THE MONETIZATION OF MISOGYNY: PLATFORM CAPITALISM AND MANOSPHERE'S POLITICAL ECONOMY

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Abstract
Contemporary research often views the Manosphere as a cultural backlash or a masculinity crisis. This study reinterprets it as a political and economic system rooted in platform capitalism. Using International Political Economy, it explores how algorithms, affiliate marketing, and multi-level marketing profit from misogynistic radicalization. The analysis of Andrew Tate's "Hustler's University" shows that radicalization does not result from failed content moderation but is a predictable outcome of profit-driven algorithmic systems. Followers become unpaid digital workers, turning ideology into paid labor. The study argues that global governance and counter-terrorism strategies do not adequately address the issue. They focus on removing content instead of disrupting revenue streams. This changes the approach to platform regulation, shifting from speech-based moderation to financial de-platforming and algorithmic auditing.

Keywords: Manosphere, platform capitalism, political economy, digital radicalization, global governance.

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital world, the vast amount of information has made attention a rare and valuable resource. Instead of focusing on the accuracy or social value of content, digital players are competing for visibility. Menczer (2020; Vosoughi et al., 2018; Brady et al., 2017) points out that this competition encourages material that stirs strong emotional reactions, as these responses are more likely to be pushed by platform systems. This creates a marketplace of ideas that is not neutral. Instead, it is a skewed setting where polarizing and hostile content has an edge. The "Manosphere" is a decentralized network of anti-feminist subcultures that includes Incels and Men’s Rights Activists (MRAs). These groups have mastered the extraction of this commodity. Though often dismissed as fringe internet subcultures, they have developed into sophisticated networks that use the global system to spread their ideology.

However, traditional International Relations (IR) and security studies have had difficulty accurately categorizing this phenomenon. The usual approach sees radicalism mainly as an ideological or cultural challenge—a "backlash" against the global spread of feminist norms or a crisis of identity. While researchers like Barnes and Karim (2025) correctly identify the Manosphere as a political entity that views the world as a hostile "gynocracy," this perspective is limited. It does not consider the realities of the digital age: radicalization is not just a belief system but also a money-making venture. By focusing solely on the beliefs of radicals, traditional frameworks overlook the economic motivations that boost these beliefs.

This creates a big gap in global governance and security studies. Some recent policy frameworks have started to recognize the gender-related aspects of violent extremism (Gender and Counterterrorism, 2022), but they often overlook the business models that keep these networks going. The focus remains on why men radicalize, citing psychological weakness or economic failure (Maloney et al., 2024), rather than on how their radicalization is turned into profit and shared. This paper aims to fill that gap by shifting the focus from culture to economy.

This paper argues that the Manosphere is not just a cultural backlash; it is a transnational radicalization industry. By applying the idea of platform capitalism (Srnicek, 2017), this essay shows how people in the Manosphere use specific business methods, such as affiliate marketing, multi-level marketing structures, and algorithm exploitation, to turn misogyny into a sellable product. Case studies of Hustler's University and the influencer economy reveal that these actors do not just spread hate; they franchise it, encouraging followers to act as digital marketers for radical content (Leidig, 2023). As a result, the Manosphere is a commercialized security threat that benefits from the failure of global governance to control transnational digital economies. This is important for policy. Current digital rules, like the EU's Digital Services Act, focus on removing

content instead of addressing the revenue sources that support radicalization networks.

Theoretical Framework

A political economy approach focuses on the material structures and market incentives that drive the global expansion of the Manosphere, rather than just identity-based explanations. Instead of viewing it as mainly a cultural backlash or a crisis of masculinity, this perspective places the Manosphere within wider economic and technological systems. To see it as a global industry rather than a fringe subculture, we need to look at the infrastructures that support its growth. Drawing from International Political Economy (IPE), this paper uses concepts like platform capitalism, the attention economy, and surveillance capitalism to show how digital infrastructures influence radicalization. From this perspective, radicalization is a market-driven result where algorithms, profit motives, and neoliberal instability come together to create a self-sustaining economy of hate.

The material basis for this process lies in platform capitalism. As Srnicek (2017) notes in Platform Capitalism, today's capitalism depends more on digital intermediaries that organize and monetize social interactions than on directly producing goods. Platforms gain value not by owning content but by coordinating users, data, and attention (van Dijck et al., 2018; Gillespie, 2018). Their power grows with scale, creating network effects that promote visibility and rapid expansion. These conditions are especially beneficial for extremist and misogynistic networks. Established ecosystems like Google (YouTube), Meta, and ByteDance (TikTok) make mass broadcasting easier. Radical groups no longer need physical spaces or institutional backing; they just need to engage with infrastructures that maximize user interaction and growth.

Digital platforms act as profit-driven companies, not neutral spaces. Their business relies on constantly extracting data from everyday online activities. Instead of simply facilitating communication, platforms are designed to extend

engagement (Srnicek, 2017). Every click, comment, and view produces data that can be monetized through targeted advertising and algorithm refinements. User participation thus becomes a valuable economic resource. This leads to the creation of addictive interfaces and recommendation systems that focus on content meant to keep users' attention. In the context of the Manosphere, platforms are not just passive hosts; they directly profit from high engagement with controversial or emotionally charged content.

Within this framework, the spread of misogynistic narratives is less about ideological consistency and more about the competition for attention. In the attention economy, visibility acts like currency (Menczer, 2020). Users face information overload, so algorithms curate content for them. However, these algorithms favor engagement over accuracy or social well-being. Research by Filippo Menczer shows that emotionally charged, divisive, or "low-quality" content spreads faster than neutral or factual information. Strong emotions like anger and fear boost sharing behavior, giving polarizing narratives an edge. The digital landscape therefore tends to promote content that stirs reactions rather than content that informs.

The Manosphere takes advantage of this structural bias. Recommendation systems reinforce past interactions, creating ideological clusters and limiting exposure to different viewpoints (Menczer, 2020). Over time, this feedback loop normalizes extreme narratives within isolated online communities. What seems like widespread agreement is often just an algorithmically amplified minority. Misogynistic content, frequently presented in eye-catching or sensational ways, capitalizes on these dynamics. Its perceived virality reflects the platform's design rather than genuine popularity. In a crowded market for attention, controversial content wins because it keeps users engaged.

These dynamics are further illustrated by research on algorithmic radicalization. A large-scale audit of YouTube by Ribeiro et al. (2020) finds a "radicalization pipeline" where users get gradually guided from milder right-wing

content to more extreme material. The study shows pathways from "Alt-lite" commentary to explicit "Alt-right" ideology, highlighting how recommendation systems nudge users toward increasingly radical content. This suggests that radicalization stems not just from personal choice; it also results from algorithmic supply designed to maintain engagement. The growth of the Manosphere is thus partially rooted in the structural incentives of platform design.

The underlying economic logic behind these mechanisms is captured by Zuboff's (2019) concept of surveillance capitalism. In The Age of Surveillance Capitalism, Zuboff explains how digital platforms turn human experiences into behavioral data, much of which becomes "behavioral surplus." This surplus is then sold as predictive products in behavioral futures markets. The goal isn't just to predict behavior but to change it for profit. Within the Manosphere, followers are not just members of a community; they are data sources and targets for behavioral influence. Influencers monetize attention by turning ideological engagement into subscriptions, courses, and digital products.

Zuboff's (2019) idea of "instrumentarian power" sheds more light on this dynamic. Surveillance capitalism aims to influence behavior in ways that benefit companies financially. In the Manosphere, radicalization becomes a gamified and monetized process. Influencers like Andrew Tate don't just push ideas; they cultivate behaviors that generate revenue. Courses, memberships, and affiliate programs teach followers to create content, recruit others, and take part in monetized systems. Radicalization thus gets woven into economic incentives, linking ideological engagement with platform profits.

However, we cannot understand this without also looking at demand. The appeal of the Manosphere relates to the broader context of neoliberal economic changes. Maloney et al. (2024) discuss this appeal using the term "neoliberal heteromasculinity." Economic insecurity, the decline of social safety nets, gig work instability, and rising inequality have undermined traditional views of

masculinity. Many young men find a gap between societal expectations and their economic realities. This structural insecurity creates fertile ground for narratives that promise restored status and control.

Manosphere influencers fill this gap by framing economic insecurity as a result of feminist overreach, rather than failures of neoliberal policies. This narrative simplifies a complex issue, reducing cognitive dissonance and directing frustration toward specific cultural targets. Engaging with Manosphere content becomes both an emotional outlet and a market choice. Influencers offer “solutions” such as courses, supplements, and memberships that promise financial independence and masculine supremacy. The industry thrives on the interplay of algorithm-driven supply and structurally generated demand (Maloney, 2024).

In summary, these dynamics show the Manosphere as more than just an ideological movement; it’s a political and economic system tied to digital capitalism. Its growth is sustained by platform incentives that reward engagement, surveillance practices that turn behavior into profit, and neoliberal conditions that create consumer demand. The issue lies not just in speech, but in the economic system that turns resentment into profit.

This study uses a qualitative critical case study design. Andrew Tate's "Hustler's University" was chosen as the key case because it clearly shows how affiliate marketing drives radicalization in the Manosphere. Data collection spans from January 2022 to December 2023. It includes publicly available digital traces, such as archived clips from TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram, leaked course materials from investigative journalism, and peer-reviewed secondary sources. Thematic analysis helped identify common monetization methods, and the findings were cross-checked across different source types. Limitations include the focus on a single case, which restricts how much we can generalize to other parts of the Manosphere, and the lack of data from private channels, like closed Discord servers.

DISCUSSION

Case Study: The "Hustler" Business Model and the Gamification of Radicalization

These political and economic dynamics are best shown by the business model promoted through Andrew Tate's "Hustler's University." This model uses misogynistic beliefs as a way to generate profit. Having laid out the theoretical background of platform capitalism and algorithmic bias, this paper now shifts to a specific case study that illustrates the "commercialized extremism" model. This case study focuses on Andrew Tate's "Hustler's University," which was later rebranded as "The Real World." While many people often look at Tate through his misogynistic comments or legal issues, this view overlooks the structural changes he brought to the Manosphere. Tate did not just create a following; he established a transnational multi-level marketing (MLM) scheme that used the "attention economy" to make money. This section examines the "Hustler" business model and shows how it turned radicalization from a passive ideological process into an active, gamified job for thousands of young men.

Table 1. Monetization Pathway of Manosphere Radicalization

Stage	Actor/Mechanism	Platform Incentive Aligned	Economic Output
Content production	Influencer (e.g., Andrew Tate) creates high-arousal, misogynistic clips	Algorithm favors controversy (anger/fear = engagement)	Viral reach -> Attention as currency
Affiliate distribution	Followers repost clips with unique affiliate links on TikTok, YouTube, Instagram	Gamified rewards (commissions for clicks/subscriptions)	Unpaid digital labor ("playbor")
Algorithmic amplification	Platform recommendation systems boost high-engagement content	Extended session time -> more data extraction	Manufactured virality (feedback loop)
Monetization	Viewer clicks link -> subscribes to Hustler's	Subscription revenue + behavioral data surplus	Commission paid to affiliate; profit to platform/influencer

	University ($49/month)		
Recruitment as labor	New subscriber joins affiliate program, repeats stage 2	Network effects -> scalable radicalization workforce	Self-sustaining radicalization economy

Source: Author's synthesis based on Haslop et al. (2023) and Srnicek (2017)

Haslop et al. (2023) describe this structure as a clever affiliate marketing system aimed at taking advantage of the algorithmic biases of platforms like TikTok. In 2022, Tate launched "Hustler's University" (HU), an online subscription service that promised to teach young men how to escape the "Matrix," a metaphor for the neoliberal economic status quo, and achieve financial independence. However, as Haslop et al. (2023) show, the main source of revenue was not the educational material but the affiliate program.

New HU subscribers were encouraged to join the "affiliate campus," where they learned to create new accounts on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube to repost controversial clips of Andrew Tate. These students received specific guidelines on how to "game" the algorithm. Haslop et al. (2023) point out that students were taught that controversy equals views. They were rewarded for choosing the most inflammatory, misogynistic, and polarizing parts of Tate's content because those clips were more likely to trigger the "high-arousal" metrics that platforms favor. Each clip contained an affiliate link; if a viewer clicked and subscribed to HU, the student earned a commission.

This structure changed the nature of digital radicalization. In traditional extremist groups, radicalization flows from a leader to followers. In the HU model, the followers became the distribution network. Haslop et al. (2023) argue that this "gamified" the spread of misogyny. Students did not necessarily share Tate's content because they agreed with everything, but because they were financially motivated to do so. Radicalization became a "side hustle." By flooding the internet with millions of clips, this decentralized group of affiliates artificially boosted Tate's visibility, creating a "manufactured virality" that no single

marketing team could replicate. The result was a self-reinforcing cycle: the more controversial the content, the more money the affiliates earned, and the wider the ideology spread (Haslop et al. 2023).

This model changes how we see participation in the Manosphere. It treats it as a kind of digital work. This shift makes it hard to tell the difference between engaging with ideas and being economically taken advantage of. To understand the economic reasoning behind this phenomenon, we must consider Scholz's (2016) ideas of "digital labor" and "crowd-fleecing." Scholz (2016) states that the digital economy relies on the unpaid or underpaid work of users who create the content and data that platforms profit from. In the Manosphere, this exploitative dynamic is particularly pronounced. The thousands of young men editing, tagging, and sharing Tate's videos were engaging in what Scholz (2016) describes as "playbor," a mix of play and work. They thought they were "hustling" to become alpha males, but economically, they were low-paid or unpaid workers in a radicalization content factory.

Scholz (2016) describes "crowd-fleecing" as a system where a platform or entity takes value from a crowd while giving back only a small portion. The HU model fits this description perfectly. While a small number of "top affiliates" made money, most subscribers paid a monthly fee to work for Tate. They paid to join the "War Room" or the "University," providing Tate with steady income from subscriptions while also serving as his free marketing team. This highlights the predatory nature of the Manosphere's business model: it preys on the economic desperation of its target audience. By selling the idea of escaping neoliberal instability, the Manosphere leaders take advantage of that very instability to profit themselves, turning the "angry young man" into a unit of economic output (Scholz 2016).

Table 2. Monetization mechanisms in Hustler's University (2022-2023)

Mechanism	How it works	Reported revenue/scale
Subscription fees	$49/month per user	Estimated 100,000+ subscribers at peak (Forbes, 2022)
Affiliate commissions	10-20% per referral	Top affiliates reportedly earned $8,000+/month (VICE, 2022)
Gamified content creation	Points/rankings for reposting	Over 40,000 active affiliates (Haslop et al., 2023)

Source: Forbes (2022), VICE (2022), Haslop et al. (2023)

Moreover, this dynamic creates a strong barrier to deradicalization. Since the followers' financial hopes are connected to the leader's success and the spread of the ideology, they become financially invested in the radicalization process. Stopping the sharing of misogynistic content means halting their "grind" or "hustle," which, in the group's internal logic, is seen as a failure. Therefore, the business model strengthens the ideological brainwashing, tying individuals to the movement not only through belief but also through the promise of profit (Scholz, 2016; Haslop et al., 2023).

The commercial sophistication of the Manosphere shows in its ability to segment the market. The "Manosphere" is not a single entity; it is a collection of different consumer demographics, each targeted with specific products and narratives. Ging (2017) and Barnes and Karim (2025) outline these subcultures: Incels (Involuntary Celibates), PUAs (Pick-Up Artists), MGTOW (Men Going Their Own Way), and MRAs (Men's Rights Activists). These can be viewed as different "market segments."

Ging (2017) notes that while these groups share a "Red Pill" philosophy—an awakening to the supposed truth of female dominance—they need different value propositions. The PUA segment is sold "skills" and "techniques" for sexual conquest; this market focuses on self-help courses and boot camps. Andrew Tate initially aimed at this demographic but shifted to a broader "Alpha Male" lifestyle brand that appeals to disillusioned men in general. On the other hand, the Incel community, described by Barnes and Karim (2025) as having "low

communitarianism, low interaction," reflects a demographic steeped in "hopelessness." For this group, the product is not about self-improvement; it is about community and validation of their victimhood.

By segmenting the market, Manosphere entrepreneurs broaden their reach. They can sell hope to the PUA, validation to the MRA, and nihilism to the Incel. This product differentiation enables the "industry" to address a wide range of male concerns, from the awkward teenager seeking a girlfriend to the divorced father frustrated with family court systems (Ging, 2017). Barnes and Karim (2025) state that this "constellation" of groups forms a unified political front, but economically, it operates like a diversified media company, ensuring that no potential "customer" misses a customized entry point into the radicalization pipeline.

Finally, describing the Manosphere only as a male-driven industry misses its broader commercial reach. The commercial logic of the Manosphere goes beyond male influencers. It includes gendered performances that increase its market reach. Leidig (2023) shows that the radicalization economy now includes women, particularly through the "Tradwife" phenomenon and female far-right influencers. Leidig (2023) argues that these women play an important role in softening the image of extremism while expanding the market. Just as Tate makes money from male insecurity, female influencers profit from the rejection of modern feminism. They promote an image of domestic submission and traditional gender roles.

Leidig (2023) reveals that these female influencers use the same tactics as their male counterparts in the influencer economy. They rely on brand deals, lifestyle vlogs, and monetized social media engagement. They serve as validators for the Manosphere ideology, providing the female approval that many men in these communities seek. By participating in anti-feminist conversations, they engage with the same algorithmic trends that favor division. This shows that the Manosphere is not only a boys' club but a wider, gender-inclusive industry. It is

a marketplace where gender traditionalism is the product. Anyone willing to follow the script, whether male or female, can profit from resistance to progressive social norms (Leidig, 2023).

This growth into female demographics highlights the strength of the business model. It does not rely on a single group or leader. It is a decentralized system where influencers compete to profit from the same underlying issues. Whether a Tradwife is selling aprons and anti-feminist essays on Instagram or an Alpha Male is offering crypto courses on Discord, the economic logic remains the same: commodifying identity and financializing political division (Leidig, 2023; Haslop et al., 2023).

In summary, the Hustler business model signals a shift in how extremism functions. It replaces secret terror cells with public networks of affiliates. It swaps ideological manifestos for viral TikTok videos. By outsourcing radicalization work to a crowd of unpaid digital laborers (Scholz, 2016) and rewarding them with gamified financial incentives (Haslop et al., 2023), figures like Andrew Tate have built a self-sustaining machine. This machine does not just meet the demand for radical content; it actively creates it, segmenting the market (Ging, 2017) and reaching into new demographics (Leidig, 2023) to increase profits. The outcome is a Transnational Radicalization Industry that is strong, decentralized, and driven by the demands of platform capitalism.

The Failure of Global Governance: Regulating the Unregulatable

Despite its size and international presence, the Manosphere is mostly overlooked in current global governance frameworks. The fast growth and strength of the Manosphere as a global radicalization industry highlight a major failure in today's global governance structure. The earlier sections explained the economic factors behind this issue. This section looks at why governments and international organizations have struggled to address it. The main reason for this problem is a fundamental mismatch. The Westphalian state system focuses on managing territorial entities and structured organizations. In contrast, the

Manosphere functions as a decentralized, digital, non-state network. Using theories of transnational governance and security, this section argues that the Manosphere acts as a harmful non-state actor. It undermines state sovereignty, relies on a regulatory approach that focuses on "speech" instead of "business," and takes advantage of significant gaps in traditional counter-terrorism strategies.

To understand the governance challenge, one must first categorize the actor correctly. Josselin and Wallace (2001) offer a framework for viewing "non-state actors" as more than just harmless NGOs or multinational companies; they also recognize these actors as powerful groups that can challenge state authority. They identify a category of "dark" non-state actors, which includes groups that operate transnationally to avoid national laws and weaken social cohesion. The Manosphere fits this classification well. It operates in the digital "space of flows" and bypasses physical borders and national jurisdictions. Josselin and Wallace (2001) argue that such actors force a re-evaluation of sovereignty since the state loses its ability to control the information and norms entering its borders. When a teenager in Indonesia is radicalized by a British influencer, Andrew Tate, on the Chinese-owned platform TikTok using American servers, the idea of national jurisdiction becomes practically meaningless.

Additionally, Breslin and Nesadurai (2018) emphasize how transnational governance is shaped by the complex interactions between public and private authority. In the case of the Manosphere, governance is privatized; the "rules" come not from governments but from the Terms of Service of private platforms. Breslin and Nesadurai (2018) point out that non-state actors often take advantage of the gaps between these overlapping authorities. The entrepreneurs of the Manosphere engage in what can be called "jurisdictional arbitrage." They host content in countries with strong free speech protections while targeting audiences in nations with stricter hate speech laws. This flexibility allows them to navigate around the slow, bureaucratic processes of state regulation, making the state reactive instead of proactive (Josselin and Wallace, 2001).

A main reason for the failure of governance is the strategic mistake of regulating "speech" instead of the economic "business model." Sander (2019) points out that the main method of digital regulation has been "content moderation." This means putting pressure on platforms to remove specific examples of hate speech or disinformation. This method is based on human rights ideas about freedom of expression. However, Sander (2019) argues that depending on platforms to act as "private judges" of rights is filled with problems. In the context of the Manosphere, content moderation is like playing "Whac-A-Mole." Because the network is decentralized and driven by affiliate marketing, banning one account, such as Andrew Tate's main profile, does little to stop the thousands of affiliate accounts that repost his content. The tool for regulation, censorship, does not match the operational reality of a distributed marketing network.

Furthermore, recent legislative efforts, like the European Union's Digital Services Act (DSA), show the limits of current frameworks. Nannini et al. (2024) explain that while the DSA tries to impose transparency and risk assessments on platforms, it fails to keep up with the changing tactics of disinformation. The Manosphere's use of "dog whistles," irony, and coded language often gets past automated detection systems. Nannini et al. (2024) stress that regulation often focuses on the implementation stage instead of a lively assessment of real-world effects. As long as the key economic incentive, the "engagement" that drives platform profit, stays unregulated, the Manosphere will simply change its language to avoid the new rules. The problem is thus structural: states are trying to solve a problem of platform capitalism, the profit motive, with tools meant for media regulation, such as content removal. This ignores the reality that the platform's business model is closely tied to the radical actors they are tasked with policing (Sander, 2019).

Finally, the Manosphere thrives because it is in a "security blind spot" within global counter-terrorism (CT) efforts. The Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism (2022) reports that standard security frameworks are heavily

focused on male perspectives and hard security threats, which are usually defined as violent, hierarchical terrorist groups like ISIS or Al-Qaeda. Radicalization is often seen as a path to physical violence against the state. However, the Manosphere represents a different type of threat: it is a "soft" security issue that weakens social cohesion and spreads misogynist violence, often in private settings, rather than carrying out dramatic attacks on public infrastructure. Since security agencies are trained to look for bomb plots instead of "digital marketing schemes" or "gender-based hate," the Manosphere mostly operates unnoticed by high-level security systems (Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, 2022).

The report also points out that gender is rarely considered in counter-terrorism strategies. When gender is taken into account, it is usually with women as victims or, more recently, as recruits for groups like ISIS. The Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism (2022) calls for a broader view of how "toxic masculinity" drives radicalization. The Manosphere weaponizes masculinity, portraying it as under threat. Yet security agencies often see this as a "social issue" rather than a security problem. This separation is dangerous. By viewing gendered violence as separate from "real" terrorism, global governance bodies overlook how the Manosphere is radicalizing young men using the same psychological tactics as traditional terrorist groups, but with a commercial aspect that makes it far more widespread.

Moreover, the "lone wolf" aspect of Manosphere-inspired violence makes traditional interventions challenging. Barnes and Karim (2025) note that sub-groups like Incels show "low communitarianism" but strong ideological loyalty, leading to unpredictable acts of violence that are hard to foresee with standard intelligence methods. Security agencies seek networks of command and control, while the Manosphere provides a network of "influence and affiliate." There is no one in charge directing an attack; instead, there are influencers promoting a worldview that makes violence seem inevitable. This decentralized, commercialized setup undermines the effectiveness of the traditional

"decapitation" strategy, which aims to remove leaders, as the market demand continues and new "entrepreneurs" of hate can easily take their place (Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The rise of the Manosphere marks a change in global security. This study uses an International Political Economy approach to show that the Manosphere acts as a Transnational Radicalization Industry within platform capitalism. It makes money from hate through scalable digital systems. The "Hustler" model illustrates how multi-level marketing structures turn ideology into a game. Followers become unpaid digital workers who spread outrage for profit. By taking advantage of the attention economy and algorithmic bias, this type of extremism succeeds by turning emotional engagement into revenue in the data-driven markets of surveillance capitalism.

Importantly, this study highlights a significant failure of global governance in dealing with this hybrid threat. Josselin and Wallace (2001) state that the Manosphere functions as a "dark" non-state actor, using transnational networks to evade the control of individual states. Current regulatory systems, which mainly focus on "content moderation" and managing speech, do not effectively address the problem. As Sander (2019) points out, trying to solve an economic issue with censorship is not effective; banning individual accounts does not work when the underlying "business model" of affiliate radicalization stays in place. Moreover, the gender-neutral approach of traditional counter-terrorism strategies (Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, 2022) often leads security agencies to overlook these decentralized networks until they result in random acts of violence.

Therefore, to tackle this issue, there needs to be a shift from "security policing" to "economic regulation." To break down the Manosphere, global governance organizations should focus on disrupting revenue flows rather than only addressing rhetoric. This means:

- Financial de-platforming – disrupting MLM payment systems and affiliate commissions
- Algorithmic auditing – penalizing platforms whose recommendation systems amplify extremism
- Digital literacy campaigns – teaching users how monetization drives radicalization Nannini et al., 2024).

Ultimately, as long as the digital economy rewards engagement at any cost, radicalization will continue to be a lucrative venture. Recognizing the "political economy of hate" is the first step to reclaiming the digital public space from those who view it as a marketplace for extremism.

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