



REPORT

Antifeminism Online

Misogyny, Toxic Masculinity and the Enemy Image of
“Feminism”

September 2025

Antifeminist attitudes are widespread on social media. They are derogatory to hostile towards women and female-identified people, their rights and equality. Young users are quickly confronted with misogynistic content on TikTok, YouTube or Instagram, ranging from patriarchal role models and the devaluation of women to fantasies of violence and murder. Misogynistic influencers want to return to a supposedly traditional world with “real men”; antifeminist influencers romanticize submissiveness and their own ideas of “true femininity”. Antifeminism can not only convey problematic gender images but also act as a gateway to extremist worldviews.

Antifeminism as a hate ideology on social media

Antifeminism is used as an umbrella term for various forms of hatred and ideologies of inequality. These include (heteronormative) sexism, familism¹, and queerphobia. Antifeminism is based on patriarchal² gender roles and rejects feminism, which questions this supposed fundamental order. This can manifest itself in misogynistic or anti-women attacks and messages.

In social media, antifeminism and its misogynistic manifestations are not a marginal phenomenon, but part of everyday life – even beyond extremist niches and actors. This ranges from general statements about traditional femininity and misogynistic jokes about pick-up artists and “manfluencers” to sexist insults. Female or female-identified politicians and activists are deliberately devalued in a sexist manner.³ Antifeminist views can also be based on religion or even – perhaps unconsciously – spread by women and girls themselves.

Despite their different orientations and affiliations, antifeminist actors propagate similar images of women and narratives.

They view feminism and women's emancipation as something negative that must be stopped. They cling to traditional role models and the idea of a natural inequality between the sexes.

Research on antifeminism online

The jugendschutz.net research on antifeminism in social media took place from May to July 2025. The aim was to develop an overview of antifeminist content, forms of dissemination and communication, and narratives.

As part of the research, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube – digital services frequently used by children and young people (see the 2024 JIM Study) – were reviewed. Other popular platforms used by young people, such as 9Gag, Telegram, Discord and Spotify, were also consulted. Around 5,000 posts were reviewed during the research. These were primarily videos, images and comments, as well as audio material. Innocuous search terms such as 'dating', charged keywords such as 'abortion', and relevant terms such as misogynistic expressions or scene codes (e.g. from the incel ideology) were used in the research.

¹ Familism is a concept based on the family with the traditional role models of mother, father, and child as the guiding form and fundamental unit of social order.

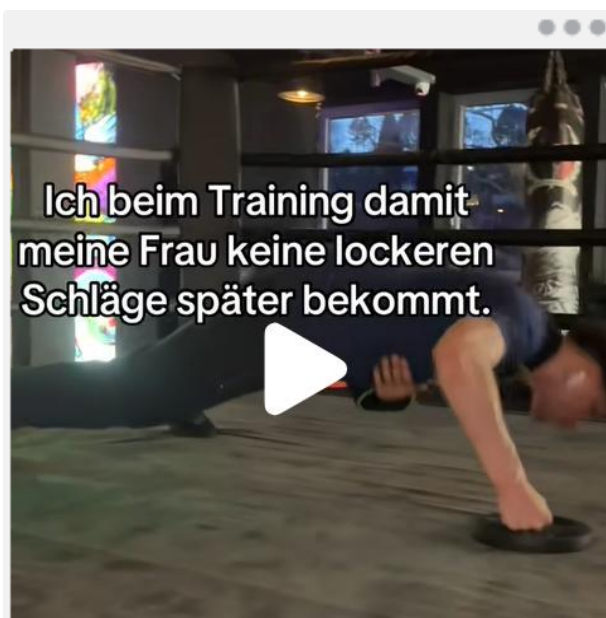
² Patriarchy refers to a power relationship in which men occupy a privileged position.

³ For more information, see the jugendschutz.net report [Hass gegen junge Klimaaktivist:innen](#) („Hatred towards young climate activists”).

Not all criticism of feminism is automatically antifeminist or misogynistic. However, boundaries are crossed when women, female-identified individuals, or trans* persons are excluded from equal participation in society, and their fundamental rights or equality are called into question. This is particularly true when such exclusion is carried out in a systematic and structured manner.

Manosphere: women as objects of sex and hatred

The so-called “manosphere” refers to a “male sphere” in certain niches and in mainstream social media, in which men portray themselves as victims of feminism and systematically disadvantaged. They long for a hierarchical gender order in which men are “leaders” and women are subordinate. Young men find clear explanations for their own perceived inadequacies, toxic recommendations for action, and role and identity models that enhance their self-image.

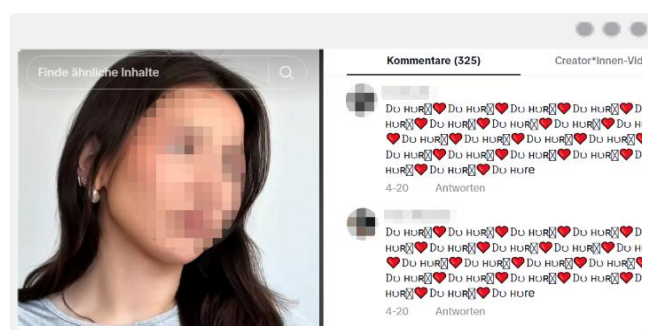


On profiles of fitness influencers, violence against women is becoming an amusing trend (“I train so that my wife doesn't get hit with weak punches”).
(Source: TikTok)

Many misogynistic and sexist posts do not necessarily stem from an ideological opposition to women's rights or equality. However, a common derogatory image of women is shared and cultivated. Women are considered to be fundamentally unfaithful, devious and promiscuous, and are subjected to gender-based insults, including in humorous content such as memes.

High-profile examples of the online devaluation of women from mainstream social media can be found in the context of YouTuber Mois' separation from his ex-wife. After she publicly announced on Instagram that domestic violence was one of the reasons for the separation, Mois responded with misogynistic insults and massive hate speech against her. Users joined in.

A video in which Mois admits to violence against her and expresses relief that he did not kill her has been shared widely and continues to be shared today. In the comments, the term “Kahba” (Arabic for “prostitute”) quickly became the YouTuber's trademark and developed into a misogynistic buzzword unrelated to the case. In supposedly humorous posts, there is talk of shooting women with the “Kahba rifle.”



The ex-wife of YouTuber Mois is being called a “whore” online by loads of people.
(Source: TikTok; original unpixelated)

Women as objects in male competition for sex

Actors in the manosphere operate on the basic assumption that men have a right to sex. They see themselves confronted with a supposedly anti-male feminism that denies them this alleged right. Therefore, they argue, “real men” are needed once again to take control of the situation. In contrast, many men today are “losers”, which makes them not only weak but also unattractive to women. Men should be dominant, physically fit, and financially successful, because this would automatically lead to (at least) one pretty and traditionally submissive woman. Such masculine “superiority” is justified by evolution: certain characteristics are said to be in the nature of men.



“Despite ‘no’ ...”: Predatory behavior and manipulation to get sex are sold as successful techniques.
(Source: YouTube; original unpixelated)

Self-proclaimed “manfluencers”, “dating coaches”, or “pick-up artists” usually see themselves as “alphas” at the top of such a hierarchical gender image and as experts in dating, flirting, and “picking up” women based on their supposed deep insight into the female psyche. Some of them offer personal counseling services for a fee.

Their supposed dating tips are actually emotional manipulation techniques designed to make women sexually compliant. Women are thus degraded to objects in men's sexual competition. Furthermore, a derogatory image of them is portrayed. According to this image, they should submit to men and not criticize them, because the sooner they accept male superiority, the sooner this will lead to a happy relationship.

In many cases, such guides share misogynistic patterns of interpretation, such as the different assessment of the “body count”: while a high number of women with whom men have sexual intercourse is interpreted positively as a greater wealth of experience, a woman's value decreases as her “body count” rises.

Incel ideology: Open misogyny and violent fantasies

While “manfluencers” and “pick-up artists” see themselves as participants in a competition for sex with women, so-called “incels” believe they have already lost this supposed competition. “Incel” stands for involuntarily celibate. While “alphas” are at the top of the male hierarchy, “incels” imagine themselves to be at the bottom: they believe they belong to the defined group of men that women find unattractive due to their appearance or low economic status.

From the incel perspective, feminism is partly to blame for their misery: it has empowered women socially to such an extent that it poses a threat to the quasi-natural masculine dominance, thereby denying them a sex and relationship life.

This mixture of subjectively perceived rejection and threat gives rise to the male victim role in incel ideology, in which hatred and violence against women are portrayed as self-defense and feminism and female emancipation are considered the declared enemy.

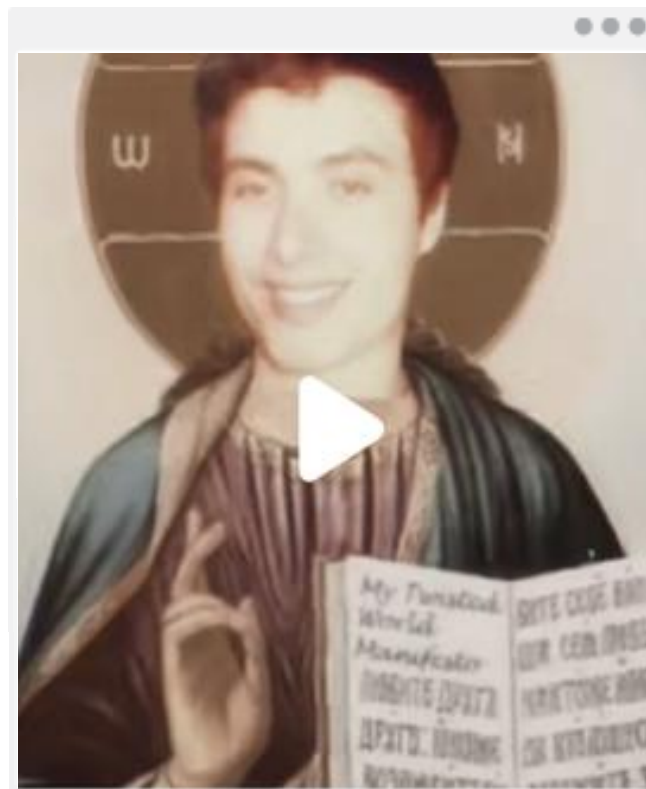
Their misogyny manifests itself in the demonization and radical dehumanization of women. Incel terms such as “foid” and “femoid” declare women (females) to be androids, i.e., robots. In relevant incel forums, women are sometimes even degraded as “hole” or “toilet”.

Although the seriousness behind this does not always seem apparent, because there is a lot of trolling and [shitposting](#) in the incel scene, incels glorify sexualized violence against women or even femicide. Antifeminist rampage killers and misogynistic terrorists such as [Elliot Rodger](#) and Marc Lépine are glorified and stylized as heroes or saints. jugendschutz.net found corresponding posts on TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and other platforms.

Some incels also express their misogyny through music. On Spotify, jugendschutz.net found several playlists and songs that could potentially be harmful to minors, which severely devalue and dehumanize women or share violent fantasies against them, including femicide. Where German parties responsible were identified, steps were taken to initiate regulatory proceedings in these cases.

However, despite how extreme such content may be, jugendschutz.net found no evidence of the incel subculture being openly active or networking on services popular with young people, such as TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube. Instead, this type of content can be found on relevant forums and image boards, as well as on alternative platforms such as Telegram. Nevertheless, elements of the incel ideology, such as the terms “alpha” and “red pill”⁴, have become widespread in the mainstream. Thus, a numerically small antifeminist subculture is having an impact and becoming compatible with web and youth culture, effectively becoming normalised.

⁴ In reference to the science fiction film *The Matrix*, the “red pill” in incel ideology, but also in right-wing extremist conspiracy circles, stands for seeing through social blindness or facing the “truth”. In the incel context, this means that women supposedly use feminism to dominate and oppress men.



In the incel subculture, misogynistic murderers and rampage killers like Elliot Rodger are glorified as “saints”. (Source: TikTok)

Religiously motivated antifeminism

Ideas of male superiority are sometimes based on religion – for example, among Islamists and Christian influencers (“Christfluencers”, see below). Women are said to have a God-given role as housewives and mothers, and are therefore caring, relationship-oriented, and family-oriented. Men, on the other hand, are called by God to lead: according to a Christian influencer in his podcast, masculinity has been “designed to make decisions”. Men are considered “fact-oriented”, while women are considered “simple-minded” and “emotional,” which is why they need male guidance and leadership and must submit to it by divine nature.

Islamist actors in particular claim, with reference to religious writings, that it is a woman's duty to satisfy her husband, serve him, and be available to him, including sexually. They are considered potentially sinful or infantile.



According to Salafist preachers – here Ibrahim El-Azzazi – women have different rights and duties than men. (Source: TikTok)

Feminism challenges this religiously based patriarchal division of roles and attributions. Accordingly, Christians and Islamists reject it or even demonize it as a threat to salvation. Feminist concerns that demand a free, self-determined choice for or against children and marriage or certain role models are considered incompatible with the divine mandate to the sexes. In some cases, fear-based education is used: the reason why more women than men would end up in hell is, for example, that many women do not obey their husbands and criticize them too much.

Emancipated women are selfish and “far removed from love” – whereby love is equated with subordination. Their obedience to men is divinely commanded.

It becomes particularly problematic in cases where young people are indoctrinated. Formats such as podcasts on YouTube featuring fashionably dressed, attractive male Christian influencers and headlines in youth slang (“Green Flags in Women”) appeal particularly to young people. In these, girls are manipulated into wanting affection and love. Among other things, popular TikTok short videos in which Salafist influencers briefly answer followers' questions can cause boys to develop or reinforce problematic ideas of inequality. For example, that women should always be available or that physical punishment is legitimate in cases of “disobedience.”

„True femininity“: antifeminist influencers

Antifemism is not purely a male phenomenon: women also speak out against emancipation and equality on social media, adopting similar gender stereotypes to male antifeminists, but specifically addressing a female audience. They offer young women clear instructions on how the “ideal woman” should behave in order to be happy and to please boys and young men. In some cases, they exert moral or religious pressure on young women to renounce feminist causes.

This applies, for example, to the converted Muslim woman Hanna Hansen, who, in accordance with the Salafist view, spreads antifeminist messages and uses threatening rhetoric to brand emancipation and feminism as “wrong” and as tools of the devil to lead women astray from the right path. Young, devout girls and women in particular are targeted and intimidated in this way through their fear of hell.

Tradwives and Christfluencers: antifeminism in beauty looks

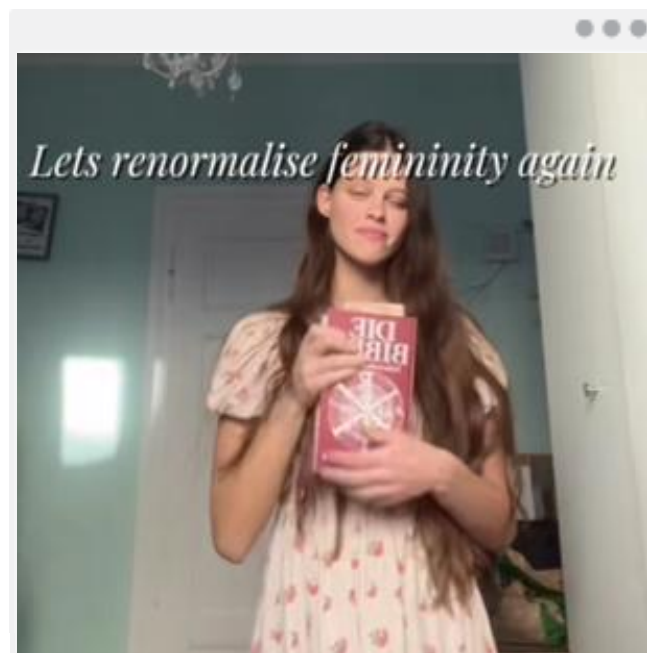
The so-called “tradwife”⁵ movement enjoys great popularity on social media. Young women present themselves on social media as traditional wives and romanticize a lifestyle as a housewife, wife, and mother, which is based on the corresponding ideal of the 1950s.

In German-speaking countries, well-known “tradwives” have tens of thousands of followers, and their videos are viewed hundreds of thousands, even millions of times. They feature highly aestheticized retro styles in terms of clothing, hairstyles, and makeup, and focus on baking, cooking, cleaning, and how to keep their husbands completely satisfied. The message is that giving up a career and serving at home makes you happy and “free.”

There is some overlap here with the group of Christfluencers, who also present themselves as happy, attractive, and stylish young women and promote a subordinate role for women, but justify this on Christian religious grounds. Women and girls receive tips from such influencers on self-optimization and “proper” womanhood according to their point of view. Strict, binary views of gender and rules about what a woman can and cannot do are combined with beauty and lifestyle topics, sometimes even concealed.

Gender differences, career sacrifice, and the subordination of women are presented as timeless truths on the channels of tradwives and Christian influencers. Time and again, women are urged to renounce feminism, as it is considered a misguided belief or a wrong path that alienates women and makes them unhappy.

Instead, young women are offered an alternative and encouraged to live “true femininity”: By relinquishing control to men, they would ostensibly free themselves from the excessive demands and pressure to perform that an emancipated image of women places on them. Accordingly, social media posts are tagged with hashtags such as #femininitynotfeminism.



Tradwives as happy housewives who want to bring back or “normalize” “true femininity”.
(Source: TikTok)

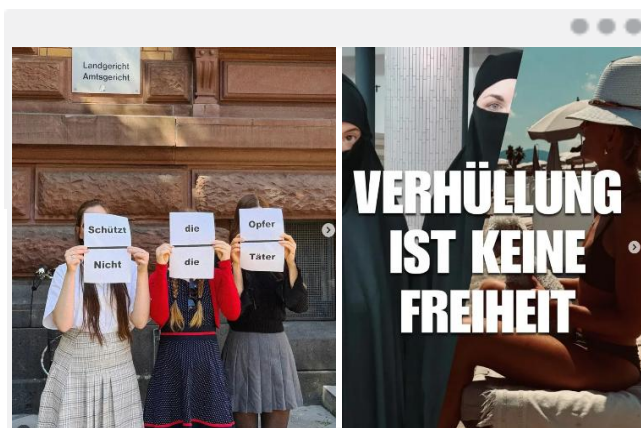
„Remigration” agitation disguised as activism against femicide

Right-wing extremist influencers on social media advocate their own, often nationalistic form of counter-feminism: women are emancipated as equal “patriotic” activists (e.g., in martial arts training) or as mothers who bear as many children as possible with “German” men in order to preserve the German people (see below). At the same time, feminist positions are used to brand Islamic culture as backward and incompatible with German culture.

⁵ For more information on tradwives and extreme right-wing images of women, see the jugendschutz.net article [Frauendarstellungen in rechtsextremer Online-Propaganda](#) (“Depictions of women in far-right online propaganda”).

As “strong women”, they also advocate for so-called “homeland security”. In doing so, they reinforce racist stereotypes and prejudices against migrant and refugee men, especially those from the Middle East and North Africa. These men are portrayed as potential sex offenders, “knife men”, and quasi-culturally conditioned murderers of women – often in the context of the far-right narrative of a supposed foreign infiltration of Germany.

Influencers such as those in the “Lukreta” group present themselves as activists against femicide and violence against women. They do this with the aim of promoting a right-wing extremist and right-wing populist “remigration” agenda: male refugees are held solely responsible for the rising rate of femicide, and such acts are exploited for propaganda purposes. As a measure against violence against women, they call for a tightening of asylum laws and deportations. Misogyny and related assaults and homicides by other, for example, German perpetrator groups are ignored. In this way, solidarity among women as victims of violence and their right to equal treatment and safety are exploited politically and ideologically.



„Feminist“ anti-Muslim propaganda and protests against violence in the name of “remigration” (“Protect the victims, not the perpetrators” / Veiling is not freedom”).
(Source: Instagram)


Antifeminism opens the door to various forms of extremism

Antifeminism is not only an ideology of rejection in its own right, but also a component of various forms of extremism. Like other shared narratives and enemy images (e.g., in anti-Semitism), antifeminism not only forms a bridge or interface between right-wing extremism and Islamism, for example: it offers a connection or access to the respective extremist, sometimes conspiracy-believing world of ideas, and this also applies to young people who are receptive to sexist patterns of thought, for example.

In right-wing extremist circles, feminism is a battle cry used against diversity, non-discrimination, and equality. Mothers are described as “the most feminine of all women”. Strong women are those for whom “true equality” means respecting and valuing supposedly natural differences and traditional family values. Anyone who does not conform to this binary conception of gender and roles, and the associated reproductive mindset, is attacked as “selfish”, “gender confused”, or “degenerate”.

In this context, antifeminism is closely intertwined with queerphobia and transphobia⁶. Trans* women in particular are seen as an expression of supposed “gender madness” and a provocation to the supposedly natural gender order. This is evident, among other things, in the far-right and right-wing populist campaign of “Pride Month”, in which love of one's homeland is propagated as a deliberate counterpoint to Pride Month and thus against the commitment to the acceptance of LGBTIQ* people and their rights.

⁶ For more information on anti-LGBTQ narratives in social media, see the jugendschutz.net report [Queerfeindlichkeit online](https://www.jugendschutz.net/queerfeindlichkeit-online).



According to right-wing extremists, feminism reduces “ethnic” birth rates, contributes to “foreign infiltration” through migration, and thus enables population „[replacement](#)“. Through the propagation and imposition of “gender ideology,” the family as the last bastion of social stability is being undermined. This reveals the connections between right-wing extremism, racism, and antifeminism, specifically also in the incel subculture. In his livestream during the attack, the Halle attacker (2019) justified his actions by claiming, among other things, that feminism was the cause of declining birth rates and thus a gateway for migration. Here, as in similar acts of violence, the line between right-wing and antifeminist terrorism is blurred.

However, it is not only right-wing extremists, but also Islamist political activists who hold queer-hostile views toward a supposed “gender ideology” and see feminism as part of a conspiracy. As part of an anti-Muslim agenda of the “West”, demands for equality between men and women are seen as “Europe's weapon against Muslims” and are deliberately directed against their values and identity.⁷ Antifeminism is thus interpreted in Islamism, as in right-wing extremism, as a position of resistance or defensiveness.

Antifeminist content from the perspective of youth media protection


During its research, jugendschutz.net came across content that could potentially harm the development of children and young people. In isolated cases, potential instances of obvious serious harm to young people were identified, such as acts of violence against women being promoted as a necessary means to an end, or well-known antifeminist murderers being glorified as role models or “saints”.

In general, the development of minors is endangered or impaired when fundamental values of social coexistence, such as equality and mutual respect, are neglected. This can also be the case when women are disregarded and degraded for the purpose of amusement, but especially when violence against women is trivialized, justified, or even encouraged.

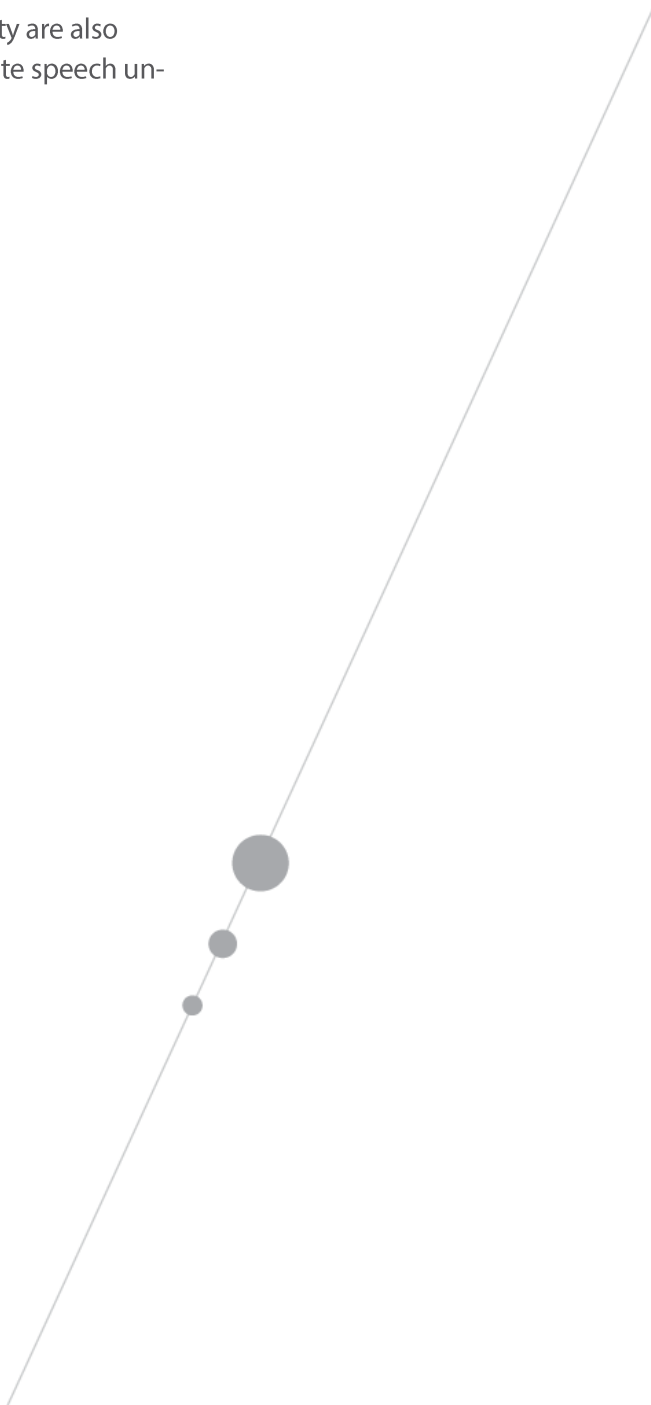
Content that promotes gender inequality and presents it as 'natural' or 'God-given' is particularly problematic. In principle, conservative and religiously fundamentalist notions of masculinity and femininity are also protected by freedom of expression and religion. However, when these ideas and role models are presented as absolute truths, relying on fear-based pedagogy and devaluing, demonising or antagonising other people, they can have a negative effect on children and young people. This applies not only to the formation and reinforcement of sexist or gender-related views in boys, but also to the formation of feelings of inferiority in girls. They may become concerned that they will be the target of misogynistic attacks or be regarded merely as sexual prey because of their gender. In a religious context, they may feel that they are "sinful". Queer or trans* people may feel excluded, unaccepted and potentially attacked by anti-feminist thinking.

Antifeminism in social media is a problem, not least because of its partial subtlety, broad appeal, and everyday presence in the mainstream. On services popular with young people, misogynistic or antifeminist content is often disseminated in humorous contexts or forms, as part of online trends, or casually and without any clear ideological reference. Young users may not recognize them as problematic, accept them uncritically, experience them as “normal,” and spread them further. In this way, resentment toward women and their equality is reproduced and perpetuated, ultimately making right-wing populist worldviews and extremist hate messages more acceptable.

⁷ For more information on Islamist propaganda online, see the jugendschutz.net report [Islamistisches Influencing](#).



This can be countered by raising awareness of misogynistic and sexist interpretations and promoting critical thinking and possible courses of action. This also applies to the option of reporting such content to the relevant service providers, as attacks on individuals based on their gender or gender identity are also considered an unacceptable form of hate speech under the terms of use of many services.



Further information



www.jugendschutz.net

Report violations at



www.jugendschutz.net/en/make-a-report

About jugendschutz.net

jugendschutz.net serves as the joint competence center of the federal government, the states and state media authorities for the protection of children and young people on the internet. jugendschutz.net looks closely at dangers and risks in internet services specifically popular among young people. The centre works to ensure that violations of youth protection laws are removed and urges providers and operators to design their content in a way that allows children and young people to use the internet free of troubles.

The German youth ministries founded jugendschutz.net in 1997. The tasks were laid down in the Interstate Treaty on the Protection of Minors (JMStV) in 2003. Since then jugendschutz.net has been organizationally linked to the Commission for the Protection of Minors in the Media (KJM). In 2021, the Federal Government also assigned jugendschutz.net a statutory mandate in the Protection of Young Persons Act (JuSchG).

The work of jugendschutz.net is funded by the Supreme Youth Protection Authorities of the federal states, the state media authorities and the Federal Ministry for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the European Union. jugendschutz.net runs a hotline accepting reports about violations of youth media protection laws.



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