

In many groups and websites—particularly those focussed on “sexual strategy”¹—rigid definitions of masculinity, femininity, and inherent male and female nature are constructed. Construction of gender in the MRM is founded upon traditional feminist dialogue of the concept of masculinity being “a culturally idealized form”² embodying strength, power, aggression and dominance. To an extent, MRAs construction of gender embraces Connell’s theory of hegemonic (dominant) and unhegemonic (non-dominant) masculinity, unconsciously manipulating this concept in their description of ‘Alpha’ — “socially dominant” men who display “high value” to women — and ‘Beta’ males, described as men who “provid[e] resources or validation” and thus are of “low value to women”³. The popular Movement symbol of the ‘red pill’ and ‘blue pill’, appropriated from popular culture film *The Matrix* (1999), identifies Movement members (‘red pillers’) and the ignorant (‘blue pillers’). This symbolism and language is typically used in close alignment with the Alpha and Beta assignments, with masculine Alpha males emerging from within the MRM, while feminine Beta males are blue-pilled outsiders. This firsthand observation is supported by interviewee Prof. David Buchbinder, PhD., who identifies that “men who refuse membership in such movements may well find themselves stigmatised as incomplete men, failed in their masculinity, or perhaps even feminised”⁴.

This highly traditional application of masculinity dynamics underpins the vast majority of sexual selection discourse, a sticking point of discussion for online MRAs in particular. However, discussion regarding the inherent nature of the sexes often incorporates non-traditional paradigms of female characteristics and behaviours, whereby rather than submissive and pacifistic, “women are often painted as fundamentally materialistic, selfish, dishonest, and vindictive” in a display of “disturbing and blatantly antifeminist and misogynistic views”⁵. The importance of this facet of discourse is correlated by primary data collected in my content analysis⁶ of 21 articles sourced from the Red Pill Reddit forum, which demonstrated 52 instances of constructions of rigid gender behaviours. This quantitative content analysis was performed by coding for specific themes in discourse, relying on subjective interpretation of content. By sampling from a singular site from within the Movement a skewed representation of discourse was evident, particularly as articles contributed to this site are

¹ Anon, 2015. *Updated Glossary of Terms and Acronyms • r/TheRedPill*. [online] reddit. Accessed 23 April 2017, at: <https://www.reddit.com/r/TheRedPill/comments/2zckqu/updated_glossary_of_terms_and_acronyms/>.

² Donaldson, M. (1993). “What Is Hegemonic Masculinity?”. *Theory and Society, Special Issue: Masculinities*, October vol. 22, no. 5, p.643-657

³ Anon, 2015. *Updated Glossary of Terms and Acronyms • r/TheRedPill*. [online] reddit. Accessed 23 April 2017, at: <https://www.reddit.com/r/TheRedPill/comments/2zckqu/updated_glossary_of_terms_and_acronyms/>.

⁴ See Appendix Item D for interview with Prof. Buchbinder

⁵ Berggren, H.; Crowley, J. E. “Book Review: Defiant Dads: Fathers' Rights Activists in America” *Politics & Gender*, September, vol.6, no. 3, pp.497-499

⁶ See Appendix Item B for content analysis

renowned for vitriol and misogyny. That being said, the Red Pill Reddit is the most significant MRM online space, with “141,966 (and counting)”⁷ members. The gendered worldview that women are inherently self-serving and hypergamic by nature is typified by the popular Movement-wide abbreviation ‘AWALT’⁸ — ‘All Women Are Like That’. This construction of female behaviour forms the crux of the Movement argument that women and feminism are responsible for men’s issues. This subtle misogyny is indicative of the palpable sense of victimisation expressed by members of the Movement.

⁷ Marche, S. (2016). ‘Swallowing the Red Pill: a journey to the heart of modern misogyny’. *The Guardian*, April 14, accessed 3 June 2017 from:

<<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/apr/14/the-red-pill-reddit-modern-misogyny-manosphere-men>>

⁸ Anon, 2015. *Updated Glossary of Terms and Acronyms • r/TheRedPill*. [online] reddit. Accessed 23 April 2017, at: <https://www.reddit.com/r/TheRedPill/comments/2zckqu/updated_glossary_of_terms_and_acronyms/>.