Western Washington University

Western Libraries Undergraduate Research Award

Western Libraries and the Learning Commons

Spring 2020

Beyond Thoughts and Prayers: Understanding Mass Violence through an Investigation of Masculinity in the White Nationalist Movement

Paige Chun Lai Toop
Western Washington University

Follow this and additional works at: https://cedar.wwu.edu/library_researchaward

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Beyond Thoughts and Prayers: Understanding Mass Violence through an Investigation of

Masculinity in the White Nationalist Movement

Paige Chun Lai Toop

Western Washington University

Abstract

Mass violence is a growing concern in the United States. In August 2019, two mass shootings occurred less than 24 hours apart, but far too often these incidents are lost in the waves of hashtags, tweets, and posts offering thoughts and prayers, but such attention rarely results in action. I hypothesize that the current conceptualization and enforcement of masculinity breeds resentment and frustration toward women and when taken to the extreme results in violence. Based on data collected on Stormfront.org, the first major hate website, three archetypes were created, the New Victim, the Critic, and the Traditionalist. Each engages with the hegemonic masculine ideal, the New Victim being the most concerning and at the highest risk for perpetrating violence.

Two mass shootings occurred less than 24 hours apart in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, in August of 2019. Minutes prior to the El Paso shooting, the perpetrator posted a manifesto online in which he espoused racist and xenophobic sentiments, as well as concern over the "Hispanic invasion" of Texas (Attanasio, Bleiberg, and Weber 2019). Although the motives for the Dayton shooter have not been publicly established, he had a history of sexism and violence; in high school he created a list of female peers who he wished to sexually assault (Grady 2019). On another occasion in 2014 in Isla Vista near the University of California, Santa Barbara, Elliot Rodger killed six individuals and injured 14. This mass killing spree has been reported as motivated by perceived sexual and social rejection (Poston 2018). These intentions can be confirmed in a document he distributed prior to the incident, titled "My Twisted World: The Story of Elliot Rodger". In the document he cited his distaste for being half Asian and half white as he felt it made him "different from the normally fully white kids" and that his biracial status was one explanation for the sexual rejection he experienced. He harbored anger toward interracial couples as he felt it was immensely unfair for full Asian men to be with white women, while he was half white and remained a virgin at 22 (Rodger 2014). These incidents, especially that of Rodger, exposes the complex interplay of sexism and racism. The urgency of this matter is increasing as mass violence perpetrated by self-proclaimed "incels", or involuntary celibates, has continued to grow. In April 2018, a man in Toronto, Canada, killed 10 people after driving a van into a group of pedestrians. He allegedly praised Rodger before the attack in a Facebook post, calling him the "Supreme Gentleman" (BBC News 2018). In November 2018, another man killed two women at a yoga studio in Tallahassee, Florida, after opening fire during a class. The man had posted videos on YouTube in 2014 in which he identified himself as an "incel", detailed his complaints against women for rejecting him, and espoused racist ideologies (Andone and

Moshtaghian 2018). Many of these incidents, from Dayton to Tallahassee, involve male

individuals who have historically engaged with racist and sexist beliefs.

In an effort to examine the intersection of racism and sexism, this is an investigation of

masculinity in current literature, as well as on the website, Stormfront.org. Stormfront was

founded by Don Black, a White Nationalist and former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, in

1995 and hosts more than 300,000 registered guests. Specifically, this investigation is based on

the analysis of a thread created by the Stormfront user *TrucksnGuns* titled "Lack of good White

Women". At the time, the thread had 861 responses, and the content of those responses was used

to formulate three archetypes, the New Victim, the Critic, and the Traditionalist. These

archetypes were created to better understand the function of masculinity within White

Nationalism, but also in broader society.

Often, mass violence is depicted as a senseless tragedy and is accompanied by a

downpour of condolences offering "thoughts and prayers". As senseless as it may seem to lose

innocent lives, treating it as such does not lend to change or prevention. In hopes of contributing

to the literature that creates evidence-based solutions for mass violence, this is an investigation

of masculinity within White Nationalism that identifies how the hegemonic masculine ideal

creates a risk for violence and who within the movement is at the highest risk.

What is Masculinity?

Current literature on masculinity has established its cultural prominence in Western

societies, as well as several common methods through which the masculine ideal is socially

constructed. While masculinity is typically thought of as an innate quality, literature focuses on

how strength and size, power and authority, heterosexuality, sexual prowess and physical

attractiveness, aggression and violence are all vehicles through which male-identified persons are

expected to communicate masculinity (Kimmel 2004; Myketiak 2016; Ricciardelli, Clow, and White 2010; Vito, Admire, and Hughes 2018). In discussions of the masculine ideal, the topic of hegemonic masculinity inevitably arises. Hegemonic masculinity is known as the dominant set of values designed by the patriarchy to place men in positions of power over women (Jewkes et al. 2015). It is understood to be a socially constructed expression of masculinity, setting the parameters of the masculine ideal and encompassing many of the values discussed earlier, such as heterosexuality and power (Kimmel 2004). As a result, homosexuality and femininity are distinct opposites of masculinity, and thus become the antagonist to power and authority. In order to understand the occurrences and patterns of mass violence, especially those perpetrated by extremists, it must be understood how violence can be rooted in the current cultural model of masculinity.

Threats to Masculinity

Sexual prowess and physical attractiveness are closely tied to the concept of masculinity, and thus social and sexual rejection has a profound effect on the masculine identity (Ricciardelli et al. 2010). Existing research supports the connection between a self-perceived lack of sexual domination and attention from the opposite sex with a threat to personal masculine image. The inability to fulfill this particular tenet of the masculine ideal, heterosexual sex, results in severe dissatisfaction with oneself, implying impotence, homosexuality, and a lack of masculinity (Vito et al. 2018). Myketiak (2016) introduced the concept of "heterosexual failure" as an explanation for the violence that results when a man who identifies with the hegemonic masculine ideal fails to find a girlfriend or sexual partner. The violence is an expression of dominance and a chance at redemption for the lack of sexual aptitude that is believed to be inherent to masculinity.

In some cases, this "heterosexual failure" leads to not only feelings of inadequacy, but also a sense of entitlement to women's time, attention, and bodies. Thus, when this right is not met, men who subscribe to hegemonic masculine beliefs again feel a threat to their masculinity as well as a sense of victimization as they have not received the sexual attention to which they believe they are entitled. Luke (1998) explains that in some cases of rape by men, the perpetrators felt threatened by the victim and so define the act as a restoration of masculinity. This sense of entitlement and perception of sex, consensual or not, frames women and their bodies as tools to achieve masculinity (Park 2012; Vito et al. 2018). Thus, sexual rejection by a woman is perceived as a direct threat to one's personal sense of masculinity.

It is amid these feelings of powerlessness that an overcompensation through aggression and violence occurs. It appears that for men who subscribe to the hegemonic masculine ideal, violence becomes the last resort to express the masculinity that they feel is threatened. As a result, existing research cites masculinity as a significant risk factor for mass violence (Kimmel and Mahler 2003; Vito et al. 2018).

Masculinity and White Nationalism

In addition to examining literature on the masculine ideal, it is important to understand the interaction of the masculine ideal with the White Nationalist movement. If masculinity is considered a risk factor for violence, the masculine ideal must be notably present in the White Nationalist movement (Kimmel and Mahler 2003; Vito et al. 2018). Ferber and Kimmel (2000) argue that White Nationalist discourse refers consistently to the Western concept of masculinity. In classic Western culture, the man is a lone operative who takes risks and engages in violence to stand up for his beliefs, such as Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone. Crockett, known as the "King of the Wild Frontier", is famously remembered for his death in the Battle of the Alamo during

the Texas Revolution, and Daniel Boone for his exploration and settlement of what is now Kentucky. The authors argue that this image of a man translates into the current concept of masculinity and is upheld in White Nationalist discourse. Evidence of this exists in the autobiography of David Duke, former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan and current far-right politician, as he describes the inspiration he pulled from Western heroes like Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone (Ferber and Kimmel 2000). This masculine ideal influences the White Nationalist mission to maintain and restore the white race, especially by way of sex and violence. Additionally, as a result of the vapid and secondary depiction of women in Western culture, women have become a means to achieving the masculine ideal. Ferber and Kimmel (2000) explain that women have historically lacked agency within these contexts and so become a "passive prize to be possessed". As a result of this objectification, women become collateral damage in the pathway to establish masculinity. Women are the spoils of the war in the battle for racial domination and masculinity, existing as proof of man's successes and failures.

This concept of women's bodies as a medium to communicate power and masculinity is echoed by Park (2012) in her work establishing the connections among violence against women, masculinity, and global politics. Though she does not address White Nationalism specifically, she discusses the treatment of women of color by white men. In the development of geopolitics, Park (2012) has found that the sexual humiliation of girls and women, a form of violence, is a tool to occupy and dominate an enemy. It is these Western values of masculinity that facilitate violence against women in response to threatened masculinity.

Methodology

Members of Stormfront turn to their fellow White Nationalists for advice and to discuss topics tangential or even unrelated to their common cause. As a result, the website hosts forums

for topics like health and fitness, homemaking, and music and entertainment. After browsing the

available forums, the thread titled "Lack of good White Women" located in the Ideology and

Philosophy forum, appeared to be the best option for analysis of the masculine ideal. At the time,

the thread had 861 responses and was created by the user, *TrucksnGuns*.

> *"Between all the white women who are Negro lovers, drug addicts, hardcore feminists, LGBT, or just down right ugly and obese, there is only a very small amount of white women actually relationship/wife material. I feel like for every 5 good men there's probably 1 good woman. Obviously this ratio is an estimate but regardless it is not good for the furtherance of the white race and of white well being. I just wanted to get that off my chest. Any thoughts?" (TrucksnGuns)*

The responses to the question posed by *TrucksnGuns* were printed and coded based on the

following categories.

1) Anti-feminism (AF)

2) Women are the source of the problem or are to blame for the issues (WOPROB)

3) Insulting the physical appearance of women (WOPHY)

4) Women are inherently evil and/or manipulative (WOEVIL)

5) Women lack overall quality and/or intelligence (WOLQ)

6) Derogatory language toward women (DLANG)

7) Enforcement of feminine gender roles (FEMROLE)

8) Enforcement of masculine gender roles (MASROLE)

9) Anti-LGBTQIA+ or homophobia (ALGBT)

10) Men are victims (MV)

11) Advocacy of men separating from women and "men going their own way"

(MGTOW)

12) Pressure to find a partner in order to further the White Nationalist cause by starting a family (WFP)

13) Attribution of problems to Jewish control (JC)

14) Opposition (OPP)

The three archetypes, the New Victims, the Critics, and the Traditionalists, were developed based on the patterns found in the coded responses and will be discussed in the remainder of this paper.

Results

The New Victims

The New Victims are a crucial group that occupied a majority of the discussion in the "Lack of good White Women" thread. The members that fall within this category are typically men who feel that they are victims of manipulative and incompetent women. In addition, they believe that society is infested and corrupted by feminists, which has lowered the quality of the women in the white dating pool. For some, these beliefs about women were formed based on their previous interactions and relationships with women, or most importantly, their lack thereof. Their posts are characterized by personal anecdotes of rejection, the unfair termination of long-term relationships, and complaints of white women with minority men, referred to as "mudsharks". New Victims provide accounts of their extreme efforts to garner the attention of women through self-improvement and gentleman-like behaviors. Inevitably, however, they explain that their lack of female attention is entirely the responsibility of women and a society corrupted by feminism, rather than a result of their own behaviors and actions. Thus, a major tenet of the New Victims' belief system is that men are systematically disadvantaged, while women are offered preferential treatment, resulting in their limited chances and ability to amass

female attention and obtain a romantic partner. According to the New Victims, these

disadvantages span through the realms of economics, law, as well as dating and relationships.

Out of the 14 categories, the New Victims most often contributed responses that were coded as

anti-feminism (AF), men as victims (MV), and placement of blame for their problems on

manipulation by women (WOEVIL).

New Victims believe that women are only interested in money, and in order to gain the

attention of a woman, one must have wealth and resources to offer. It is depicted as an epidemic

in which women have been programmed as *"princesses" (CarlVClausewitz)* whose sexuality

and attraction are dependent upon a man's income.

> *"All you need is a high income, luxury vehicle, and a big house where suddenly overnight*
> *they all "love" you." (CarlVClausewitz)*

This belief in economic disadvantage is further supported by users who share narratives about

the disadvantages they believe that men face legally in divorce proceedings.

> *"Marriage is a WORD. A word that has Jewish contracts tied to the man if he screws up.*
> *We all know the courts favor the womans side." (European Crusader)*

> *"Let's face some facts, half of all men end up getting divorce raped in America.*
> *Let's not pretend like everything is just fine with male-female relations." (Veiled*
> *Heritance)*

"Divorce raped" is a term used to describe a situation in which a wife takes more than her fair

share of assets in a divorce. However, according to this concept, the reason the wife is able to do

so is because the legal system favors women and allows them to financially take advantage of

men. This is another systematic and societal disadvantage that New Victims believe to affect

male and female interactions and contributes to their lack of success in the dating pool and

relationships.

This New Victim mentality is advanced by the belief that men today are victims of scapegoating, objectification, and unattainable standards.

> *"What amazes me about this particular feminine strain of neoconservatism is that it believes in female innocence incapable of any wrong doing and always tries to put the blame solely on men's shoulders only. It's like a double negative reinforcement against men." (CarlVClausewitz)*

Not only do New Victims believe that they are unfairly blamed for society's issues, but that men, not women, are actually the victims of concepts like objectification.

> *"It always humors me when women say men objectify them because the fact is women always objectify men and in my opinion more so in the worst possible ways. The objectification of women doesn't even light a candle or come close to the objectification of men. Women by far are the more judgemental of the sexes." (CarlVClausewitz)*

According to the New Victims, the modern man is held to standards to which they will never be able to meet, such as the expectation that they be "perfect".

> *"When it comes to male-female relations, people have expectations that men have to become perfect in order to get and hold onto a decent quality woman. We are expected to have the perfect job with the perfect income, with the perfect social life, perfect material possessions, perfect looks, perfect body, perfect conversations, perfect charisma, perfect house in a perfect neighborhood, perfect education, etc." (Veiled Heritance)*

For these reasons, the New Victims believe that while women are generally believed to be victims of objectification and high standards in society, the truth of the matter is that the law, economics, and society hold men to a standard that makes it impossible for them to be adequate in the eyes of women.

In addition to the systematic disadvantages New Victims believe that men face in the modern world, these users of Stormfront maintain that women today are not to be trusted, as a result of their lack of competence and quality, and their manipulative nature. Many of the replies to this thread included degrading comments about women's intelligence and quality as

individuals. On occasion, the cause of the perceived lowered quality of women is explained as a

result of brainwashing and "programming" by the media and feminism.

> *"I totally support your analysis. There are so many reasons white women have become*
> *unfit for serious relationships, and not only in terms of marrying white men. It comes*
> *down to their human quality. And there are many ways in which they have lost such*
> *quality. First of all, many are brainwashed by various poisonous elements of society into*
> *being libidinous libertines and materialists." (Norferatux)*

> *"I've also given up as well because most women are mentally beyond saving or*
> *salvaging, they're damaged psychologically beyond repair." (CarlVClausewitz)*

Women's inherent manipulative nature is also often discussed in conjunction with the new male

victimhood from which the New Victim suffers. According to these users, from this low-quality

modern woman there has emerged a simple, yet manipulative woman.

> *"Unlike you, I don't claim to be an expert on women. Treat a woman with "too much*
> *respect" or "too much conversation" and she will walk all over you." (Veiled Heritance)*

> *"True. Many women have become extremely hypocritical this day in age. When men are*
> *nice to women, women accuse men of being X Y and Z. Perhaps men should start being*
> *more cautious of modern women. It will take powerful changes from the government and*
> *media before women start to change. Their personalities just aren't enough." (European*
> *Crusader)*

In addition to the modern-day woman being manipulative, the New Victim also describes this set

of the population as unpredictable and untrustworthy.

> *"Women are willing to break up with men over abstract reasons like "something doesn't*
> *feel right" or "I want to be alone for awhile". Men usually break up with women over*
> *concrete reasons because the woman let herself go, is a gold digger, is nagging him all*
> *the time, cuts him off sexually (that's a big one right there)." (Veiled Heritance)*

Attributions like these contribute to the negative definition and portrayal of women in which they are demonized and thought of as the sole cause of the New Victims' misfortune. These discussions also encourage a victim mentality through which they sidestep responsibility for the outcomes they face.

Some of these men openly resigned from the dating pool citing the inescapability of the male disadvantage and untrustworthy nature of women.

> *"There's simply no options, and no hope for many men now. In my lived experience, women are either taken, uninterested, or slutty trash. Everywhere you turn, it's just another "nope, can't do that! Nope, can't do that! Nope, can't do that!" I've spent many years with the mentality of "when's it going to be my turn? When will I finally succeed?" That mentality went away when I woke up to the facts, the science, and the reality of this world. I now see that it can't happen. Women are out of touch for me, and I think that's set in stone. If I make it to 30 and still haven't had my first girlfriend or lost my virginity, I will completely abandon women forever and never go back." (Username1000)*

This portion of the New Victims have determined that the effort required to acquire a partner is wasted because, for men like them, it is an impossible feat. Though these men retire from the dating pool, they harbor intense negative emotions regarding women and their perceived ill-treatment, which feeds an anger and bitterness that, in some cases, manifests in posts about revenge. In fact, one New Victim on this thread who was particularly active, *CarlVClausewitz*, twice mentioned the satisfaction he feels from imagining the demise of women and feminism.

> *"When the United States economy collapses I'm looking forward to the screams, dreary blank facial expressions, and lamentations of spoiled rotten or entitled princesses everywhere when they finally find out that the gravy train really is over. Then I'm going to treat them horribly like I've been treated the last twenty years, what goes around comes right back around ladies. Enjoy!" (CarlVClausewitz)*

> *"It will be interesting however when the United States collapses in the near future because as I said a majority of men have become angry, bitter, isolated, and alienated. It's a dangerous combination when you mix that with a collapsed society… They really messed up with western feminism because now you have an entire world of a majority of angry men that are watching their every move 24/7 that daydreams daily about their execution." (CarlVClausewitz)*

CarlVClausewitz did not make direct threats, nor did he state any intended plans to carry out this destruction of women and feminism. However, it begs the question, what will a New Victim like *CarlVClausewitz* do when the collapse of women does not occur? If he grows tired of being the "victim" and fails to see a change to society in his favor, will he take the start of this demise into his own hands through an act of extremism? Based on the content of the posts by New Victims, particularly *CarlVClausewtiz*, they are experiencing a threat to their masculinity. As demonstrated in the current literature, this threat has the potential to manifest violent action if the person feels he cannot restore his masculinity in another way, such as a change in physical attractiveness or sexual prowess (Kimmel and Mahler 2003; Vito et al. 2018). Websites like Stormfront offer platforms for the toxic interaction of racism and sexism, and it is here that attention should be focused, so as to prevent another unnecessary act of deadly violence.

The Critics

The Critics are a second typology within this thread who, in some ways, act in opposition to the New Victims by offering advice and solutions to their problems. A Critic's responses are most likely to be coded as enforcement of the masculine ideal (MASROLE) and, occasionally, may be coded as opposition to anti-feminist rhetoric (OPP). The Critics are in no way feminists, but because they typically fulfill the role of offering advice to the New Victims, their responses are often perceived as opposition. For example, in their responses, the Critics often denigrate the attitudes of the New Victims, while informing them that through reflection and self-improvement

they will find success in dating and relationships. Furthermore, the Critic does not directly

invalidate the New Victims' claims about the low quality of women, but rather believes that the

New Victims are likely going for women outside of their league, and that if men are patient, they

will eventually come across a rare, high quality woman, as long as they simultaneously pursue

self-improvement.

> *"For disgruntled men, I can say with conviction they almost always are guys that:*
> *a) Want a woman better than they reasonably can get.*
> *b) Put little effort into themselves / improvement.*
> *c) Think they are owed attention.*
> *…If you fail to take action to improve your situation (look for someone equal to yourself,*
> *move, work on yourself/situation, etc) you deserve your fate." (S Sinistrari)*

The Critics emphasize the philosophy that one attracts what one is. Thus, while they believe that

the New Victims are likely being rejected because they are stepping outside of what is attainable

for them, they also maintain the belief that the rejection can be reduced if the men self-improve.

Such as in the quote above by the user *S Sinistrari*, who explains that a failure to take action and

work on oneself is the responsibility of the man in question. Another user, who goes by the

handle *Cyan Sky* echoed this sentiment in a discussion.

> *"Brother, you're doing the right thing; self-improvement is the key to success." (Cyan*
> *Sky)*

In addition, it is vital for this discussion to also consider the role of masculinity in the

Critic. While the Critic provides advice and solutions for the troubles of the New Victim,

masculinity and gender roles are emphasized. For example, one user who may be categorized as

a Critic, *Renascentistafl*, responded to the complaints of a New Victim, *European Crusader*, who

posted about his ex-girlfriend who he claims left him without reason. *Renascentistafl's* advice

assumes an entitlement on part of *European Crusader* to his ex-girlfriend's space and time by

implying that she should answer his questions simply because he is "the man".

> *"And she blocked you? Maybe she's just upset to talk in the moment but she needs to*
> *explain this situation. Make her explain. You are the man." (Renascentistafl)*

While the Critics do not espouse the same male victim rhetoric as the New Victims, they

certainly enforce standards of masculinity that incite a restricted perspective of what it means to

be a man. This applies too in the quote below in which the user, *S Sinistrari*, reinforces the idea

that a man should not have problems with women, and thus the New Victims must not be "real

men".

> *"Many of us real men do not whine about women, we don't need to." (S Sinistrari)*

Though the Critics appear to disagree with the New Victims on some level, the dissent between

these groups, as demonstrated by the attacks on the masculinity of the New Victims, is not to the

benefit of women or feminism. The Critics are not perceived as helpful by the New Victims, but

rather as "white knights" who have entered the thread to defend women.

> *"Right on cue the white knights come to defend the fair ladies from the angry hordes of*
> *dissatisfied men." (CarlVClausewitz)*

The Critics rarely defend women and instead attack and correct the masculinity of the New

Victims, an act that is generally perceived as an insult. The Critics evaluations of masculinity

may even be considered a threat to masculinity, which runs the risk of inducing defensiveness or

even feelings of anger and inadequacy.

The Traditionalists

The Traditionalists of Stormfront took to the thread, "Lack of good White Women", to

counter the grievances of the New Victims by arguing that their bitterness only prevents them

from continuing their bloodline and contributing to the White Nationalist cause. According to

this group, the top priority of White Nationalists should be reproduction, and taking to these

threads to complain about the lack of good women is selfish and pointless.

> *"Last I checked the 14 words didn't include a caveat that said, 'We must secure the*
> *existence of our people and a future for white children... Unless you decide white women*
> *don't appreciate you and then you can date an Asian who you think does...'" (famavita)*

The Traditionalists primarily consist of women who voice anti-feminist sentiments (AF), enforce

gender roles (FEMROLE and MASROLE), and of course heavily emphasize the importance of

marriage and starting a white family (WFP). The extent to which Traditionalists defend women

throughout this thread is limited only to their value as reproductive beings. While they are

women themselves, they do not appear to take offense to the New Victims' commentary, but

rather they chastise these men for forgetting about the mission of White Nationalism.

> In fact, some Traditionalists place the blame for the New Victims' attitudes on feminism

and women. Namely, the effect that feminism has on women's desire to have children, which is

occasionally demonstrated through slut-shaming. Below, *vox4america* uses the term "thots"

which is an acronym for "that hoe over there", a shorthand for referring to a woman of perceived

sexual promiscuity as a "slut" or "whore".

> *"And I agree- many women are thots. But there are good ones out there who are*
> *screening for important things like character and values. These women act way*
> *differently than the majority of their sisters and tend to have a more conservative*
> *approach to dating." (vox4america)*

This attack on the presumed sexual activity and behavior of women is connected to the

Traditionalists' beliefs about the effect of feminism on women, that it corrupts and alters

important traditional values about family.

> *"The biggest reasons that feminism is a direct attack on the white race is 1) because it*
> *discourages white women from wanting to become mothers and pushes them to focus on*
> *their careers instead..." (Trisquelle)*

Furthermore, Traditionalists emphasize the importance of men fulfilling traditional

gender roles by pursuing romantic relationships with women and maintaining their gender's

dominance in society.

> *"Men are supposed to be the pursuers not the other way around. If white men are so low*
> *energy and so incapable of being the hunter toward their intended prey than we are*
> *definitely on extinction level activity." (famavita)*

This emphasis on the traditional view of family and gender roles is an important facet of the

Traditionalist. Similar to the Critic, it places pressure on men to meet specific guidelines of

masculinity. None of these guidelines are inherently necessary to obtain a partner or to

reproduce, but the characteristics are portrayed by Traditionalists as essential to fulfilling the role

of a White Nationalist.

Traditionalists do not condemn the bashing of women in these threads because they

believe it to be sexist, but because they believe it is a waste of time that weakens the White

Nationalist movement. To this group, reproducing is the first priority, and along with this comes

the expectation of certain gender roles and masculinity. Such pressure to find a mate and

reproduce when the New Victims already feel incapable of finding a girlfriend may foster

feelings of inadequacy and anger, especially as other Stormfront users accuse them of failing to

support the movement. In one discussion, a Traditionalist attempts to explain to a New Victim

that the reason his ex-girlfriend left their four-year relationship was because he waited too long

to propose a marriage and begin a family. An argument ensued throughout the thread about the

importance of marriage and the New Victim's previous relationship. The man in question,

European Crusader, believed his girlfriend left because of her lack of quality and the

shallowness of the modern-day woman, while the Traditionalist, *vox4america*, stated that his

experience was due to his failure to propose. Eventually, the argument ended with the New

Victim expressing frustration with the Traditionalist.

> *"Your snarky comments are just proof that modern women have become entitled*
>
> *demanding thots who want everything handed to them perfectly." (European Crusader)*

Though throughout the argument both expressed the importance of starting a family, there was a

major difference in their approach to the same issue. While the Traditionalists may believe they

are helping or furthering the White Nationalist cause, their tactics only create tension and fuel the

negative beliefs New Victims hold about women.

Conclusion

The current conceptualization of masculinity in Western cultures leans on a singular,

unchanging image of a physically strong, sexually active, attractive heterosexual man (Kimmel

2004; Myketiak 2016; Ricciardelli, Clow, and White 2010; Vito, Admire, and Hughes 2018). As

a result of this rigid and unattainable standard, much has become a threat to masculinity,

including real or perceived rejection by women. Rejection is amplified by the hegemonic

masculine ideal as it perpetuates the notion that men are entitled to women's bodies, attention,

time. Of the three typologies established, the New Victims appear to be the group that engages

the most with the hegemonic masculine ideal and thus, are the most substantial threat. This threat

is exacerbated by the two other typologies, the Critics and the Traditionalists, as they chastise the

New Victims. The Critics consistently reinforce male gender roles and cite that self-

improvement of the characteristics associated with masculinity, like physical strength and

attractiveness, is the best solution. The Traditionalists maintain the masculine ideal within the

White Nationalist movement by insisting the New Victims spend less time complaining, and

more time finding a partner with whom they may start a white family.

It is imperative that the methods used in this analysis be replicated in the examination of other threads on Stormfront, as well as on similar threads on websites like Reddit, 4chan, and 8chan. In order to reduce the frequency of mass violence in the United States, the public's conceptualization of masculinity must be scrutinized and understood to the fullest extent. While the intention of this investigation was to understand the role of masculinity within the White Nationalist movement, its overarching purpose is to move beyond the thoughts and prayers that are so often the only offering to those affected by mass violence. Although condolences are not unimportant, they should not act as a replacement for action, but rather be accompanied by the discussion, development, and implementation of evidence-based solutions.

Notes

The victims of the mass shootings referenced in the introduction of this paper are not intended to be a mere statistic. These were real people and these are their names.

El Paso, Texas

Jordan Anchondo, 24

Andre Anchondo, 23

Arturo Benavides, 60

Leonard Cipeda Campos, 41

Maribel Hernandez, 56

Raul Flores, 77

Maria Flores, 77

Jorge Calvillo García, 61

Adolfo Cerros Hernandez, 68

Sara Esther Regalado, 66

Alexander Gerhard Hoffman, 66

David Alvah Johnson, 63

Luis Alfonzo Juarez, 90

María Eugenia Legarreta Rothe, 58

Elsa Mendoza Márquez, 57

Ivan Hilierto Manzano, 46

Gloria Irma Marquez, 61

Margie Reckard, 63

Javier Rodriguez, 15

Teresa Sánchez de Freitas, 82

Angelina Englisbee, 86

Juan Velázquez, 77

Dayton, Ohio

Lois L. Oglesby, 27

Megan K. Betts, 22

Saeed Saleh, 38

Derrick R. Fudge, 57

Logan M. Turner, 30

Nicholas P. Cumer, 25

Thomas J. McNichols, 25

Monica E. Brickhouse, 39

Beatrice N. Warren-Curtis, 36

Isla Vista, California

George Chen, 19

Cheng Yuan Hong, 20

Weihan Wang, 20

Katherine Breann Cooper, 22

Christopher Ross Michaels-Martinez, 20

Veronika Elizabeth Weiss, 19

Toronto, Canada

Beutis Renuka Amarasinghe, 45

Andrea Knafelc Bradden, 33

Geraldine Brady, 83

So He Chung, 22

Anne Marie D'Amico, 30

Mary Elizabeth "Betty" Forsyth, 94

Chul Min "Eddie" Kang, 45

Ji Hun Kim, 22

Munir Najjar, 85

Dorothy Sewell, 80

Tallahassee, Florida

Maura Binkley, 21

Nancy Van Vessem, 61

References

Andone, Dakin and Artemis Moshtaghian. 2018. "Gunman in Florida yoga studio shooting made

    misogynistic comments on YouTube, NYT reports." CNN, November 3. Retrieved

    August 15, 2019 (https://www.cnn.com/2018/11/03/us/tallahassee-shooting-yoga-

    studio/index.html).

Attanasio, Cedar, Jake Bleiberg, and Paul J. Weber. 2019. "El Paso gunman confessed: 'I'm the

    shooter,' was targeting Mexicans." PBS News Hour, August 9. Retrieved August 15,

    2019 (https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/el-paso-gunman-confessed-im-the-shooter-

    was-targeting-mexicans).

BBC News. 2018. "Alek Minassian Toronto van attack suspect praised 'incel' killer." BBC

    News, April 25. Retrieved August 15, 2019 (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-

    canada-43883052).

Ferber, Abby L. and Michael Kimmel. 2000. "Reading Right: The Western Tradition in White

    Supremacist Discourse." *Sociological Focus* 33(2):193-213.

Grady, Constance. 2019. "The Dayton, Ohio, shooter reportedly kept a "rape list" of potential

    victims." Vox, August 5. Retrieved August 15, 2019

    (https://www.vox.com/identities/2019/8/5/20754918/dayton-ohio-shooter-rape-list-mass-

    shootings-misogyny-link).

Jewkes, Rachel, Robert Morrell, Jeff Hearn, Emma Lundqvist, David Blackbeard, Graham

    Lindegger, Michael Quayle, Yandisa Sikweyiya, and Lucas Gottzén. 2015. "Hegemonic

    Masculinity: Combining Theory and Practice in Gender Interventions." *Culture, Health*

    & Sexuality 17(2):112-127.

Kimmel, Michael S. 2004. "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the

    Construction of Gender Identity." Pp. 182-199 in *Feminism & Masculinities*, edited by P.

    F. Murphy. New York: Oxford University Press Inc.

Kimmel, Michael S. and Matthew Mahler. 2003. "Adolescent Masculinity, Homophobia, and

    Violence: Random School Shootings, 1982-2001." *American Behavioral Scientist*

    46(10):1439-58.

Luke, Brian. 1998. "Violent Love: Hunting, Heterosexuality, and the Erotics of Men's

    Predation." *Feminist Studies* 24(3):627-655.

Myketiak, Chrystie. 2016. "Fragile Masculinity: Social Inequalities in the Narrative Frame and

    Discursive Construction of a Mass Shooter's Autobiography/Manifesto." *Contemporary*

    Social Science 11(4): 289-303.

Park, Hijin. 2012. "Interracial Violence, Western Racialized Masculinities, and the Geopolitics

    of Violence against Women." *Social & Legal Studies* 21(4):491-510.

Poston, Ben. 2018. "Killer who committed massacre in Isla Vista was part of alt-right, new

    research shows." Los Angeles Times, February 6. Retrieved August 15, 2019

    (https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-isle-vista-massacre-alt-right-20180206-

    story.html).

Ricciardelli, Rosemary, Kimberley A. Clow, and Philip White. 2010. "Investigating Hegemonic

    Masculinity: Portrayals of Masculinity in Men's Lifestyle Magazines." *Sex Roles* 63:64-

    78.

Rodger, Elliot. 2014. "My Twisted World: The Story of Elliot Rodger."

Vito, Christopher, Amanda Admire, and Elizabeth Hughes. 2018. "Masculinity, Aggrieved

Entitlement, and Violence: Considering the Isla Vista Mass Shooting." *NORMA:*

International Journal for Masculinity Studies 13(2):86-102.