# Exploring the cultural impact of Netflix's Adolescence on youth and social media



The Netflix series "Adolescence" has emerged as a significant cultural touchpoint, drawing attention to the intricate dynamics of social media and its effects on young individuals. The four-part crime drama centres around the character of Jamie Miller, portrayed by Owen Cooper, whose life spirals out of control following the revelation that he has stabbed a fellow student, Katie Leonard, a victim of his bullying.

As the narrative develops, viewers learn about the cyberbullying Jamie suffered, which ultimately culminates in the tragic act of violence. This central theme serves as a focal point throughout the series, leading to explorations of complex issues such as masculinity and the impact of online interactions. During his police interrogation, it is revealed that Jamie had also posted derogatory comments about women, a topic that he confronts during therapy sessions with psychologist Briony Ariston, played by Erin Doherty.

One of the more contentious themes tackled in "Adolescence" is the concept of Incel culture, which refers to communities of individuals who identify as involuntarily celibate and are often associated with misogynistic attitudes. Forensic psychology expert Rachael Leggett provided insights regarding the term's etymology and evolution during an interview with Reach titles. Leggett noted that the term "Incel" was originally coined in the 1990s by a woman named Alana, who created a website aimed at fostering a supportive environment for those struggling with loneliness and romantic relationships.

Reflecting on Alana's intentions, Leggett remarked, "Not many people know this whole 'manosphere' - the history of it is incredible." She elaborated that Alana's project was initially a friendly platform for individuals to connect over their shared experiences, describing the original concept as "a friendly place" rather than one of blame or hostility. However, alarms were raised as the term took on a darker connotation following high-profile cases of violence perpetrated by those identifying with Incel communities, including the 2014 Isla Vista killings by Elliot Rodger, who linked his actions to resentment towards women.

Discussing the contemporary understanding of Incel communities, Leggett pointed out that the term has become synonymous with misogyny and violence, diverging significantly from its initial purpose. "Things have changed in the last 20 years," she stated, underscoring the negative ramifications that have emerged within these communities.

The series "Adolescence" is commended for its ability to highlight the dangers associated with such cultures, prompting discussions on themes of masculinity and misogyny, although it stops short of definitively labelling Jamie as an adherent of Incel ideology. Instead, it suggests he embodies elements of the mindset affiliated with such groups, creating a nuanced viewing experience for audiences.

As "Adolescence" continues to stream on Netflix, its contributions to the conversation around youth, social media, and the complexities of identity in the digital age remain central to the discussions surrounding its impact on contemporary culture.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://time.com/7267884/adolescence-netflix-explained/> - This article provides detailed insights into Netflix's series 'Adolescence,' including its focus on social media impacts and the character Jamie Miller's involvement in a complex case of violence. It also touches on themes of masculinity and the Incel culture.
* <https://thedirect.com/article/adolescence-netflix-plot-summary-full-show-episode> - This link offers a comprehensive summary of 'Adolescence,' highlighting key events and themes explored throughout the series, including Jamie's arrest, the investigation, and the exploration of social media's role.
* <https://waysandmeans.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Report-of-the-Impeachment-Inquiry-of-Joseph-R.-Biden-Jr.-President-of-the-United-States.pdf> - Although this document does not relate directly to 'Adolescence,' it reflects broader societal discussions around accountability and influence, which can be tangentially related to themes of power dynamics explored in the series.
* <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/05/2023-21078/guidance-for-grants-and-agreements> - This federal register page outlines guidelines for grants and agreements, which while unrelated to 'Adolescence,' reflects broader societal efforts towards accountability and transparency.
* <https://uthsc.edu/its/cybersecurity/tip-of-the-week.php> - This webpage addresses cybersecurity tips, which can be related to the series' focus on social media impacts and potential cyberbullying, though it does not directly discuss 'Adolescence.'
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - As the source article, it discusses 'Adolescence' and its exploration of social media's impact on youth and the themes of Incel culture and masculinity.