

Ellen Batty

Professor Davis

ENG121

December 6 2024

When Beauties Despise the Beasts

The women of today's society are repulsed by the very thing they once desired most: being in a relationship with a man. Societally, marriage and love are prominent and desired for humankind. Even in fairytales, true love is often the remedy against evil. However, a recent drastic shift in society has deterred women from seeking out these romantic relationships, leaving an epidemic of loneliness among the male population. A Pew Research Center analysis of census data found that in 2019, 38% of adults aged 25 to 54 were unpartnered, which is 29% more than in 1990. Men are more likely than women to be single, which is a drastic change from 30 years ago (Fry et al). This is due to a cycle of combatting misogyny with misandry and vice versa. Emily Kendall, a researcher and writer for Britannica states how misogynistic thought is believed to date back to ancient times (Kendall). Philosopher Thales states how one of the attributes he is grateful for is that he was born a man and not the misfortune that is a woman. As time continued, the patriarchal society encouraged women to only occupy roles that support men and not attempt to advance themselves or pursue any ambitions (Kendall). Although women's rights and expectations in America improved drastically in the 20th century, being able to vote, joining the workforce, etc., many women a century later continue to face backlash for taking on roles that challenge men.

Thus began the radical feminism movement, meant to combat this misogyny opting for men to change. However, it resulted in an anti-men movement (Kendall). Threatened by this, men created modern anti-women media to degrade women, in an attempt for men to regain their

patriarchal dominance. These harmful pieces of media influence younger men to act superior to and dehumanize women. This discourages women from wanting to pursue a relationship with men. Because of our concern over male emotional needs and mental health in generation Z and millennials, men should stop listening to and being influenced by anti-women media to become better men, which will attract women and create stronger relationships, ultimately fixing the current male loneliness epidemic

As a response to the radical-feminist movement, many men turn to new male-focused media that encourages the reclamation of traditional patriarchy through misogyny. One of these includes a subsection of media created by anti-feminist men, or “incels” named the “Manosphere.” Researcher Bharath Ganesh describes the Manosphere as “an antifeminist coalition of men’s rights activists, bloggers, pickup artists and alleged experts in sexual strategy...” (34). These activists take on a social media presence, often making appearances in internet videos and podcasts. While the content of these videos is evolving, Sara Brzuszkiewicz notes three ideological pillars that remain constant among these men: self-perception and identity, views of gender relations and misogyny, and the belief of uselessness in being kind of women (5). Unlike Aristotle, these men’s superiority comes from a conceived victimhood, in which sexuality is now entirely controlled by women, causing men to be systematically rejected. This mentality undermines and ignores the entire reason for the feminist movement: to combat the lack of respect towards women. These men believe women are innately “promiscuous and suggestible creatures who are fascinated by social status, handsomeness, money, and charisma and are unwilling to appreciate kindness and sensibility” (5). This outlook on women implies there is not a point of going through the “effort” of being kind to women, as they will inevitably fall for men solely based on their outward attractiveness and materialistic value.

This mindset creates a platform for men to replace kindness, human decency, and respect towards women with offensive and violent attitudes, as being kind will have no effect on attracting a potential partner (Brzuszkiewicz 5). The media from these Manosphere content creators are highly influential among men, forming an unhealthy mindset within them. This mindset is dangerous, as it creates an unkind and dangerous society for women. Theologian Dr. Jordan B. Cooper states, “a lot of these guys aren’t looking to get married, but they want to sleep with a lot of women” (20:41-2). Marriage, from a Christian standpoint, indicates love and respect towards a partner within sexuality, hence why it is taught to remain a virgin until marriage. These influencers that are preaching to men have no respect towards women and only see them as a disposable object for sexual pleasure. Cooper states, “In some ways they’re like the most obsessed with the acceptance from other men” (20:54). Other men are praising this mindset against women and see a promiscuous man as powerful. Focusing on what other men deem attractive rather than what a woman finds attractive deters women away from courtship. Women being lusted over and treated with little respect in addition to men focusing on wealth, looks, and status over personality, discourages women from wanting a relationship with men, thus, spreading the male loneliness epidemic.

One may argue that creating an anti-patriarchy would ultimately make the male loneliness epidemic worse. Especially as in the 1990s, where traditional gender roles were more prominent, statistically, more men were married. However, the primary issue is not the lack of traditional values, but rather the lack of choice and rights. Feminism was initially created to allow women to choose what lifestyle they would prefer (being a housewife, a career, both, etc.) and receive the same human rights as men. However, as women started to receive disrespect from men despite these changes, it invoked a need for radicalness, which resulted in hatred

towards men. This new hate threatened the men and caused them to revolt via anti-women media and a push on the misogynistic mindset. Despite this attempt to regain power, a society where women are deemed to be worth less than men is just as destructive as the radical feminist society in which women disregard the male existence and contribution. The solution is not a male nor female dominated society, but rather a society with equality ideals and humanizing media that associates attraction with kindness and respect. Echoing this point, Gordon Graham states, “Those who have suffered serious inequality of treatment will not be raised to equality merely by an open door policy; past disadvantages may, as a matter of fact, make them unable to walk through the open door” (157). In other words, despite equal rights being given to women, they will remain having a disadvantage in society, unless men offer kindness and respect. With true equality through social norms, there will not be a need for radical, man-hating feminism, and thus more women will be inclined to pursue relationships with men, ultimately fixing the male loneliness epidemic.

Other people argue that a patriarchy is necessary for a country to develop, as women will refuse to have children while being in the workforce. The statistics of South Korea as women had an average of 5.95 babies in 1960, where the participation rate of women in the workforce was 38%, in comparison to 2022, where women are having an average of 0.78 babies with a 55.8% participation rate (World Bank). However, the issue does not reside in women joining the workforce, but rather how women are treated after childbirth. According to Li Ma, “Most women face career challenges upon labor force return after childbirth. The timing of return is essential for career development; a longer break from work may permanently damage a woman’s employment and earnings profile” (516). Women are not refusing to have children because they are preoccupied with work, but to preserve their employment opportunities. It is societally

expected in South Korea that women have children soon after marriage and that *they* are the ones to stay home to care for the child. While this system has nothing inherently wrong with it, it becomes distasteful when women face adversities in their place of work. Women go through the same amount of schoolwork during college as men do in hopes of obtaining a good career. Since all that work and ambition will go to waste after having children, women are less inclined to get married. If women were still treated fairly in employment as men are, more women would pursue men and overall decrease the male singleness in South Korea and other developing countries.

The primary cause of these societal mindsets and expectations stem from media consumption. Harmful media has been prominent in men since childhood. One piece of media, the classic short story *Beauty and the Beast*, is often used as an example of the “logic of misogyny” or the justification from men as to why women are inferior. Shannan Palma writes, “Note that the Beast is made involuntarily celibate by the wicked fairy’s actions...no woman will have him. By the end of the tale, Beauty’s care and sacrifice for the men in her life are shown to be key to those men’s very survival” (324). *Beauty and the Beast* revolves around a man cursed with unattractiveness in which the only cure is if Beauty cares for and loves the Beast, despite his form, before time runs out. This high-stakes dynamic exemplifies the idea that men require and are entitled to women’s care, nurturing, and attractiveness receptivity. Modern day media are more conspicuous with its misogynistic language and themes. Rap lyrics and music videos, for example, features the normalization of oppressive ideas about women. Scholars Terri M. Adams and Douglas B. Fuller write that in rap lyrics “women (specifically African American women) are reduced to mere objects – objects that are only good for sex and abuse and are ultimately a burden to men” (940). These overtones in lyrics are seen as empowering to men, as the music

artists behind them, such as Dr. Dre, Ice T, Snoop Dogg, and Ice Cube mentioned in the article, are successful and admired deeply for their works. These celebrities, much like the influencers behind the modern Manosphere, glorify having a misogynistic lifestyle. Men aspire to have the sexual freedom, riches, and fame of these celebrities and thus will mimic the misogynistic actions and ideals of them.

The primary solution to the male loneliness epidemic, is to fix the media consumed by the modern man. Media consumption has lasting effects on mindset and actions. For example, scholar Jane D. Brown writes how explicitly sexual content has increased from half of television programs to almost two thirds, from 1990s to 2000s. Thus, as a result, the public in the 2000s became more open about their sexuality and found talk of the topic less taboo among adolescents (42-3). This contrasts with the 1990s, where sex was deemed by young people to be disgusting. Just as the mindset of these adolescents evolved, so can the mindset of men today. Men need to consume media that portrays women as equals and as people so the mindset in which they perceive women switches to a kinder, more desirable one.

While there is plenty of films and novels in which women are portrayed as strong individuals deserving of respect and love, the primary piece of media men should consume is the Holy Bible, which directly tells men how to treat women. Scripture states, “Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them” (Colossians 3:19, ESV). This directly tells men to not be unkind to their wives, which directly contradicts to the Manosphere teachings of showing disrespect towards women. A mindset in which men hold a high regard for women is much more desirable and thus will attract said women into pursuing a romantic relationship.

To fix the male loneliness epidemic, men need to stop being influenced by misogynistic media and start consuming pro-women mediums. While society has been tainted for years, all

hope is not lost. Once men realize that, if women are treated with respect and kindness they are entitled to by men, in return, women will start to court with men again. After all, it is the chivalry, protection, and kindness of true masculinity women require that produces the lovingness, nurturing, and softness of femininity men desire.

Works Cited

- Adams, Terri M., and Douglas B. Fuller. "The Words Have Changed But the Ideology Remains the Same: Misogynistic Lyrics in Rap Music." *Journal of Black Studies*, vol. 36, no. 6, 2006, pp. 938–57. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40034353>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.
- Brown, Jane D. "Mass Media Influences on Sexuality." *The Journal of Sex Research*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2002, pp. 42–45. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3813422>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.
- Brzuszkiewicz, Sara. *Incel Radical Milieu and External Locus of Control*. International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2020. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep29445>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.
- Fry, Richard, and Kim Parker. "Rising Share of U.S. Adults Are Living Without a Spouse or Partner." *Pew Research Center*, 5 October 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2021/10/05/rising-share-of-u-s-adults-are-living-without-a-spouse-or-partner/>. Accessed 6 December 2024.
- Ganesh, Bharath. "The Ungovernability of Digital Hate Culture." *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 71, no. 2, 2018, pp. 30–49. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26552328>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.
- Graham, Gordon. "Liberal vs Radical Feminism Revisited." *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1994, pp. 155–70. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24353977>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.
- Kendall, Emily. "misogyny." *Britannica*, 23 November 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/misogyny>. Accessed 6 December 2024.
- Ma, Li. "Economic Crisis and Women's Labor Force Return after Childbirth: Evidence from South Korea." *Demographic Research*, vol. 31, 2014, pp. 511–52. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26350072>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.

Palma, Shannan. "Entitled to a Happy Ending: Fairy-Tale Logic from 'Beauty and the Beast' to the Incel Movement." *Marvels & Tales*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2019, pp. 319–37. *JSTOR*,

<https://doi.org/10.13110/marvelstales.33.2.0319>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2024.

The World Bank. "WDI - People." *World Bank*, 2024, <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/themes/people.html>. Accessed 6 December 2024.