

Privacy and Data Use Statement

Project Title:

Mainstreaming the Extreme: How Manosphere Ideologies Travel through Digital Lifestyle Discourse

Institution:

Erasmus University Rotterdam – Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

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What is this research about?

This project explores how gender ideologies (especially those associated with masculinity and dating culture) are embedded into everyday digital content, such as travel advice and dating forums. It focuses on how these ideas spread and gain legitimacy through platforms like Reddit, particularly within communities like r/ThePassportBros. The research is part of a doctoral trajectory in Media and Communication Studies.

What data are used in this research?

We collect and analyze publicly available content from Reddit, including posts, comments, and general metadata (e.g. post time, subreddit, and engagement metrics). No private messages or restricted content are accessed.

The following categories of data may be processed:

- Written text in Reddit posts or comments
- Metadata such as timestamps or subreddit names
- Expressions of personal opinions or ideological viewpoints
- Potentially sensitive content (e.g., related to gender, politics, or cultural identity)

No usernames or direct identifiers are stored or published as part of this research. All data is pseudonymized and decontextualized where necessary to prevent reverse identification.

Legal basis for data processing:

This study is conducted under the legal basis of the following regulations:

- Article 6(1)(e) GDPR – processing is necessary for a task carried out in the public interest (i.e., scientific research);
- Article 9(2)(j) GDPR, in conjunction with Article 89 GDPR and Article 24 UAVG – processing of sensitive personal data is permitted when carried out with appropriate safeguards for scientific purposes.

User consent

Under Article 14(5)(b) and (c) of the GDPR, researchers are not obliged to seek informed consent when doing so would require disproportionate effort or impair the objectives of the study. Given that Reddit users are typically anonymous or pseudonymous and cannot be contacted individually on a large scale, and that engagement with the community could create safety risks for the researcher, obtaining individual consent is not feasible.

To protect users' privacy, all usernames are omitted or coded, quotations are paraphrased or anonymized, and no efforts are made to deanonymize individuals. The research is based exclusively on content already made public by users on Reddit, following Reddit's public content policy.

Data protection and retention:

All data are stored securely using institutional platforms (e.g., SURFdrive). Identifiers are removed from all transcripts and working documents. Only the researchers directly involved in the project have access to raw data.

Use of data and publication:

Findings will be published in academic outlets such as journals, books, or conference proceedings. No names, usernames, or directly identifying quotations will be published. All excerpts will be paraphrased or stripped of identifying context to ensure user anonymity.

Want to know more or have concerns?

If you have questions about this study or your privacy rights (such as accessing, correcting, or objecting to the use of your data), you may contact:

Guilherme Giolo – giolo@eshcc.eur.nl

Data Protection Officer – fg@eur.nl

Dutch Data Protection Authority – www.autoriteitpersoonsgegevens.nl

Ethics Approval

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Ethics Review Committee of Erasmus University Rotterdam (approval number: [to be added]). This committee ensures that research is conducted responsibly and ethically.