminism taught women to despise men.”



Physical Inadequacy: “Your face, your jaw, your height, your body – these determine your worth. You are losing before you start.”



Emotional Suppression as Strength: “Therapy is for the weak. Vulnerability is exploitation bait. Real men do not need help.”



Institutional Abandonment: “Schools were built to feminize you. Courts will destroy you in divorce. Doctors do not take men seriously.”



Cultural Displacement: “Men are being erased. The things that made men men are now called toxic. You are not allowed to exist.”



Democracy Fails: “The system is rigged against you. Democracy is a joke. Human rights are special rights. The real problem for men is excessive liberalism.”



Example Grievances

CLOSE UP



Economic betrayal: “The system is rigged against men. Women get hired over you. DEI took your job. You will never own a home. Feminists seek power over men”

Platform: X

Account: @WyronGaines (Myron Gaines)

Type of operation: Economic grievance framing / gendered status hierarch

Message: “Men have real jobs, women have desk job wh*res”

Source: <https://x.com/WyronGaines/status/1958305422923755528>

What they are doing:

The post layers two grievances into a single frame: that the economy has been rigged against men through DEI hiring, and that male-dominated physical labor represents inherently superior, more meaningful work. The video proof – military, aviation, construction – is social confirmation that men who build and sacrifice are the real productive class, while women in offices are interlopers whose status is unearned. Calling professional women “desk job wh*res” collapses economic competition into sexual contempt, making structural grievance feel personal. This is the economic betrayal narrative at its most efficient: real wages stagnating, homeownership out of reach, and a convenient target placed in frame to absorb the anger. The function is not to offer solutions. It is to locate the blame, harden the resentment, and keep the audience returning to a creator who is willing to say out loud what they have been.



Caption: Women dominate useless jobs, men keep this country going! “Shoutout to y’all n*ggas! We don’t give a fvck about no desk job wh*res. get the fvck outta here!”

CLOSE UP



Dating and relationships: “Women’s standards are impossible. Game the system. You are being rejected because feminism taught women to despise men.”

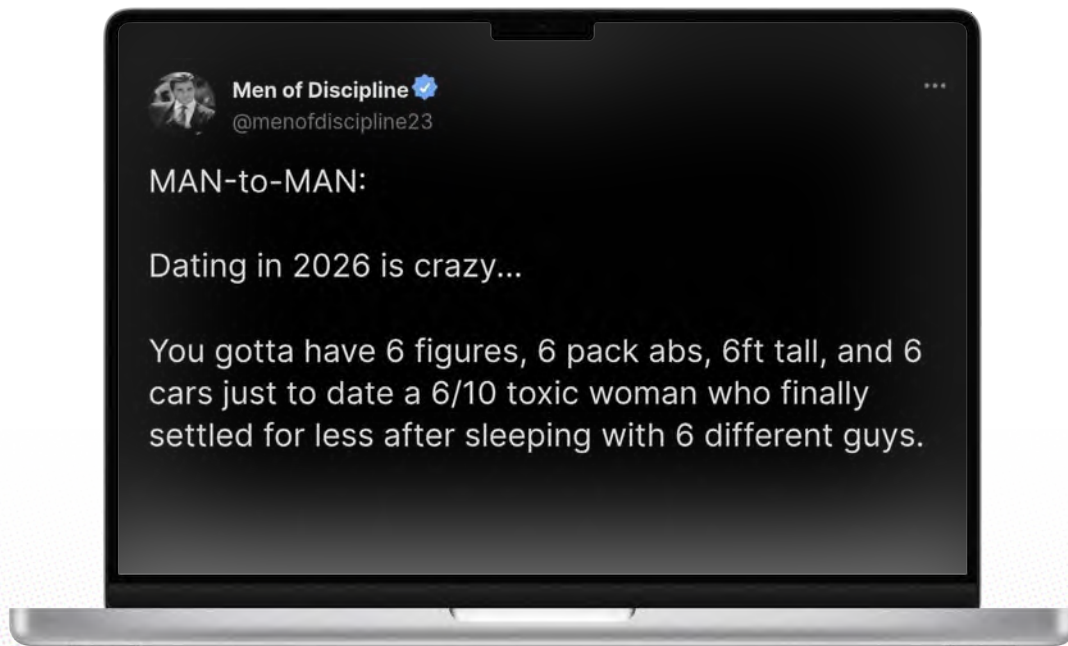
Platform: Facebook

Type of operation: Grievance reinforcement / dating expectation manipulation

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=122161837964942217&set=a.122104357982942217>

What they are doing:

The repeated claim that women exclusively select for height and wealth does two things simultaneously: it sets a bar most men cannot meet, and hands them a pre-built explanation for why they are failing. The messaging is so consistent across platforms that it surfaces organically – in focus group conversations conducted for this report, men repeated height and income requirements unprompted, as settled fact rather than contested claim. When an ideological talking point migrates into casual conversation without attribution, it has completed its work. The dating market has been reframed not as something men can navigate, but as a rigged system designed to exclude them.



CLOSE UP



Physical inadequacy: “Your face, your jaw, your height, your body – these determine your worth. You are losing before you start.”

Platform: YouTube Shorts

Account: Hamza Ahmed

Type of operation: Physical inadequacy pipeline / masculinity community recruitment

Message: “How to Build an Aesthetic Body”

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Y08rRYtpmO0>

What they are doing: The video opens with fitness – aspirational, broadly acceptable, and algorithmically rewarded across every major platform. By the end, viewers are directed to the comments to learn about masculinity, where the real pitch begins. This is the looks-maxxing pipeline in miniature: physical self-improvement as the entry point, masculine identity as the destination, and a paid community – the Adonis School – waiting at the bottom. The ideological payload is embedded in the closing message: men today are more feminine than ever and should not show emotion, because emotional expression costs them respect from women. Physical inadequacy and emotional suppression are sold as two sides of the same problem, and Hamza Ahmed is the solution to both.



CLOSE UP



Emotional suppression as strength: “Therapy is for the weak. Vulnerability is exploitation bait. Real men do not need help.”

Platform: X (formerly Twitter)

Account: GutFirstHealth

Type of operation: Emotional-suppression pipeline / anti-help-seeking masculinity

Message: “Therapy is for the weak. Vulnerability is exploitation bait. Real men do not need help.”

Source: <https://x.com/GutFirstHealth/status/1903445370593558660>

What they are doing:

The post reframes emotional suppression as a core masculine duty, using short, absolutist statements that perform well on X’s engagement-driven feed. It casts therapy as weakness and vulnerability as a threat, pushing men toward isolation rather than support. This is the emotional-suppression pipeline in miniature: distress is recoded as a test of manhood, help-seeking is delegitimized, and the creator positions themselves as the voice that understands what “real men” should do. The result is a clean on-ramp into communities that reward stoicism, distrust, and grievance as identity.



CLOSE UP



Institutional abandonment: “Schools were built to feminize you. Doctors do not take men seriously. Courts will destroy you in divorce.”

Platform: X

Account: @MasculineM7 (Elite Masculine)

Type of operation: Anti-marriage grievance content/
supplement pipeline

Message: Modern marriage is not worth it

Source: <https://x.com/MasculineM7/status/2043374083648458888>

What they are doing:

The carousel runs a narrative arc borrowed directly from men's rights and divorce forums: a man invests in marriage, his wife cheats, takes his money and children, and lies about him on the way out. The story is framed not as a cautionary tale but as the inevitable outcome of modern marriage — an institution recast as a legal trap. The racial coding embedded in the imagery adds a further grievance layer without making the subtext explicit enough to moderate. The “bathroom figure” aesthetic provides just enough abstraction to evade platform intervention while ensuring the message lands.



CLOSE UP



Cultural displacement: “Men are being erased. The things that made men men are now called toxic. You are not allowed to exist.”

Account: @TheeDrGroyper

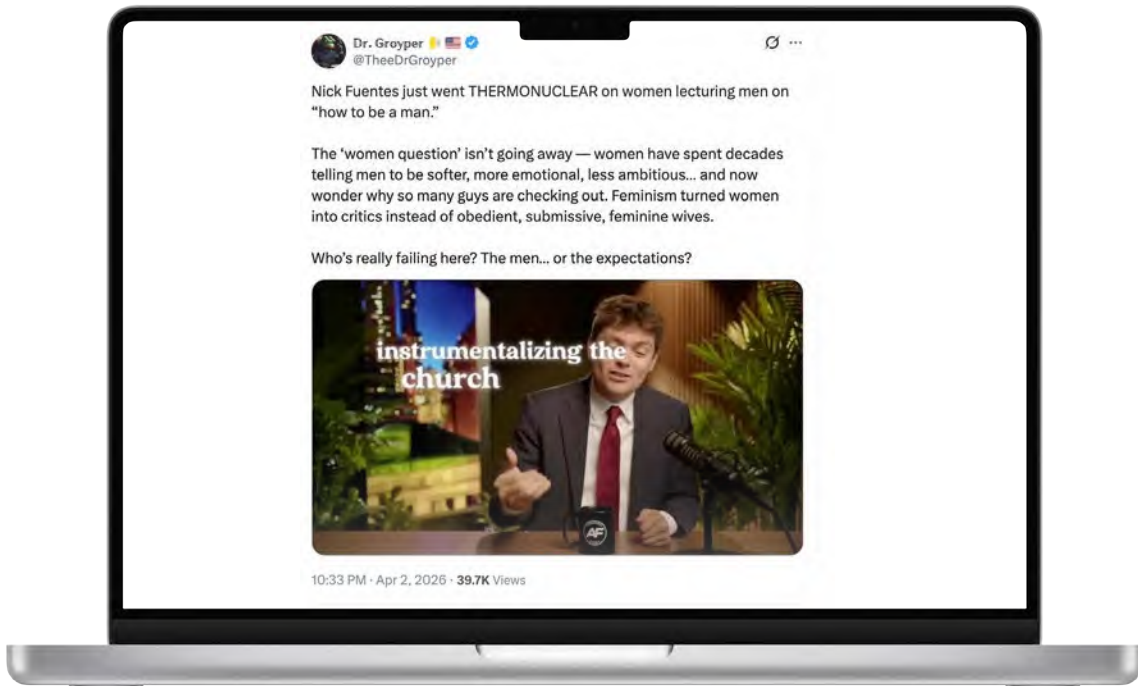
Type of operation: Cultural displacement framing / anti-feminist identity politics

Message: Feminism needs to be eradicated

Source: <https://x.com/TheeDrGroyper/status/2039818636924473738>

What they are doing:

The post makes a jurisdictional argument: women have no authority to define or instruct masculinity, and their attempt to do so – through feminism, through public opinion, through the trad wife who voices her own views – is itself the problem. The trad wife is not exempt. Her role is explicitly domestic and silent; the moment she lectures, she has crossed into enemy territory. This is cultural displacement in its most concentrated form: masculinity is not merely under pressure, it is being actively administered by people with no right to touch it. Fuentes and the Groyper ecosystem convert that grievance into a political identity with a clear enemy, a clear hierarchy, and no room for dissent from within.



Caption: Nick Fuentes just went THERMONUCLEAR on women lecturing men on “how to be a man.” The ‘women question’ isn’t going away – women have spent decades telling men to be softer, more emotional, less ambitious... and now wonder why so many guys are checking out. Feminism turned women into critics instead of obedient, submissive, feminine wives. Who’s really failing here? The men... or the expectations?

CLOSE UP



Democracy fails: “The system is rigged against you. Democracy is a joke. Human rights are special rights. The real problem for men is excessive liberalism.”

Platform: Gab

Account: JohnQPublic0000

Type of operation: Constitutional violence framing / QAnon-adjacent radicalization content

Message: Child trafficking and abuse justify the constitutional right to overthrow the government.

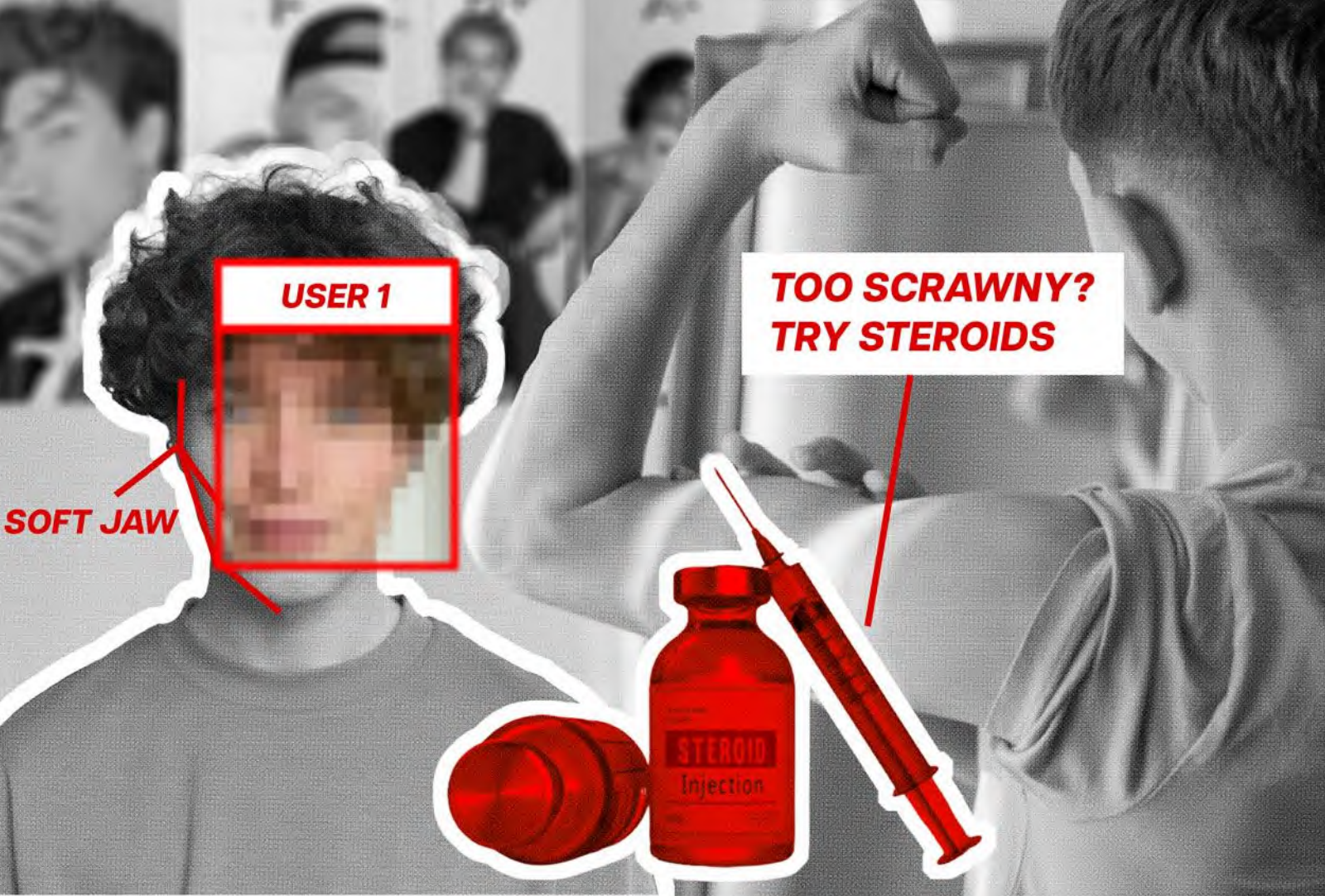
Source: <https://gab.com/JohnQPublic0000/posts/116265042034174989>

What they are doing:

This post builds the moral and legal scaffolding that makes political violence feel not only justified but obligatory – without ever calling for it directly. The mechanism is precise: take a genuine public concern about child trafficking, attach it to QAnon mythology and the Epstein files, then argue that the scale of the threat activates constitutional provisions for armed resistance. The framing converts a passive believer into a potential actor by giving him a cause sufficiently monstrous to warrant extreme response, a legal framework that reframes that response as patriotism, and a community of others who have accepted the same premises. Nothing forecloses rational argument faster, or opens the door to violence wider, than the suggestion that children are being harmed and that the institutions meant to stop it are complicit.



Caption: Pretty sure trafficking and eating our children is beyond enough to be labeled tyrannical. There has never been a better time to overthrow our government. It is our constitutional right.



CHAPTER 4 – WHO IS BEING TARGETED

The Men in This Story

Before further documenting the industry that preys on men, this report accounts for the men themselves. Not as a threat to be managed or a constituency to be won – but as people whose real experiences are being systematically exploited for profit.

The picture that emerges from Reset Tech's research, Equimundo's extensive IMAGES analysis, combined from focus groups conducted for this report, is not one of radicalized ideologues or passive victims. ***It is one of ordinary men navigating genuine pressures in an environment that offers them little institutional support, and that has been deliberately engineered to convert their uncertainty into loyalty and their loyalty into revenue.***¹⁰

¹⁰ Sources: Four focus groups conducted by Lake Research Partners for Reset Tech, March 2026; Equimundo's State of American Men 2025; Gallup, "Younger Men in the U.S. Among the Loneliest in West," March 2026. Global IMAGES survey data available at menandgendersonline.org.



The Conditions Are Real

The male grievance industry did not manufacture the pressures men are experiencing. It found them already there and built a business on top of them.

Equimundo's State of American Men 2025 documents the baseline: 86 percent of men, and 77 percent of women, say being a provider defines manhood. That expectation has not relaxed as the economic conditions required to meet it have deteriorated. Wage stagnation, credential inflation, and a housing market that has priced out a generation mean that structural failures land as personal ones. A young man who cannot support a family or see a clear financial path is not experiencing an economic problem in isolation – he is experiencing it as evidence of his own inadequacy as a man.¹¹

Men facing financial strain are more than 16 times more likely to report suicidal thoughts than those who are not. Over half of men say “no one really knows me.” That loneliness is compounded by the emotional suppression the same masculinity norms require – a closed loop in which distress accumulates without outlet, because strength means not showing it.

There's never a time to really decompress.

-Latino non-college man, 25-39



Gallup's 2026 research adds a comparative dimension: 25 percent of young American men report daily loneliness, compared to 17 percent of other American adults – a gap wider than any other country in the OECD. Forty-six percent report daily worry, compared to 37 percent of other adults.¹²

This is the population the male grievance industry is targeting. Not because its operators are uniquely perceptive, but because these conditions are visible, measurable, and have been growing for years. The industry did not create the loneliness. It identified it as a market.

¹¹ Equimundo, State of American Men 2025 (Washington, DC: Equimundo, 2025). The report finds that economic insecurity, isolation, and adherence to harmful masculine norms are driving a dangerous combination of despair and political grievance among American men. Key findings include: men facing financial strain are over 16 times more likely to report suicidal thoughts; more than half of men say “no one really knows me”; and adherence to rigid masculine norms (the “Man Box”) is increasing in intensity, with men in the Man Box 6.3 times more likely to experience suicidal ideation. <https://www.equimundo.org/resources/state-of-american-men-2025/>

¹² Benedict Vigers, “Younger Men in the U.S. Among the Loneliest in West,” Gallup, May 20, 2025. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/690788/younger-men-among-loneliest-west.aspx>



What Are They Looking For?

*You have to have everything such as a house,
a great job, good savings.*

-Latino non-college man, 25-39



In March 2026, Lake Research Partners conducted focus groups with “very online men” between the ages of 18 and 39 in the United States. These cohorts represent the demographic intersections where the male grievance industry is most active: economic precarity, identity uncertainty, high algorithmic exposure, and political volatility.¹³

What participants described looking for when they first encountered masculinity-oriented online operations was not ideology. It was practical help with problems no one else was addressing: financial pressure, dating expectations, mental health strain, provider anxiety, and a sense of direction in transitions where they felt they had no roadmap.

Self-improvement operations – fitness, finance, discipline, dating advice – felt like practical help and, crucially, a rare space where men’s pressures were acknowledged at all. Many described social media as raising the bar for what men must achieve to be seen as successful. They described arriving at masculinity-oriented content while searching for guidance, stability, and recognition in a context they experience as increasingly demanding.

Men primarily understand today’s perceptions of masculinity through the lens of responsibility to others - being a provider, protector, and source of strength for others, while leaving little room for emotional expression or personal fulfillment.

-Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners



13 Focus groups were screened for moderate political leaning and ideology

They consistently named:

Financial pressure: wages, cost of living, and the difficulty of “getting ahead.”

Dating expectations: rising standards around money, appearance, and status

Mental health strain: stress, emotional suppression, and limited space to decompress.

Provider expectations: the desire to be responsible, dependable, and “set up” before forming a family.

A sense of direction: especially among younger men navigating transitions in work, relationships, and identity. One Latino non-college man aged 25 to 39 described it plainly: “You gotta have a mansion, a certain type of body. It’s more expectations, not being able to fulfill what society expects.”

The entry point is not manipulation. It is recognition. A young man navigating financial stress encounters a creator who speaks to his experience with apparent authority and without judgment. The transaction feels like being seen.

It really feels like as a man you have to shut up and do it.

-White non-college man, 18-24

“



What the Online Community Provides – And What It Costs

Participants consistently described a strong sense of community, validation, and recognition in these online ecosystems. They felt part of something bigger, surrounded by others who understood their pressures, less alone in their struggles. This sense of belonging softened resistance to more provocative content. Men said the online communities offered:

- Emotional recognition that they do not receive from institutions
- Shared language for pressures they struggle to articulate
- A sense of direction when they feel they lack a “playbook” for modern manhood

Family responsibility was strong across all groups. But civic or community belonging beyond the immediate family was weak – men struggled to articulate any collective role for themselves beyond “not causing problems.” That gap is precisely what the membership economy fills, and why the brotherhood pitch works.

Over time, however, many described a widening gap between what they had sought and what they found. They came looking for discipline, confidence, financial guidance, and mental health support. They encountered narratives of societal betrayal, resentment toward women framed as hard truth, pressure to optimize against unattainable standards, and emotional suppression that foreclosed the vulnerability they had originally come looking for help with.

Men trapped within what Equipundo calls the Man Box – the rigid set of norms demanding self-sufficiency, emotional suppression, and dominance – are 6.3 times more likely to experience suicidal ideation than men who are not. The online operations documented in this report are not simply adjacent to those norms. They actively manufacture and enforce them, at scale, for profit.



Awareness of Being Targeted

They're pushing sports, gambling ads.

-White non-college man, 18-24

“

mercial infrastructure – courses, coaching, exclusive memberships – as a sales funnel. They experienced it as the next step.

Even when manipulation was recognized, most participants were not angry. They saw it as normal online behavior. Awareness did not translate into disengagement.

This is the critical operational finding for anyone thinking about intervention. The solution is not better information about what these operations are doing. Many participants already knew. The solution is addressing the underlying conditions – isolation, economic precarity, the absence of alternative structures for the male community, and purpose – that make the ecosystem's offer worth accepting even when its nature is visible.

Some people are trying to sell their brand or ideas that are more immaterial.

-Latino non-college man, 25-39

“

Social media is pushing out a wrong narrative telling us guys what real men are.

-Latino non-college man, 25-39

“



What Reaches and What Closes Doors

Appeals from this ecosystem that resonated with men emphasized discipline, purpose, self-reliance, taking control, brotherhood, and the observation that “no one teaches men this anymore.” Self-improvement appeals were powerful even when they became rigid or unhealthy.

Language that closed doors and triggered defensiveness included direct criticism of masculinity-focused influencers, framing that implied gullibility or manipulation, characterizations of the broader ecosystem as misogynistic, and institutional or academic tones that felt judgmental. These did not simply fail to persuade – they hardened resistance.

Empathy was not rejected, but it was coded differently than practitioners often expect. Participants described it as a universal human trait and several framed it as part of proper masculinity – a reflection of calm, strength, and perspective-taking. That framing is an underused bridge. It speaks in the language the ecosystem already uses, toward a different end.

Empathy is required for proper masculinity

-White non-college man, 18-24



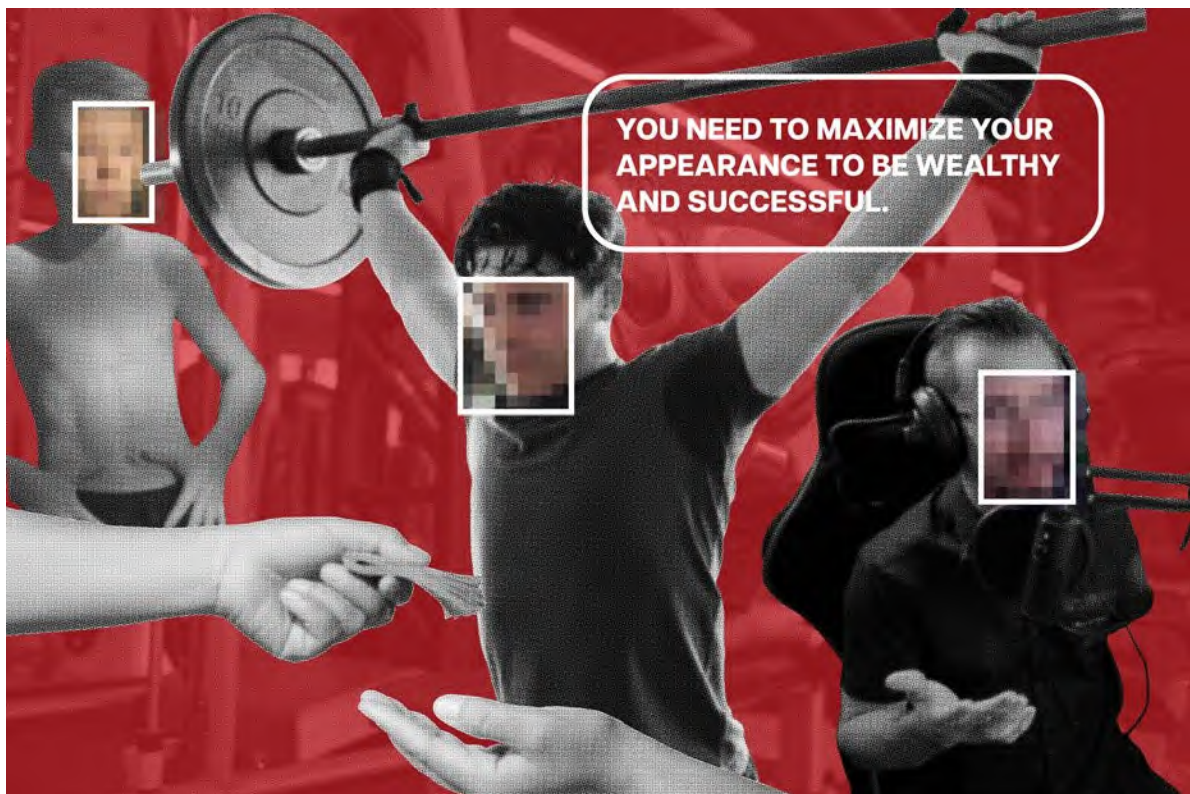
The Environment They are Entering

These individual experiences exist within a broader constructed environment that shapes how everything else is interpreted. The discourse analysis conducted for this report identified two dominant narrative frames that men encounter repeatedly.

The first is loss of status – the claim that men are being pushed out of society, replaced, or silenced, with economic anxiety and social isolation reframed as evidence of a coordinated attack on men’s rights and identity. It does not solve the loneliness or the financial precarity. It gives them a target.

The second is distorted masculinity ideas – manhood defined through dominance, hierarchy, control, and emotional suppression, where protection is weaponized as justification for hostility and empathy is coded as weakness. These are not neutral descriptions of male experience. They are manufactured environments, produced and distributed at scale for commercial and political reasons that have nothing to do with the well-being of the men consuming them.

The men in these focus groups were not there because they were uniquely vulnerable. They were there because the ecosystems were built to find them, and because nothing else was there first.



PART II: EXPLOITING THE NEED FOR SECURITY & BELONGING

The following chapters focus on the scams targeting men online in the pipeline from manufactured vulnerability to extracted revenue. The analysis surfaced the five most financially significant grifts, the most thoroughly documented, where the commercial infrastructure is most clearly visible and actionable. The regulatory tools to address these operations already exist. Little of what follows requires new laws to be written, new agencies to be created, or new frameworks to be invented. What it requires is a decision to see what is happening as what it is: ***a commercial ecosystem built on the financial exploitation of men, operating at scale, escalating in harm, and generating billions of dollars for platforms and creators who face no meaningful accountability for the damage they cause.***

The 5 Biggest Scams Targeting Men

Scam 1: The Fake University

Scam 2: The Brotherhood Membership

Scam 3: Wealth Porn and Crypto

Scam 4: The Body Optimization Pipeline

Scam 5: The Conflict Machine



Scam 1: The Fake University

Courses and membership platforms selling recycled content at subscription prices, with affiliate pyramid structures where the primary income model for members is recruiting other members. Documented example: Andrew Tate's Real World, stated 155,000 students at \$99/month. Product packaging changes – dropshipping, crypto, AI – but the audience and the price point do not. Cancellation terms are often obscure and the process slow or unresponsive.

Regulatory opportunities: Consumer protection frameworks in multiple jurisdictions have established precedent for pursuing fraudulent educational products – where promised outcomes are fabricated, cancellation is deliberately obstructed, and the primary income model is recruiting other members into the same scheme. This is akin to consumer fraud. It has a paper trail. The framing has been missing, not the authority.



Scam 2: The Brotherhood Membership

Private communities selling access, belonging, and parasocial mentorship at escalating price points. The Guru Effect produces dependency rather than self-reliance by design: if results are not achieved, the failure is attributed to insufficient discipline, keeping members paying for additional coaching. Internal chats are sometimes populated with bots to simulate an active community. After a [2024 hack](#) into Tate's Real World, significant gaps between registered usernames and genuinely active users were noted.¹⁴

Regulatory opportunities: False advertising, deceptive subscription practices, and the deliberate simulation of community activity to sustain paid membership all fall within existing consumer protection law across the US, EU, UK, Canada, and Australia. Enforcement has not followed because the ecosystem has not been characterized as a consumer protection problem.

¹⁴ The breach revealed 794,000 usernames against the platform's own claim of 113,000 active members, a gap that reporters noted but the platform attributed to former and lapsed subscribers. <https://medium.com/lazy-by-design/analyzing-the-real-worlds-hacked-chat-logs-part-1-2234a0098700>



Scam 3: Wealth Porn and Crypto

Fabricated or leveraged lifestyle displays – jets, Lamborghinis, luxury hotels – used to sell financial products to young men whose economic anxiety makes them willing to take on risk for a promised shortcut. Scott Galloway has described this ecosystem as people “vomiting their wealth porn and their faux success.” Documented example: Adin Ross promoted a crypto token to 750,000 live viewers for \$200,000; the coin crashed to near zero. His response: “I got paid a bag to do that. I don’t give a f***.”¹⁵

Regulatory opportunities: *Undisclosed paid promotion of financial products, fabricated lifestyle claims used to sell investment schemes, and the deliberate targeting of economically anxious men with false promises of financial transformation are actionable under securities, financial services, and consumer protection frameworks in every major jurisdiction where these operations run.*



Scam 4: The Body Optimization Pipeline

Supplement funnels, gray-market peptides, and unregulated health products sold through looksmaxxing and fitness operations, with false or misleading claims about effectiveness. The same kind of affiliate marketing infrastructure documented in Reset Tech’s Clickbait Cures investigation – coordinated burner accounts, fake authority ecosystems, rotating domains – that operates across the nutraceutical scam ecosystem appears to use parallel tactics in the male grievance industry. This comparable pipeline architecture operates in a pattern that is materially similar to those documented in the Clickbait report. Over 20 percent of the 390 flagged nutraceuticals in Clickbait Cures are male sexual health products. The pipeline runs from fitness influencer to supplement affiliate to gray-market injectable, with no medical oversight at any stage.

Regulatory opportunities: *False health claims, unapproved products, and coordinated inauthentic advertising networks promoting dangerous interventions without medical oversight fall within health product safety and consumer protection authority in the US, EU, Canada, and Australia – the enforcement gap is prioritization, not legal authority.*



Scam 5: The Conflict Machine

Manufactured feuds, cancellation cycles, and alpha contests engineered to drive audience acquisition and sponsorship revenue, with men’s anger and tribal loyalty as the raw material – and platforms as co-profiteers. In Chapter 8-10, influencer tiers show how Mid-level creators may earn \$10,000–\$60,000 from a single conflict stream; top-tier events could generate \$75,000–\$300,000 or more. As an example of scale, the Candace Owens conflict cycle added 2.5 million subscribers in March 2026. Platform cancellations are welcomed rather than feared – they function as proof of outsider status, spiking followers and hardening loyalty. Every step of the conflict is a content event. None requires resolution to be profitable.

Regulatory opportunities: *Platform accountability frameworks – including the EU’s Digital Services Act systemic risk obligations and emerging equivalents in the UK, Australia, Brazil, and Canada – reach the infrastructure that monetizes manufactured conflict, not just the content it produces. Advertiser transparency requirements and political funding disclosure obligations would expose the financial relationships currently sustaining this ecosystem without accountability.*

¹⁵ Adin Ross Live on Stream <https://www.twitch.tv/adinross/clip/TriangularAssiduousDumplingsDancingBaby-wDwTkD-BIEZ-KJR3V>



CHAPTER 5 – THE BROTHERHOOD BUSINESS

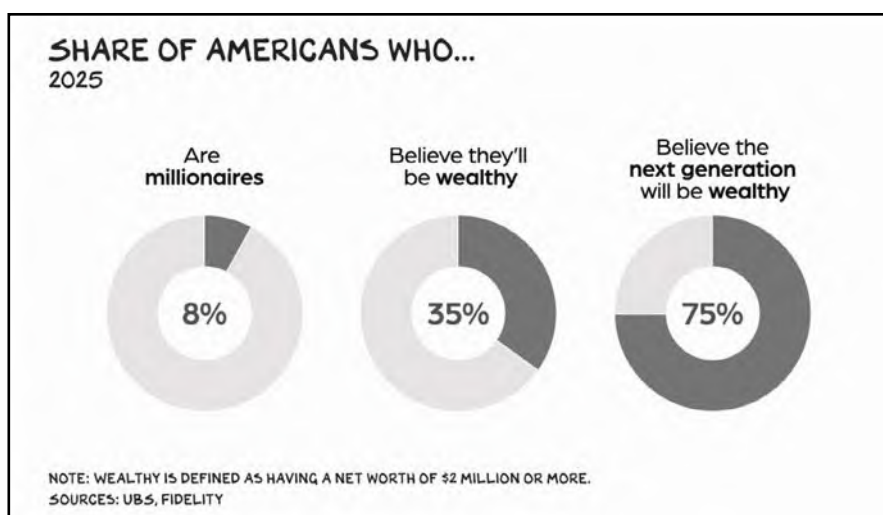
Membership Schemes, Private Communities, and Manufactured Mentorship



What is Actually Being Sold - Lifestyle Fantasies

Before documenting the mechanics of how these membership operations work, it is worth pausing on what they are actually selling, because it is not only – or sometimes not at all – as advertised. The influencer personality is also the product, in the hope it comes with access to information, community, or success to get rich and be successful.

NYU professor, author, and tech commentator [Scott Galloway](#) has been one of the more persistent mainstream voices willing to name this dynamic plainly, and unlike other masculinity experts, speaks to the profit motivation of Big Tech and their targeting of men and their vulnerabilities. In his 2025 book *Notes on Being a Man*, in accompanying interviews and blog posts, Galloway identified what he calls “wealth porn” as the central engine of the male influencer economy – a relentless performance of faux success designed to manufacture aspiration and inadequacy simultaneously.¹⁶



Galloway’s research captures the gap between what young men expect their financial lives to look like and what the economy is actually likely to deliver – a gap the male grievance industry did not create, but has learned to monetize with precision. Only 8 percent of Americans are millionaires – yet 35 percent believe they will be wealthy, and 75 percent believe the next generation will be. Wealthy here is defined as a net worth of \$2 million or more. The distance between what is statistically likely and what people believe is coming is not a coincidence. It is the market. The course, the membership, the crypto scheme, and the coaching program are all selling a place in the 35 percent – to an audience the algorithm has already primed to believe it is attainable and that someone who figured it out is willing to share the secret, for \$99 a month.

16 [No Mercy/No Malice](#), Scott Galloway, Prof G. Media

“Effectively, you have the deepest-pocketed companies in the world that represent 40% of the S&P, who have one mission. And that is to sequester you from your family... so you have a group of young men whose prefrontal cortex doesn’t catch up to a woman until it’s 25 is looking for that immediate dopa. And they think I can have a reasonable facsimile of life online. Why go through the pecking order of having friends when I have Discord and Reddit? Why go through the BS of putting on a tie and navigating the corporate world when I can trade stocks or crypto on Coinbase or on Robinhood? And why would I go through the humiliation, the expense, the rejection, the perseverance of trying to establish a romantic relationship when I have lifelike porn? Big Tech is not our friend. The bottom line is, they are doing everything they can to sequester you from the most meaningful and important thing in your life, and that is relationships...”¹⁷

Galloway rightly identifies the product clearly: it is not the course, the membership, or the coaching. It is the lifestyle. The Lamborghinis, the women, the private jets, the penthouse office, the freedom – these are not incidental to the pitch. They are the pitch. The course or membership is the mechanism by which a man is told he can access the life being displayed.

This is a well-constructed illusion. The lifestyle being sold is, in most cases, either fabricated, heavily financed by the revenue the course itself generates, or simply unavailable to the people being sold it. Galloway has described the operators of this ecosystem as “parasites trolling off despair and anger” – a characterization that names both the predatory intent and the emotional raw material being exploited.

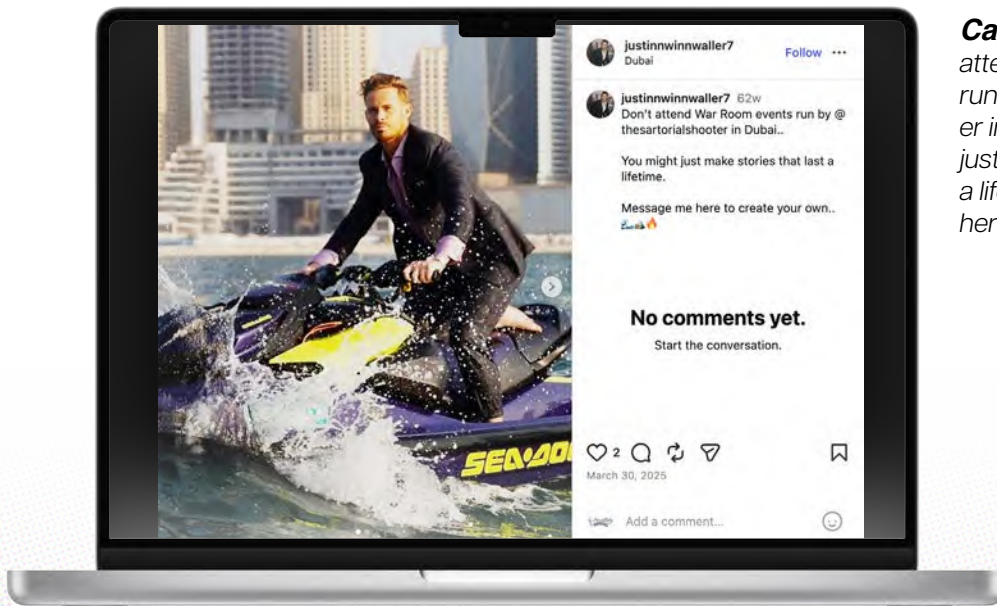


¹⁷ NY Post <https://nypost.com/2026/01/12/opinion/scott-galloway-is-saving-dejected-gen-z-men-from-the-likes-of-nick-fuentes-sneako/>



Men are not buying information. They are buying hope in the form of a lifestyle that has been engineered to look attainable and has been designed to remain just out of reach.

Caption: INSANE: Business Icon Patrick Bet-David (\$450,000,000 net worth) says he bought \$XRP and breaks down why it could reach \$1,000 per coin.



Caption: Dubai. Don't attend War Room events run by @thesartorialshooter in Dubai.. You might just make stories that last a lifetime. Message me here to create your own

The Commercial Anatomy of Manufactured Belonging

The lifestyle is the bait. The membership is the trap. In cases analyzed, the influencer typically starts offering free information. Once follower numbers increase, the relationship becomes monetized as memberships in clubs or elite communities. The club promises unique access to the influencer, insider information, and success. The list of promised results often includes financial success, access to high-quality women, and increased transformation. Promotion of these courses is often peppered with testimonials of “men like you.”

Platform: Men of Action website, Michael Sartain

Type of operation: Affluence monetized

Message: Network your way to women, money, and success with little investment of time

What they are doing:

From the “How A Chubby, Video-Game-Playing Introvert Dated PlayBoy Playmates and Networked With Celebrities... Without Two Dimes to Rub Together! And How Any Man Can Do The Same in just 21 Days! (works even if you have social anxiety... and in just 25 minutes a day) A [testimonial](#) under the Manifesto, Men of Action website.

Social psychology notes that the “Guru Effect” is often an expensive, charismatic self-help program or wellness retreat that often relies on emotional elevation and temporary motivational spikes rather than lasting psychological change. They can sometimes foster unhealthy dependency rather than genuine self-reliance.

Reliance on the guru is baked into these courses. Embedded into all these courses or clubs is the promise of success – but only if the member has enough discipline. This puts the blame on the member not having the discipline to work the prescribed system if the member does not get the promised results. This also keeps them in the club for additional coaching or other services. Motivational talk, certainty of the promised influencer lessons, and ever-increasing fees for more personalized coaching are included in membership.

As with all self-help programs, social science research shows that when people pay, they are more likely to follow through and complete the program, due to the sunk cost fallacy. Spending more on a course or coach can increase your initial motivation and belief in the process, in perceived value studies.



The ultimate irony of the manosphere economy is the inherent conflict of interest between the creator and the consumer. These influencers preach total financial independence, self-reliance, and breaking free from the traditional corporate system. Yet their entire revenue model depends on their audience never actually achieving those goals. If a follower truly became wealthy and self-sufficient, they would cancel their monthly subscription.¹⁸

-Money Talks News

“

The parasocial mentorship pitch: exclusive access, insider content, the feeling of being chosen and guided by a successful man who understands the struggle. There are often internal chats on Telegram and other internal messaging services like [Skool.com](https://skool.com), which is an all-inclusive portal for education programs that allow others to talk to the influencer or to other successful members. These inside chats are seen as a membership premium and, in some cases, include topics not discussed openly, such as recruitment of members, crypto, or questionable health or drug sales.

The chats can also be populated with bots or internal automated responses to make the rooms seem busier and more successful, and to pressure real users to stay. After [a hack into Andrew Tate's Real World in 2024](#), data scientists analyzing leaked server logs noted massive gaps between the total number of registered usernames and the number of genuinely active users.



¹⁸ "Money, Misogyny and the Manosphere: Nothing New to See Here," moneytalksnews.com, March 26, 2026

Snapshots: Example Personalities and Products

Andrew Tate, also known as: *Top G; the most googled man in the world (self-described)*

Platform Base: YouTube, X, Rumble, Telegram

Primary Pipeline Stage: Aspiration → Grievance → Monetization

What He Tells Men: That the world is designed to keep men weak, broke, and controlled – and that he has the blueprint to escape it. Success, women, money, and status are available to men willing to do what others won't.

What He Is Actually Selling:

- The Real World: \$99/month, or \$499/month premium tier. Stated enrollment is 155,000 students as of March 2026. The product has been repackaged repeatedly – Hustler's University, then dropshipping, then crypto, then AI business – same price, same testimonial format, different product each time the previous one lost credibility. The audience is the asset; the product is whatever is being sold to it this cycle.
- The War Room: Now \$1640, but previously \$8,000, a year in crypto for a private membership network marketed as an exclusive brotherhood. This is where he taught "Tate's Pimping Hoes Degree" (PhD), where members learned how to recruit women for webcam porn filming. According to his own texts, he featured 75 girls in his webcam business. 140 of his members were in "porn boasting," claiming they made \$10k-15k a month.¹⁹
- Tate was indicted in Romania in 2023 on charges of rape, human trafficking, and forming an organized criminal group to sexually exploit women. In May 2025, the UK Crown Prosecution Service confirmed charges against him include rape, human trafficking, and controlling prostitution for gain, though Tate denied all charges, and the charges were later dropped due to a failure to meet the evidence threshold.²⁰
- The affiliate mechanic: students earn financial benefits for recruiting other students. Their testimonials function as advertising. The primary income model for members is not the course itself – it is selling the course to others.
- \$Daddy or Daddy Tate is his crypto currency valued at \$0.007671 [June, 10 2026](#). As the Coinbase site states, "Buy a few \$DADDY coins, and enjoy your profits and hot yachty babes fast-tracking your phantom wallet to 1 million solana."



¹⁹ New Yorker, Andrew Tate Empire of Abuse <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/06/15/andrew-tates-empire-of-abuse>

²⁰ Romania indictment: Andrew and Tristan Tate, along with two Romanian co-defendants, were indicted by Romania's Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism (DIICOT) on June 20, 2023, on charges of human trafficking, rape, and forming an organized criminal group to sexually exploit women; the case alleges seven victims recruited via the "loverboy" method and remains awaiting trial. Andrew Tate is indicted on human trafficking and rape charges in Romania, NPR, June 20, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/20/1183176707/andrew-tate-indicted-human-trafficking-rape-romania>. UK: On May 28, 2025, the Crown Prosecution Service confirmed it had authorized 21 charges against the brothers – Andrew Tate facing 10 charges relating to three women, including rape, human trafficking, actual bodily harm, and controlling prostitution for gain – arising from alleged conduct between 2012 and 2015; UK extradition is to follow conclusion of the Romanian proceedings. "Tate brothers charged with rape and human trafficking in UK," Associated Press / PBS NewsHour, May 2025, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/tate-brothers-charged-with-rape-and-human-trafficking-in-uk>. The Tate brothers deny all charges in both jurisdictions. CPS confirmed dropping of charges: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2025/sep/29/andrew-tate-to-face-no-criminal-charges-over-abuse-claims-made-in-uk-civil-case#:~:text=8%20months%20old-,Andrew%20Tate%20to%20face%20no%20criminal%20charges%20over,made%20in%20UK%20civil%20case&text=Andrew%20Tate%20will%20face%20no,the%20high%20court%20in%20London>.

Fresh & Fit, (Myron Gaines and Walter Weeks) Also known as: Fresh and Fit Podcast, OSS Army

Platform Base: YouTube, X, Rumble, Kick

Primary Pipeline Stage: Aspiration → Grievance → Monetization

What He Tells Men: That women are hypergamous by nature, that modern dating is rigged against men who play by the rules, and that the only path to success with women is wealth, status, and dominance. Female guests, often OnlyFans models, are routinely humiliated on camera as proof of concept.

What He Is Actually Selling:

- Castle Club: \$315/year private membership marketed as access to a brotherhood of high-value men, networking events, and unfiltered relationship advice.
- Sponsorships: supplements, financial products, lifestyle brands integrated directly into programming. The mechanism: Dating anxiety as the entry point; misogyny normalized as insight; membership sold as admission to the in-group of men who have figured it out.



Austin Wayne, also known as: @austinwayneofficial; founder of Kalosique

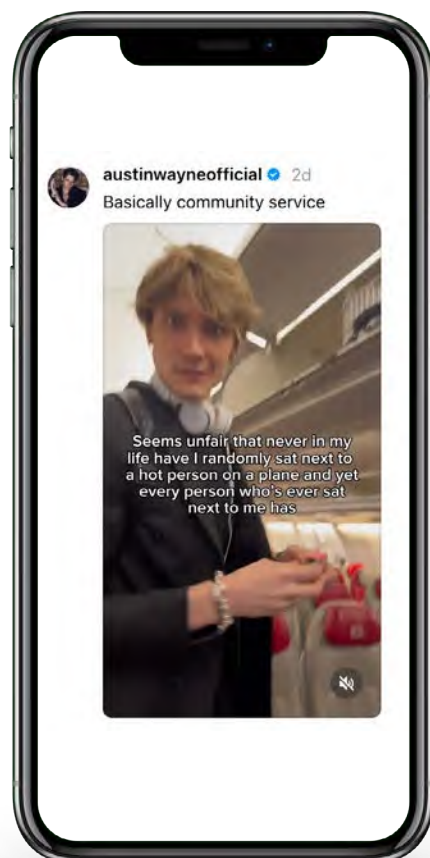
Platform Base: YouTube, Instagram, TikTok

Primary Pipeline Stage: Aspiration → Monetization (primarily belonging pipeline)

What He Tells Men: That physical appearance is the determining factor in social status, dating, and self-worth – and that with the right guidance and products, any man can become maximally attractive.

What He Is Actually Selling:

- Mogversity: looksmaxxing school on Skool, \$29/month, including a 3-hour looksmaxxing course and bi-weekly coaching calls
- 1-on-1 coaching: premium tier via Kalosique, \$660 for direct personal access
- Supplements: the Kalosique product line, including “Titan Growth 2.0,” marketed with testimonials claiming significant height gains in adult men The mechanism: Fitness and appearance aspiration as the entry point; physical inadequacy as the sustained emotional driver; a tiered product stack from low-cost digital to high-cost personal coaching converts anxiety into recurring revenue.



Caption: Seems unfair that never in my life have I randomly sat next to a hot person on a plane and yet every person who's ever sat next to me has

Hamza Ahmed, also known as: @HamzaAdonis; “the Adonis.”

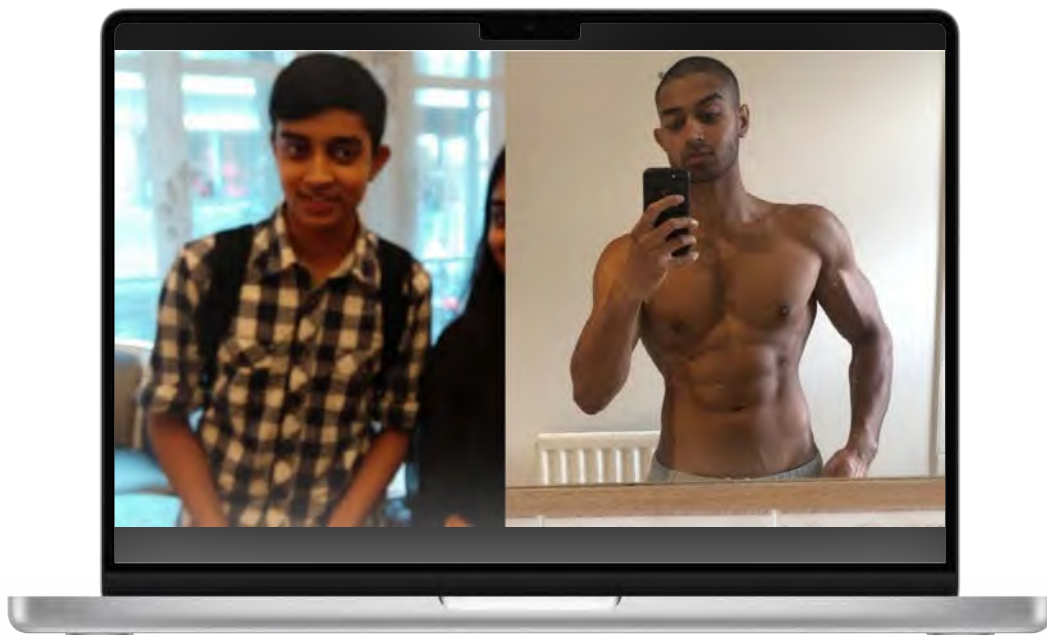
Platform Base: YouTube, Skool

Primary Pipeline Stage: Aspiration → Monetization

What He Tells Men: That most men are “total losers” by default, and that through discipline, fitness, nofap, and his system, they can become one of the rare few who are genuinely attractive, masculine, and successful. Self-described \$1.5 million profit from YouTube last year.

What He Is Actually Selling:

- Library of Adonis: \$37/month men’s self-improvement school on Skool, 2,300 members, covering discipline, looksmaxxing, fitness, nofap, dating, productivity, and business
- Educational Content Creators: \$47/month separate Skool community teaching men how to replicate his income model – build a YouTube channel, sell courses and communities. The mechanism: The second product is the tell. The primary income model is not self-improvement – it is teaching other men to sell self-improvement to other men. The pyramid is the product.



Patrick Ben David, *also known as: PBD*

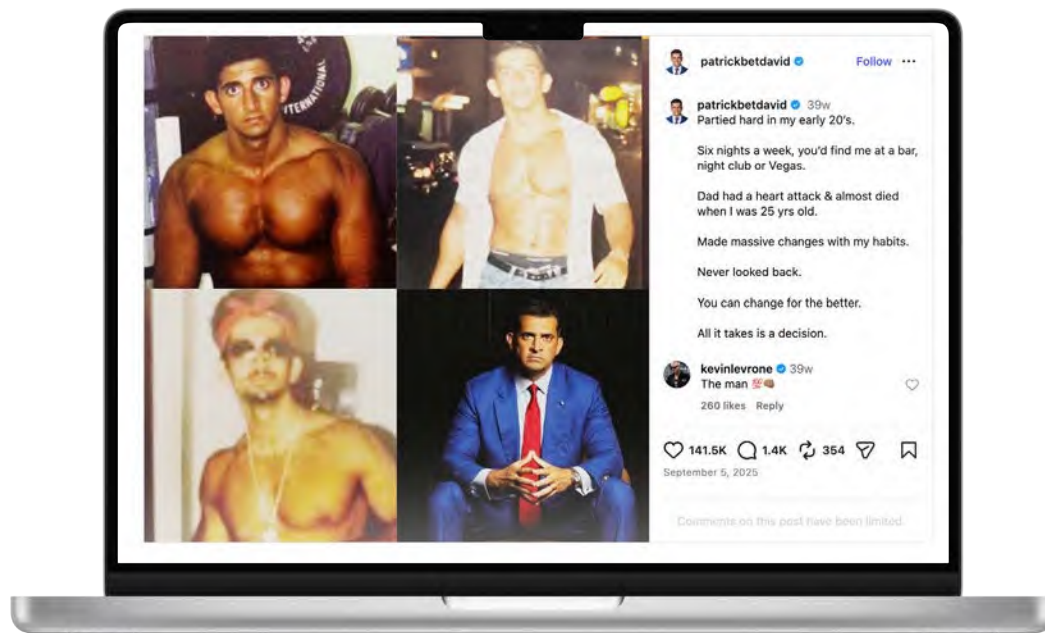
Platform Base: YouTube, Valuetainment Media, a platform he owns with multiple podcasts

Primary Pipeline Stage: Business Aspiration → Monetization

What He Tells Men: “While some entrepreneurs and business owners have been inspired with new ideas and have flourished, others have been met with harsh realities and failure. That’s why knowing how to make your next five, ten, or fifteen next moves in the War Room, Board Room, and Bedroom has never been more important than today.”

What He Is Actually Selling:

- Academy Membership is \$277 a month. Specific pricing: \$100 for a Video Answer: \$300 FaceTime / Direct Call: \$800/minute, a personal identity audit with a consultant, Direct 1-on-1 time with Patrick on Minnect is priced at \$12,000 for 15 minutes and can go up to \$48,000 for a 30-to-60-minute session. For dedicated face-to-face sessions in Dallas, rates can range from \$20,000 to \$50,000, depending on travel.
- Book sales, Your Next Five Moves, and Choose Your Enemies Wisely.
- As the Founder of PHP Agency Insurance was described by critics as a multi-level marketing model²¹ with a compensation structure that relied on recruitment rather than sales, and with most agents earning little or no net income after expenses. It was widely reported that he had a nine-figure payout on his equity stake.²²



²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8PHTem7p4>

²² https://ceo.wiki/wiki/Patrick_Bet-David

Jon Zherka, *also known as: Zherka*

Platform Base: Kick, YouTube, Instagram, Discord, Telegram

Primary Pipeline Stage: Relationships → Monetization

What He Tells Men: “Unlock valuable insights into the human psyche with our latest Psychology Edition package!” Much of his appeal is his outrageous statements—whores and N*ggers are often embedded in his podcast and stream.

What He Is Actually Selling:

Secret Society basic subscription is \$46 a month, premium is \$111 to learn about relationships.



Justin Waller, also known as: JWaller Studios

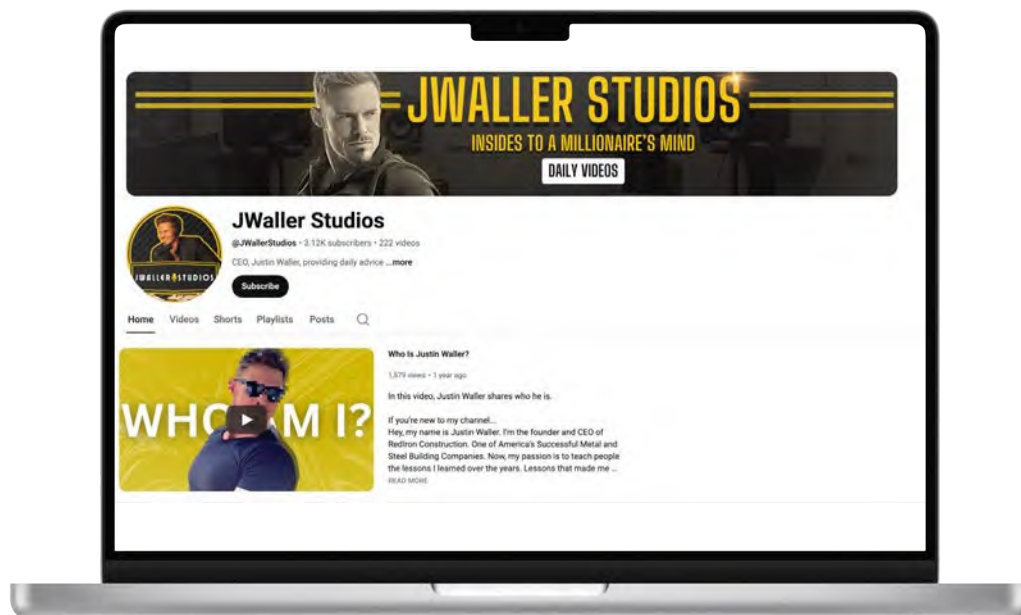
Platform Base: Skool, also podcast guest for Tate, Ben-David, Gaines

Primary Pipeline Stage: Business Aspiration → Monetization

What He Tells Men: “Get weekly coaching directly with Justin through the live calls where you can ask him anything about business, networking, construction, real estate, relationships, and anything personal.” Built a social media audience through male influencers’ guest appearances and misogynistic views of relationships, Alpha male, and a close friendship with Tate.

What He Is Actually Selling:

Limited-time price of \$97/month, original price of \$247/month.



Asmongold, also known as zackrawrr on twitch, Zack on X

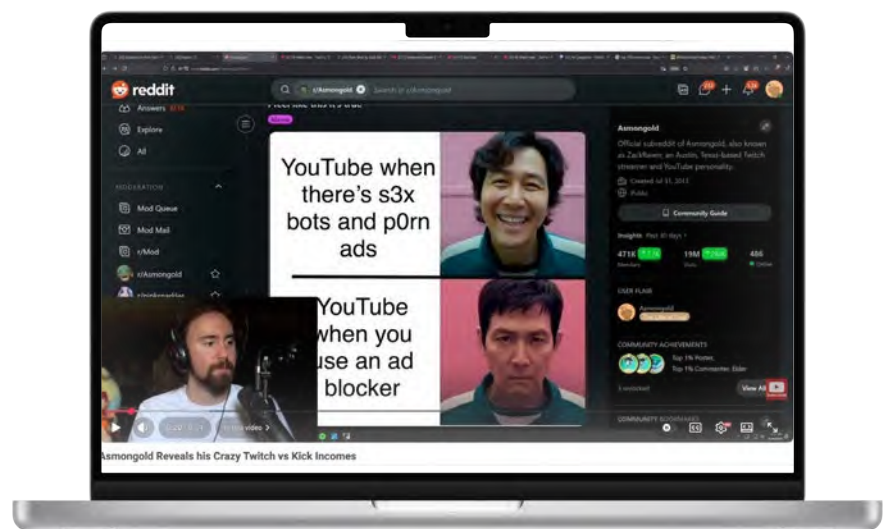
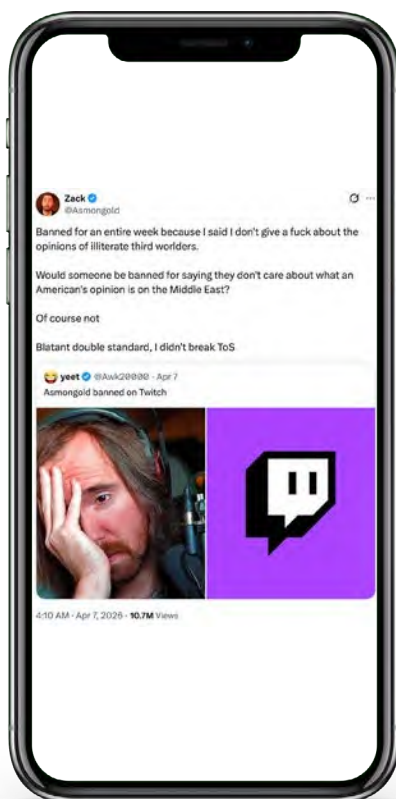
Platform Base: Twitch, Kick, Rumble, YouTube

Primary Pipeline Stage: Gaming → Grievance Monetization

What He Tells Men: He was exclusively a popular streamer known for playing World of Warcraft. In 2024, political and cultural commentary became a permanent, daily component of his streams targeting immigrants, blacks, and women, cementing his status as a rage-bait commentator rather than just a gamer.

What He Is Actually Selling:

- With 3.5 million followers on Twitch and 4.6 million subscribers on YouTube, he generates revenue primarily through advertising, platform monetization, and viewership from his daily livestreams. In 2025, he distanced himself from ownership in a gaming company citing his shift toward controversial political content as the reason – confirming that political commentary had become the deliberate direction for his channel and career.
- His social media bans are relevant as examples of platform enforcement inconsistency – the October 2024 ban was widely criticized as too light, and his primary Asmongold channel remained active throughout. A second suspension followed in April 2026 after a segment where he dismissed certain global perspectives which Twitch's safety team flagged as a violation of its Hateful Conduct and Harassment policies. He responded by posting on X, accusing Twitch of inconsistent enforcement.



Caption: Banned for an entire week because I said I don't give a fuck about the opinions of illiterate third worlders. Would somebody be banned for saying they don't care about what an American's opinion is on the Middle East? Of course not. Blatant double standard, I didn't break ToS.



Built to Trap, Not To Teach: The Exploitation Mechanics

These operations share a structural logic borrowed from pyramid schemes and high-control groups alike.

- **Affiliate pyramid structure:** members become recruiters; primary income path is selling membership to others
- **Frictioned cancellation barriers**
- **Recycled content** – most of what is sold behind paywalls is freely available elsewhere
- **Identity lock-in:** once membership becomes part of self-concept, leaving is experienced as loss of self

Close Up – The Brotherhood Aesthetic

Imagery functions as in-group signaling before explicit ideology is introduced. The aesthetic does the belonging work first; the ideology and the product come later. Sneako uses live streams in New York City for meeting fans. Hamza Ahmed has [meet-ups](#) for his Adonis School.



Caption: SNEAKO goes live in the middle of NYC and gets shown love from fans despite threats from Nick Fuentes. "They said it was green lit. They said it was on sight. They obsess, they keep talking, I make their careers, I put them on. They wanna k*ll me, but I don't see nobody."



Key Takeaway

Digital platforms fuel the growth and reach of these influencers. For mid-tier influencers, there are Discord and Telegram communities: \$10–100 a month. Smaller and mid-sized creators use Patreon. Patreon occupies a specific niche in this architecture. Smaller and mid-sized creators use it because the subscription model converts passive viewers into paying members – but the bigger names have largely migrated away, precisely because Patreon has enforced content policies against hate speech, deplatforming several high-profile accounts. What remains on Patreon tends to be creators operating just below the threshold of masculinity exploitation or extremism: content that frames itself as male self-improvement or relationship advice rather than explicit grievance politics.

A channel like [Manosphere Daily](#) – roughly 1,000 followers, approximately 250 paid subscribers – illustrates the economics at the low end. Even at \$5/month per subscriber, that's \$1,250 in monthly recurring revenue for a single small creator. Multiply that across hundreds of similar operations, and the aggregate financial footprint is substantial.

The broader point is that this is a never-ending cycle. Even deplatforming from one service doesn't end the revenue stream – it redistributes it. When YouTube demonetizes a channel, the creator typically retains their audience and directs them to Patreon, Substack, or a proprietary Discord. As outlined in Chapter 13, this is a pattern documented in Brazil: creators embed alternative monetization links directly in video descriptions, so that even a demonetized channel continues generating income. The platform penalty is partial at best.

The platforms enabling this aren't fringe; they're mainstream subscription infrastructure.



CHAPTER 6 – THE BODY AS THE PRICE OF ADMISSION

Looksmaxxing, Fitness Culture, and Physical Optimization as Belonging

#How It Functions

The body optimization pipeline is not about looks; it's about belonging. It is rarely understood as one, which is precisely why it works. The entry point is fitness and discipline – aspirational, often genuinely useful, and culturally widespread enough that encountering it online raises no flags. A man searching for motivation to get in shape finds a creator who speaks his language, acknowledges his pressures, and offers a practical path forward. The relationship that forms is parasocial but feels personal. That relationship is the product.

CLOSE UP

Platform: X

Message: Men are more attractive

Source: <https://x.com/Awk20000/status/2060447354931802607/photo/1>

What Are They Doing?:

Male influencers look for the approval of other men. Women are regarded as objects. To make sure their comments are not taken out of context, they flip it so that it is gay to think women are attractive. This was done on X to generate comments and hits.

From there, the escalation is gradual enough to be nearly invisible. Information about gyms and working out normalizes the influencer as a trusted authority on the male body. So-called “looksmaxxing” introduces a harder proposition: that the body must not merely be healthy but optimized – jawline, cheekbones, facial symmetry, height – for social acceptance and sexual viability.

This reframe shifts standards from what a man can do to what a man looks like, and then to what he is made of.

Fitness gives way to facial structure. Facial structure gives way to hormonal optimization. At each stage, a commercial layer emerges: the supplement that accelerates the transformation, the coaching program that unlocks the next level, the membership that provides accountability from men who have already made it. These are not presented as products. They are presented as the price of admission to a masculine in-group that the man has, by this point, been convinced he desperately needs to join.



Caption: I agree with Asmongold. You have to be really gay to think women are more attractive than men.

Men are naturally more attractive than women on average, that's why women need makeup. This isn't me being gay, it's science.

Spotlight: Austin Wayne Sells Belonging

The belonging pitch here is in plain sight. Austin Wayne's community sells looksmaxxing and fitness instruction – but the closing line does the real work: "It's a brotherhood."²³

Platform: [Skool.com](https://www.skool.com)

Type of operation: Course on looksmaxxing, including inches to height through stretches

Message: Join an elite club to improve fitness, confidence, and a high-value lifestyle.

Source: Austin Wayne

What Are They Doing?: The instruction draws men in; the "brotherhood" framing keeps them paying. The product is admission to the in-group, not the fitness advice.

Send a message...



BLACK FRIDAY SALE, only \$29 down from \$49

The Austin Wayne community is the elite hub for men who want to master looksmaxxing, fitness, confidence, and a high-value lifestyle. Inside you get:

- ✓ Height Growth Masterclass with proven science-based methods
- ✓ Looksmaxxing Masterclass covering jawline, skin, hair, style, and overall aesthetics
- ✓ Female Nature & Social Dynamics Masterclass
- ✓ 10+ hours of exclusive content from Austin Wayne
- ✓ 30+ hours of upcoming advanced lessons
- ✓ Weekly livestreams for coaching and Q&A
- ✓ Weekly updated curriculum
- ✓ A driven community of men leveling up together

This isn't just another group.

It's a brotherhood built to help you look better, think sharper, and become the most aesthetic and confident version of yourself.

23 Source: Austin Wayne Skool community <https://www.skool.com/kalos/about>



The Body As A Sexual Battlefield

The body optimization pipeline does not stay at the gym. It was never really about the gym in the first place.

Beneath the fitness and discipline framing runs a harder current – one that the discourse analysis for this report identifies as sexualized grievance: narratives that frame a man's physical appearance, and specifically his sexual characteristics, as the determinant of his worth, his romantic prospects, and his standing among other men.

The escalation follows a predictable path that the looksmaxxing community itself describes as soft and hard.

Softmaxxing is the entry point – skincare, grooming, posture, gym routines. Genuinely useful, broadly accessible, no medical risk. This is what gets recommended first, feels reasonable, and builds the parasocial relationship that makes everything downstream possible.

Hardmaxxing is where the pipeline leads. Surgical interventions – jaw implants, cheekbone augmentation, rhinoplasty, dickmaxxing and ballmaxxing (**featured recently** on Fox news) – promoted not by medical professionals but by influencers who present them as the natural conclusion of a serious self-improvement journey. Hormonal protocols initiated without medical supervision. And at the furthest reach of the pipeline, a category of physical interventions that mainstream medicine does not recommend and that carry documented risk: penile enlargement regimens, devices, and supplements promoted under the logic that sexual adequacy is a measurable physical attribute and inadequacy a correctable condition.

None of the penis enlargement interventions promoted in this space carry clinical evidence of effectiveness. Several carry documented risks, including nerve damage, scarring, and erectile dysfunction. Urologists²⁴ and sexual health clinicians²⁵ are consistent: what is being sold as self-improvement is not standard of care, is not recommended, and in some cases is actively contraindicated.

What the medical consensus cannot explain is why these products sell. The answer is not ignorance. It is that the product being sold is not the intervention – it is relief from a sexual status anxiety that the ecosystem has spent months carefully manufacturing. The inadequacy is constructed. The measurement by which a man falls short is invented by the same people selling the solution.

²⁴ American Urological Association on Penile Augmentation Surgery <https://www.auanet.org/about-us/aua-statements/penile-augmentation-surgery>

²⁵ Mayo Clinic, Penis Enlargement, Do They Work <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/sexual-health/in-depth/penis/art-20045363>



The Body is Not the Destination. It Is The Leverage.

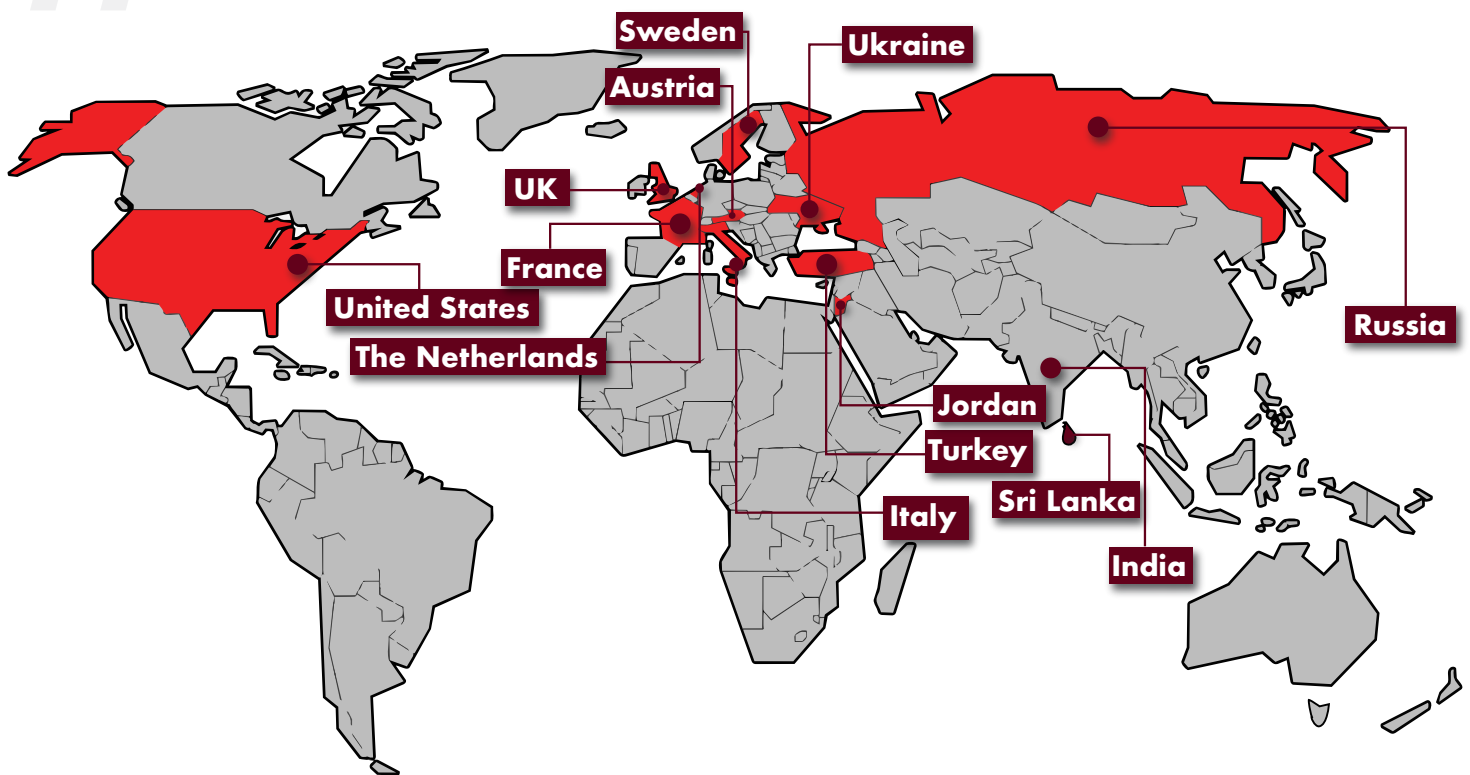
#looksmaxxing reach: the body optimization pipeline & what the data shows

Reset Tech's original cross-platform research on the looksmaxxing ecosystem puts numbers on what this chapter describes. Across 216 influencers tracked on TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook, the combined reach of looksmaxxing-related operations exceeded 14.6 billion views during the analysis period. The reach is not organic – it is a product of recommendation architecture. The ecosystem is not Western – the influencers in the dataset represent men from the United States, France, India, Sweden, Italy, Jordan, the Netherlands, and beyond. And the consequences are not digital – they are showing up in clinics, schools, and emergency rooms.

The clinical parallel is pro-eating disorder culture targeting women. The mechanism is identical. The difference is that the eating disorder culture eventually generated enough pressure to produce platform policies, however inadequate. Looksmaxxing has not reached even that stage. No major platform's community guidelines address it. ***There is no policy to fail to enforce.***

Refer to the Looksmaxxing Data Spotlight in Appendix A for the full analysis

Built Everywhere, Regulated Nowhere



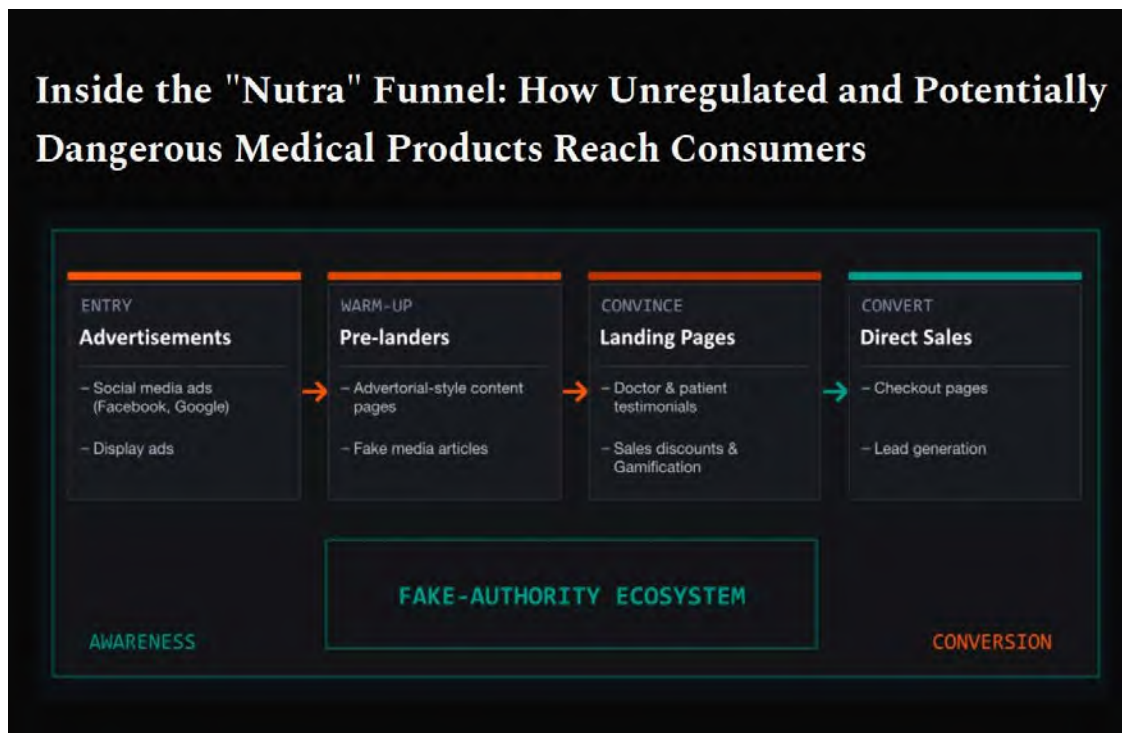
The Top Looksmaxxing Influencers

The 216 influencers tracked in this analysis span the United States, France, India, Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey, Russia, Sri Lanka, Austria, Jordan, United Kingdom and Ukraine – evidence that looksmaxxing is a global commercial operation, not a Western subcultural moment. No major platform's community guidelines address it. There is no policy to fail to enforce.²⁶

26 Refer to the Looksmaxxing Data Spotlight for specifics. "Top" is defined in terms of reach of the hash tracked in this analysis



Where Body Optimization Meets Health Fraud

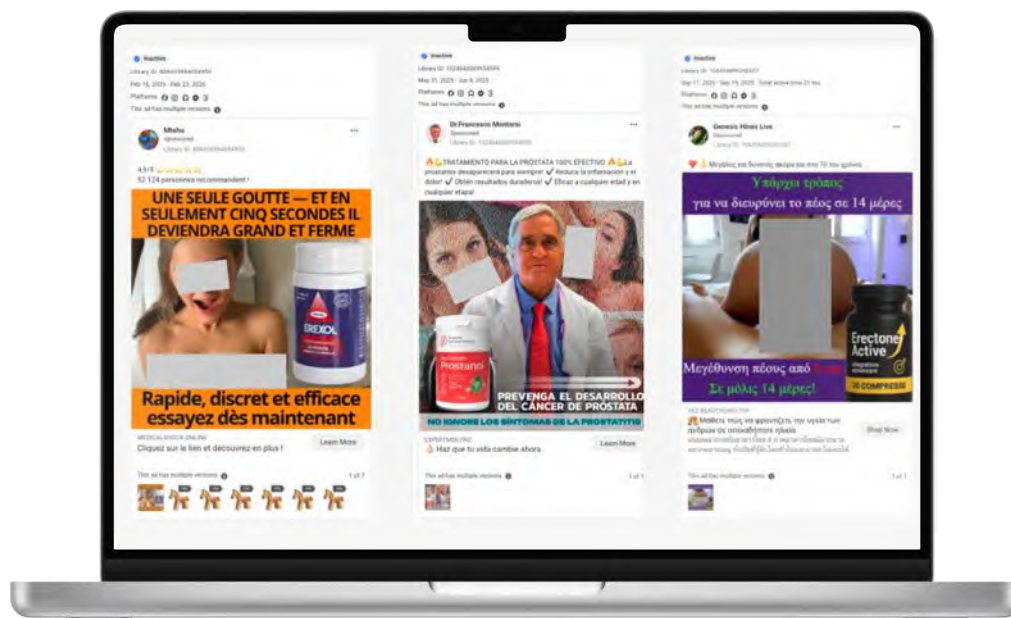


The Affiliate Marketing Infrastructure is a Similar Predatory Pattern

Reset Tech's Clickbait Cures investigation documents in detail how "nutra affiliate" networks operate: ad → pre-lander → landing page → checkout, with coordinated burner accounts, fake authority ecosystems, and rotating domains to evade detection.

The male grievance industry runs on identical infrastructure – the same ClickBank-style affiliate systems, the same course and community funnels, the same emotional manipulation playbook (fear, shame, urgency). These are not separate industries. They are the same predatory ad-tech stack, applied to different insecurities. In one case it's a diabetic looking for a cure. In the other it's a lonely man looking for belonging. Same funnel, different bait.

Clickbait Cures documented this directly in the adjacent nutraceutical ecosystem: fabricated testimonials, synthetic authority figures, and fake “doctor and patient” endorsements engineered to manufacture social proof for products with no clinical basis.²⁷ Because the male grievance industry runs on the same affiliate and ad-tech infrastructure – the same funnels, the same emotional playbook – these techniques are not adjacent to it but native to it: the testimonial that sells a gray-market supplement and the one that sells a “brotherhood” membership are produced by the same machine.



The scale of that infrastructure in North America is no longer a matter of speculation. Reset identified 2,164 active peptide-related Facebook advertisements explicitly targeting Canadian users – 324 of which contained clear injection-related markers. The pages running these advertisements were managed from the United States, Vietnam, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. Not one was based in Canada, despite the campaigns being directed exclusively at Canadian consumers. Many of the same peptides flagged by Health Canada in August 2025 – seized from a Canadian vendor citing serious safety concerns – were still being actively promoted on Facebook months later.

This is not the distant end of a different pipeline. It is the documented downstream of the same one this chapter has been tracing – from the fitness influencer recommending a supplement stack, to the looksmaxxing creator normalizing hormonal optimization, to an anonymous overseas operator running injection ads against a manufactured market of men who have been told their bodies are not enough.

²⁷ Reset Tech, Clickbait Cures (April 2026), page 21 shows examples of fabricated testimonials, synthetic doctor personas, and fake “doctor and patient” endorsements in the nutra funnel. <https://www.reset.tech/resources/reset-tech-clickbait-cures-unmasking-the-deceptive-health-ad-infrastructure-on-meta-and-google-april-2026-web.pdf>

The Male Sexual Health Overlap is Direct and Documented

Clickbait Cures found that over 20 percent of the 390 flagged nutraceuticals are male sexual health and prostatitis products, many promoted with pornographic imagery. The Bayer logo misuse is concentrated in exactly this category. This is not adjacent to the male grievance ecosystem – it is part of it. The same influencers who sell courses on dominance and dating are often the gateway to these supplement funnels. The line from looksmaxxing → TRT normalization → gray-market peptide pipeline to the products being flagged by health authorities in the European Union is direct and traceable.

Campaign advertisements in French, Spanish, and Greek promoting pornographic content and products for male sexual health and prostatitis, such as Erexol or Prostanol, with one ad claiming that the product prevents prostate cancer. These ads have been running for almost a week (February 16–22, 2026) without being removed by Meta for violating the platform's policies on adult content and nudity.

The Emotional Manipulation Mechanics Transfer Directly

The advertising tactics documented, including fear induction, fake scarcity, conspiratorial “doctors are hiding this” framing, fabricated testimonials, parasocial trust exploitation – are structurally identical to the grievance pipeline documented in this report. Research shows that heightened emotional states impair truth discernment, making audiences less able to critically evaluate claims. That finding applies equally to a man radicalized through loneliness into a \$99/month course as to a diabetes patient being sold a fake cure.

The supplement is sold as self-improvement. The self-improvement is sold as belonging. The infrastructure underneath both is the same.



Common Products Being Sold: The Belonging Pipeline

The Masculinity Grievance Pitch

Products Targeted to Men



You are weak. Other men can see it. This fixes that.

Gym programs & fitness courses



Your face is your first impression. You're losing before you speak.

Skincare & grooming stacks



Bone structure determines attraction. Yours is suboptimal.

Jaw/cheekbone/chin implants



Symmetry is measurable. You don't have it.

Rhinoplasty referrals



Your jaw receded because nobody told you how to fix it. We will.

Mewing devices & guides



Short men are invisible to women and disrespected by men.

Height-increase programs
(stretches, insoles, protocols)



Your T is low and it makes you a weak person.

Testosterone/TRT protocols
(unsupervised)



The Masculinity Grievance Pitch

Products Targeted to Men



Gray-market peptides & SARMs

Pharma doesn't want you to know this exists.



Sexual adequacy is measurable. You fall short. This corrects it.

Penis enlargement devices, regimens & supplements



Even this is being optimized by men who take themselves seriously. Are you one of them?

Ballmaxxing & scrotal enhancement products



The men who figured this out aren't sharing it publicly. Join us.

Looksmaxxing memberships & brotherhood communities



Parasocial coaching packages

One-on-one access to a man who made it. He'll tell you what you're doing wrong.





Potential Regulatory Violations: Common Consumer Fraud Factors

These are structural features of how these products are sold – patterns that consumer protection frameworks across the globe are designed to address, regardless of which agency or statute applies.

How It Appears in the Belonging Pipeline

Consumer Fraud Factor



Unsubstantiated efficacy claims

Products – penis enlargement regimens, height protocols, hormonal stacks – are sold with outcome claims that have no clinical basis and that mainstream medicine actively contradicts



Manufactured inadequacy as sales mechanism

The deficiency the product claims to fix is constructed by the same ecosystem selling the solution. The measurement by which a man falls short does not exist outside the pipeline that invented it



Deceptive testimonials and fake social proof

Before/after transformations, purchased reviews, and fabricated authority figures (“doctors recommend,” or “clinically proven”) presented as independent validation



Undisclosed commercial relationships

Influencers promoting surgical referrals, supplement stacks, and membership programs without disclosing financial relationships with providers or affiliate commissions



Targeting of demonstrably vulnerable populations

Products are marketed to men in documented states of loneliness, low self-worth, and social isolation – conditions the pipeline has often deliberately induced or amplified prior to the sales moment



How It Appears in the Belonging Pipeline

Consumer Fraud Factor



Fake scarcity and urgency tactics

“Limited brotherhood enrollment,” countdown timers, and “this offer expires” framing used to suppress deliberation and accelerate purchase decisions



Pyramid and affiliate recruitment structures

Members are incentivized to recruit others, making the primary income path for existing members dependent on expanding the pool of buyers rather than on product value



Cancellation barriers and retention manipulation

Friction in cancellation processes; identity lock-in tactics that make leaving feel like personal failure rather than a consumer choice



Unapproved or misrepresented product categories

Devices and supplements sold as self-improvement products that meet regulatory definitions of medical devices or drugs in multiple jurisdictions, sold outside the frameworks those categories require



Predatory platform amplification

Recommendation architecture that systematically surfaces these products to the highest-risk demographic – young, isolated, male – without disclosure, age-gating, or content labeling



PART III: THE REVENUE STACK - THE INFLUENCER AS FRANCHISE

The business model is consistent across the male grievance industry, regardless of tier or topic. Build an audience through free content on major platforms. Convert that audience into revenue through sponsorships, merchandise, and platform payouts. Diversify into higher-margin products – longer-form content, digital courses, private membership communities – that generate recurring income independent of algorithmic performance. Migrate the most loyal segment of the audience to owned or equity-staked platforms where content moderation is minimal and revenue share is favorable. Keep the social media presence active at the top of the funnel.



**LOOKSMAXXING
BE A REAL MAN
JOIN MY PROGRAM**

CHAPTER 7 — HOW THE INFLUENCERS MONETIZE

The model is identical across tiers, but what's extracted and how platform-dependent it is changes as you move up. The key insight it carries is the inversion at the bottom – where the product being sold is access to the tier above.

TOP-TIER 01

FRANCHISE OPERATORS

Audiences of 1-10M+. Diversified, largely platform-independent revenue

Owned infrastructure, equity stakes, fight promotions, political adjacency

No single deplatforming can end the operation.

The proof of concept sold downward. e.g. Andrew Tate, Adin Ross e.g. Austin Wayne

MID-TIER 02

THE EXTRACTION LAYER

Audiences of 100k-500k. The most commercially active layer.

Recurring revenue from memberships, courses, sponsorships

Still algorithm-dependent – every incentive to escalate. Belonging pitch most effective here e.g. Hamza Ahmed, Austin Wayne

BOTTOM-TIER 03

THE AUDIENCE BECOMES THE MARKET

Aspiring creators who want to become the tier above.

Sold the tools, courses, and communities that promise to get them there.

The product is access to the level above. The pyramid is transparent here. e.g. “influencer school” memberships at \$47/month

Revenue flows up the tiers; recruitment pressure flows down. The bottom tier funds the middle by buying its way up.

TOP TIER CREATORS: Franchise Operators

These are the franchise operators of the male grievance industry – creators with audiences of one to ten million or more, diversified income across platforms, equity stakes, speaking circuits, and political adjacency. Their revenue is largely platform-independent: they have built enough owned infrastructure that no single deplatforming can end their operations. They are the proof of concept that the entire ecosystem sells downward.

CLOSE UP: ADIN ROSS

Adin Ross started as a gaming streamer, particularly in NBA 2K, a basketball video game, and Grand Theft Auto livestream culture on Twitch. He then evolved into a much broader internet personality tied to masculinity-adjacent content, gambling, “alpha male” influencers, and political culture wars. He collaborated with figures like Andrew Tate and became part of the broader ecosystem around Kick, gambling streams, and male grievance/self-improvement media.

He was permanently banned on Twitch after his eighth ban for “hateful conduct” due to unmoderated live chats with toxic comments on screen. This final ban in 2023 effectively ended Ross’ presence on the platform, prompting him to move to Kick, where he built an audience. He eventually returned to Twitch two years later²⁸ reportedly after an estimated \$50 million deal²⁹ for him and his team with Rainbet³⁰, a gambling platform. He is estimated to be worth \$20-40 million through livestream, property, and sponsorships.³¹

He created “Brand Risk” as both a personal identity and, later, a business ecosystem around merch, boxing/influencer fights, livestreaming, gambling sponsorship or integration, and the monetization of controversy. **Brand Risk Promotions** livestreams on Kick, Twitch, YouTube, X, and TikTok, featuring creator boxing, sponsorships/gambling integrations, and recurring combat sports events. He has an equity stake in the Kick platform and has said that he makes \$10-100K an hour during a stream. Outside analysts assume it is closer to \$30-50K an hour. Adin Ross has sponsors, including gambling-adjacent platforms such as Stake and, later, Rainbet.

The business model is based on influencers driving huge livestream audiences; gambling sites sponsor streams/events; users sign up through affiliate/referral systems. Ross also earns fixed contracts and revenue share from player losses or activity. This also provides him with income through merchandise, ticket sales, and livestream traffic.

28 Twitch ban <https://streamscharts.com/news/adin-ross-twitch-return-kick-ban-2025>

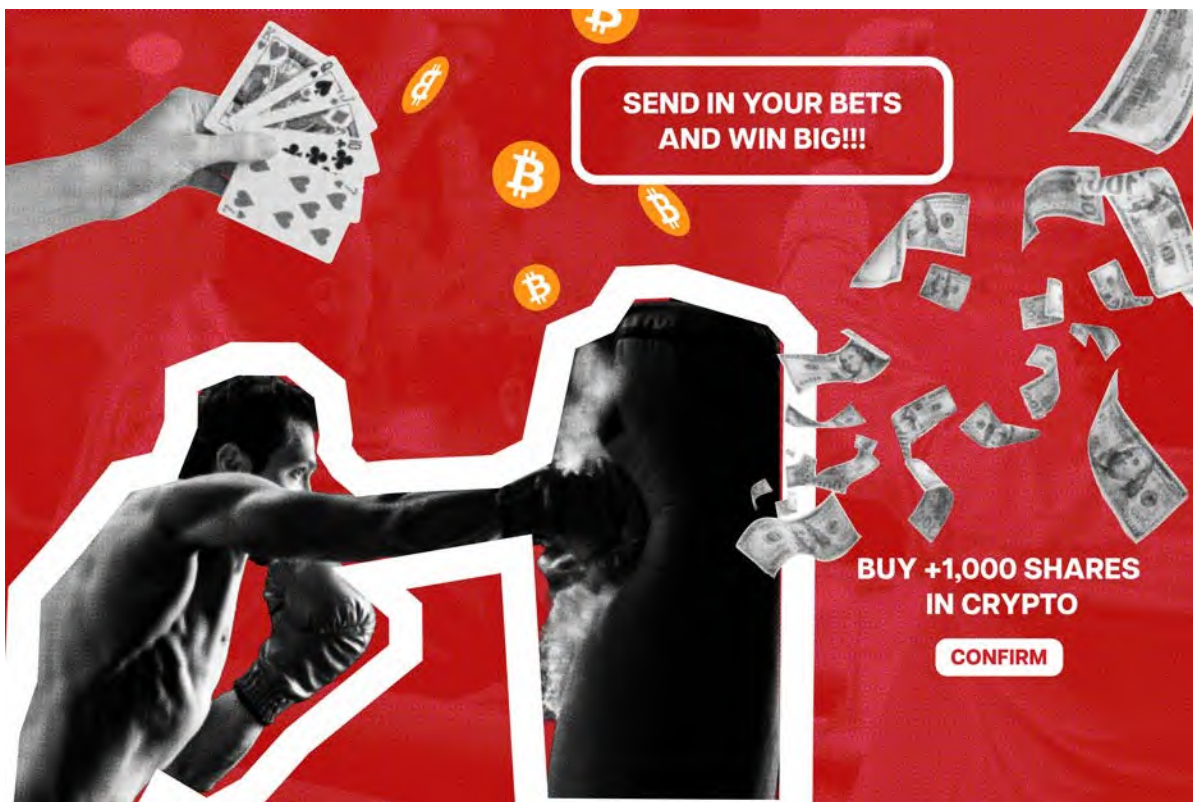
29 Rainbet <https://igamingexpress.com/adin-ross-suspension-raises-speculation-of-rainbet-ties/>

30 Adin Ross and friends payout <https://www.instagram.com/reels/DO7SylUDJiw/>

31 Adin Ross Net Worth <https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/producers/adin-ross-net-worth/>

The events are cheaper than professional boxing because fighters are influencers, and the promotion is social media-driven, audiences are built in, and controversy itself markets the product. Like WWE, the shift is that the fights rely on internet conflict, fandom warfare, humiliation/drama, masculine status competition, gambling-adjacent excitement, and nonstop livestream clips.

His crypto support has been far less successful. Ross promoted an MLG coin crypto scam in January 2025 to 750k viewers for \$200,000, and the coin's value surged to a massive market cap before crashing to near zero, leaving many investors with heavy financial losses. He said in response to the crash, "That MILF token sht I did a while back, I already told you guys not to buy that sht. I got paid a bag to do that sh*t. Like I don't give a f**k, I hope none of you guys actually bought it."³²



³² Adin Ross Live on Stream Taling about his crypto <https://www.twitch.tv/adinross/clip/TriangularAssiduousDumplingsDancingBaby-wDwTkDBIEZ-KJR3V>

MID-TIER CREATOR: Extraction Layer

With audiences between 100,000 and 500,000, mid-tier creators are the ecosystem's most commercially active layer. Close enough to their audiences to sustain genuine parasocial relationships, they generate recurring revenue through memberships, courses, and sponsorships while remaining dependent enough on algorithmic performance to have every incentive to escalate. This is where the belonging pitch is most effective and the financial extraction most direct.

CLOSE UP: HAMZA AHMED

Hamza Ahmed makes the vast majority of his wealth through premium private subscription communities and info-product sales, leveraging his audience of over 2 million subscribers as a free marketing pipeline. While he initially relied on standard creator revenue streams, his business model shifted heavily toward his own ecosystem and products on high-margin digital communities hosted on platforms like Skool, providing a continuous, recurring income. These networks include: The Library of Adonis, The Educational Content Creators/Influencer School, and [digital guides](#) available via text.

[The Library of Adonis](#) is a community focused on self-improvement, fitness, looksmaxing, and breaking bad habits. The website tagline is, "Jeffery to Adonis, Sub5 to Chad, Loser to Winner, THAT is the transformation I'm offering you. Join now." It costs \$37 per month and hosts over 2,200 active members.

Like many influencers, he starts with sound advice, such as avoiding alcohol, drugs, and processed foods. It moves into microplastics, environmental estrogens, and modern tap water, which he says are actively "turning men into women" and crushing natural testosterone levels.

He is a [strong promoter of testosterone](#) and suggests that the doctor-recommended high range of 700 is too low because the average is based on damaged men, and shooting up to a range of 1,000 to 1,500 may be good for his followers. He also says not to worry about side effects and lists the side effects of coffee to prove his point.³³

His casual framing of TRT as a casual, consequence-free mechanism for faster workout recovery is ironic, given that he is against [antidepressants or therapy](#) and suggests watching his show for better mental health instead.

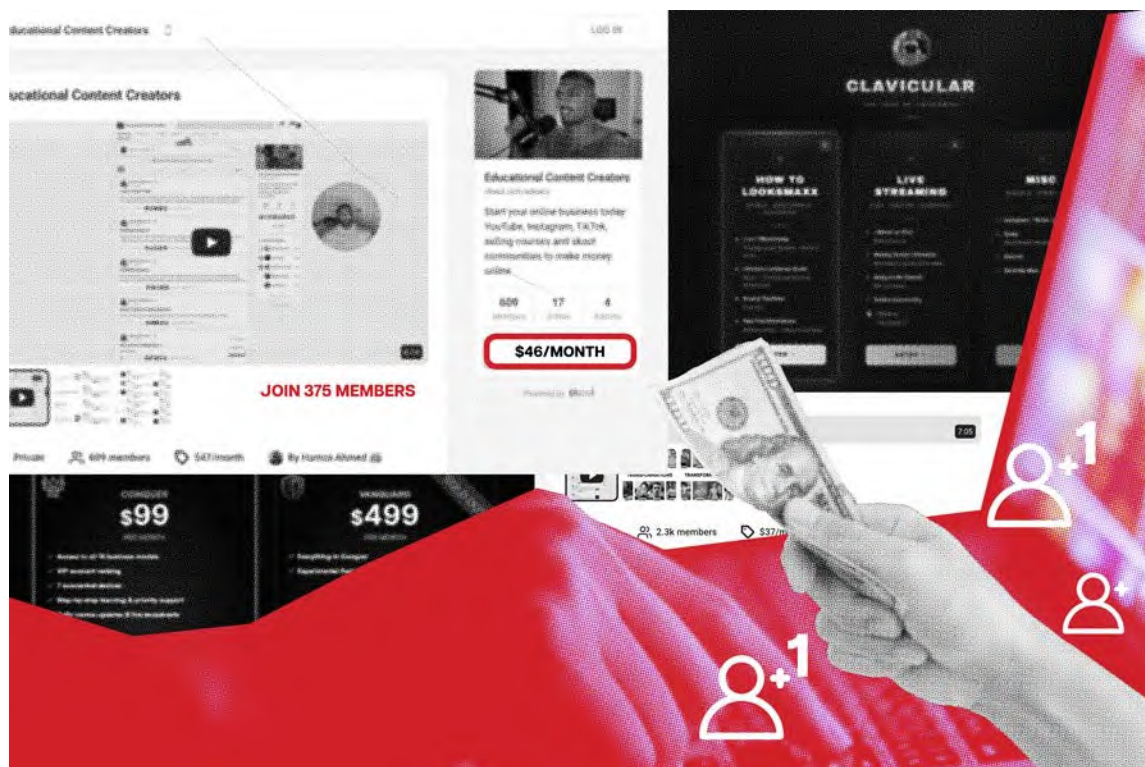
33 Hamza on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DYXe3GFMi8Y/>

The Educational Content Creators / Influencer School is for aspiring digital creators, priced at \$47 per month, offering courses on growing online audiences and building a “cult-like” following. He says on the site that he made \$1.5 million from the school. The website says, What you get (worth \$4K) step-by-step, detailed courses on becoming an influencer, content creation, getting views, building a cult-like audience, getting followers, online business, advice to grow on YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and make money online. His formula for content creation is similar to what is available in free sources on YouTube.

Adonis School / Academy: His flagship, ultra-premium mentorship network. Pricing packages have scaled up over time from \$129 and \$499–\$500 per month, depending on tier and access, and include direct coaching calls with him.

He has normalized what he calls Monk Mode, working through pain, intermittent fasting for long periods, and normalizing TRT to young audiences as a casual, consequence-free injection for faster workout recovery.

Hamza Ahmed’s views on women were heavily rooted in the “Red Pill” frameworks, blending traditional gender roles with evolutionary psychology concepts. He emphasized a strict dichotomy between masculinity and femininity, asserting that modern society has distorted relationship dynamics. In the past few years, his views have evolved to emphasize softer skills in relationships, such as teamwork, vulnerability, and respect, rather than control.





BOTTOM TIER: The Marketplace

The entry tier is not just an audience – it is a market. Men who want to become the creators they follow are sold the tools, courses, and communities that promise to get them there. This is the tier that Hamza Ahmed's Educational Content Creators school targets explicitly, charging \$47 a month to teach men how to build a cult-like following. The pyramid is transparent at this level: the product being sold is access to the level above, and the primary qualification of the seller is that he has already sold it to enough people to prove it works.

Livestream Revenue: The Real-time Extraction Engine

Of all the revenue streams in the male grievance industry, livestreaming is the least understood from the outside and the most important from the inside. For a significant tier of creators, it is the business model – structured to extract money from audiences in real time, at the moment of highest emotional arousal.

How the Money Moves

Platform payouts vary by ecosystem. Kick offers creators a 95/5 revenue split compared to Twitch's standard 50/50, making it structurally attractive for anyone whose content is too toxic for advertiser-supported platforms – which explains why it has become the default home for creators cycling through bans elsewhere. Adin Ross, permanently banned from Twitch in 2023 after his eighth violation for hateful conduct³⁴, rebuilt his primary income stream on Kick within months. On top of platform payouts, every major platform supports direct viewer-to-creator payment during streams: YouTube Superchats, Rumble Rants, Kick tipping. These are not tips. They are participation fees in a real-time social performance – payments that buy a comment read aloud or a name acknowledged by the creator in front of thousands of viewers. The emotional charge of the moment is the pricing mechanism. Ross has stated publicly that he earns between \$10,000 and \$100,000 per streaming hour; outside analysts place the figure closer to \$30,000 to \$50,000.

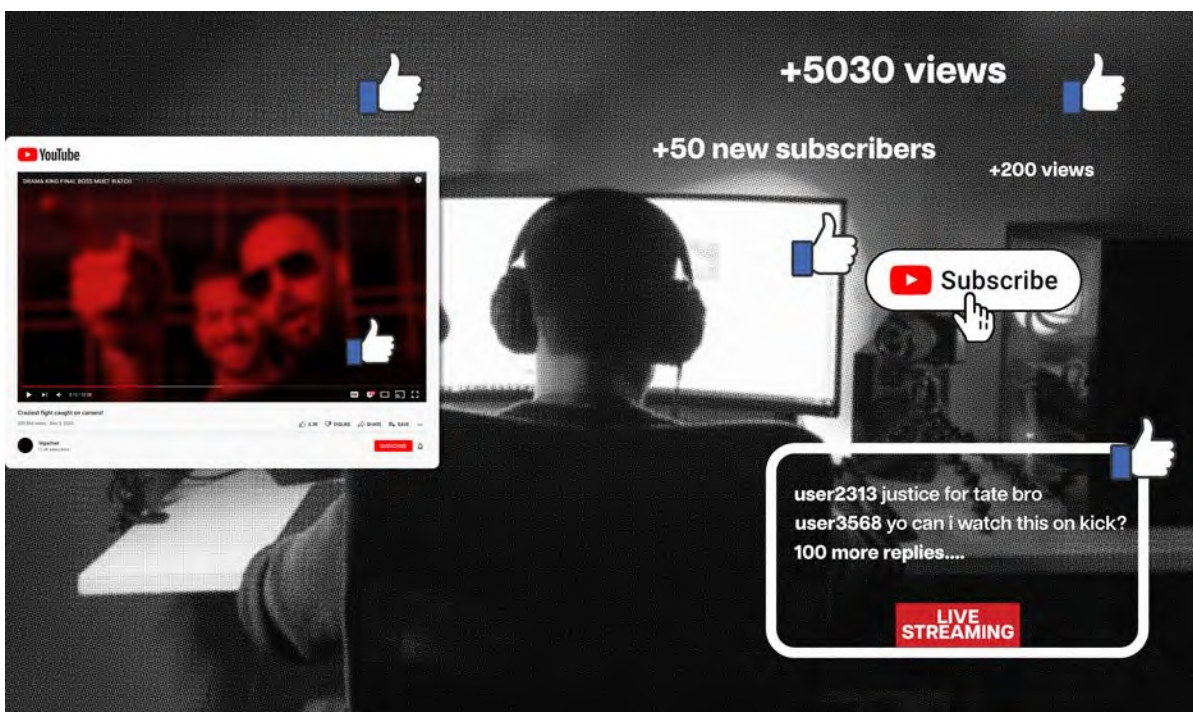
The Conflict Premium

Livestream revenue scales with emotional intensity. Mid-level creators earn an estimated \$10,000 to \$60,000 from a major confrontation stream, with clipped and redistributed content generating \$15,000 to \$100,000 in additional value over subsequent days. Top-tier conflict events earn \$75,000 to \$300,000 or more.

³⁴ Twitch's "hateful content" policy https://safety.twitch.tv/s/article/An-Update-to-How-We-Enforce-Our-Hateful-Conduct-Policy?language=en_US

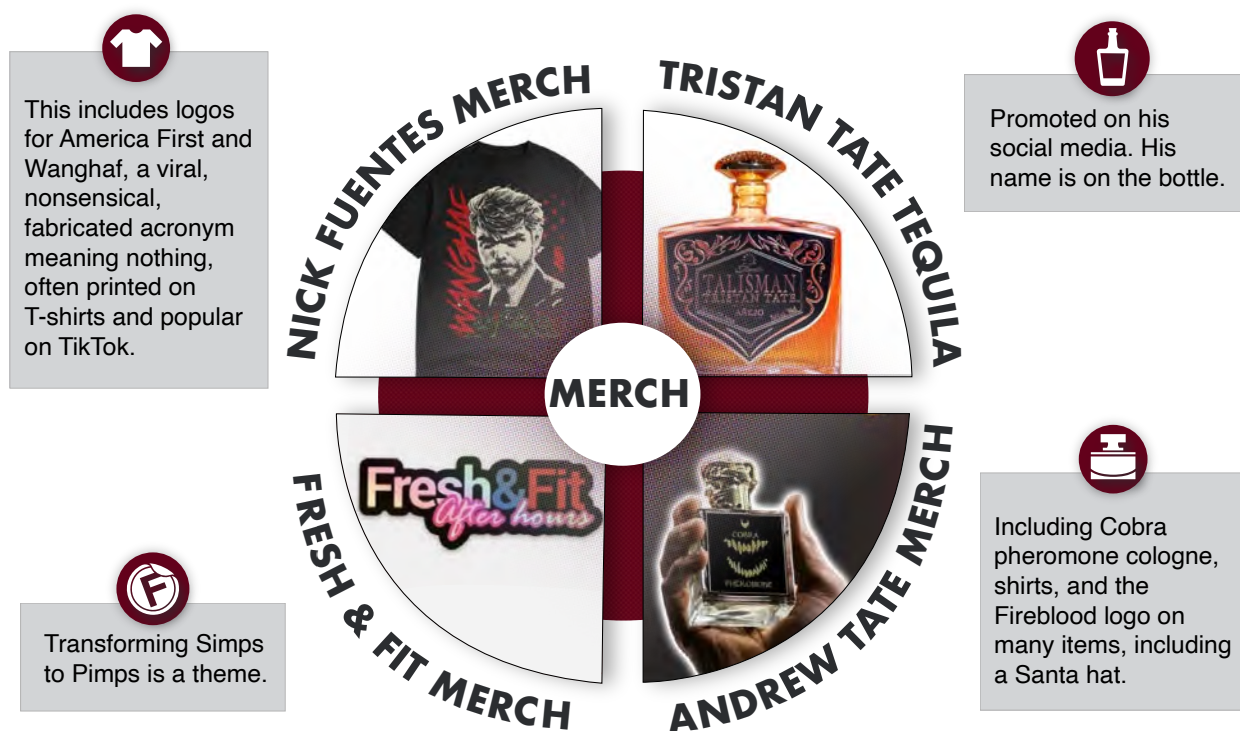
Why Livestream is the Resilience Layer

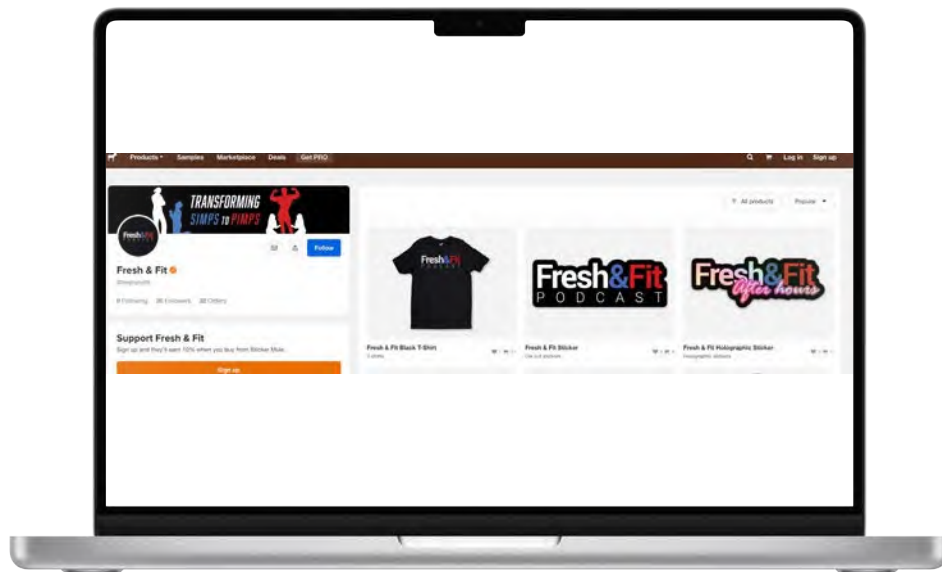
When mainstream platforms remove a creator, livestream infrastructure on Rumble, Kick, and Telegram allows monetization to continue through the most loyal – and most radicalized – segment of the audience. After Andrew Tate's removal from YouTube and major social platforms in 2022, researchers documented a decentralized network of creators – termed “Tate-space” – that continued circulating his content through reaction videos, clips, and commentary, sustaining audience engagement and membership revenue through the [deplatforming period](#). Ross's own trajectory confirms the pattern: banned from Twitch, he returned two years later on a reported [\\$50-100 million deal](#) with gambling platform Rainbet. Deplatforming sheds the casual, advertiser-facing audience and consolidates a smaller, higher-spending core.



Merchandise

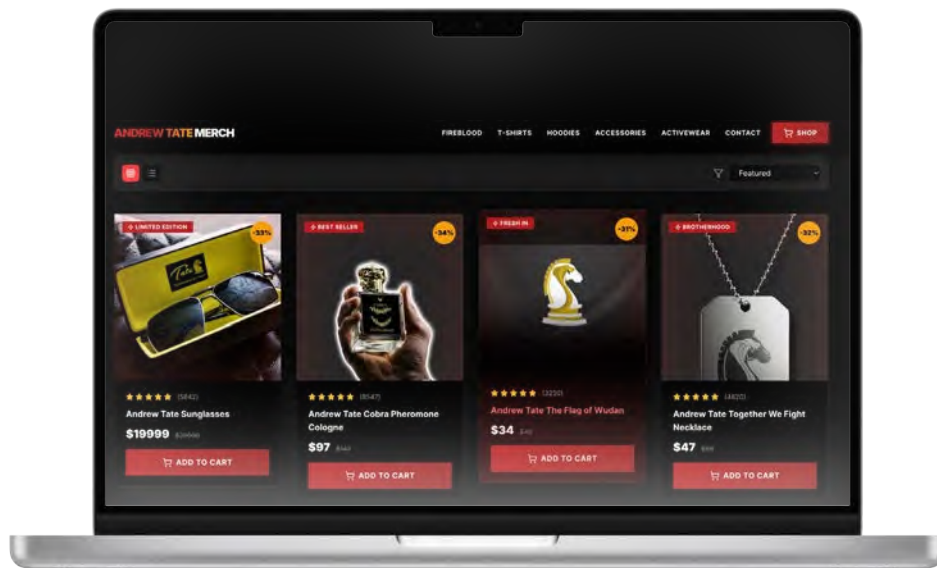
Merchandise is rarely discussed as a serious revenue stream in the male grievance industry, but it functions as more than a secondary income source. A hoodie, a cap, or a branded item is a physical declaration of membership – it makes the parasocial relationship tangible and visible in a way that a monthly subscription does not. For a young man who has built his identity around a creator or community, wearing the brand in public is an act of allegiance. That visibility raises the psychological cost of leaving. Canceling a subscription is a private decision made alone on a phone. Throwing away a wardrobe is something else entirely. Creators including Andrew Tate, Adin Ross through Brand Risk, and the Fresh & Fit OSS Army have all developed merchandise lines that serve this function – converting digital loyalty into physical identity, and making disengagement feel like self-erasure rather than a simple cancellation.





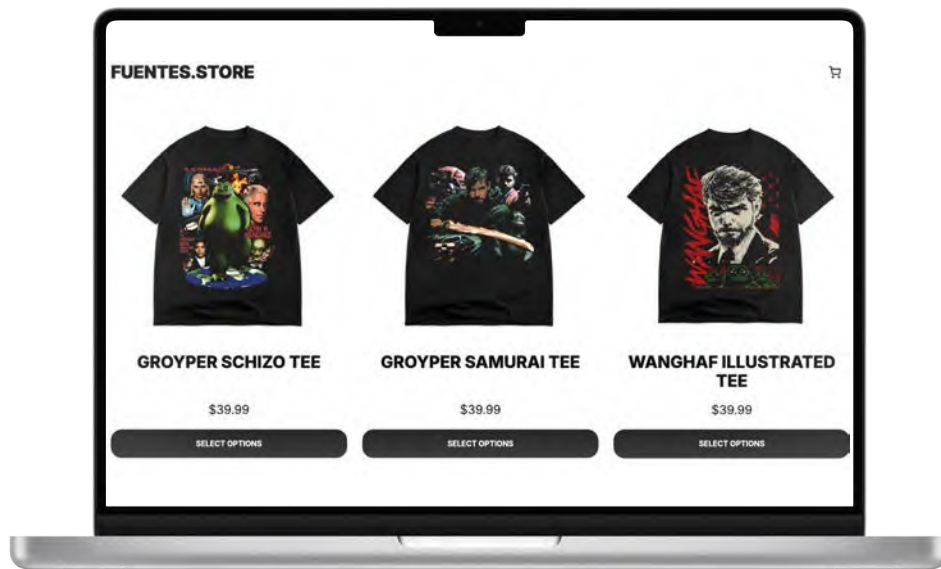
Fresh & Fit Merch

https://www.stickermule.com/freshand-fit?utm_source=rumble&utm_medium=integration&utm_campaign=shop_button&utm_term=freshandfitmiami



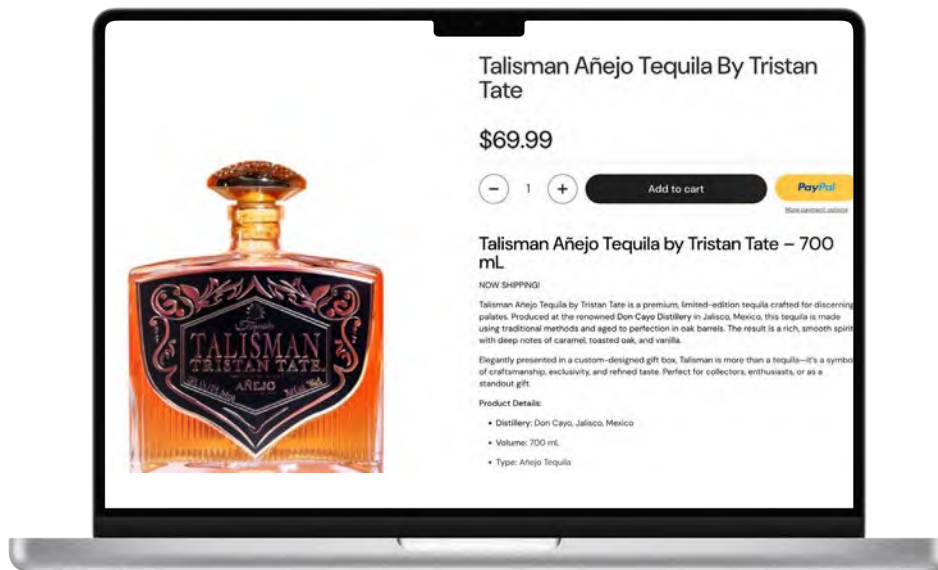
Andrew Tate Merch

<https://www.andrew-tate-merch.com/collections/accessories>



Nick Fuentes Merch

<https://fuentes.store/>



Tristan Tate Tequila

<https://theliquorpros.com/products/talisman-anejo-tequila-gift-box-set-by-tristan-tate-copy>



Case Study in Conflict Reach & Monetization

The Miami Nightclub Incident: Mapping the Attention-to-Profit Pipeline

The Miami nightclub incident in January 2026, in which a group of influencers were filmed playing an **antisemitic “Heil Hitler”** track inside a **sprinter van** and a Miami venue, demonstrates how the grift economy converts extremist provocation into a multi-layered monetization event.

What began as a fringe Kick livestream – later reconstructed by Reset Tech through more than 1,100 viewer-saved clips – quickly migrated into the mainstream attention economy through anonymous aggregator accounts. The most-viewed post, published by the viral-content account FearedBuck, reached 38.1 million views yet produced no meaningful engagement lift for the account itself.



Caption: Andrew Tate, Nick Fuentes, Sneako, Tristan Tate, Clavicular, Myron, and Justin Waller arrive at the club playing Ye's banned song

FearedBuck's earliest identified X post about the incident, viewed 38.1 million times.



Key Takeaways

This is the core dynamic of the attention economy, where anonymous amplifiers generate the reach, but capture none of the value. They function as the unpaid distribution backbone that allows influencers to monetize scandal at scale.

The influencers at the center of the footage did not benefit equally. The largest figures – Andrew Tate, Nick Fuentes, Sneako, and Myron Gaines – saw little to no change in their engagement metrics, suggesting their audiences are already saturated and controversy merely reinforces existing loyalties. By contrast, mid-tier creators such as Clavicular and Justin Waller experienced dramatic spikes in views and likes in the two weeks following the incident.

Scandal is a growth engine for mid-tier creators, not the top of the pyramid.

This pattern reflects a broader structural truth: the grift economy rewards those just below saturation, where controversy can still be converted into measurable audience expansion.

The response behavior of the influencers further reveals how conflict is operationalized as content. Rather than apologizing, each figure engaged in a predictable choreography of blame-shifting, denial, and narrative reframing – from the Tate brothers publicly assigning responsibility to Sneako, to Clavicular and Myron Gaines refusing to apologize outright.

Accountability is avoided not because it is risky, but because conflict is profitable. Deflection keeps the drama alive, extends the news cycle, and sustains engagement across platforms. This is audience-priming.

Beyond the primary actors, the incident triggered a secondary attention market. At least 38 opportunistic accounts identified by Reset Tech – including manosphere personalities, crypto promoters, gaming-adjacent profiles, and anonymous clip-farmers – used the controversy to boost their own visibility. Their activity demonstrates how political outrage, influencer drama, speculative online subcultures, and meme-driven ecosystems overlap to form a mutually reinforcing attention engine.



Controversy creates a temporary “attention market” where dozens of opportunistic actors extract value without contributing anything.

The Miami nightclub case serves as a microcosm of the broader grift economy: a system in which extremist spectacle becomes raw material, mid-tier creators extract the greatest gains, anonymous aggregators provide the distribution infrastructure, and a constellation of opportunistic actors swarm to harvest residual attention.

The incident highlights the role of fringe platforms like Kick as upstream content factories. Weak moderation and high tolerance for extremist content create ideal conditions for provocative material to be produced, clipped, and redistributed.

Fringe livestream platforms act as the supply chain for the broader outrage economy. And because audiences now function as decentralized archivists, even deleted content remains available for monetization.





Who Generates the Reach is Not Who Captures the Value

The Miami nightclub incident, January 2026 –one scandal, traced through the attention economy.

FRINGE PLATFORM PRODUCES THE SPECTACLE

A Kick livestream – weak moderation acts as the upstream content factory



ANONYMOUS AMPLIFIERS CARRY IT TO THE MAINSTREAM

One aggregator post reached 38.1M views
– and captured none of the value



TOP TIER – Little Change

Tate, Fuentes, Sneako, Gaines.
Audiences already saturated;
controversy only reinforces loyalty

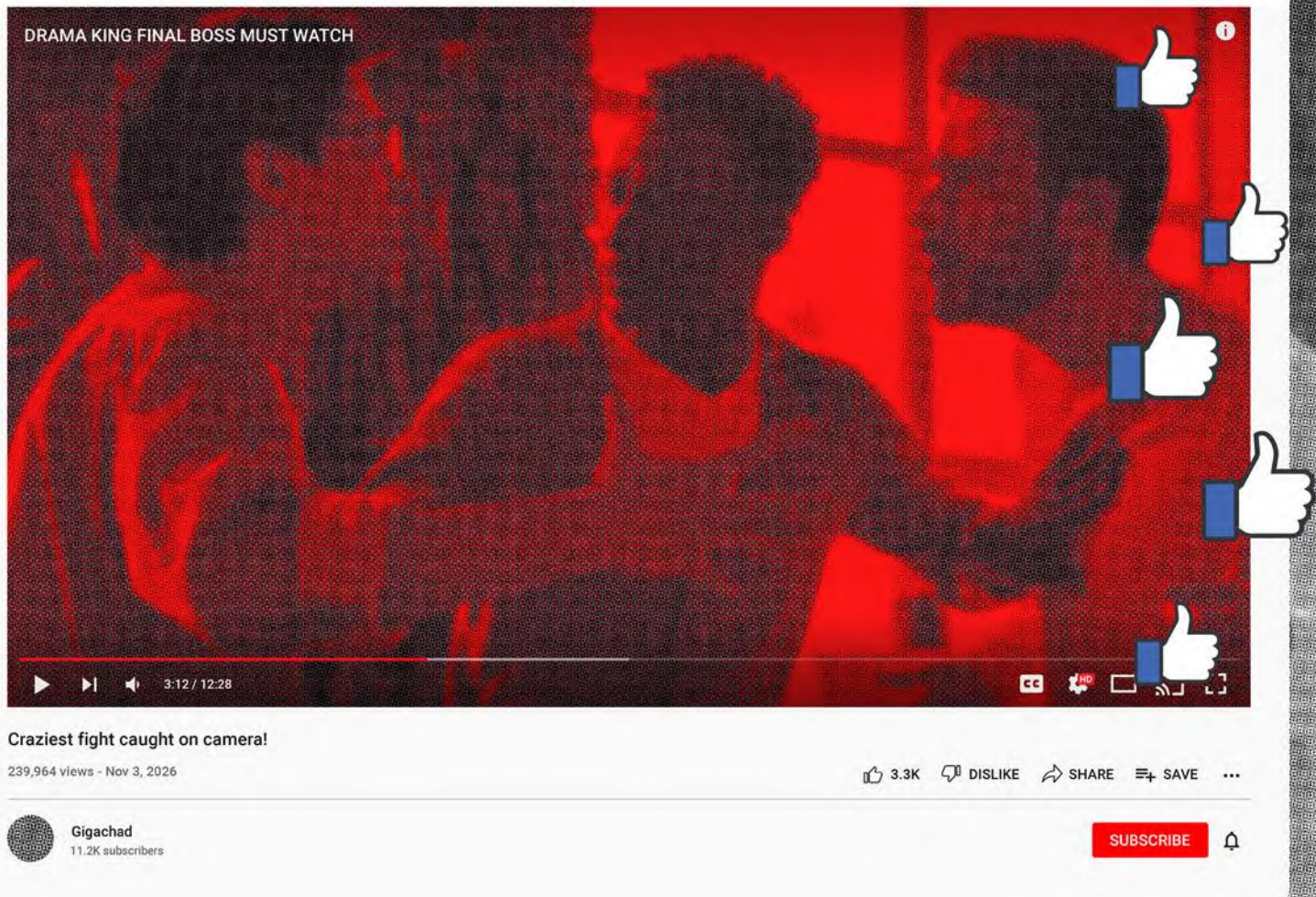
MID TIER – The Real Winners

Clavicular, Justin Waller.
Dramatic spikes in views and likes –
scandal is a growth engine just below
saturation



A SWARM HARVESTS THE RESIDUAL ATTENTION

At least 38 opportunistic accounts – crypto promoters, clip-farmers,
manosphere profiles – extract visibility without contributing anything.



CHAPTER 8 – THE CONFLICT ECONOMY

How the Ecosystem Pays Itself - Fights, Beef Cycles, and the Monetization of Rage

The male grievance industry does not just profit from posts. It profits from combat. Fights fill the need to content everyday, and since the audience overlap is similar, it provides the potential to acquire new followers.

Mid-level creators with 100,000 to 500,000 followers earn an estimated \$10,000 to \$60,000 from a major debate or confrontation stream. Clipped and restreamed across platforms over multiple days, the same event generates \$15,000 to \$100,000. Top-tier creators with audiences of one to ten million can draw 50,000 to 150,000 live viewers for a conflict event, with earnings of \$75,000 to \$300,000 or more. The fight is the product. The outrage is the distribution mechanism.

Fights in this ecosystem function simultaneously as audience acquisition tools, status contests, and monetization engines. Some are genuinely adversarial. Many are collaborative – two creators manufacturing conflict to split each other's audiences and grow both. The distinction is invisible to the viewer and irrelevant to the algorithm. Engagement is engagement. The platform pays either way.³⁵³⁶

THE FIGHT TYPOLOGY

Fight Type	Emotional Driver	Business Result
Media Clash	Outrage	Viral growth
Alpha Contest	Status anxiety	Loyalty hardening
Purity War	Ideology	Audience sorting
Grifter Claim	Distrust	Sales spike
Faux Conflict	Entertainment	Cross-pollination
Cancellation	Injustice narrative	Audience redistribution

Conflict Pays

Conflict produces emotional arousal → arousal increases spending resulting in:

- YouTube CPM spikes
- Superchat revenue with donations or tips during livestream debates
 - Membership subscriptions
 - Affiliate traffic

³⁵ <https://www.creatoriq.com/blog/how-to-determine-influencer-marketing-budget>

³⁶ <https://influenceflow.io/resources/calculate-creator-earnings-potential-the-complete-2026-guide/>

Many creators benefit even when they appear to lose. Controversy expands reach regardless of outcome, and conflict hardens fan identity in ways that pure aspiration content cannot. The Clavicular Clan, the Groyper, Fresh & Fit's loyal audience – these are not passive viewers. They are communities defined in part by their willingness to defend their creator against attack, generating comments, reposts, and algorithmic engagement that the conflict itself produces.

The dynamics are visible in real time. On June 3, 2026, [Sneako](#) appeared on a Kick stream accusing Nick Fuentes, the Tates, and others of turning on him after years of mutual support. [Fuentes](#) responded on Rumble, demanding Sneako take accountability. Sneako escalated, posting that Fuentes was inciting violence after Groyper in Fuentes's chat began threatening him and his family. Fuentes declared he was at war with anyone not committed to America First. Every step of this sequence – the accusation, the response, the escalation, the declaration – was a content event. Each one drove traffic. None of it required resolution to be profitable. The fight is the product. The audience is the fuel. The platforms and the influencers all profit as the public discourse hardens.



Caption: SNEAKO just WENT OFF on Nick Fuentes, Andrew Tate, Zherka, Fresh & Ryan Dawson
 "Zherka, I made his career. Ryan Dawson, gave him money when he was poor. Tates defended, the frogs and Nick Fuentes said lock him up. Now their glazing each other and scking each other's dcks! Fresh, I went to war with MoistCr1TiKaL to defend him."
 "When Tate doxed my family, were any of these friends saying anything? No. You know who did? Dan Bilzerian. You're welcoime for making all your careers."



Caption: SNEAKO has become Nick Fuentes' ENEMY after stabbing him in the back
 "If your 'friend' is not only gonna refuse to take your side but actually sides with your enemy, and then shits on you the rest of the week, that just sounds like an enemy!"

The Drama Kings of the Internet Age

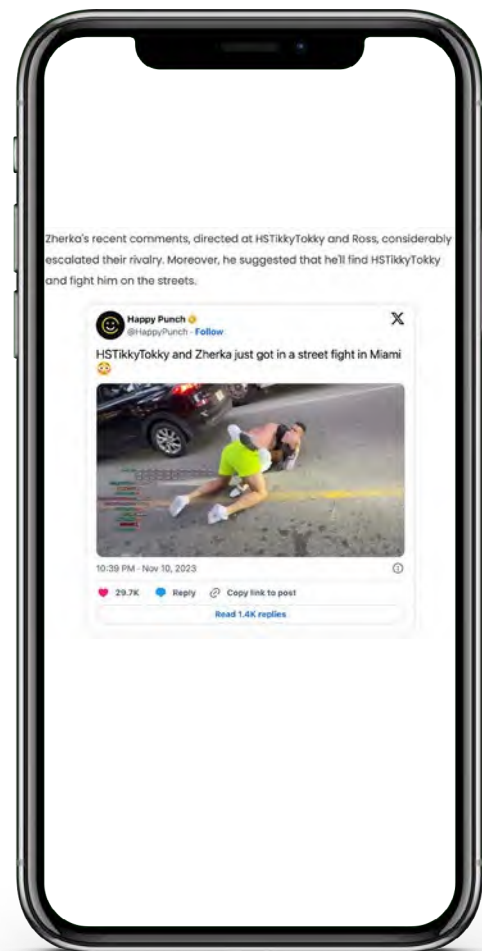
External conflict also has baked-in drama. It is a content format with its own grammar, audience expectations, and revenue logic. It takes several distinct forms.

Myron Gaines and Walter Weekes monetized humiliation of outside guests on their show *Fresh and Fit After Hours*. The guests serve as a target and are often seeking publicity as Instagram/OF models, feminists, or someone who they identify as too self-important. Questions from the hosts are personal and humiliating. There is also a live chat financial feature, *Rumble Rants*, where viewers pay two to hundreds of dollars to message questions to the panel or guests. The vast majority of these paid comments are vicious, personal insults directed at specific women on their appearance, intelligence, or morals. Gaines and Weeks read these audience comments to the woman, forcing her to respond. If a guest reacts defensively or cries, the live chat responds by sending more money. The audience is essentially paying to watch the hosts emotionally break down a guest in real-time. The more hostile, aggressive, and uncomfortable the environment becomes, the more money the audience pours into the stream.

Cancellation by a platform becomes an external fight for life and an us vs. them battle. Followers mobilize against those who try to silence their leader, and use this as confirmation of identity and proof of the matrix working against them.

Researchers documented that after Andrew Tate was deplatformed from YouTube, a decentralized network of creators continued circulating his ideas through interviews, reaction videos, clips, remixes, and commentary. The researchers call this ecosystem the “Tate-space.” Creators felt they were participating in a movement, and the community’s importance grew precisely because it was under attack. Deplatforming did not shrink the ecosystem. It organized it. Loyalty hardened. Willingness to pay for access and membership increased. The attack became the best recruitment tool available. This increases loyalty in supporters and increases willingness to pay for access or membership.

In an Alpha contest, two creators compete for dominance – in debate, in physical confrontation, or in public status claims. The loser gains sympathy traffic; the winner gains authority and both gain subscribers, but the audience is the prize.



Caption: Zherka's recent comments, directed at HSTikkyTokky and Ross, considerably escalated their rivalry. Moreover, he suggested that he'll find HSTikkyTokky and fight him on the streets

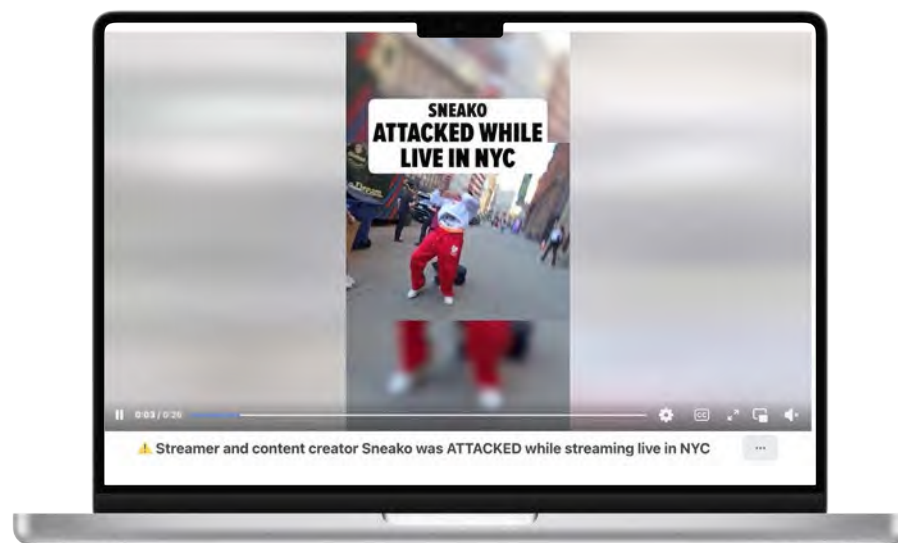
Jon Zherka is a rising influencer, who actively collaborates or feuds with other influencers in order to capture audience share. He has been a guest on Fresh & Fit, Bradley Martyn's Raw Gear and No Jumper where he goes viral for his outlandish takes. Before his permanent bans from Twitch and Kick, Zherka specialized in hijacking other streamers' digital group streams—such as those hosted by Adin Ross or Trainwreckstv—solely to drop inflammatory insults and launch personal attacks against the hosts or their ex-partners.

In one example, Zherka made derogatory comments regarding HSTikkyTokky's mother as well as Adin Ross' former partner. Zherka also looks for live events and tracked down HSTikkyTokky in Miami to engage in a [street fight](#) on stream. He is also one of the main sharers of the Heil Hitler song dance video of five streamers at the Vendome Club to profit from the outrage, which is highlighted in this report.

Influencer Sneako gets hit in the [face while doing a livestream](#), creating national news. The puncher states, "clip this." Online, there are often physical fights posted by influencers alongside MMA content. The normalization of posting organic fight videos on places like X/Twitter, where channels and hashtags exist to watch fights, domestic abuse, or physical crime videos from around the world, leads viewers to believe that violence is everywhere and is a normal occurrence.

Another form of online fighting is a purity battle that distinguishes one influencer from another. A creator is accused of ideological deviation – not being sufficiently masculine, nationalist, or committed to the cause. The accused either capitulates, which proves the accusation, or fights back, which proves their authenticity.

Matt Walsh and the Daily Wire focus on marriage, motherhood, and women submission to their husbands. What they are doing is not offering commentary on gender, rather, they are selling a worldview in which women's autonomy is a social pathology and male authority is the corrective. The product is ideological; the business model is grievance. The Daily Wire's revenue – subscriptions, merchandise, live events – depends on sustaining the outrage that worldview generates. The overlap is anti-feminist with the Red-Pill influencers, but Walsh argues over promiscuity, which he defines as destroying the family and breaking down society. The argument online between Walsh and Andrew Tate, for example, reaffirms and hardens their base and increased views on the debate.



Purity battles also create ideological sorting of audiences. Male influencers divided lines on Israel. Geopolitics are not usually a typical topic discussed on livestream and those with larger audiences like Joe Rogan or Theo Vonn hosted discussions, but remained largely neutral. The pro-Israel side of Ben Shapiro, David Rubin, Piers Morgan and the critics of Israel, includes Sneako, the Tate brothers, and Myron Gaines. The reaction of audiences largely reinforced the views of followers. Jordan Peterson, who had a broad cross-over audience, was impacted most by taking a pro-Israel view and tweeting “Give ‘em hell @ Netanyahu.” He lost younger followers, Western-critical audiences, and Muslims who followed him, but broadened and hardened his appeal with more conservative followers and with his Daily Wire audiences.

INSIDER MONTHLY
Access the Daily Wire library of content powered by the ideas that keep America free.
Stream Daily Wire uncensored, ad-free daily shows.
Exclusive bonus shows, breaking news & investigative journalism.
Power Daily to build culture, defend values, and shape stories that ensure your voice shapes the future.
Cancel anytime
\$15/mo
Select Plan
Starts with 30-day money-back guarantee

INSIDER ANNUAL
Access the Daily Wire library of content powered by the ideas that keep America free.
Stream Daily Wire uncensored, ad-free daily shows.
Exclusive bonus shows, breaking news & investigative journalism.
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Join private All Access-only DWA sessions with your favorite DWA hosts.
Experience video access to content and Daily Wire announcements.
Stand with us. You don't just watch the fight, you help fund the victory.
Priority service. Jump to the front of the line if you ever need customer support.
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Starts with 30-day money-back guarantee

THE DAILY WIRE REPORTS UNFILTERED HONEST NEWS.

MATT WALSH

RECENT EPISODES

\$34.99

CHEF / CHEF-SELF

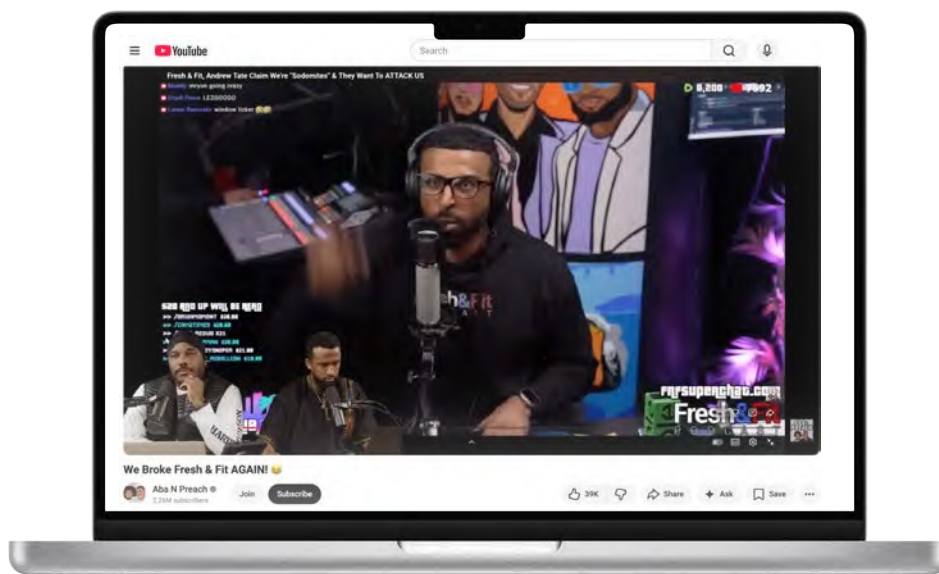
Two Key Monetization of Rage Methods

The Serialized Investigation

When a creator releases a multi-episode takedown of a person or organization: trailer, episode drops, cliffhangers, audience speculation fills the gaps between releases over two to three weeks. Andrew Tate has used this format to defend himself following his arrests. Streamers use long-form serialized video to maximize watch time, generate reaction content from other creators, and turn personal disputes into serialized entertainment with appointment viewing.

Myron Gaines (Fresh & Fit) used this format in his recurring feud with comedian Akaash Singh, reigniting and extending it across episodes and posts over weeks rather than resolving it.³⁷ The ongoing debate between Fresh & Fit and Aba N Preach is one of the most prominent conflicts among online male influencers. Fresh & Fit built a large audience around red-pill views on dating, status, and gender dynamics, while Aba & Preach criticized their advice as overly simplistic and confrontational. What began as content criticism evolved into a prolonged public feud that attracted millions of views and significant attention across the creator ecosystem.

The conflict is notable because it demonstrates how online disputes can fuel growth for both sides. Fresh & Fit strengthened loyalty among supporters, while **Aba & Preach** expanded their audience by positioning themselves as critics of this culture. The feud ultimately became a high-profile debate over competing visions of masculinity, relationships, and self-improvement.



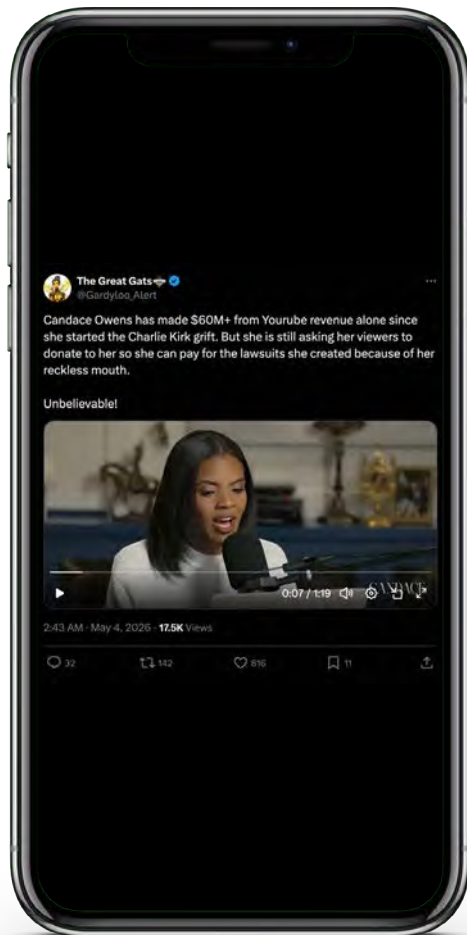
³⁷ The American Bazaar, "Who is Myron Gaines? Controversial podcaster at center of Akaash Singh viral feud", November 25, 2025 <https://americanbazaaronline.com/2025/11/25/who-is-myron-gaines-controversial-podcaster-at-center-of-akaash-singh-viral-feud-470562/> / <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/celebrity/articles/akaash-singh-fires-back-myron-181058071.html?guccounter=1>

The Grifter Claim

A creator accuses another of financial fraud, fake results, or selling a scam. Irony is rarely acknowledged. Trust in the accused erodes. Trust in the accuser – who is often also selling something – does not.

Nick Fuentes uses the grifter label for both male influencers and right-wing podcasters as he tries to acquire audience share from both communities. He has criticized Tate for taking advantage of subscribers, Gaines for faking hyper-masculine and Sneako for trend-chasing for money. Fuentes also targeted right-wing commentators in “[Calling out Conservative Grifters by Name](#),” a podcast in January 2026 targeting Ben Shapiro, Josh Hammer, and Glenn Beck. Fuentes says his movement is the only serious one and implies he is a true ideologue, unlike the others, who are seeking status and money. His main source of income is donations, with \$900,000 over a little over a year, according to the [Washington Post](#).

Male influencers are not the only ones using the grift claim. Candace Owens built her audience on YouTube from the “Bride of Charlie” series in 2026 on Erika Kirk, which earned her subscribers and viewers.³⁸ Laura Loomer called Candace a grifter and detailed her personal finances, including homes, cars, and income. The male influencers and the far-right have some overlapping audiences, but each learn from each other’s mechanisms for audience growth.



Caption: Candace Owens has made \$60M+ from Yourube revenue alone since she started the Charlie Kirk grift. But she is still asking her viewers to donatae to her so she can pay for the lawsuits she created because of her reckless mouth. Unbelievable!

³⁸ <https://www.mediamatters.org/candace-owens/candace-owens-crashing-out-online-shes-never-been-more-popular> and <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/tv/articles/candace-owens-bride-charlie-viewership-002122211.html>



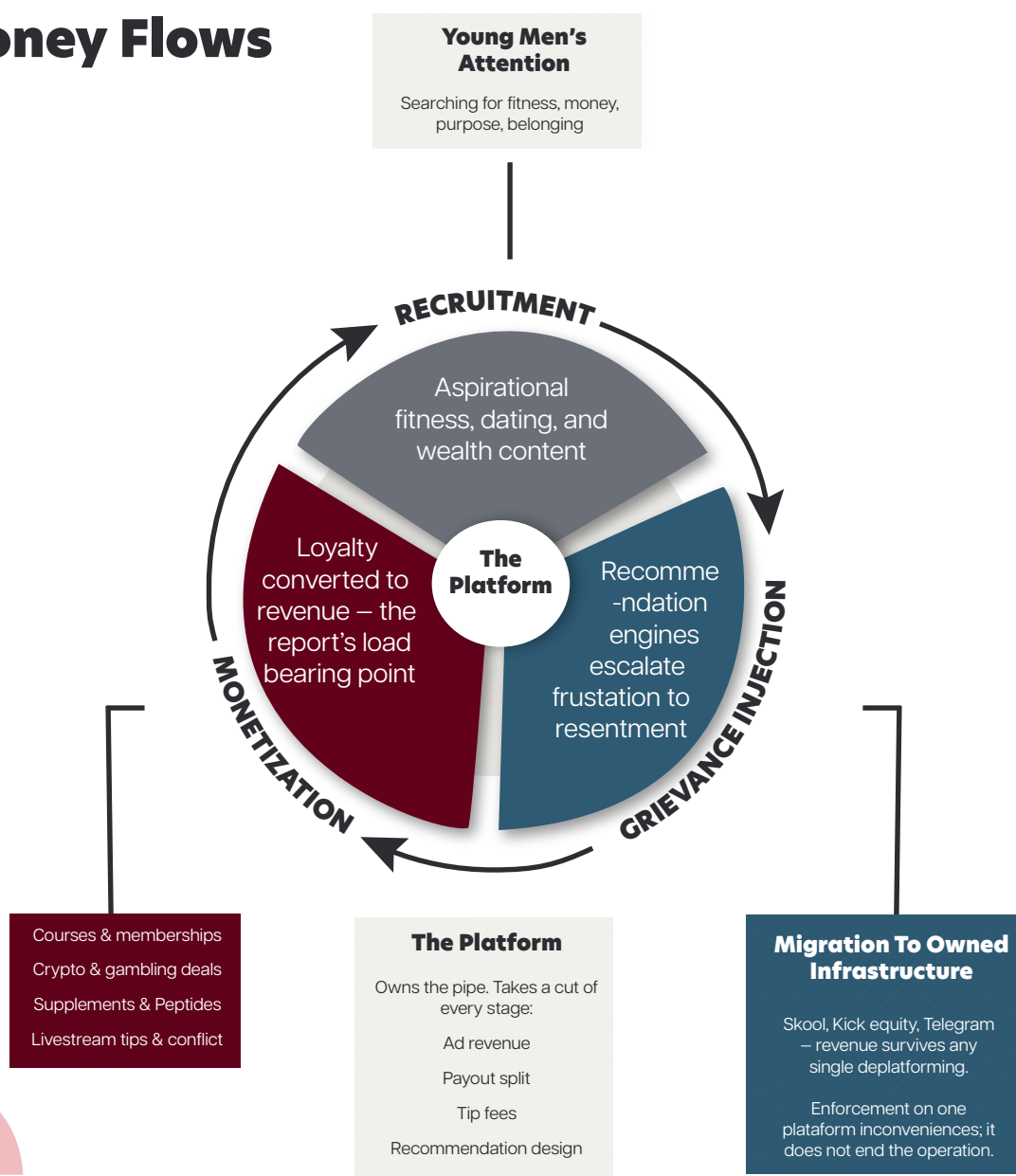
CHAPTER 9— THE PLATFORM SUBSIDY

How Big Tech Profits from the Grift

The male grievance industry did not build its own distribution network. It inherited one. Private companies that own that network take a cut of everything it produces.

This chapter documents the financial relationship between the male grievance industry and the digital platforms that host, amplify, and monetize it. It is not a relationship of reluctant tolerance. It is a commercial partnership, structured by platform design, revenue-sharing arrangements, and algorithmic systems that reward exactly the content this report has documented. The platforms did not create Andrew Tate, Adin Ross, or the looksmaxxing pipeline. But they built the infrastructure that those operations run on, and they profit from every view, subscription, and sponsorship impression that infrastructure generates, even if they are de-platformed on some and move to others.

Money Flows





The Revenue Architecture

Understanding platform complicity requires understanding how platform money flows – which is less visible than creator income but significantly larger.

The visible layer: Platform payouts to creators are structured to maximize engagement rather than quality or accuracy. YouTube long-form video creators earn approximately \$3 to \$15 per 1,000 views, depending on niche, with creators in finance, self-improvement, and masculinity content consistently at the higher end of that range because advertisers bidding on those audiences are willing to pay more. Facebook monetization yields roughly \$0.10 to \$0.22 per 1,000 qualifying views, with additional creator bonus programs that reward consistent posting volume. Instagram platform payouts are minimal – creators make their money through brand sponsorships, which the platform facilitates but does not regulate for content accuracy or product legitimacy. These figures are the visible layer.

The invisible layer: Advertising revenue is what the platforms retain. For every dollar paid to a creator, platforms retain the majority of the advertising revenue their content generates. A grievance operation with five million views per month is not just earning its creator several thousand dollars in AdSense. It is generating multiples of that in advertising revenue for the platform – revenue that does not appear in any creator income disclosure, and that carries no accountability for the content that produced it.

The scale of what is possible on YouTube is illustrated by two creators whose operations sit adjacent to the male grievance industry rather than inside it – but whose business models have directly shaped it. Jimmy Donaldson (MrBeast) generates an estimated \$4 million monthly in AdSense revenue from his main channel alone, with sponsorships on individual videos costing between \$2.5 million and \$3 million. He has effectively demonstrated that YouTube can function as a base for a diversified media and consumer products empire, with offline revenue streams that dwarf platform payouts. Jake Paul built his initial wealth through AdSense during his peak vlogger years – estimated at several million dollars annually from view volume alone – before pivoting to use his YouTube channel primarily as a marketing vehicle for pay-per-view boxing events and business ventures.

Both men established a template that the male grievance industry has absorbed directly: the platform audience is the asset; the monetization happens elsewhere. The fights, the courses, the memberships, the supplements – these are the Jake Paul pivot, applied to grievance content. The template was developed in plain sight on mainstream YouTube and then replicated across the ecosystem this report documents. The platforms watched it work, profited from it, and built the infrastructure that made the replication possible.

YouTube and the Google Blind Spot

CASE STUDY

Of all the platforms outlined in this ecosystem, YouTube – and its owner, Google – attracts the least scrutiny relative to its centrality. Public attention fixates on the fringe venues, Kick, Rumble, Telegram, where the most extreme content lives. But those are downstream. YouTube is where the business model was invented, normalized, and proven at scale. It is the platform whose own advertising market prices finance, business, and self-improvement audiences at the very top of its rate card, which means YouTube's revenue system does not merely tolerate this content; it pays a premium for the audiences it assembles. It is the platform where masculinity grievance influencers have developed the playbook in plain sight, demonstrating that an audience built on free content could be converted into a media empire monetized elsewhere, and then supplied the recommendation engine that routes young men toward the operators replicating that playbook. It is the platform where YouTube's own algorithm has been caught surfacing harmful content to young users.³⁹

And because of the 55/45 split, Google retains 45 cents of every advertising dollar these operations generate, making it the single largest financial beneficiary of the ecosystem documented in this report, larger than any individual creator.

Yet enforcement, public criticism, and regulatory pressure are focused more on the creators and the fringe platforms rather than on the mainstream infrastructure that makes the entire model viable. That asymmetry is itself an accountability failure: the most consequential actor is the least examined, precisely because its role is structural rather than visible. The grievance operator is the face of the harm.

Google is the landlord, the banker and the distributor, taking a cut at every stage.

³⁹ See Tech Transparency Project, "YouTube Leads Young Gamers to Videos of Guns, School Shootings," May 16, 2023, <https://www.techtransparencyproject.org/articles/youtube-leads-young-gamers-to-videos-of-guns-school>, an experiment finding that YouTube's recommendation system steered young gamer accounts toward content on guns and violence. On YouTube monetizing channels through advertising despite their content, see Tech Transparency Project, "YouTube Profits Off U.S.-Sanctioned Iranians Amid Middle East Conflict," June 11, 2026, <https://www.techtransparencyproject.org/articles/youtube-profits-off-u.s.-sanctioned-iranians-amid-middle-east-conflict>. The Tech Transparency Project is a research initiative of the nonprofit Campaign for Accountability.



Accountability Spotlight: Big Tech Money, Big Tech Influence

Two further dynamics distinguish Google from the smaller platforms in this ecosystem and help explain why its central role attracts so little scrutiny. Google is among the heaviest corporate lobbyists in Washington, DC, spending tens of millions of dollars a year and lobbying directly on the precise frameworks that would impose accountability – intermediary liability, children’s online safety, online advertising, and AI.⁴⁰ Accountability advocates have documented how the industry pairs lobbying with public relations and philanthropic spending to, in one watchdog’s words, keep meaningful reform “off the table” while presenting itself as a willing partner on safety.⁴¹ The result is that the company best positioned to alter the economics of this ecosystem is also the one most heavily invested in shaping the rules that would require it to.

The Kick Architecture

The most instructive platform case study in the male grievance industry is Kick – a streaming platform whose design, revenue model, and content policy are each, in different ways, optimized for the ecosystem this report documents.

Kick offers creators a 95/5 subscription revenue split, meaning creators keep 95 percent of subscription income. Its primary competitor Twitch offers a standard 50/50 split, with top-tier partners qualifying for 70/30. The difference is not incidental. It is a deliberate platform design choice that makes Kick the most financially attractive destination for creators who have been deplatformed elsewhere, who operate in content categories that mainstream platforms nominally restrict, or who simply want to maximize revenue from an existing audience.

Adin Ross holds an equity stake in Kick. He streams his Brand Risk Promotions fight events on Kick as well as through his own channel. The platform and the creator appear financially intertwined: his content drives traffic to Kick; Kick’s generous revenue split and permissive content policy make it the right home for his operation; and his equity stake means the platform’s growth is also his growth. Multiple documented accusations of bot use in Kick’s discussion forums are consistent with the broader pattern of simulated community activity documented elsewhere in this report.⁴²

Kick’s content moderation is materially less restrictive than Twitch’s, which enforces policies on hateful conduct, sexually explicit content, and unlicensed gambling. Creators who have been banned from Twitch for these violations have migrated to Kick, bringing their audiences with them. The platform has positioned itself as the infrastructure layer for the content that other platforms’ stated policies prohibit. That is not an accidental outcome. It is a competitive strategy.

40 Refer to federal lobbying filings as reported in “Meta outspends other tech giants in Q1 2025 lobbying,” Axios, April 22, 2025, and OpenSecrets, Alphabet Inc. lobbying profile, <https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/google-inc/summary?id=D000022008>.

41 Issue One, “As Big Tech Gears Up for the 2026 Midterms, Its Lobbying Operations Continue Unabated,” October 21, 2025, <https://issueone.org/articles/big-tech-lobbying-2025-q3/> (documenting roughly \$50 million in combined federal lobbying by seven major tech and AI firms in the first nine months of 2025 and the industry’s use of lobbying, public relations, and philanthropy to forestall Section 230 reform)

42 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viewbot>

The male grievance industry has developed a sophisticated content distribution model that extends its reach well beyond the platforms where creators post directly. At the center of this model is the clipping economy – a network of paid operators who take long-form podcast and livestream content and reformat it as short-form video for YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels, TikTok, and Facebook.





The Clipping Economy: Distributed Amplification at Scale

Clipping is cheaper than paying influencers directly and functions as a distributed amplification network that circumvents individual platform enforcement. A piece of content removed from one platform in long form may already exist as dozens of short-form clips across multiple others. The clip is the unit of viral spread; the original stream is the factory that produces it. Each platform that hosts a clip earns advertising revenue from it, and the algorithm reads a large volume of clips as a major event and promotes it further.

The scale of this infrastructure is documented in the case of Clavicular, a looksmaxxing creator whose clipping operation represents the most developed example in this ecosystem. Clavicular paid an estimated \$650,000⁴³⁴⁴ per month to clippers, generating approximately 70,000 videos per month and between one and two billion views.⁴⁵ He describes the arrangement as his “[viewmaxxing ATM](#).” The investment is rational: at platform payout rates, one to two billion monthly views generates revenue that makes the \$650,000 clipping budget a viable operating cost for long term growth.

Commercial clipping infrastructure has professionalized rapidly. Services including [Vyro](#), [Content Rewards](#), [Clipping Culture](#), [Clipster](#), and [Whop](#) now offer creator-clipper matching. Dedicated [Discord](#) servers connect clippers to creators, with documented communities of up to 70,000 followers. [Clipping.net](#) operates both a website and a Discord channel specifically for this market. Kick has internalized the model, running a [Creator Program](#) that structures clipping arrangements to drive traffic back to the platform.

The Kick monetary split is different from its main competitor Twitch, which split income 50/50, and is moderated and has de-platformed many influencers including Tate, Sneako and Asmongold. Viewers pay a recurring monthly fee for ad-free viewing, custom emotes, and chat badges. Creators who consistently maintain a high number of recurring paid subscriptions can qualify for the [Twitch Plus Program](#), unlocking 60/40 or 70/30 revenue splits. Over time, Kick has become a better platform for someone like Adin Ross, who streams his fights on Kick as well as on his own channel at Brand Risk Promotions under Live on Kick.

43 <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/WvRfAqK6RtM>

44 <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us-streamers/clavicular-spends-over-650k-on-clipping-campaign-reports-claim/article-show/130460429.cms>

45 <https://followin.io/en/feed/24916544?utm>



The Migration Model: From Platform to Owned Infrastructure

Every platform that hosts a clip earns from it, and the algorithm reads a large number of clips as an important event and promotes it further.

The mature stage of the male grievance industry's business model does not depend on platform payouts at all. Once a creator has built sufficient following, the model shifts: social media becomes the advertising infrastructure, and the monetizable product moves to owned or equity-staked platforms the creator controls directly.

Adin Ross's Brand Risk Promotions hosts his fight content and livestreams directly, with Kick integration for subscriber revenue. The major platforms – YouTube, TikTok, X – become traffic sources rather than revenue sources. The audience is built on platforms the creator does not own; the money is made on infrastructure the creator does.

At the mid-tier, Skool has become the dominant owned infrastructure platform. Hamza Ahmed, Austin Wayne, Oscar Patel, and Clavicular all use Skool to host paid subscription communities, instructional video libraries, and premium coaching tiers. Skool's low operating cost and subscription management infrastructure make it accessible to creators who have built audiences large enough to monetize through direct membership. The platform has no content oversight obligation and takes a fixed monthly fee from creators rather than a revenue percentage, giving it no financial incentive to moderate what its hosted communities contain.

The migration model matters for regulation because it means that platform-level enforcement – demonetization, suspension, content removal – does not end the commercial operation. It inconveniences it. A creator whose YouTube channel is demonetized has already moved the revenue-generating product to Skool. A creator banned from Twitch has already migrated to Kick. The public platform is the front door. The money is made out the back.



What the Platforms Know and Choose Not to Do

The platforms are not passive beneficiaries of this ecosystem. They are active participants in its design.

Algorithmic recommendation systems that surface grievance operations to men who were not looking for them are not accidents of engineering. They are the intended outputs of optimization systems designed to maximize engagement. The California jury verdict in March 2026 (under appeal) – finding Meta and YouTube liable for addictive design features – established the legal principle that platform design choices with foreseeable harmful consequences constitute a product defect, not a speech act. That principle applies directly to the recommendation architecture that distributes the operations documented in this report.

Platform terms of service violations in this ecosystem go routinely unenforced. Adin Ross was permanently banned from Twitch after his eighth violation for hateful conduct before migrating to Kick. Andrew Tate was deplatformed from multiple major platforms before his operations continued circulating through the Tate-space network of affiliated creators – documented by peer-reviewed research as a more organized and loyal ecosystem after deplatforming than before it. His channel remained banned, but he was able to return as a guest on other influencer's channels. The pattern is consistent: individual enforcement actions against the most visible actors, while the network, the appearances, and the revenue flows to friends continue undisturbed.

The coordinated inauthentic behavior networks documented in Reset Tech's Clickbait Cures investigation – running automated accounts across Meta and Google to distribute fraudulent health advertising – are similar in tactics to the same networks distributing male grievance operations. The infrastructure is shared. The enforcement gap is the same. The platforms' financial incentive to close it is the same: weak, because the operations generate engagement, and engagement generates revenue, regardless of what the operations contain.

This is not a content moderation failure. It is a business model operating as it was designed.

The Accountability Gap

The regulatory frameworks that currently govern platform behavior were built around a different model of harm. In the United States, Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act shields platforms from liability for what users post. It does not shield them from liability for how their platforms are designed – a distinction the March 2026 California verdict has now made legally actionable.

In Europe, the DSA's systemic risk assessment obligations offer a more direct framework: platforms above a certain scale are required to assess and mitigate the systemic risks their design choices produce. The commercial exploitation of men's psychological vulnerabilities, at the scale documented in this report, is a systemic risk by any reasonable definition. The DSA applies to European users. An equivalent US framework does not yet exist.

Regardless of approach, what's important to understand about this industry is that the platforms are not neutral infrastructure. They are financially interested parties in the male grievance industry's operations with CEOs who are now echoing the same male coded grievances (from their multimillion mansions). The companies are earning advertising revenue from this content, providing the distribution networks that give it scale, and designing the algorithmic systems that find its audience. The accountability frameworks being built for platform harms need to reach this financial relationship, not just the content it produces.

Big Tech did not create the grift. But it built the machine the grift runs on – and it takes a percentage of everything the machine makes.



PART IV: RECOMMENDATIONS



PLATFORM
ACCOUNTABILITY

CONSUMER
PROTECTION

CHAPTER 10 — THE REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

What Exists, What Is Missing, and Where the Opportunities Are

The male grievance industry is not beyond the reach of existing law. It has simply not been framed in the language that activates the relevant legal frameworks and urgency among policymakers who struggle to keep up with modern media and the financial structure and revenue of information and digital platforms.

The regulatory tools described here, applied alone, don't fully close the accountability gap this report has documented. But taken together – and applied with consumer protection and platform accountability, they reach further into this problem than the current public debate suggests.



Top 3 Oversight Priorities to Address the Grievance Industry

1. Platform Accountability
2. Consumer Protection
3. Health and Product Safety

Platform Accountability

What It Aims to Do

Platform accountability frameworks address the systemic behavior of large platforms – not individual pieces of content, but the design choices, algorithmic systems, and advertising infrastructure that determine what content reaches which users at scale.

Global Trends

The limitation of current platform accountability frameworks is jurisdictional and definitional, but the field is no longer confined to Europe. A cluster of jurisdictions has now adopted variations on the same core move – shifting platforms from reactive content takedown toward a proactive, systemic duty of care – and several have built in provisions that speak directly to the harms documented in this report.

Europe's Digital Services Act remains the anchor: its Article 34–35 systemic-risk regime applies to Very Large Online Platforms serving European users, and the European Commission has begun enforcing it, issuing the DSA's first non-compliance fine against X in December 2025 and opening proceedings examining recommender systems and addictive design at other major platforms.

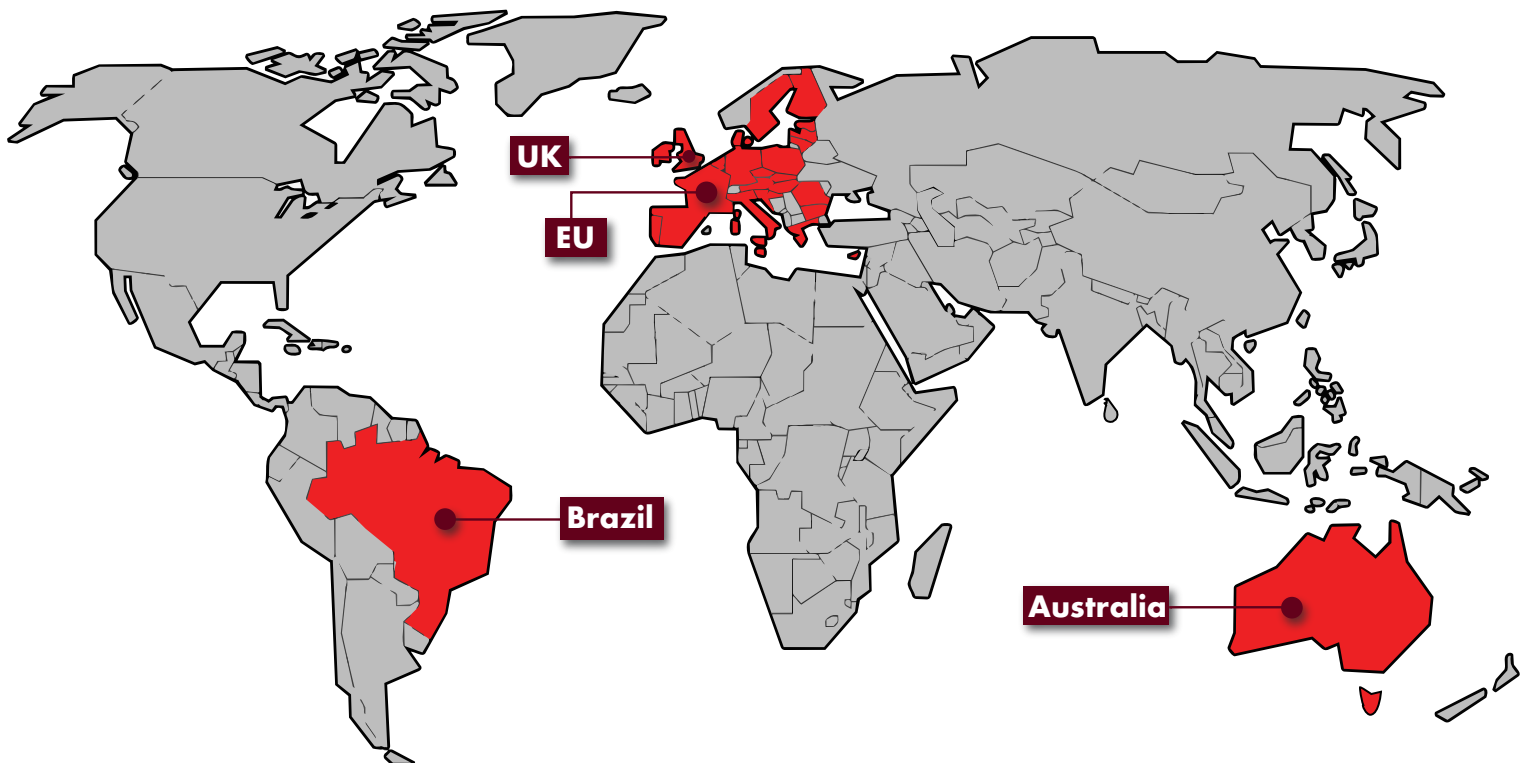
The United Kingdom now operates a parallel regime under the **Online Safety Act**, whose illegal-content and child-safety duties came into force across 2025 and moved into active enforcement in 2026. The duty is explicitly about design and governance rather than a guarantee that no illegal content appears, and Ofcom has issued dedicated guidance on harms that disproportionately affect women and girls. Certain predominantly misogynist harms – non-consensual intimate image sharing and AI-generated deepfake sexual imagery – are written into the law as enforcement priorities, and 2026 amendments have moved toward personal liability for executives who fail to remove non-consensual intimate images. A super-complaints mechanism, enabling eligible organizations to raise systemic failures to Ofcom, came into force in early 2026 – a potential avenue for civil-society bodies documenting coordinated abuse.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The Online Safety Act in 2026: What Platforms Now Have to Do," About Human Rights, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.abouthumanrights.co.uk/the-online-safety-act-in-2026-what-platforms-now-have-to-do.html>.

Australia, home to the world's first dedicated online-safety regulator, is extending its Online Safety Act regime toward a statutory “digital duty of care” requiring platforms to take reasonable steps to prevent foreseeable harm, alongside an image-based-abuse removal scheme and enforceable industry codes already in operation. Its own research finds women and gender-diverse people disproportionately targeted by harassment, non-consensual image sharing, stalking, and impersonation – the same pattern this report documents.

The **Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024** – the first law of its kind in the world – restricts users under the age of 16 from accessing platforms including Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, X, Snapchat, Reddit, Twitch, Threads and Kick, and came into force on 10 December 2025. Platforms that fail to implement suitable age verification systems face fines of up to A\$49.5 million.

Against this, the United States is conspicuous in its gap. It has no equivalent systemic-risk framework. The Federal Trade Commission has authority over deceptive and unfair practices, but that authority reaches false claims, not algorithmic design choices that produce harmful outcomes without making any false statement – and it is exercised only if the agency chooses to use it. Filling that gap is the most consequential regulatory innovation available, and the frameworks now operating in the EU, UK, Australia and Brazil (refer to spotlight) offer four working models for what it could look like.



Systemic Risk and the Grift Economy

The male grievance industry's commercial exploitation of men's psychological vulnerabilities should be considered a systemic risk. While often distorted by industry lobbyists and pundits, it bears repeating that the DSA does not require a platform to remove any specific piece of content (save for illegal content). It requires the platform to assess and address the systemic effects of its design and algorithmic choices. That is the accountability framing this report has been building toward throughout.

Reset Tech's [Dormant Danger](#) report documents how platforms focus on removing violative ads rather than violative accounts, leaving whole scam systems operative for years. While the focus of the research has differed, the point remains. Platform responses are inadequate, and this may rise to the level of systemic risk.

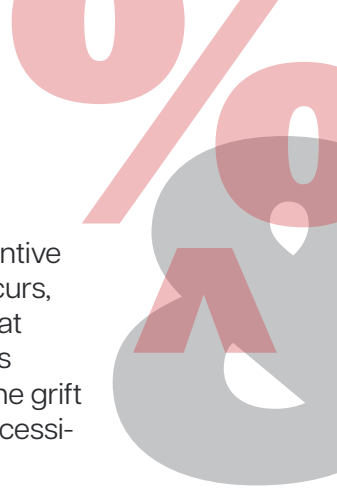
SPOTLIGHT ON BRAZIL

Brazil offers a second jurisdiction where accountability obligations are tightening, and where reforms address directly the harms documented in this report. The trajectory runs from court to executive action. Highlights of Brazil's approach:

- ***Platforms have public responsibilities:*** In June 2025, Brazil's Supreme Federal Court (STF) declared Article 19 of the Marco Civil da Internet (from 2014) partially unconstitutional, replacing a regime under which platforms faced liability only for ignoring a specific court order with a duty-of-care approach. The court ordered the platforms to act proactively, without waiting for a court order, on predefined serious harms requiring action – including terrorism, child exploitation, incitement to self-harm, violence against women, racism, and anti-democratic acts. The Court framed this as provisional, governing until Congress legislates, and explicitly called on lawmakers to fill the gap. This shift reframes tech platforms not merely as private service providers, but as essential components of the public sphere, subject to constitutional obligations.⁴⁷
- ***The focus is on systemic risk.*** In May 2026, the federal government translated that ruling into enforceable rules through two executive decrees (Nos. 12.975/2026 and 12.976/2026). Three features are directly relevant to the accountability argument this report advances. First, the framework adopts a systemic-oversight model rather than a content-arbiter one: Brazil's data protection authority is designated as the supervisory body and is explicitly barred from ordering the removal of individual pieces of content. Its mandate is to evaluate whether platforms are meeting their proactive obligations consistently and diligently – the systemic behavior of the platform, not the individual post. This is the same regulatory logic as the DSA's systemic-risk regime, and the same logic this report has been building toward.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Sahasranshu Dash and Ana Tereza Duarte Lima de Barros, "Brazil's Digital Sovereignty Is Under Attack: How Courts, Platforms, and Constitutional Law Are Redefining Democracy Online," *Just Security*, August 13, 2025, <https://www.justsecurity.org/118915/brazil-digital-sovereignty-courts-democracy/>.

⁴⁸ Santos, N., & Brant, J. (2026, June 9). Brazil moves to increase citizens' security online. *Tech Policy Press*. <https://www.techpolicy.press/brazil-moves-to-increase-citizens-security-online/>

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- ***Curtailing fraudulent ads proactively should be the aim.*** The decrees also target advertising infrastructure directly. Platforms are now subject to a preventive due-diligence obligation to act against fraudulent advertising before harm occurs, and are required to retain more detailed data about ads and advertisers so that harmed users can seek redress and investigators can trace illegal activity. This addresses, in one jurisdiction, precisely the opacity problem at the center of the gift economy: an advertising system whose commercial relationships leave no accessible public record.
 - ***Addressing addictive design.*** The Digital ECA officially came into effect in March 2026. It is a landmark legal framework designed to update Brazil's 1990 Child and Adolescent Statute to protect minors across digital environments, social media, and electronic games. It is among the most far-reaching addictive-design frameworks in operation. It bans specific design features for products directed at or likely to be accessed by minors – including infinite scroll, autoplay, time-based rewards, excessive notifications, and the “exploitation of cognitive vulnerabilities” – with penalties up to 10 percent of a company's group revenue in Brazil, capped at R\$50 million per violation, enforced by the data protection authority. This framework does not target misogynistic content directly. ***This decree regulates the systems that surface and amplify masculine grievances to men.*** Addressing the delivery architecture is a complementary lever to addressing the content and its monetization – and one that, notably, regulates platform design rather than speech, sidestepping the free-expression objections that content-based interventions attract.
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Consumer Protection

What It Aims to Do

Consumer protection law addresses the relationship between commercial operators and the people they are selling to – prohibiting deception, misrepresentation, and unfair practices in commercial transactions. It is the framework most directly applicable to the male grievance industry as this report has characterized it: not a cultural movement but a commercial operation that defrauds its customers.

How It Addresses the Grift Economy

Consumer protection law operates across multiple jurisdictions and at multiple levels of government, and several of its existing applications reach directly into the ecosystem this report documents.

In many jurisdictions, there is existing authority over influencer marketing deceptions (such as the failure to disclose paid relationships, affiliate arrangements, and financial interests in the products being promoted) that can be applied to the online environment. The male grievance industry’s promotional infrastructure – testimonials that are paid advertising, affiliate pyramid schemes presented as community, crypto promotions without financial disclosure – falls squarely within documented FTC enforcement categories in the United States. The FTC has taken action against deceptive influencer marketing in the health, beauty, and financial products spaces. The application of that authority to masculinity content has not yet been tested, not because the legal basis is absent, but because the framing has not been made.

Scam advertising by design: the natural legal hook

The most direct point of entry for consumer-protection enforcement is the one already generating action elsewhere: deceptive commercial advertising. Scam ads are where the male grievance industry’s monetization becomes legally legible. A paid commercial message making false claims is squarely within existing FTC and state authority, regardless of the ideological packaging around it. Starting there, three escalating lines of action are recommended:

Investigative powers. The FTC has already begun the work and left it unfinished. In 2022, the Commission used its market-study authority to eight major social media and video-streaming platforms, demanding detailed information about how they screen paid advertising for fraud and deception.⁴⁹ The inquiry asked precisely the right question; then-Chair Lina Khan framed it around whether platforms’ engagement-driven business models create incentives that run against rooting out fraud. The Commission has not published findings from that ad-fraud inquiry. Publishing them would convert a dormant investigation into a public evidentiary record. From there, the FTC could open a second study aimed at the broader ecosystem this report documents: how algorithmic amplification, monetization programs, and creator-payout systems together sustain a marketplace of deceptive “coaches,” “mentors,” and “influencers” selling to young men. State attorneys general hold parallel investigative powers and could pursue the same inquiry at the state level, where the enforcement environment is often more favorable.

⁴⁹ FTC 6(b): Federal Trade Commission, “FTC Issues Orders to Social Media and Video Streaming Platforms Regarding Efforts to Address Surge in Advertising for Fraudulent Products and Scams,” Commission File No. P224500, March 2022, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases>; see also Remarks of Chair Lina M. Khan Regarding the 6(b) Orders Concerning Deceptive Advertising on Social Media (March 16, 2022), https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/remarks-of-chair-lina-m-khan-regarding-the-social-media-ad-fraud-6b-final.pdf. Section 6(b) authorizes the Commission to conduct market studies distinct from its Section 5 enforcement power.



Direct action against platforms. Consumer-protection authority reaches not only the advertiser but the platform that knowingly profits from the ad, particularly if its design choices are structured to.⁵⁰ In December 2025, the U.S. Virgin Islands became the first jurisdiction to test this directly, suing Meta under its consumer-protection and deceptive-practices statutes for allegedly detecting fraudulent ads instead of removing them, charging the fraudsters a premium to run them, while using its own targeting systems to deliver those ads to the most vulnerable users. The complaint alleges Meta internally projected that roughly a tenth of its annual revenue would come from ads for scams and prohibited products. The male grievance industry’s supplement funnels, fake-university promotions, and crypto schemes are the same category of deceptive commercial advertising, delivered by the same targeting infrastructure, to a demographic the system has identified as susceptible.

Action against the perpetrators. Finally, and more conventionally, the FTC and state AGs can bring cases directly against the creators themselves – the “coaches” and “influencers” whose undisclosed paid promotions, fabricated earnings claims, and affiliate-recruitment structures already fall within documented enforcement categories. This reaches the individual influencer rather than the platform. This is a narrower tool, but it is also the most established and can build toward the systemic case.

At the state level in the US, state attorneys general have consumer protection jurisdiction that in some respects exceeds the FTC’s. The for-profit college fraud enforcement actions of the 2010s are the most directly applicable precedent. In this case, AGs coordinated to pursue institutions making false claims about educational outcomes and career prospects. The course and membership model documented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 8 makes claims about financial transformation, dating success, and physical optimization that are structurally identical to the claims that generated for-profit college enforcement action. The income disclosure requirements that apply in multi-level marketing are a further relevant precedent: if a business model’s primary income mechanism is recruiting other participants, disclosure obligations follow. Many of the operations documented in this report meet that definition.

Canada’s Online Harms Act (not yet enacted) establishes platform obligations around content that facilitates financial harm to users – a provision with direct application to the crypto scheme, course fraud, and affiliate pyramid operations documented in this report. The Canadian peptide advertising case study in Reset Tech’s Clickbait Cures investigation, involving 2,164 active Facebook advertisements targeting Canadian users with injectable compounds, demonstrates both the jurisdiction and the enforcement gap.



50 USVI v. Meta: Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Department of Justice, “V.I. Attorney General Files Lawsuit Against Meta to Protect Children and Combat Widespread Online Fraud,” December 2025, <https://usvidoj.com/v-i-attorney-general-files-law-suit-against-meta-to-protect-children-and-combat-widespread-online-fraud/>. The complaint alleges violations of the Virgin Islands Consumer Protection Law of 1973 and the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act. Meta has denied the allegations.



Health and Product Safety

What it aims to do

Health and product safety frameworks govern the claims that can be made about health products, the conditions under which substances can be marketed and sold, and the regulatory oversight of products that carry physical risk.

How it addresses the grift economy

The body optimization pipeline documented in Chapter 7 and the looksmaxxing ecosystem documented in the standalone research note represent a documented public health harm operating in a regulatory gap. Gray-market peptides⁵¹, unregulated supplements marketed with false efficacy claims, and injectable compounds promoted without medical supervision all fall within FDA jurisdiction over unapproved health products and FTC jurisdiction over false health claims. The enforcement gap is not a legal problem – it is capacity and prioritization.

Elements of the supplement and alternative health ecosystem that this report characterizes as predatory have found political alignment with the current Health and Human Services direction in the United States. Regulatory action against gray-market peptides and unregulated supplements may face a less hospitable enforcement environment at the federal level in the near term. State-level health authority and coordinated international action – the EU's health authority enforcement actions against products flagged in Clickbait Cures offer a model – may be more productive near-term levers.



51 "The trend of unproven peptides is spreading through influencers and RFK Jr. allies," CNN <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/11/15/health/peptides-unregulated-influencers>

The limitation of consumer protection frameworks is one of framing rather than authority. The male grievance industry has not been pursued under consumer protection law because it has not been characterized as a consumer protection problem. This report argues that characterization is both accurate and strategically necessary – it is the framing that activates the relevant tools and builds the broadest possible enforcement coalition.





Kids Online Safety: The Age-restriction Debate, And Why It Points At Design

The most visible online-safety policy of the past two years has been the move to keep young people off social media altogether. Australia's restriction on accounts for under-16s took effect in December 2025; similar age-verification and age-assurance requirements are advancing across US states, the EU, and the UK.

These measures are a response to a real harm, and this report takes no position on the right minimum age. It is worth naming what the age-restriction wave is actually a response to: it exists because platforms built environments that are unsafe by default and decline to make them safe. Age gates are a downstream remedy for an upstream design failure. They concede, in effect, that the recommendation systems, engagement mechanics, and commercial targeting documented throughout this report cannot be made safe for a fifteen-year-old, so the fifteen-year-old must be removed from platforms.

That concession should be read alongside the report's central finding rather than separately from it. The grievance pipeline does not switch off at age eighteen. The young men most exploited by the commercial operations documented here are frequently above whatever age threshold a ban would set. The targeting that finds them – the precision delivery of fitness, money, and dating products engineered to convert frustration into revenue – is the same machinery that an age gate keeps younger users away from rather than dismantling.

The Remedy? Safe Social

The more durable goal is not only deciding who is old enough to enter these systems, but obligating the systems to be safe for the people inside them, whatever their age or gender, and whatever distortion is being aimed at them. Brazil's Digital ECA, by banning specific manipulative design features rather than setting an age line, is one model of what that looks like in practice. Age restriction and design duty are not competing answers. The first manages exposure to a hazard; the second is an attempt to remove it.

Regulatory Area	What It Aims To Do	How It Reaches The Grift Economy
Children's Online Safety UK - Online Safety Act AU - Online Safety Act	Protect minors from harmful content exposure and predatory design. Requires platforms to assess foreseeable harm and build safeguards into design, not retrofit them.	Algorithmic recruitment of adolescents into the pipeline is the foreseeable design harm these frameworks target. Age-appropriate design requirements create direct obligations around recommendation systems. Gap: does not extend to 18-25 cohort most deeply embedded in the ecosystem.
Platform Accountability EU - DSA Arts. 34- 35 Brazil – Lei das Fake News	Require Very Large Online Platforms to assess and mitigate systemic risks their design and algorithmic choices produce - not individual content, but structural harms at scale.	Commercial exploitation of male vulnerability at billion-view scale is a systemic risk under DSA definitions. Ad repository transparency (Art. 39) addresses the opacity of funding networks. Coordinated inauthentic behavior provisions – currently applied only to political campaigns – should extend to commercial ones. X fined €35M for Art. 39 failures.
Consumer Protection US - FTC US - State Acts Canada - Online Harms Act	Prohibit deceptive, misleading, and unfair commercial practices. Cover influencer disclosure failures, fraudulent educational products, and pyramid scheme structures.	FTC authority covers undisclosed affiliate arrangements and deceptive course claims. There is opportunity to pursue enforcement against platforms that enable or facilitate unfair or deceptive online design practices. State AG for-profit college enforcement precedent applies directly to the course and membership. model.
Health And Product Safety US - FDA US - FTC health EU - Health Authorities	Govern claims made about health. products, conditions for marketing substances, and oversight of products carrying physical risk. FDA has authority over unapproved products; FTC over false health claims.	Gray-market peptides, unregulated supplements with false efficacy claims, and injectable compounds promoted without medical supervision all fall within existing authority. Enforcement gap is capacity and prioritization, not legal authority. State-level and coordinated international action may be more productive near-term levers.
Emerging Frameworks EU - AI Act Brazil – Lei das Fake Canada - Online Harms	Extend accountability into financially motivated disinformation, platform liability for content facilitating financial harm, and AI-generated content in advertising. Build precedent for US frameworks that do not yet exist.	Canada's Online Harms Act covers content facilitating financial harm directly applicable to crypto, course fraud, and affiliate pyramid operations. Brazil's framework applies to commercially motivated disinformation where the male grievance industry and political dark money overlap. EU AI Act addresses deepfake and AI-generated advertising content increasingly prevalent in this ecosystem.



Emerging Frameworks And Regulatory Innovation

Three gaps in the existing architecture exist, each paired with a specific opportunity:

Gap 1: Platform enforcement tends to act on individual content, not infrastructure

The pattern documented in this report and in Clickbait Cures is consistent: platforms that act on their terms of service or respond to the law in the jurisdictions where they operate tend to remove individual posts, ban individual accounts, and demonetize individual creators while leaving the advertising networks, affiliate infrastructure, coordinated inauthentic behavior networks, and revenue-sharing arrangements that sustain the broader ecosystem intact. Facebook deplatformed only 24 percent of Clickbait Cures-identified offenders over a three-year period. The networks those offenders operated on remained active.

How to Consider the Role of Influencers vs the Ecosystem

The accountability question for influencers is usually framed as one of individual liability: what a creator can be sued or sanctioned for, and who shares the blame. Existing frameworks answer this unevenly. The European Audiovisual Observatory's 2024 survey of national rules found that most member states already have a route to treat high-reach influencers as audiovisual media service providers, subjecting them to the same disclosure and content obligations as broadcasters, yet none name influencers in their transposition of the directive, and the definitions in force vary widely.

Where dedicated rules exist, they tend to extend liability outward: France's 2023 influencer law establishes joint and several liability among the influencer, their agent, and the advertiser, and requires creators outside the EU but targeting French users to designate a legal representative inside it. This is the right instinct applied at the wrong scale. Individual-liability regimes ask who is responsible for a given post; they do not ask why the system reliably produces and rewards the behavior in the first place. A creator demonetized on one platform routes the same operation through course marketplaces, consultancy fees, and direct payment, exactly as the NetLab data below shows. Pursuing the individual leaves the machine intact.

Influencers promoting scam products, fraudulent courses, and undisclosed paid political content should be treated not only as liable actors but as a measurable input into platform systemic risk. The logic is the same one the DSA, the Brazilian decrees, and the UK and Australian duty-of-care regimes apply to platform design: the unit of accountability is the system that surfaces, amplifies, and monetizes harm, not the individual piece of content or the individual creator.

Under that frame:

- A platform's tolerance for high-monetization grievance operations becomes a risk it must assess and mitigate,

- The opacity of how those creators are paid becomes a transparency failure the regulator can act on, and
- Network-level enforcement replaces the account-by-account whack-a-mole that the NetLab study featured below, and Reset Tech’s own Clickbait Cures findings show does not work.

Influencer accountability and platform accountability are aligned

The creator is the demand-side interface of a supply chain that the platform operates and profits from, and a systemic-risk regime that reaches the architecture but exempts its most monetized nodes is incomplete by design.

A September 2025 study by NetLab at the University of Rio de Janeiro conducted with the Brazilian Ministry of Women, analyzed 76,289 YouTube videos from 7,812 channels and identified 137 channels carrying misogynistic content, together accounting for roughly 3.9 billion views.⁵² The study’s central finding is directly relevant to a systemic-risk framing: misogyny on the platform is not primarily incidental hate speech but a monetized product, “often sold as ‘male personal development.’” Eighty percent of the misogynistic channels carried at least one active monetization method, and these channels monetized at consistently higher rates than non-misogynistic comparison channels across nearly every mechanism – advertising (52 percent vs. 46), live-stream donations, off-platform payment links, and crowdfunding among them.

Crucially for the accountability argument, the study documents that demonetization at the content level does not disrupt the underlying economy. Channels route revenue through external “educational” platforms (course and e-book marketplaces such as Hotmart and Kiwify), direct bank transfers, consultancy fees up to R\$1,000 per session, and courses sold for up to R\$2,000 – revenue streams that survive any individual video’s removal. This is the same enforcement gap documented in this report: the platform removes posts while the monetization infrastructure remains intact. The study also documents the opacity problem at the heart of the DSA’s transparency provisions – Google does not disclose, for YouTube in Brazil, the channel-removal, complaint, and ad-revenue data it provides in jurisdictions covered by the DSA, creating what the researchers call a transparency asymmetry that leaves the monetization of misogyny “open to ... free circulation.”



52 SANTINI, R. Marie; SALLES, Débora; BELIN, Luciane L.; BELISÁRIO, Adriano; MATTOS, Bruno; MEDEIROS, Stéphanie G.; MELLO, Danielle; GRAEL, Felipe; SEADE, Renata; BORGES, Amanda; MURAKAMI, Lucas; CARDOSO, Rafael; DAU, Erick; LOUREIRO, Felipe; YONESHIGUE, Bernardo; CARMO, Vitor do; MAIA, Felipe; BENZECRY, Lena. “Learn to avoid ‘this kind’ of woman”: discursive strategies and monetization of misogyny on YouTube. Rio de Janeiro: NetLab - Laboratory for Internet and Social Network Studies, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Published in September 2025.



The authors of the study are calling for platforms to be made transparent about how creators are remunerated and what content is being driven by ads and membership programs, and it explicitly points to the DSA's obligations on Very Large Online Platforms as a model Brazil could replicate even absent a domestic legal mandate.

The federal route to address this gap in the US is real but politically contingent. For safeguarding the public good, a DSA systemic risk assessment model could, in theory, be applied to US platforms through FTC rulemaking. The FTC has authority over unfair practices that cause substantial harm to consumers. An FTC rule requiring large platforms to assess and mitigate the systemic commercial harms their algorithmic infrastructure produces would close the enforcement gap without requiring new legislative authority, i.e. coordinated inauthentic behavior enforcement applied to commercial campaigns, not only political ones; ad budget transparency for commercial advertising; network-level deplatforming rather than account-level.

Gap 2: No Fraud Framing Is Currently Applied To Deceptive Educational Products Targeting Men

The course and membership economy operates in a regulatory grey zone, not because consumer protection law does not reach it, but because it has not been framed and pursued as the consumer fraud it is. The for-profit college enforcement precedent is directly applicable. The affiliate pyramid structure, the fabricated testimonials, the frictioned cancellation barriers, the gap between promised and delivered outcomes – these are documented fraud mechanics, not cultural preferences. For the US, the opportunity is coordinated state AG action modeled on for-profit college enforcement. If combined with FTC guidance specifically addressing affiliate pyramid structures in the course and membership model, it would have even more teeth. This guidance does not require new law. It requires the existing framework to be applied to a commercial sector that it has not yet reached.

A model for mobilization

State AGs, coordinating across dozens of jurisdictions, pursued institutions that made false claims about outcomes and saddled students with debt. In 2020, California led 48 states to a \$330 million settlement with ITT Tech, and California alone obtained a \$1.1 billion judgment against Corinthian⁵³. The course and membership economy documented in Chapters 6 and 8 make structurally identical claims about financial transformation, dating success, and physical optimization. The recommendations below adapt that template to the male grievance industry, and all three are anchored in a single principle: exposure. The harm survives because the commercial mechanics are invisible to the people most affected and to the officials who could act. Make the mechanics visible, and the existing law has something to bite on.



⁵³ State of California Department of Justice, Attorney General Becerra Announces Multistate \$330 Million Settlement with ITT Tech Lender for Defrauding Students <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-announces-multistate-330-million-settlement-itt-tech>

Recommended actions

- Hold state legislative hearings on the youth coaching and “mentorship” economy. A hearing is the cheapest, fastest exposure instrument available, and it requires no new statutory authority. State legislatures, or AG-convened investigative panels, can compel testimony from former customers, platform representatives, and the operators themselves; surface the cancellation-barrier and fabricated-testimonial mechanics on the record; and build the evidentiary foundation that enforcement and legislation both require. The for-profit college reckoning began the same way – with sustained documentation of the gap between what was promised and what was delivered. Hearings also do the coalition work by putting parents, educators, and the men themselves in front of policymakers as financial victims rather than ideological combatants.
- Require a registry and substantiation file for high-revenue coaching and course products marketed to consumers. Rather than wait for the federal Earnings Claim Rule, a state can impose its own version of its core requirement: any operator selling coaching, mentorship, or “income opportunity” products above a revenue or enrollment threshold must register with the state and maintain, available on demand, written substantiation for every earnings or outcome claim it makes, along with actual customer outcome data. This is the FTC’s proposed substantiation regime, enacted at the state level where it does not depend on a contested federal vote. The registry is itself the exposure mechanism: it converts an opaque, off-platform revenue stream into a public record that journalists, researchers, and AG investigators can examine, and it shifts the burden onto the operator to prove its claims rather than onto the defrauded customer to disprove them.
- Open coordinated multistate investigations and publish the findings. Even before any settlement, the act of opening a coordinated investigation – and publishing interim findings, complaint patterns, and named operators – is a deterrence and exposure tool in its own right. The FTC already runs the Consumer Sentinel complaint database that state AGs draw on, and recent joint actions show the model working: the FTC and Nevada AG moved together against the IM Academy / IYOVIA coaching-and-investment scheme, alleging it bilked consumers of more than \$1.2 billion. A standing multistate working group focused specifically on the youth-targeted coaching sector would pool complaint data, coordinate subpoenas, and – critically – publish what it finds, so that exposure does not wait for litigation to conclude.

Gap 3: No Accountability For Algorithmic Amplification As A Revenue-generating Choice

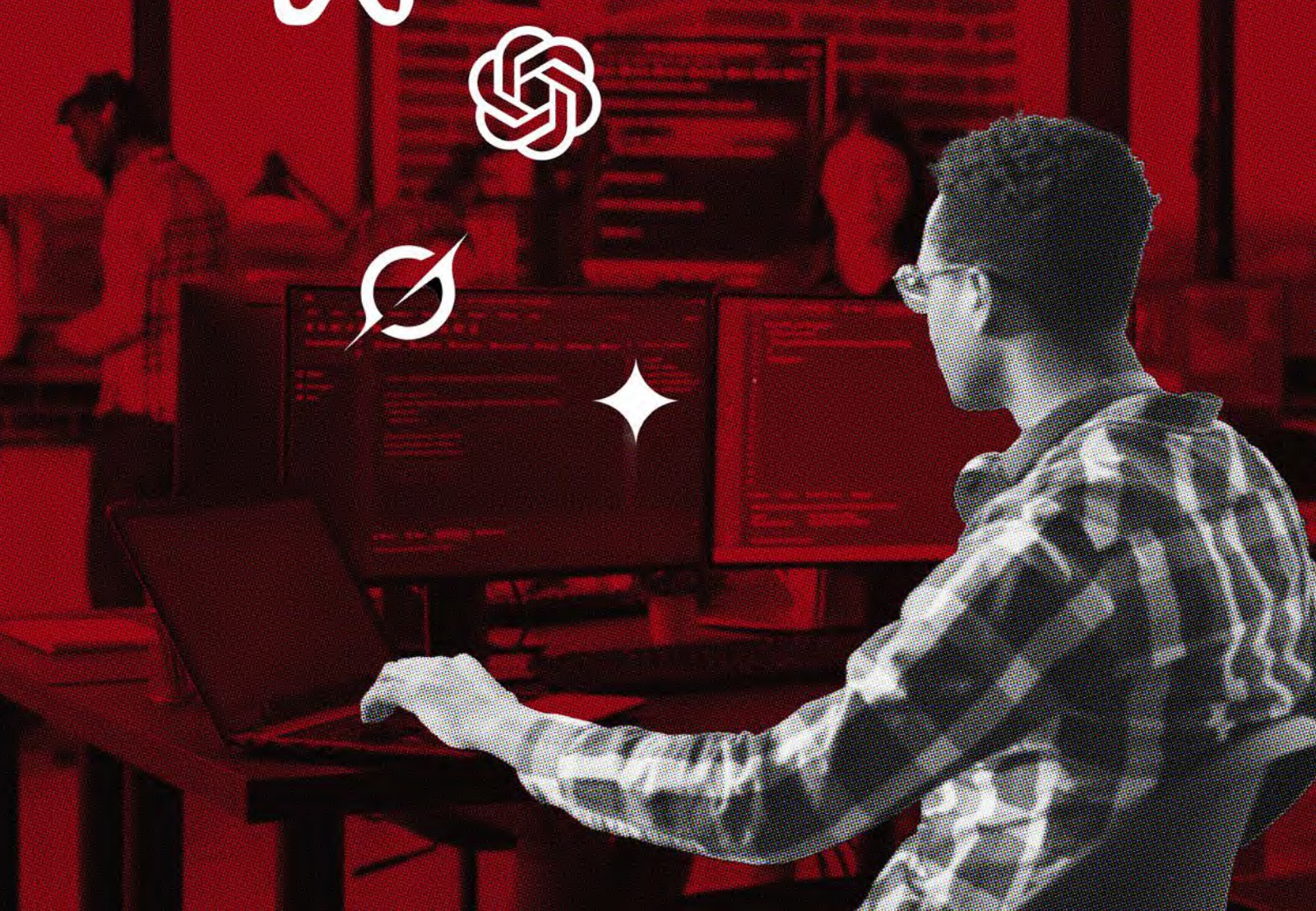
The most consequential regulatory gap is the absence of any framework that holds platforms financially accountable for the revenue they earn from algorithmically amplifying false or harmful information and taking paid advertising revenue that defrauds or harms users.

Section 230 shields platforms from liability for what users post. The March 2026 California verdict established that it does not shield them from liability for their design choices. The revenue-sharing accountability question – if a platform earns advertising revenue from content that demonstrably harms users, what is the liability framework? – has not yet been answered in US law.

Three specific innovations would address this gap:

- **First**, algorithmic amplification liability: a framework establishing that platforms that profit from the recommendation of content causing documented commercial or physical harm to users bear partial liability for that harm, calibrated to the revenue earned.
- **Second**, cross-platform ad repository accessibility: public, machine-readable ad repositories across all major platforms, modeled on the DSA's Article 39 requirement, enabling civil society and regulatory bodies to track commercial advertising campaigns across the full infrastructure.
- **Third**, mandatory disclosure of political funding in influencer content: extending existing government regulated paid endorsement disclosure requirements to cover politically motivated payments to creators.

None of these innovations requires building a new regulatory architecture from scratch. Each extends an existing framework – platform design liability, ad transparency, disclosure rules – into territory it has not yet reached. The framing determines the tools. The tools are closer than the debate suggests.



CHAPTER 11 – THE AI GAP

A regulatory urgency

Everything documented in this report is about to get worse. Generative AI does not create the male grievance industry's business model – it supercharges it.



The cost of producing a convincing fake testimonial, a fabricated doctor endorsement, a synthetic success story, or a personalized recruitment message has collapsed to near zero. Reset Tech's Clickbait Cures investigation documented the shift to AI-generated ad creatives in fraudulent health campaigns from 2025 onward – synthetic news footage, fabricated medical authority, emotionally manipulative imagery produced at scale and rotated faster than platform enforcement can track. The male grievance industry is undergoing the same transition. The pipeline that previously required a charismatic creator, a production team, and a distribution budget can now be replicated by anyone with a prompt and a free account.

This is not a future threat. It is a current one. AI-generated looksmaxxing advice, synthetic influencer personas promoting supplements, deepfake endorsements from real creators used without their consent, and AI-optimized recruitment scripts targeting algorithmically identified vulnerable men are all documented or emergent phenomena as this report goes to press.

The regulatory gap is significant. The frameworks described in this chapter were designed for human-generated content distributed through identifiable accounts.

AI-generated content breaks both assumptions. A synthetic influencer persona has no account history, no financial disclosure obligations, and no jurisdiction of origin. A deepfake endorsement may not trigger an influencer disclosure requirement because there is no human influencer to disclose. An AI-optimized recruitment campaign targeting psychological vulnerability does not violate platform terms of service that were written before such targeting was technically possible at this scale.

The EU's AI Act addresses some of this – transparency requirements for AI-generated content, prohibitions on certain manipulative AI applications, and obligations for providers of general-purpose AI models. But the AI Act's implementation timeline and the specificity of its provisions leave significant gaps in the commercial predation use cases documented in this report. The United States has no equivalent framework. Voluntary commitments from AI companies have not addressed the downstream use of their tools for commercial exploitation.





Three Specific AI-related Interventions

1

Mandatory disclosure of AI-generated content in commercial advertising and influencer-style promotional material – extending existing disclosure requirements to cover synthetic personas, AI-generated testimonials, and AI-modified or fabricated endorsements. The principle is the same as for human influencers: if a commercial interest is being promoted, the audience is entitled to know.



Follow



2

Platform obligations to detect and label AI-generated content in high-risk categories – supplement advertising, financial product promotion, course and membership marketing – in the same way that political advertising is subject to enhanced scrutiny. The categories documented in this report are the categories where AI-generated deception has the potential to cause the most documented harm.



Follow



3

Regulatory classification of AI-powered targeting for psychological vulnerability as an unfair commercial practice. The male grievance industry's pipeline works because it finds young men at their most susceptible and delivers a precisely calibrated commercial offer. AI makes that targeting more precise, more automated, and less visible. An FTC rulemaking that classifies the use of AI to identify and target psychological vulnerability for commercial exploitation as an unfair practice would close the most significant gap this report has documented, and would do so within existing statutory authority.



Follow



The AI transition in this ecosystem is not a reason to wait for better regulatory tools before acting on the frameworks already available. It is a reason to act faster – and to build the AI-specific layer of accountability in parallel, rather than treating it as a separate problem for a later conversation.

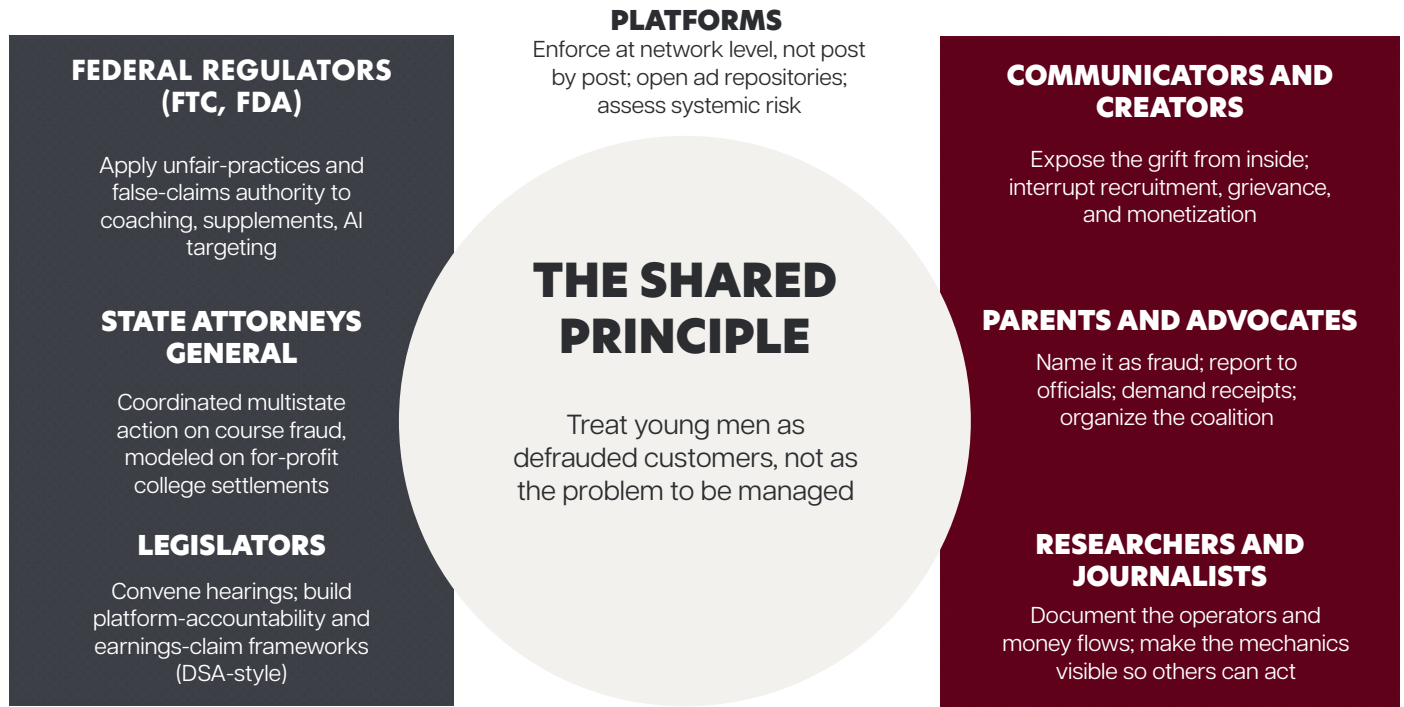


CHAPTER 12 – RECOMMENDATIONS AND OFF-RAMPS



The Accountability Supply Chain: Who Can Act, And How

Each actor can use authority that already exists. No single one closes the gap; together they reach the whole system.





For Policymakers, Advocates, Parents and Citizens Alike

Everything in this report has been an argument that the tools already mostly exist. The consumer-protection statutes are on the books. The platform-accountability frameworks are operating in four jurisdictions and waiting to be extended to a fifth. The enforcement precedents – the for-profit college settlements, the coaching-scheme judgments, the ad-transparency fines – have already been won against businesses that ran the identical playbook on a different customer. What has been missing is not authority, but the political will to act. It is the decision to use these frameworks and existing authority that is missing.

The case has been laid out at length precisely so that it cannot be waved off as a culture-war complaint or a moral panic about men's media diets. It is none of those things. It is a documentation of fraud – structured, monetized, and operated at scale by some of the wealthiest companies in the world, which collect a share of every transaction and have built the machinery that delivers the customers. Men are not the problem to be managed here. They are the people being sold to, and the sale is being run on them in plain sight, through systems engineered to find them at their most vulnerable and to convert that vulnerability into revenue.

This is not a harm that holds still. Left alone, it metastasizes. The body-optimization pipeline that sells gray-market peptides today sells something more dangerous tomorrow; the recruitment funnel that runs on a charismatic creator now runs on a synthetic one at a fraction of the cost; the targeting that finds a susceptible teenager gets more precise, more automated, and less visible with every generation of the tools. Chapter 12 is unambiguous on this point: the AI transition does not create a new problem to study later. It accelerates the one already here, and the cost of waiting compounds in the lives of real men – the savings drained into a fake university, the health wrecked by an unregulated injectable, the relationships and the trust in institutions hollowed out by a grievance sold as belonging.

Which is why the audience for these recommendations is not only the regulator and the legislator. It is everyone with a role in the supply chain of accountability, and on this issue that is nearly everyone. The attorney general who can open an investigation. The legislator who can convene a hearing. The platform engineer who can name what the recommendation system is actually optimizing for. The journalist who can publish the operator's name. The educator who can teach a sixteen-year-old to recognize a sales funnel. The parent who can turn private worry into organized pressure. The researcher whose documentation makes the enforcement possible in the first place. No single one of these closes the gap. Together, applied with the consumer-protection frame this report has argued for throughout, they reach the parts of the system that individual action never will.

The companies running and profiting from this are betting that the framing never coheres – that the harm stays filed under culture war, that the man stays cast as the problem rather than the customer, that the coalition that could act stays fragmented across the partisan and disciplinary lines the grievance industry is so good at exploiting. The single most consequential thing this report can do is make that bet a losing one. The framing is here. The tools are here. The precedents are here. What remains is the will to act, and the recognition – by everyone who reads this – that acting is now their job too.



For Communicators and Digital Creators

The interventions in this chapter follow from the same claim in this report. The system that profits from men is built on the supply side: platforms, operators, and the financial infrastructure that pays both. So the question for any off-ramp is not how to fix the men who arrive at the bottom of the funnel. It is where in the supply chain the money, the reach, and the recruitment can be interrupted, and who is positioned to interrupt them.

This reframes a debate that usually runs through individual psychology. The dominant approach treats the problem as one of belief: a man holds bad ideas, and the task is to talk him out of them. That approach concedes the supply side entirely. It leaves the payout systems, the recommendation engines, and the paid promotion networks fully intact and simply competes with them for the attention of the people they have already reached. An off-ramp built on the consumer-protection frame does the opposite. It treats the man as the person being sold to, not the problem to be solved, and it directs pressure at the parties collecting the revenue.

The recommendations are organized in two layers. The first maps three interruption points onto the funnel described earlier in this report: recruitment, grievance injection, and monetization. The second sets out the counter-messaging approaches our discourse analysis found most credible, with a clear-eyed account of which messengers carry weight, which tactics require testing before deployment, and where the demand-side instinct quietly creeps back in.

A note on what follows. The counter-messaging material below is drawn from our own open-source analysis of the male grievance industry across multiple platforms. It catalogues approaches that already circulate and appear to land. It is evidence about what resonates, not a turnkey campaign plan, and every approach named here carries the caveat that resonance varies by audience and that supply-side accountability, not counter-speech, is the load-bearing intervention.

Three Points of Interruption

The funnel converts attention into revenue in three stages, and each stage is also a point where the conversion can be broken. The interruptions are listed in the order a man encounters the system, but their priority for this report runs in reverse: the monetization point is where the supply-side case is strongest and the coalition widest



Interruption A: At Recruitment

Recruitment happens through aspirational products. Fitness, money, and dating advice operate as the entry point, normalizing the tone and the personalities of the wider ecosystem before any grievance is introduced. The intervention at this stage is to contest the same surface the recruiters use: to seed credible material on fitness, purpose, and self-improvement on the platforms and in the formats where men are already searching, rather than ceding that territory and hoping to reach them later.

The limit of this intervention is precisely why it cannot stand alone. Seeding alternatives competes for attention inside a system engineered to reward the original product. It is necessary terrain, but it does not touch the economics that make the original product profitable. It belongs in the mix; it is not the lever.

Efforts to contest this entry-point surface are beginning to be funded and studied systematically. The [Young Men and Media Collective](#), an initiative co-convened by [Movember](#) and Equimundo, funds creators and organizations to test which messages and formats actually shift the “relentlessly rich and ripped” success script that recruits young men into the pipeline, and to share what does and does not work across a wider learning network.⁵⁴ As a test-and-learn effort, its value is as much in the evidence it generates about effective counter-content as in the content itself – and, consistent with this report’s argument, seeding alternatives competes inside a system engineered to reward the original product and cannot substitute for supply-side accountability.

⁵⁴ Introducing our Young Men and Media Collective ‘test and learn’ cohort 2026,” Movember, June 4, 2026, <https://uk.movember.com/story/introducing-our-young-men-and-media-collective-test-and-learn-cohort-2026>. The Collective is co-convened by Movember and Equimundo, with co-funding from the Oak Foundation.



Interruption B: At Grievance Injection

Between the entry product and the paid offer, personal frustration is converted into directed grievance, and the recommendation systems do much of that work by surfacing steadily more provocative material to accounts that show early interest. The intervention here is twofold: counter-messaging that interrupts the conversion of frustration into resentment, and pressure on the recommendation flows themselves. The first is a messaging task. The second is a platform-design and accountability task, and it is the more durable of the two, because it addresses the machine rather than the message.

This kind of intervention – meeting men inside the recommendation environment and redirecting them toward healthier material before grievance hardens – is already being attempted by a small field of redirection organizations such as [Diverting Hate](#), as documented in the Wall Street Journal’s reporting on efforts to pull men out of online “rage rabbit holes.”⁵⁵ Consistent with this report’s argument, such work is a complement to supply-side accountability, not a substitute for it.

Our analysis found independent evidence that these flows are not neutral. Studies cited elsewhere in this report document new accounts being served grievance-directed material within minutes, and the offline effects of algorithmic prioritization. That evidence is the foundation for treating recommendation design as a regulatory object, not a matter of individual platform goodwill.



Interruption C: At Monetization

This is the interruption point that carries the report. At the bottom of the funnel, loyalty is converted into revenue through courses, subscription communities, supplements, crypto schemes, gambling tie-ins, and managed adult-content operations, while the platforms take their share of the attention that drives all of it. The intervention is to expose the grift, name the financial manipulation in the plain language of fraud, and hold the platforms accountable for the cut they collect.

This is the consumer-protection argument applied as an intervention rather than as analysis. Naming a crypto pump-and-dump, an unpaid “hackathon,” a fake university, or a predatory revenue split as financial exploitation does three things at once. It reframes the man as a defrauded customer rather than an ideological actor. It opens the coalition to parents, educators, coaches, and regulators who disengage from a culture-war framing but respond to fraud. And it points liability at the operators and the platforms that profit, which is where the leverage actually sits.

55 Julie Jargon, “Rescuing Men From Rage Rabbit Holes,” The Wall Street Journal, September 23, 2023, <https://www.wsj.com/tech/rescuing-men-from-rage-rabbit-holes-c4605d1e>.

Boys & Men Seeking Purpose

Real unmet needs: identity, belonging, status



STAGE 1 - RECRUIT

Aspirational self-help: fitness, finance, dating
Gateway content normalises tone and ecosystem
Influencers model "alpha" success scripts

Off-Ramp A

Positive masculinity content
seeded on same platforms

ALGORITHMIC AMPLIFICATION

Platforms surface escalating
content for profit



STAGE 2 - INJECT GRIEVANCE

Personal frustration → political resentment
Loss of status, anti-democratic frames
Misogyny, distorted identity ideals
Escalating influencer networks reward hostility

Off-Ramp B

Counter-narrative seeding; disrupt
recommendation flows that inject grievance

COMMUNITY LOCK-IN

Identity fused with ecosystem; exit
feels like loss



STAGE 3 - MONETIZE LOYALTY

Courses, crypto, supplements, gambling
Creators profit from infighting and clip farming
More extreme narratives fund radicalization
Men pay for their own radicalisation

Off-Ramp C

Expose the grift; name the financial
manipulation Platform accountability

CIVIC DESTABILIZATION

Anti-democratic norms

OFFLINE HARM

Violence, misogyny,
self harm



Universal Intervention Principles

What Works (Universal):



Affirm the core values men already hold (strength, protection, responsibility)



Start with recognition, not correction



Expose grift – men respond well to anti-guru, anti-exploitation content



Calm, grounded, practical tone with a clear takeaway.



Frame community as an extension of the family role they already value



Show partnership (men and women) not division

What Fails (Universal):



Preachy, performative, or politically coded tone



Overgeneralising ('all men', 'toxic masculinity' as accusation)



Leading with blame or shame



Vague messaging with no actionable takeaway.



Critiquing self-improvement or fitness broadly



Intellectual framing without lived-experience grounding



Counter-Messaging That Resonates

The counter-messaging catalogued here is real and worth deploying, but it should not be mistaken for the solution, and the framing of this chapter is deliberate on that point. Every messaging approach above competes inside a system that is paying, in real money, to win the same attention. As long as the payout systems, the recommendation flows, and the paid promotion networks operate as they do, counter-speech is a tax on the harm rather than a cure for it.

Universal Intervention Principles For “Very Online” Men

Where messaging is the appropriate tool, our analysis surfaced a set of approaches that appear to land, grouped below by the grievance they answer. Two findings cut across all of them and should govern any deployment.

Messenger credibility decides whether the message survives contact. The approaches that cut through are delivered from inside the space being contested: a former operator admitting the product is a grift, a veteran contrasting professional standards with intimidation theater, a man correcting other men. Correction from inside the group carries a legitimacy that critique from outside it does not, and the same words fail when the audience can dismiss the speaker as an outsider.

Mockery is potent and unstable. Humor that deflates a dominance performance can strip an operator of the one asset the brand depends on. It can also harden the target audience if it reads as contempt for them rather than for the operator. Every satirical or mockery-based approach below should be treated as requiring audience testing before deployment, not as a reliable default.

Answering status loss

Two clusters do the work here. The first models responsibility and care directly: fatherhood, service, repairing relationships, reliability. The second is men correcting men, where male creators name immaturity, exploitation, or the refusal to grow up. Specific approaches that resonate include reframing the zero-sum story about work and dating, and showing men in ordinary middle-income jobs sustaining stable relationships, which directly contradicts the “only high-value men succeed” product being sold upstream.

Answering the identity script

The most effective approaches puncture performed dominance rather than arguing with it. They include status-policing close-ups that expose how the dominance culture punishes any vulnerability, betrayal framing that positions men as someone who has been sold a lie by an operator, and a shift from ideology to conduct: the standard becomes not being cruel, not blaming women or outsiders, and not treating empathy as weakness. This last move is powerful because it sidesteps the argument entirely and offers an alternative script for manhood that a young man can adopt without conceding a debate.



Answering anti-democratic and authoritarian appeals

The credible lane here runs through duty, restraint, and lawful conduct, delivered by veterans, former conservatives, and clergy who speak to oaths and responsibility rather than to moral critique. Approaches include appeals to constitutional principle, pushback on selective morality from within faith communities, and humor that deflates law-and-order theater. The messenger profile matters more here than anywhere else: the audience responds to the uniform, the collar, or the prior credentials, not to the argument in the abstract.

Answering the normalization of violence

Veterans, Marines, and law-enforcement-adjacent voices carry this one, contrasting actual professional standards with intimidation tactics and naming the war-crime and liability risks of reckless posturing. The constructive counter-model is civic agency that works through institutions rather than around them: peaceful action, and protecting people by calling and cooperating with law enforcement rather than taking matters into one's own hands. These approaches need careful audience testing, since the line between deflating a violent performance and appearing to lecture is thin.

Exposing the grift directly

This cluster is the messaging arm of Interruption C, and it is where the report's frame and the counter-messaging frame converge. The approaches that work use credible insiders and culturally fluent explainers to show the mechanics: how operators upsell young audiences into fake universities, crypto and currency schemes, and low-quality products; how the payout systems reward outrage; how clipping operations manufacture reach that looks organic; and how friendship and relatability are engineered as a sales funnel for the youngest audiences. The effect is to convert the young viewer from a follower into a skeptical customer who can see the transaction being run on him.

Naming the machine

A final cluster targets the infrastructure itself: explainers on how recommendation systems prioritize polarizing material, how paid promotion launders political and commercial messages as organic opinion, and how the same engagement engine that monetizes attention also accelerates the harm. This material does the public-education work that supports the regulatory case. It moves the conversation from "why do these men believe this" to "who built the system that pays to put it in front of them," which is the question this report exists to ask.





For Parents: From Off-Ramps to Accountability

The male grievance industry online should not be seen as a messaging problem to resolve. The durable off-ramps are structural ones: interrupting the monetization that funds the funnel, holding platforms accountable for the share they collect, and treating recommendation design as a regulatory object. The messaging meets men where they already are. The accountability work goes after the parties who put them there and profit when they stay. This report's contribution is to insist that the second is the priority, and that the first only works in its service.

There is a script for what comes next, and parents already know it. Over the past decade, parents turned private worry about what social media was doing to their children into one of the most effective advocacy movements of the era – school phone bans, age-verification laws, design codes, lawsuits, and legislative hearings on three continents. That movement did not begin with policy expertise. It began with parents who refused to accept that the harm was their child's fault or their own failure to supervise, and who insisted instead that the systems be made to answer for what they were built to do.

This report is an invitation to the next stage of that energy.

Most parents who have mobilized around screen time and social media do not yet know the half of it. They know the platforms are engineered to hold attention. Fewer know that a structured commercial industry is using that attention to sell their sons fraudulent courses, gray-market supplements, crypto schemes, and “mentorship” programs – that what looks like their son falling down a rabbit hole is, underneath, a sales funnel with identifiable operators collecting real money at the bottom of it. The grievance is the product's packaging. The fraud is the product. Parents who organized against the slot-machine mechanics of the feed will recognize this instantly once it is named, and they will not accept it any more than they accepted the rest.

That recognition is a political fact, and any regulator or elected official who misreads it is not reading the room. The parents who moved for safer car seats, tobacco free schools, or phone policy are the same constituency that consumer-protection enforcement needs and does not yet have. They are not a culture-war faction; they are customers' families who have discovered a fraud aimed at their children. The single most useful thing this report can do for them is tell them where the leverage actually is – which is not at home.

A note on what follows, and what it is not. The list below is not a list of ways to watch your son more closely. The premise of this entire report is that the responsibility sits with the operators who run these schemes and the platforms that profit from them, not with the families on the receiving end. These are not chores for the dinner table. They are the questions to put to the people who built the system, and the channels through which private concern becomes the kind of pressure that moved social media policy before.

8 Things Parents Can Do

- 1. Name it as fraud, out loud, to other parents.** The single highest-leverage act is breaking the isolation. The phone-policy movement scaled because parents discovered they were not alone. Say plainly, in the group chat and at the school meeting, that this is a commercial scam targeting boys – not a phase, not a personal failing.
- 2. Ask your child's school what it teaches about online financial exploitation.** Most curricula cover cyberbullying and screen time; almost none cover affiliate schemes, fake-guru economics, or how a “mentorship” upsell works. Ask for it by name, and ask at the board level where it becomes policy.
- 3. Demand the receipts from any program that took your money.** If a coaching course, or “income opportunity” product charged your family, request in writing its substantiation for every earnings or outcome claim, and its actual customer-outcome data. Operators are rarely asked. The asking is itself documentation.
- 4. Report it to local officials, not just the platforms.** Platform reports vanish into moderation queues. A complaint to your area's consumer-protection division enters a record that enforcement is built on, and law enforcement bodies can act on volume. This is the channel that produced the for-profit college settlements. A hearing requires no new law and is the fastest exposure tool available. Constituent parents asking for one, by name, is exactly the pressure that moves a legislator who already saw what the phone-policy movement did to ballots.
- 5. Demand cancellation and refund terms in writing before any subscription.** Deliberate cancellation barriers are a documented fraud mechanism, and they are increasingly illegal. Asking for the terms up front both protects your family and surfaces the operators who refuse to provide them.
- 6. Support the researchers and journalists naming the operators.** The exposure case in this report depends on civil-society documentation that runs on thin funding. Subscriptions, donations, and amplification are not symbolic here; they are the supply line for the work that makes enforcement possible.
- 7. Talk to your son as a customer, not a convert.** When you do turn inward, the frame that works is the one this report is built on: not “you've been radicalized,” but “someone is running a scam on you and making money from it.” It preserves his dignity, matches the evidence, and aligns the conversation at home with the pressure being applied outside it.
- 8. Join or build the parent coalition for commercial online safety.** Individual complaints are useful; organized ones change law. The infrastructure that won phone policy – parent networks, advocacy organizations, legislative relationships – already exists and can be pointed at this. The ask is not to start something new. It is to extend something that already works.

Methodology

This report draws on five distinct research streams, each producing a different type of evidence. This section describes each stream, its scope, its limitations, and where in the report it primarily appears.

Discourse analysis

Reset Tech conducted an ongoing qualitative analysis of creator operations, platform ecosystems, and commercial infrastructure across YouTube, TikTok, X, Instagram, Kick, Rumble, Telegram, and Discord over a period of approximately seven months ending in April 2026. This analysis tracked a sample of creators across the pipeline stages documented in Chapter 3, monitoring content cadence, audience growth, commercial product launches, pricing changes, cross-promotion networks, and monetization events, including sponsorship disclosures, affiliate announcements, and membership launches.

The discourse analysis produced two primary outputs used in this report: a typology of grievance narratives organized into seven categories (Chapter 3), and a taxonomy of conflict formats used as audience acquisition and monetization mechanisms (Chapter 8). Creator close-ups throughout the report are drawn from this analysis. They illustrate the mechanisms described in each chapter rather than constituting a comprehensive or ranked account of individual creators.

Named creator information was verified against publicly available sources, including platform pages, archived screenshots, pricing documentation, investigative reporting, and speaking bureau listings. Revenue figures presented as documented are drawn from these sources. Revenue figures presented as estimated are derived from modeling based on publicly available platform data, sponsorship disclosures, and subscriber counts, and are noted as such throughout.

Looksmaxxing cross-platform reach analysis

Reset Tech conducted an original quantitative analysis of looksmaxxing-related operations across TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. The analysis identified 216 influencers leading or capitalizing on the trend, across three platforms: 102 on TikTok, 96 on Instagram, and 18 on Facebook. These influencers were identified through a combination of keyword searches, hashtag mapping, and account network analysis. The dataset covers men from the United States, France, India, Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands, and other countries.

For each influencer, the analysis captured total post count, total view count, and engagement metrics across the analysis period. Posts were categorized by whether they used explicit looksmaxxing-related keywords in captions. Advertising activity was mapped for a subset of the dataset using platform transparency tools.

This analysis represents, to the knowledge of the authors, the first systematic cross-platform quantification of looksmaxxing reach. The full methodology and underlying data are available to researchers and journalists upon request. Results appear in Chapter 7 and in the stand-alone Looksmaxxing Data Spotlight insert.



Case Study - The Miami Nightclub Incident: Mapping the Attention-to-Profit Pipeline

Reset Tech reconstructed the deleted Kick livestream using 1,100 viewer-saved clips, combined with OSINT methods to verify authenticity and sequence events. Researchers traced the clips spread across X, TikTok, YouTube, and secondary reposting networks, identifying the earliest uploads, key amplifiers, and the 38-account reposter bubble that sustained virality. Public engagement metrics were collected to compare pre- and post-incident visibility for primary and secondary actors. Monetizable outcomes were inferred through observable engagement spikes, audience growth, and cross-platform amplification. Refer to Appendix A for the data analysis.

Focus group research

Reset Tech commissioned Lake Research Partners to conduct four focus groups with very online men in the United States in March 2026. The groups were conducted on 10 and 11 March 2026. Participants were screened for moderate political leaning, active online engagement, and interest in combat sports. The groups were:

- Latino non-college men, aged 25 to 39
- White non-college men, aged 25 to 39
- White non-college men, aged 18 to 24
- White college men, aged 18 to 24

These cohorts were selected to capture the demographic intersections where male grievance operations are most active and most politically consequential: economic precarity, identity uncertainty, high algorithmic exposure, and political volatility.

Groups explored five thematic areas: perceptions of masculinity and identity; online content consumption and influencer exposure; awareness and attitudes toward commercial products in the ecosystem; language that resonates versus language that triggers defensiveness; and openness to alternative framings and off-ramps.

Focus group research produces qualitative insight into attitudes, language, and lived experience rather than statistically representative data. Findings should be understood as illustrative of the range of perspectives present in these cohorts, not as measurements of their prevalence across the broader population. Focus group findings appear primarily in Chapter 4 and inform the recommendations in Chapter 12.

Revenue and financial mapping

The report includes documented and estimated revenue figures for individual creators, platform arrangements, and the conflict economy. These figures were developed through a combination of methods:

Documented figures are drawn from publicly available pricing pages, speaking bureau listings, platform transparency disclosures, and investigative reporting. Where a figure has been confirmed in multiple independent sources, it is presented as documented.

Estimated figures are derived from modeling based on subscriber counts, platform payout rate disclosures, sponsorship market data, and affiliate revenue structures. Where figures are estimated, they are presented as ranges with an explanation of the estimation methodology.

Readers should note that the male grievance industry is deliberately opaque about its finances. Self-reported figures, such as Andrew Tate's stated enrollment numbers, are used where they are the only available source, and are flagged as self-reported. The report does not present self-reported figures as verified without independent corroboration.

Secondary research and literature review

The report draws on published academic research, investigative journalism, regulatory filings, platform transparency reports, and publicly available survey data. Key secondary sources are cited throughout the text. Where this report draws on Equimundo's published research, including the State of American Men 2025 and the IMAGES global survey data available at menandgendersurvey.org, the specific dataset and wave are identified in the citation.

The report also draws on Reset Tech's parallel research published in Clickbait Cures (April 2026), which documents the fraudulent health advertising ecosystem on Meta and Google. Where findings from Clickbait Cures are cited in this report, the relevant sections of that report are identified so readers can review the underlying methodology.

A note on named individuals and legal review

This report names creators, platforms, and funding entities in the course of documenting commercial operations and revenue flows. All named individuals are public figures operating commercial enterprises that are the subject of public record. The report's characterizations of specific operations as fraudulent, deceptive, or predatory are based on the evidence documented in each chapter and are intended as analytical conclusions rather than legal determinations.

Where the report uses terms such as "scam," "fraud," or "pyramid scheme," these terms are used in their consumer protection and common usage senses, consistent with consumer enforcement frameworks, and not as legal findings.



Manufactured Inadequacy:

How Looksmaxxing Is Engineering Body Dysmorphia - and Reaching Billions

This research note presents original data on the scale, reach, and commercial infrastructure of the looksmaxxing ecosystem across TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. To our knowledge, it represents the first systematic cross-platform quantification of looksmaxxing reach. It is released as part of ***The Grift Economy: How Young Men Are Being Sold Fake Belonging and Fake Wealth Online***, a joint report by [Reset Tech](#) and [Equimundo](#).

The Scale Is Unprecedented

Reset Tech analyzed **216 influencers** currently leading or capitalizing on the looksmaxxing trend across TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. These accounts represent men from the United States, France, India, Sweden, Jordan, Italy, the Netherlands, and beyond. The top influencers on each platform post primarily personal content and are followed overwhelmingly by young men.

Their collective reach across the analysis period:

12.8B	Views across 27,167 posts on TikTok — an average of 470,000 views per video
1.5B	Views across 7,306 posts on Instagram — an average of 205,000 views per video
300M	Views across 6,444 posts on Facebook — an average of 46,500 views per video
14.6B	Combined views across all three platforms during the analysis period

For posts explicitly using looksmaxxing-related keywords in captions, the figures remain substantial, **14.6 billion views: 12.8 billion views on TikTok, 1.5 billion on Instagram, and 300 million on Facebook**. These numbers are not a product of content quality or organic demand alone. They are, in large part, a product of platform architecture.

Recommendation algorithms on TikTok and Instagram are designed to maximize engagement. Looksmaxxing operations perform exceptionally well on those metrics because they exploit fear, comparison, and the promise of transformation leading to the promise of romantic success. A young man who watches one jawline tutorial does not choose to see ten more. The algorithm chooses for him. The platforms are not passive distributors of this material. They are its primary amplification engine.

When It Started and How Fast It Spread

Posts mentioning looksmaxxing appeared as early as 2021, but the trend's trajectory is defined by two inflection points. It became a visible, measurable trend on TikTok starting in July 2024. On Instagram and Facebook, the visible trend emerged in December 2025 — approximately eighteen months later.

That lag follows the pattern by which harmful trends migrate across platforms: TikTok's algorithm surfaces fringe material to young audiences first; once the audience is established and the commercial opportunity is visible, the infrastructure migrates to Meta, where demographic targeting tools, advertising capabilities, and monetization architecture are more sophisticated. The trend does not stay in one place. The platforms provide the collective infrastructure for it to spread.

What Looksmaxxing Actually Promotes

"Looksmaxxing is centered on the belief that real men must have specific physical traits like a square jawline, tall stature, muscular build, perfect hair, and clear skin." — Dr. Jason Nagata, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Eating Disorders Specialist, UCSF¹

The looksmaxxing ecosystem presents itself as self-improvement. In practice, it advocates a graduated set of physical interventions that escalate from benign to dangerous, organized around the premise that a man's face and body are fundamentally inadequate and must be optimized for social acceptance and sexual viability.

What makes this particularly revealing is who is setting the standards. The body ideals promoted in looksmaxxing communities are not derived from what women say they find attractive. They are set by men, for other men — in forums, rating systems, and influencer hierarchies where women's actual preferences are largely absent and largely irrelevant. Young men are being told what women want by men who have no particular basis for that claim, and who have a direct financial interest in the anxiety that claim produces. The inadequacy being sold is not a reflection of social reality. It is a product.

This distinguishes the looksmaxxing crisis from the body image pressures that have historically targeted young women. Women's body expectations have largely been shaped by broader

¹ Nagata, J.M. Quoted in: "The Extremely Risky Trend Doctors Should Watch For." *Medscape*, February 2026 <https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/extremely-risky-trend-should-be-family-doctors-radar-2026a10004tc>

societal and commercial forces — advertising, fashion, media — that at least nominally claim to reflect male desire or cultural aspiration. In looksmaxxing, the manipulation is more direct: one group of men manufacturing a standard, selling it to another group of men as objective truth, and profiting from the resulting anxiety. The ecosystem is not responding to female expectations. It is inventing them, and then charging for the solution.

The Pathways to Manipulation

The ecosystem distinguishes between softmaxxing and hardmaxxing. The former is the entry point. The latter is where the pipeline leads.

Softmaxxing: The Entry Point

Presented as legitimate self-care. Builds the parasocial relationship that makes everything downstream possible.

- **Skincare routines and grooming** marketed as the foundation of physical optimization
- **Gym and fitness** framed as the baseline of masculine adequacy
- **Haircuts, styling, and clothing** positioned as signals of status and sexual viability
- **Mewing** pressing the tongue against the roof of the mouth for extended periods is promoted as reshaping the jawline over time. No major dental or orthodontic organization recognizes it as effective. Some adolescent boys remain silent throughout the school day or consume only liquids to maintain the tongue position continuously.
- **Chewing gum and jaw exercisers** sold commercially as tools to develop jawline definition. The anatomical basis is disputed; the commercial market is large and growing.
- **Face rating and the PSL scale** an online numerical scoring system originating in incel forums, where scores of 1 to 3 are classified as "subhuman." Boys as young as 13 post photos to be rated by anonymous strangers. In extreme cases, low ratings come with recommendations to consider suicide.

Hardmaxxing: Where the Pipeline Leads

Presented as the serious tier for those committed to real transformation. Each stage normalizes the next.

- **Bonesmashing** repeatedly striking the face with a blunt object including hammers, based on a misapplication of Wolff's Law. Carries documented risk of fractures, nerve damage, and permanent disfigurement. Boys as young as 13 claim to practice it in online forums. At least one prominent looksmaxxing influencer has been hospitalized during a livestream.
- **Steroid and hormone use without medical supervision** testosterone, human growth hormone, and peptide compounds promoted as optimization tools. Many are unregulated or gray-market. Documented risks include cardiac damage, hormonal

disruption, and in the case of injectable compounds, infection and systemic harm. Influencers frequently suggest going over the medically recommended limit.

- **Leg-lengthening surgery** elective orthopedic surgery to increase height, sought in medical tourism hubs. Documented by a 2025 peer-reviewed study as actively discussed in major looksmaxxing communities.
- **Facial surgery** jaw implants, chin extensions, buccal fat removal, cheekbone augmentation, and orbital reshaping sought for adherence to looksmaxxing aesthetic standards rather than medical necessity. Increasingly sought abroad to reduce cost.
- **Methamphetamine for weight loss** advocated by at least one prominent looksmaxxing influencer explicitly for its appetite-suppressing properties as a means of achieving extreme leanness.
- **Penile enhancement regimens** devices, supplements, physical manipulations and injectable compounds promoted as correcting physical inadequacy. None carries clinical evidence of effectiveness. Several carry documented risks including nerve damage, scarring, and erectile dysfunction. None are recommended by urologists or sexual health clinicians.

This Is Body Dysmorphia. We Have Seen This Before.

The mechanism at work in looksmaxxing is not new. It is the same mechanism that drives pro-eating disorder advocacy on social media targeting young women for decades — and that the medical community, policymakers, and platforms were slow to address.

Both movements begin with the same psychological operation: manufacturing inadequacy. For young women, pro-eating disorder promotion on social media tells them their bodies are too large, too soft, too imperfect. For young men, the looksmaxxing ecosystem tells them their faces are too soft, their jaws too weak, their height insufficient, their features insufficiently dominant. The response in both cases — optimization, intervention, transformation — is sold as the path to the belonging and acceptance they have been told they lack.

The human psychology that makes this possible is identical. It is the psychology of rejection — the fear of social and sexual rejection that sits at the core of adolescent development and that digital platforms have learned to weaponize with extraordinary precision. The algorithm fosters the insecurity. It finds it, amplifies it, and routes it toward a commercial solution.

Pro-Eating Disorder Culture	Looksmaxxing Culture
<i>(primarily targeting young girls and women)</i>	<i>(primarily targeting young boys and men)</i>
● Your body is too large, too soft, too imperfect ● Thinness is the standard. Restriction is the discipline. ● Community validates and enforces the standard ● Commercial layer: diet products, supplements, programs ● Platform response: slow, contested, and insufficient ● Clinical consequence: eating disorders, body dysmorphia, mental health decline, death	● Your face, jaw, height, and body are inadequate ● Optimization is the standard. Intervention is the discipline. ● Community validates and enforces the standard ● Commercial layer: supplements, coaching, surgery referrals ● Platform response: none. Looksmaxxers are treated as celebrities. ● Clinical consequence: body dysmorphia, disordered eating, physical harm, mental health decline

Digital Platforms Profit from this Exploitation

Platform policies on eating disorders exist. Whether they are enforced is an entirely different question.

"Thinspiration" is content promoting extreme thinness as an ideal — named a violation on Instagram and other platforms for years. "Thinstagram" is what users called the culture that persisted anyway. Pro-eating disorder communities, dangerous weight loss advice, and content promoting restriction and starvation continued to circulate on the same platforms that prohibited them, often openly. The gap between a platform's stated policy and its actual enforcement is not a technical failure. It is a structural one: as long as this content generates engagement, the platform's financial incentive to remove it is weaker than its financial incentive to keep it.

Looksmaxxing has not even reached the stage of inadequate policy. Despite widespread clinical concern, documented physical harm, and a commercial ecosystem promoting dangerous interventions to young men at billion-view scale, looksmaxxing has yet to be addressed by any major platform's community guidelines. There is no policy to fail to enforce. Prominent looksmaxxing creators are profiled in mainstream media as internet celebrities. Their products are advertised across TikTok and Meta with no content policy violation flagged. The platform that has a dedicated page on eating disorder resources and bans weight loss advertising has no equivalent response to an ecosystem telling young men to strike their own faces with hammers.

The comparison is not incidental. The response to harmful content follows public pressure, regulatory scrutiny, and reputational risk — not harm itself. Young women's body image crises generated enough of all three, eventually, to produce inadequate policies. Young men's equivalent crisis has not yet generated enough of any of them. The looksmaxxing ecosystem is filling that gap.

Researchers estimate that one in three people struggling with eating disorders are male.² A 2025 analysis found that obsession with thinness is still widely considered the hallmark of an eating disorder — even though it only captures one type, primarily female, of the condition. Boys and men struggling with eating disorders and body dysmorphia are far more likely to be fixated on leanness and muscularity. The clinical system is not built to see them. The platforms are not built to protect them. The commercial ecosystem is built to find and exploit them.

This Is a Global Crisis, Not a Western One

A persistent assumption in discussions of male loneliness and online vulnerability is that these are primarily Western conditions — products of individualism or weakened family structures. The looksmaxxing data directly challenges that framing.

The 216 influencers in this dataset are young men from the United States, France, India, Sweden, Jordan, Italy, the Netherlands, and beyond. Their audiences are global. The platforms distributing this material operate without borders. The commercial operations monetize the resulting anxiety ship and stream worldwide.

The reason looksmaxxing is global is not that male insecurity is globally uniform. It is that social media is global, and its incentive structures are platform-wide. An algorithm that rewards fear, comparison, and aspiration in one country rewards the same operations in every other. The distortion travels not because the underlying anxieties are identical across cultures, but because the commercial infrastructure that exploits those anxieties operates above and beyond any particular culture or country.

Despite the widespread recognition that promoting eating disorders is harmful to mental and physical health, looksmaxxing has yet to be addressed by social media platform policies. Instead, prominent looksmaxxers are treated as internet celebrities and have been interviewed and profiled for their methods and worldview.³

The argument that male loneliness and body anxiety are uniquely Western has sometimes been used to suggest the crisis is a product of cultural individualism rather than platform design. This data challenges that argument directly. The platform architecture is the culture. Where the algorithm goes, the distortion follows — regardless of what family structures, communal traditions, or cultural norms exist in the target country.

² Published via The Conversation, May 2026, by a researcher at the University of Waterloo. Full citation and original article: <https://theconversation.com/looksmaxxing-isnt-just-a-tiktok-trend-it-often-reflects-severe-body-image-issues-in-teen-boys-and-young-men-280567>

³ PBS: Looksmaxxing may point to deeper body image issues in young men, mental health expert says <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/looksmaxxing-may-point-to-deeper-body-image-issues-in-young-men-mental-health-expert-says>

This will continue to morph into equally harmful forms for the same reason: the incentive structure that produced looksmaxxing will produce the next version of it, in the next country, on the next platform, targeting the next insecurity a young man has not yet been told he should feel.

The Real World Consequences

Looksmaxxing is not just a digital phenomenon with digital consequences. Its effects are showing up in clinics, schools, and emergency rooms.

In the data

- Male plastic surgery procedures increased 55 percent between 1997 and 2018. Jawline enhancement has become the most sought-after facial procedure for men after Botox, and the growth rate has accelerated sharply in the period corresponding to looksmaxxing's rise.⁴
- A 2025 narrative review in *The Lancet Child and Adolescent Health* identified adolescent boys and young men as developmentally vulnerable to muscle dysmorphia and other body image disorders, particularly as appearance-focused content saturates their feeds.⁵
- A 2025 peer-reviewed qualitative study in *Sociology of Health and Illness*, analyzing more than 8,000 comments from a major looksmaxxing forum, documented users discussing leg-lengthening surgery, black-market hormone purchases, and bonesmashing.⁶
- One in 35 male adults has had a cosmetic surgery procedure. Male plastic surgery now accounts for 5 to 13 percent of all cosmetic procedures performed.

In schools

- Some adolescent boys remain silent throughout the school day or consume only liquids to maintain mewing tongue positions. These behaviors are increasingly visible in middle and high schools and are framed by the boys themselves as discipline rather than distress.⁷

⁴ AESTHETIC PLASTIC SURGERY STATS

<https://cdn.theaestheticsociety.org/media/statistics/2023-TheAestheticSocietyStatistics.pdf> example service Chesapeake Plastic Surgery. "The Rise of Male Jawline Enhancement." July 2025.

<https://barlowmd.com/blog/the-rise-of-male-jawline-enhancement-why-its-the-most-sought-after-facial-procedure-for-men-in-2025/>

⁵ Nagata, J.M., Hur, J.O., Murakami, K., Ganson, K.T., He, J., Murray, S.B., & Lavender, J.M. (2025). Muscle dysmorphia in adolescents and young adults. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, 10(2), 122–134.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642\(25\)00283-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(25)00283-4)

⁶ Halpin, M., Gosse, M., Yeo, K., Handlovsky, I., & Maguire, F. (2025). When help is harm: Lookism, self-improvement, and the mental health impact of looksmaxxing communities. *Sociology of Health & Illness*.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9566.70015>

⁷ Halpin et al

- Boys as young as 13 post photos to anonymous forums to be rated on scales where a score below 3 is classified as "subhuman," and where low scores sometimes come with suggestions to consider suicide.

In clinical and emergency settings

- At least one prominent looksmaxxing influencer has been hospitalized during a livestream. Elective interventions promoted by the ecosystem are increasingly sought abroad in medical tourism hubs with limited regulatory oversight.
- Bonesmashing has produced a growing number of cases requiring emergency maxillofacial repair. "It's just like having a blow to the face," said Dr. Edward Kwak, facial plastic surgeon. "That could lead to a fracture injury."⁸
- The American Association of Orthodontists has stated: "There is no scientific evidence that mewing changes jawlines, enhances cheekbones, straightens noses, or aligns the teeth."⁹
- Mental health professionals continue to warn that extreme looksmaxxing practices act as catalysts for body dysmorphic disorder and severe anxiety. What the medical consensus cannot explain is why these products sell despite the absence of evidence. The answer is that the product is not the intervention. It is relief from an anxiety the ecosystem spent months manufacturing.

What This Research Shows

- **The scale is documented.** No prior research has systematically quantified looksmaxxing reach across TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook simultaneously. The 14.6 billion aggregate view figure is new.
- **The reach is a platform feature, not an organic one, and profitable.** The trend's growth trajectory — TikTok first, Meta eighteen months later — follows the pattern of platform-driven harm migration. The algorithm is the distribution network.
- **The consequences are clinical, not just cultural.** Young men are being hospitalized, seeking surgery, striking their own faces, attaching weights to their penis and going silent in classrooms. The pro-eating disorder crisis for young women took decades to be recognized and was never adequately addressed. Looksmaxxing is following the same trajectory, at greater speed, with a larger commercial infrastructure behind it, and with no platform policy response in sight.

⁸ Kwak, E.S. Quoted in: "The Extremely Risky Trend Doctors Should Watch For." *Medscape*, February 2026. <https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/extremely-risky-trend-should-be-family-doctors-radar-2026a10004tc>

⁹ Durbin, M.G. (President-elect, AAO). Quoted in: "The Extremely Risky Trend Doctors Should Watch For." *Medscape*, February 2026. <https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/extremely-risky-trend-should-be-family-doctors-radar-2026a10004tc>