# Netflix’s Adolescence miniseries exposes radicalisation of young men by incel ideology



Netflix’s latest British miniseries, “Adolescence,” has sparked considerable online debate regarding issues related to incels and the wider manosphere. The series follows the story of a 13-year-old boy named Jamie Miller, played by Owen Cooper, who is arrested on suspicion of murdering a female classmate. As detectives investigate the case, they uncover that Jamie has been radicalised by what the BBC describes as “a violent form of incel ideology.”

Co-writer Stephen Graham, who also portrays Jamie’s father in the series, expressed his concerns about the pressures faced by young men globally. In an interview with Netflix, he reflected, “One of our aims was to ask, ‘What is happening to our young men these days, and what are the pressures they face from their peers, from the internet, and from social media?’” The narrative aims to stimulate dialogue on the challenges confronting youth in contemporary society.

The term “incel,” short for “involuntarily celibate,” is used to describe individuals—often male—who are frustrated by their lack of sexual experiences. According to the Anti-Defamation League, the ideology is often marked by extreme misogynistic views, with adherents attributing their romantic failures to women and societal structures. A 2022 research paper highlighted that incels tend to promote violence and inhabit a broader ‘manosphere’ movement, which includes a spectrum of male supremacist beliefs.

Research indicates that incels often view society through a “looks-based hierarchy,” wherein attractive individuals are positioned at the top. This reinforces a culture of envy and resentment among those who identify as incels. The ideology promotes a sense of sexual entitlement among its followers, who believe that they are unjustly denied romantic opportunities due to what they perceive as a superficial society.

The manosphere, as defined by sources such as USA Today, encompasses a variety of online platforms that advocate for male supremacy and traditional gender roles. Within this digital space, incels are considered to be its most volatile element, with many encountering content that fosters radicalism and deep-rooted misogyny. Notable figures within the manosphere include social media personalities like Andrew Tate, who have garnered significant followings and influence.

While the vast majority of those who engage with manosphere content do not resort to violence, certain high-profile incidents have drawn unsettling connections between incel beliefs and acts of mass violence. Incidents such as Elliot Rodger’s 2014 shooting in California and a van attack in Toronto in 2018 resulted in serious casualties and were linked to individuals espousing incel ideologies.

The series “Adolescence” explores how incel ideology can quietly infiltrate the lives of young men, highlighting the role of social media in this process. Detective Superintendent Jane Corrigan, the Met Police’s Prevent co-ordinator in London, noted the importance of parental awareness regarding these ideas, stating, “While it is still only a very small proportion of young people who may actually be affected, parents must not be fooled into thinking that this is something that only happens to others.”

In addition to the impact of social media, the series illustrates how young people use coded language and symbols to communicate their beliefs, exemplified through conversations among characters about specific emojis and phrases popularised within the manosphere. Jamie’s peers use symbols to label him as an incel, revealing how these ideologies can circulate in schools.

“Adolescence” aims not only to entertain but also to educate. As reported by the Deseret News, plans are in place for the miniseries to be streamed in British schools, which is intended to spark conversations among students about the potential dangers associated with adopting extremist beliefs. Co-writer Jack Thorne indicated that their objectives exceeded expectations, hoping that it would facilitate discussions both among teachers and students.

The unfolding narrative of “Adolescence” renders a nuanced portrayal of the challenges confronting young men and the insidious nature of radical ideologies like those espoused by incels, prompting audiences to consider the implications of these issues in today's society.

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

## Bibliography

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