JOURNAL FOR DERADICALIZATION

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

The Radicalisation of Masculinity: A social work perspective on understanding and preventing male radicalisation

Thomas Robinson[a1]
[a]PhD Candidate in Social Work, University of Gloucestershire

Abstract
Male radicalisation represents a dynamic and evolving challenge to human rights and the core values of social work. A social work perspective offers a critical lens for understanding and responding to this gendered phenomenon. This article draws on the expertise of frontline health and social care (HSC) professionals to conceptualise male radicalisation and offers original insights into effective safeguarding practices. This qualitative study involved twenty-five semi-structured interviews with experienced frontline HSC professionals and explored their experiences and approaches in safeguarding males at risk of radicalisation. The findings reveal that HSC professionals offer original insights into male radicalisation as a process that is shaped by a bespoke and complex intersection of unmet needs, within certain structural conditions, and the extremist exploitation of masculinity. The "Radicalisation of Masculinity" framework proposes extremism serves a function in offering males the opportunity to reclaim a sense of masculinity, belonging, purpose and status, contributing to a new safeguarding approach that incorporates the need for gender-sensitive, tailored interventions.

Article History
Received Dec 16, 2025
Accepted Jun 14, 2026
Published Jun 26, 2026

Keywords: Violent Extremism, Radicalisation, Gender, Safeguarding, Health and Social Care, Social Work

Introduction

Since the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, social workers in England have held a statutory 'Prevent Duty' to help stop people being drawn into terrorism (Home Office, 2015). Initially, many social workers reported low confidence in this area following the implementation of the duty (Chrisholm & Coulter, 2017). As male-led extremism evolves, with shifts across Islamist, far-right, far-left, misanthropic nihilistic violence, and online misogynistic spaces like the ‘Manosphere’, updated research on the experiences of frontline professionals in how to safeguard males from radicalisation is urgently needed (Kimmel, 2018; Johnson & True, 2019; Roose & Cook, 2022; Pearson et al., 2023; ISD (2025).

This article presents original and contemporary qualitative research with frontline health and social care (HSC) professionals who hold significant experience in safeguarding

[1] Corresponding Author Contact: Thomas Robinson, Email: thomasrobinson1@connect.glos.ac.uk, School of Health and Social Care, University of Gloucestershire, GL2 9HW

males at risk of radicalisation. As a professional group, their experiences regarding male radicalisation remain underexplored (Cowden & Picken, 2019; Hutson, 2021), despite social work having a longstanding role in safeguarding children and adults from a range of harms.

Literature Review

Globally, most perpetrators of terrorism and members of extremist groups are male (Kimmel, 2018; Roose & Cook, 2022; Pearson et al., 2023). Although scholarship on gender and radicalisation has expanded, the gendered processes underpinning male radicalisation remain underdeveloped. Much of the literature has focused on women's involvement in groups such as ISIS, often initially framing them as passive victims, though more recent work highlights the complex interplay of structural factors and individual agency (Veilleux-Lepage et al., 2023; Cook et al., 2024). Consequently, scholars increasingly call for gendered analyses that also centre men and masculinities (Cook et al., 2024). While gender analysis in extremism studies has commonly focused on women and Islamist terrorism (Cook et al., 2024), the overwhelming majority of violent extremists are male (Bakker, 2006; Carter, 2013). Explanations for this overrepresentation draw on biological, social, psychological, and ideological perspectives, including socialisation processes, identity formation, and recruitment practices (Möller-Leimkühler, 2017), with social work perspectives offering valuable, practice-informed insights into these dynamics.

Explanations for male engagement in extremism span biological predispositions, social constructions of masculinity, gender norms, demographic pressures, and the pursuit of belonging and identity (Möller-Leimkühler, 2017; Kimmel, 2018; Roose & Cook, 2022; Pearson et al., 2023). However, no single profile or pathway adequately explains radicalisation and attempts to develop predictive risk models risk stigmatising young men (International Alert, 2018). Rather, radicalisation is heterogeneous and context-dependent.

Gendered differences manifest across ideological contexts. Within Islamist movements, men may frame violence as protecting the ummah—reinforcing masculine identities—while women more often cite empathy for victims (Johnson & True, 2021). European male ISIS recruits have also frequently exhibited criminal or incarceration histories (Basra et al., 2016), in contrast to female recruits (Globsec, 2017). Recognition of gender as a

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

critical factor has led to calls for intersectional and context-specific approaches to countering violent extremism (Johnson & True, 2019; Andeeva et al., 2024).

Across ideological strands—including far-right, Islamist, and Manosphere movements—extremist groups offer identity, validation, and opportunities to reclaim or reaffirm masculinised status (Roose & Cook, 2022; Pearson et al., 2023). These movements strategically mobilise gender norms, manipulating masculinity to recruit and radicalise (Ging, 2017; Kimmel, 2018; Gentry & Sjoberg, 2015; Pearson et al., 2023). Islamist narratives emphasise honour, purity, and martyrdom (Winter, 2018), while far-right discourse promotes a return to male dominance in response to perceived threats from feminism or immigration (Mudde, 2019). Manosphere[2] ideologies similarly legitimise misogyny, sometimes framing violence against women as a response to rejection or marginalisation (Ging, 2017). Recruitment strategies frequently deploy narratives of shame and emasculation, reinforced through emotionally charged imagery—for instance, depictions of sexual violence against white women in far-right propaganda or images of children killed in conflict zones within Islamist narratives (Roose et al., 2022).

Research on Involuntary Celibates (Incels)[3] highlights a convergence of social, psychological, and ideological drivers underpinning engagement in these subcultures and, in some cases, pathways into violence. Incel communities reinforce shared identity, belonging, and victimhood narratives, while normalising misogyny and male entitlement (Andersen, 2022; Vink et al., 2023), and have increasingly been characterised as political movements (Zimmerman, 2024). Key psychological drivers include perceived injustice, unmet self-esteem needs, social isolation, barriers to perceived 'manhood', victimhood, and mental health difficulties (O'Malley & Helm, 2022; Collins et al., 2024; Whittaker et al., 2024; Costello et al., 2025). These intersect with structural and digital environments, particularly exposure to extremist ideologies online, shaping pathways toward radicalisation and violence.

[2] The Manosphere is a loose online network that produces content for males. It includes a broad range of content through blogs, videos and forums. It involves different groupings including Involuntary Celibates (Incels), Pick Up Artists, Men's Rights Activists. Overall, there is a consistent anti-feminist narrative across these platforms, that frame males as victims in modern society

[3] In 1997, a woman named Alana created a website to help people find love and coined the term Involuntary Celibate. The term has shifted dramatically since then and has been linked to misogynistic hate and deadly violence.

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Incel platforms function as echo chambers, limiting exposure to counter-narratives and amplifying grievance while normalising harmful beliefs. However, some research indicates that engagement with supportive communities and pro-social networks can facilitate disengagement (Lounela & Murphy, 2024). Similarly, self-reflection and participation in pro-social activities are associated with positive movement away from incel identities (Gheorghe & Clement, 2025).

Critical race and feminist scholarship emphasise that radicalisation discourses are shaped by gendered and racialised assumptions, particularly in post-9/11 contexts (Stenger, 2024). Bhattacharyya (2008) identified the emergence of the trope of the "dangerous brown man," while others demonstrate how Western frameworks can reproduce racial profiling and white supremacist logics (Parashar et al., 2018; Abu Bakare, 2022). These critiques highlight the importance of analysing masculinity alongside intersecting identities such as race, class, age, health, and social networks. Without such critical engagement, policies risk pathologising Muslim men (Rashid, 2014) or inadvertently "emasculating" racialised men while obscuring structural inequalities (Amar, 2011; Brown, 2013).

In the UK, Islamist terrorism remains the primary threat, alongside an emerging extreme right-wing risk and increasing numbers of self-initiated, internet-enabled extremists, predominantly young men (Lewis, 2022). MI5 has also identified a demographic shift in extreme right-wing terrorism towards younger, more educated men without prior criminal histories (Lewis, 2022). Concurrently, Manosphere ideologies exploit grievances related to masculinity, gender, and cultural dislocation (Ging, 2017; Kimmel, 2018; Pearson et al., 2023). Although extremism based exclusively on violent misogyny is not currently a dominant terrorist threat, it's growth reflects the normalisation of gendered resentment and violence (Duriesmith et al., 2018).

The predominance of men in extremist violence is well established: the vast majority of terrorist attacks are committed by males (Goldstein, 2003; Sageman, 2018; Bates, 2020), across Islamist, far-right, and other ideological forms (Bakker, 2006; Pearson et al., 2023). At the same time, young male support for far-right populism has increased, from the Alternative for Germany (Parker, 2025) to Donald Trump's 2024 campaign (Brown, 2024), where hypermasculine rhetoric resonates with marginalised men (Kellman, 2024). Nevertheless, far-

right ideologies can also appeal to women, as illustrated by Marine Le Pen's "detoxification" strategy (Mayer, 2022).

Radicalisation models consistently emphasise complexity and variability. Processes are multifaceted and individualised (Moghadam, 2008; McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011), emerging from the interaction of personal, social, and ideological factors that progressively frame violence as legitimate (Berger, 2018). Violent extremism represents one manifestation within broader patterns of male-perpetrated violence (Heilman, 2018), underscoring the value of situating radicalisation within wider scholarship on masculinity and violence (Roose & Cook, 2022). Despite growing literature, further insight can be gained by examining practitioner perspectives, particularly those working directly with men at risk.

Systematic reviews of deradicalisation and case management highlight the importance of multi-agency, relational, and contextually tailored interventions, although evidence of long-term effectiveness remains limited (Khalil et al., 2023). Studies emphasise the centrality of trust-based relationships in facilitating disengagement, aligning with social work principles of relational risk management (Morrison et al., 2021). Research on incel-related extremism similarly illustrates how gendered and relational dynamics intersect with individual vulnerabilities, social marginalisation, and ideological exposure, reinforcing the need for integrated, evidence-informed interventions.

Research on preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) has generated a range of frameworks, including whole-of-society approaches, push–pull models, community resilience strategies, counter-narratives, and youth disengagement programmes (Clement, 2024). In the UK, the Prevent Duty embeds early identification and multi-agency safeguarding responses across education, health, and social care systems, with referral pathways into interventions such as the Channel Programme (Home Office, 2025). These approaches operate in a "pre-criminal" space (Home Office, 2015) and are reflected in international practice, including in Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Sweden (Sivenbring & Malmros, 2019).

Across the literature, prevention frameworks identify vulnerability factors such as trauma, marginalisation, social isolation, identity crises, and online radicalisation (Bhui et al., 2012; Ellis & Abdi, 2017; Jensen & Larsen, 2021). Interventions commonly include mentoring, educational initiatives, disengagement support, and reintegration programmes,

often delivered through community partnerships (Holbrook & Horgan, 2019; Idris, 2019; Köhler, 2020). National Action Plans typically coordinate threat assessment, prevention, monitoring, and civil society engagement (Feve & Elshimi, 2018). However, the evidence base remains contested, with limited transparency regarding programme outcomes and insufficient evaluation of structural push and pull factors (Romaniuk & Durner, 2018).

More broadly, the field continues to face conceptual ambiguity around "radicalisation," variation in pathways across contexts, and limited evidence regarding programme effectiveness, particularly in conflict settings (Busher et al., 2017; Ragazzi, 2017; Kelly, 2019). Despite the clear overrepresentation of men in extremist violence, gender analysis remains insufficiently integrated into P/CVE research, leaving masculinity and male identity formation under-theorised (Pearson, 2023).

Social work and male radicalisation

Much social work literature in the UK negatively critiques the profession's role in the counter-terrorism Prevent programme, citing securitisation, racialised stigma, and weak empirical indicators (Stanley & Guru, 2015; Finch & McKendrick, 2017; Hutson, 2021). Critics argue that Prevent risks reproducing post-9/11 'War on Terror' narratives and marginalising Muslim men (Rashid, 2014), while a focus on masculinity may further stigmatise racialised males or obscure structural drivers of radicalisation (Amar, 2011; Brown, 2013). A cohort of social work academics have argued deradicalisation interventions should have less of a security lens (Ferguson, 2016), framing state counter-terrorism programmes as risking client stigmatization, and heightened emphasis on individual risk or vulnerability rather than consideration of wider structural and political factors (Stanley & Guru, 2015; McKendrick & Finch, 2017).

As safeguarding against radicalisation has become embedded in frontline practice in the UK practitioners initially reported uncertainty about managing cases (Lid et al., 2016; Chisholm & Coulter, 2017). Recent literature provides evidence that most professionals engage meaningfully with the duty to safeguard against radicalisation and have grown in confidence in navigating this area, including Department for Education research with social care (Langdon-Shreeve, & Nickson, 2021). This is documented in different research, such as Heath-Kelly & Strausz (2018) survey finding NHS staff were comfortable with Prevent

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

training provided and feel confident to detect radicalisation, and the quality of safeguarding within statutory services been praised within the independent review on Prevent (Shawcross, 2023).

Though limited, qualitative research into practitioners' responses to radicalisation is emerging. International bodies such as the United Nations (UN) and EU Knowledge HUB Awareness Network advocate for public health and social work approaches (Ellis & Abdi, 2017; Hutson, 2021), with evidence showing that risks cluster and require early, preventative responses (Clemmow et al., 2023). These align with trauma-informed, strengths-based, and ecological approaches central to social work (Crawford, 2020). Moreover, earlier work shows social workers have long engaged in preventing right-wing extremism in other countries, where exit strategies—particularly parent networks and family-focused guidance—proved effective (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2015), alongside recommended approaches such as motivational interviewing and Socratic questioning (Haugstvedt, 2019), strengths-based and family interventions (Stanley et al., 2018), and an open dialogue on ideology (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2013). Moreover, the vulnerabilities that research indicates may lead individuals to engage in extremist ideologies, such as identity, belonging, trauma, loss, discrimination, exclusion (Borum, 2011; Rink & Sharma, 2018) are similar dynamics that are identified in the history of safeguarding (Dixon, 2023). The connections and similarities of these vulnerabilities to other forms of exploitation are noted by frontline professionals (Langdon-Shreeve & Nickson, 2021).

In the UK, there has been a discursive shift from describing individuals as “vulnerable” to “susceptible” to radicalisation, replacing earlier statutory guidance that framed people as becoming “vulnerable” to radicalisation (Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015a). This conceptualisation has been widely criticised: Cottee (2023) argues that the language of vulnerability removes agency and portrays individuals not as political actors but as “pathetic and pitiable” subjects who succumb to harmful ideas, a critique echoed in the Independent Review of Prevent, which states that this framing “*bestows a status of victimhood… negating individual risk and agency”* (Shawcross, 2023: 42). Social work scholars similarly challenge this approach, arguing that it reflects a neoliberal, reductionist understanding of a complex social issue (Finch et al., 2022), infantilises individuals and misrepresents terrorism (Walker & Cawley, 2022), and reinforces deficit-based risk models (Stanley & Guru, 2015).

Although critiques correctly highlight that many people with “vulnerabilities” (e.g., trauma, isolation) never engage in extremism and that overemphasis on individual factors obscures structural conditions, a wholesale rejection of vulnerability is unproductive. Safeguarding practice has always required holistic, multi-disciplinary assessment of individuals within their social environments, even if local agencies have limited influence over broader structural drivers such as illicit markets, online extremist ecosystems, or national policy. Literature reviews similarly call for integrating individual and structural dimensions; for example, Stephens et al. (2019) advocate a social–ecological perspective on resilience. This aligns with long-standing social work practice centred on relational engagement and empowerment within wider systems (Lloyd et al., 2002).

Emerging work argues social work can offer a values-led safeguarding role, supporting males vulnerable to ideological and non-ideological violence (Clement 2024; Cowden, Lynch and Robinson, 2025). Recent social work doctoral research has begun to contribute original social work perspectives on radicalisation (Haugstvedt, 2019; Carroll, 2022). Previous research by Department for Education such as Chisholm & Coulter (2017) and Langdon-Shreeve & Nickson (2021) provides a helpful foundation for understanding frontline professionals' experiences of safeguarding against radicalisation but neither concentrated on the dynamics of male radicalisation. This study aims to further address this empirical gap through drawing on HSC professionals' conceptualisation and safeguarding responses to male radicalisation. This study contributes original research by providing practice based, empirically grounded conceptualisation of male radicalisation and proposes an original holistic, gendered informed safeguarding model to support frontline practice.

Methodology

This is a qualitative in-depth study of experienced health and social care (HSC) professionals in England understanding and safeguarding responses to male radicalisation. Using semi-structured qualitative interviews, it examines how personal, social, ideological, and structural factors intersect, offering a holistic, gender-aware perspective.

Epistemological and Theoretical Underpinnings

Guided by a constructivist epistemology that views knowledge as socially constructed (Schwandt, 2000), this study aligns with social work's distinct focus on complexity and context (Tener, 2024). This study draws on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory that contextualises individuals within wider systems (Lightfoot et al., 2018), recognising institutional settings influence practitioners' perspectives (Parton, 2000). A different professional cohort, such as counter-terrorism policing, may therefore have yielded different insights than the HSC professionals central to this study.

Social Work Perspectives

The study is situated within social work, informed by a gendered analysis of a social problem (Fraser et al., 2017; Cardenas, 2017). A critical social work approach understands the possible inherent tensions of social work's role within state led counter-terrorism systems, including concerns about securitisation and racialisation (Kundnani, 2014; McKendrick & Finch, 2017; Shall, 2023; Abu Bakare, 2024). It also incorporates a gender analysis on masculinity as a factor in the radicalisation of males (Ging, 2017; Kimmel, 2018; Pearson et al, 2023). Whilst it critically reflects on the profession's entanglement with state power (Ferguson et al., 2009; Fenton, 2024), it also advocates that there is also a critical and nuanced role for feminist social work practice to both understand and safeguard against male radicalisation.

Justification for Qualitative Approach

A qualitative approach was chosen for its depth and flexibility (Silverman, 2020). Semi-structured interviews enable a detailed exploration of professional's experiences and reflections on how radicalisation is understood and addressed (Savin-Baden et al., 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2023), particularly given its dynamic and contested nature (Vidino, 2011; Awan, 2016). This approach responds to the gap in original qualitative research on practitioner insights (Cowden & Picken, 2019; Hutson, 2021), which is important given the absence of a single radicalisation pathway (Neumann, 2013). Moreover, there is an additional gap focusing practitioner insights exclusively on male radicalisation, which this qualitative

approach supports through incorporating flexibility to engage in deep and probing follow up questions to practitioners (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017).

Positionality and Reflexivity

As a social work practitioner and researcher, the study was shaped by a constructivist stance (Berger, 2015). My professional experience within Prevent facilitated insider access to participants with significant relevant experience which is a hard-to-reach demographic. Recognising this positionality, I proactively engaged in a process of reflexivity, peer debriefing, and bracketing, which are methods to understand and consider potential bias (Ortlipp, 2008).

Data Collection

Twenty-five HSC professionals (15 women, 10 men) from across England were interviewed remotely in 2024. Semi-structured interviews lasted approximately one hour on average. Purposeful sampling was selected to recruit experienced participants to gain rich insights (Yin, 2016). The participants selected held significant experience of male radicalisation and included social workers, nurses, doctors, and senior leaders within health, social care and local authority such as Channel Chairs, Prevent Leads and Safeguarding Leads. As a practitioner in this field, I used professional networks, alongside social media company 'LinkedIn', and 'snowball sampling' to recruit a cohort of HSC professionals with significant experience of male radicalisation. It is acknowledged that 'snowball sampling' can introduce selection bias (Atkinson, 2001). All data collection adhered to University of Gloucestershire ethics protocols.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted following guidance from Braun & Clarke to identify patterns of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This started with becoming familiar with the transcripts of the interviews and generating codes. The coding was semantic and reflexive, shaped by a theoretical positioning and guided by their flexible six-phase process. After this, review and analysis of the different codes led to the construction of key themes. Consideration was given to the general inductive approach to enhance analytic clarity and avoid common

pitfalls, such as conflating topic summaries with themes (Braun, Clarke & Hayfield, 2022). Drawing on Braun and Clarke's *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide* (2022), a reflexive, theoretically informed stance treated themes as actively constructed patterns of shared meaning. Through this process, three key themes were identified on male radicalisation: Unmet Needs, Structural Conditions, and the extremist exploitation of a constructed masculinity crisis. These findings were integrated with existing literature on gender and radicalisation (Connell, 1995; Kimmel, 2018; Roose & Cook, 2022), offering a theoretically grounded interpretation of the data.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Gloucestershire. Informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, GDPR compliance, and participant well-being were prioritised (Bryman, 2012; Flick, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Limitations

This study does not seek the views of the males at risk of radicalisation. It aims to understand and capture the insights of frontline HSC professionals who safeguard males at risk of radicalisation. While the qualitative design offered depth, its small sample limits generalisability (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My dual role may also have shaped responses despite reflexive safeguards (Berger, 2015). A longitudinal approach could explore shifts over time (Bryman, 2012), given the evolving nature of extremism. Overall, this study offers valuable HSC practitioner insights, addressing a key gap in male radicalisation research (Cowden & Picken, 2019; Hutson, 2021).

Findings

The findings show that HSC participants understand male radicalisation as an intersection of *Unmet Needs*—particularly around identity, belonging, and purpose—within certain *Structural Conditions*. HSC participants understood that Unmet Needs often led males to experience internal distress (e.g., trauma, isolation, failure, sense of victimisation) and instead of managing this distress in a constructive and pro-social method, they often 'externalised' this

JOURNAL FOR DERADICALIZATION

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

distress onto a dehumanised out-group. In this framing, radicalisation often served a function. It is functional in that it aims to meet a need. I conceptualise this dynamic as the *Radicalisation of Masculinity*: a process through which a cohort of males seek extremism to reclaim a sense of masculinity, belonging, purpose, and status.

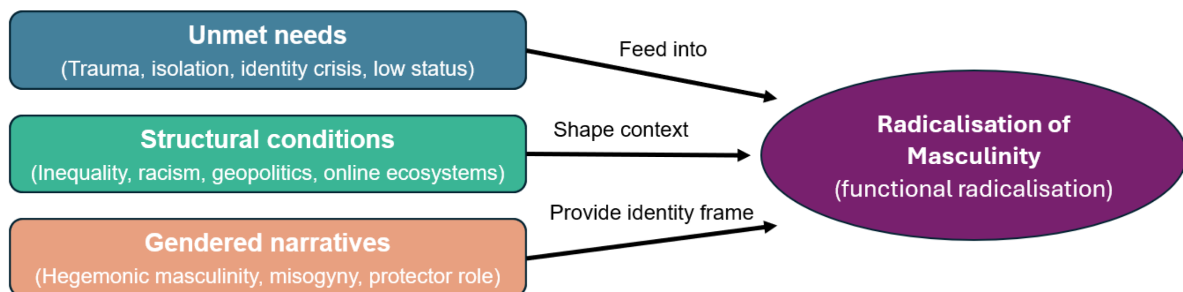

Figure 1. Model of HSC professional's conceptualisation of male radicalisation

HSC professionals in this study understood male radicalisation as a multifaceted, intersectional process shaped by personal, social, and structural factors, reflecting wider literature (Neumann, 2013; Silke, 2013). An intersectional understanding of the male in their own context is key, including the intersection of different life experiences, perspectives and identities such as race, class, gender and religion and how their place in wider society (Crenshaw, 1989; Pearson et al, 2023).

As we shall explore, participants shared the view that extremists explicitly predominately seek to recruit males. Participants reflected how extremist ideologies skilfully exploit masculinity to recruit males, and frame violence as redemptive and honourable, positioning the radicalised male as a warrior or defender; reflecting wider literature on the construction of masculinity within extremist propaganda (Roose & Cook, 2022). These narratives offer a cohort of males' scripts for restoring masculine identity and status. During interviews, participants clarified terms like "*failing at masculinity*," "*belonging*," and "*not man enough*," emphasising how such experiences intersect with broader ideological and structural contexts.

This article will argue that extremist groups offer both community and an emotional outlet, transforming the *internal distress* of Unmet Needs into *externalised violence* within

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

certain Structural Conditions. It will suggest that the process of male radicalisation re-purposes this internal distress into reactionary displays of masculinity, embedded within ideological systems that valorise control, dominance, and revenge. While radicalisation is ideological, it is also deeply gendered. Extremist groups exploit male identity crises, making masculinity a critical consideration for practitioners and policymakers. These insights help explain why male supremacy is central to extremist belief systems and how structural marginalisation contributes to making such ideologies appealing.

We will now analyse the core themes of Unmet Needs, Structural Conditions and the Radicalisation of Masculinity.

Theme 1: The Internal Distress of 'Unmet Needs'

Participants consistently described radicalisation as an "*emotional process*", often rooted in males' unmet psychological and relational needs. Rather than ideology being the starting point, many at-risk males known to the participants were initially drawn to male-dominated spaces to meet certain unmet needs such as belonging, validation, or identity. This aligns with Kruglanski et al.'s (2019) framework linking radicalisation to the influence of needs, narratives, and networks.

Participant 25 noted:

> "*Radicalisation meets a need… they identify with the narratives. It speaks to them.*"

Participant 6 reflected:

> *"Trauma, not belonging, not fitting in, and have a grievance at the establishment… rules don't work for you. The grievances can be very real. Not having consistent relationships within social care and healthcare"*

Participant 20 added:

> *"Relationships have broken. A sense of grievance: Them and Us"*

JOURNAL FOR DERADICALIZATION

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Furthermore, Participant 14 reflected one male patient engaged in far-right extremism due to seeking feelings of belonging and significance:

> *"It was group belonging, it was feeling important, feeling he could do something - he felt he was a hero. Never felt that a sense of belonging or purpose" (Participant 14).*

Belonging emerged as a particularly salient theme, with some participants indicating the Unmet Needs (e.g. internal distress, lack of belonging) can become a susceptibility to engage in violent extremism or be vulnerable to other forms of exploitation, such as gang recruitment:

> *"Radicalisation offers a way to lash out and be noticed…form one's identity in a group or community*". (Participant 4).

> *"Young men need to meet their needs in creative ways. Young men associated with gangs have [also] been drawn into a jihadi mindset" (Participant 15).*

> *"This is a similarity to gangs - sense of acceptance, belonging, brotherhood and importance of the community you were brought up in. Finding unity with people and fighting against a common enemy; a common cause" (Participant 25).*

Many males felt "*isolated, misunderstood, disliked, and abandoned by mainstream society*", and sought belonging, meaning and significance. Some were not ideologically committed but drawn to revenge or notoriety, shaped by peer dynamics. Participants frequently cited "*belonging*," "*meaning*," and "*identity*" as core motivators. Participants also referenced UK terrorist offenders, such as Darren Osborne and Salman Abedi, explaining how such cases combined personal distress with broader social and political drivers.

JOURNAL FOR DERADICALIZATION

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

While radicalisation trajectories vary, many participants highlighted difficulties young males have expressing emotion and constructively manging this internal distress. They described common traits such as low self-esteem, emotional repression, trauma, and resentment. Males socialised to suppress emotions may repurpose internal distress—linked to failure, rejection, or trauma—into externalised blame and violence, legitimised by extremist ideologies. The link between extremist ideology and males, according to the participants, is what I have conceptualised as *Unmet Needs*. These reflections from frontline work with males at risk of radicalisation indicate that male vulnerabilities around the experience of internal distress, such as trauma, isolation, lack of belonging are important factors to consider. Unmet Needs were linked to childhood adversity, unstable family environments, social exclusion, and mental health. Extremist groups were described as exploiting an assortment of grievances—ranging from immigration anxiety, rejection by women, to perceptions of injustice around racism or foreign policy—to construct group identities. The participants also emphasised the need for a person-centred approach, reflecting Horgan's (2005) conclusion that there is no singular psycho-social terrorist profile.

HSC professionals explained that extremist recruiters exploit these grievances, and utilise the male's experience of trauma, neurodivergence, or isolation, to offer a redemptive path to reclaim masculinity, power, and belonging. Participants described how online subcultures such as the far right, Islamist propaganda and 'Manosphere' fuel victimhood, anger, and misogyny, offering males identity and meaning through promoting feelings of inadequacy, insecurity, fear and resentment, reflecting wider literature (Ging, 2017; Kimmel, 2018; Roose & Cook, 2022; Pearson et al, 2023).

According to the HSC professionals, these deeply personal factors would often be highly gendered, constructing clear duties and responsibilities for males, including a:

> "*very traditionalist understanding of men as movers of history… providers and protectors" (Participant 4).*

This reflects broader findings: Islamist groups offer belonging amid racism (Khosrokhavar, 2021), the far right promises stability to white males amid cultural change (Mudde, 2019), and incel forums exploit relationship-deprived males (Ging, 2017). Extremist

narratives reframe personal suffering as group-based injustice, as participants reflected how 'Manosphere' Incel ideology positions women as withholding power, demanding males to:

> *"take back power… and extreme right-wing groups claim other races or cultures are impacting British society and that white males need to take back control". (Participant 2).*

Many added that extremism offers males a sense of power. As Participant 24 explained:

> "*They offer male power… a sense of asserting control. These spaces provide both a problem and a solution*." (Participant 24).

> "*Empowerment through violence… domination, adventure… identity, power" (Participant 16).*

Participants shared that extremist ideologies offer emotional coherence, dehumanisation of out-groups and build group cohesion through simplified narratives and nostalgic appeals. Moreover, participants added that without critical understanding of gender politics or history, some young men interpret social progress as personal loss. This framing relates to Michael Kimmel's conceptualisation of male radicalisation as based on an *aggrieved sense of entitlement* (Kimmel, 2018), whereby males may find extremism appealing due to a perceived sense of loss male status and privilege due to feminism, immigration or other political factors.

Mental health and neurodiversity

Many participants discussed the role of mental health and neurodiversity in their casework of male radicalisation. Participants consistently reported that young autistic males were a recurring theme in radicalisation cases discussed at Prevent Channel Panels[4].

[4] Prevent Channel Panels are multi-agency safeguarding meetings that aim to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Participants identified certain traits associated with certain diagnosis that may be functionally relevant to radicalisation in certain circumstances. Many of these males had experienced isolation, difficulties with relationships, and sought structure and connection online.

Participants emphasised it was not the diagnosis of autism that was relevant, as most individuals with autism will not be at risk of radicalisation. Rather, it was the specific combination of certain traits, intersecting in certain social circumstances and personal factors, in a highly bespoke way. As participant 14 states:

> *"black-and-white thinking, restricted interests, and poor impulse control…Neo-typical feelings cannot be expressed – and therefore these young boys get more desensitised… There is often isolation, lack of friendship group/ peers" (Participant 14).*

Other participants shared examples of young males with restricted special interests developing fascinations with the aesthetics of Schutzstaffel (SS) uniforms or WWII history. Many participants explained the role of a fixed intellectual interest in historical figures such as Oswald Mosely or Adolf Hitler. Over time, this dedicated study of a group identity started to fuse with their own individual identity, reflecting wider literature on identity fusion (Swan et al., 2012). As Participant 1 reflected:

“*a small part fits, then over time you make it all fit”.*

Extremist ideologies serve a function for certain males, and for some it offered a binary clarity (us vs them narrative) in a complex world, routine, and predictability. Nationally, autistic individuals are disproportionately referred to the Prevent Channel; Jonathan Hall KC described the numbers as “*staggeringly high*” (Shawcross, 2023). A 2024 Home Office report found that when suspected diagnoses are included, one-quarter of Channel referrals involved autism (Warrell, 2024). Cases include a 13-year-old neo-Nazi in Durham, a 17-year-old IS supporter in Cardiff, and members of the far-right group 764 (BBC, 2020; Dearden, 2021).

While some researchers suggest autism can contribute 'functional' roles such as hyper-fixation, vivid fantasy, and emotional dysregulation (Walter et al., 2020; Salman et al., 2023), they also stress there is no causal link between autism and terrorism (Druitt et al., 2023; Allely et al., 2024). In fact, autistic individuals are more often victims of violence than perpetrators. Whilst some individuals may be more susceptible to exploitation in certain contexts (Shaw et al, 2019), such cases remain rare.

Overall, participants acknowledged the Unmet Needs were heterogeneous, and therefore the function of extremism, can be broad. Participants listed multiple possible susceptibilities that could in certain circumstances be relevant to safeguarding against radicalisation, included certain traits such as a restricted specialist interest in weapons, historic trauma, abandonment, and emotional illiteracy, age, gender, isolation and online activities that intersect in unique ways that can increase vulnerability to exploitation. This draws parallels with other forms of exploitation (Harvard et al. 2021). Importantly, the functionality of male radicalisation highlights the need to balance vulnerability and exploitation with agency and accountability, as males actively engage with these movements to address perceived unmet needs.

Theme 2: Structural conditions

The second theme related to participants consistently emphasising that male radicalisation emerges at the intersection of personal, ideological, and wider structural factors. Structural factors refer to wider macro factors beyond the individual such as socio-economic inequality, political crises, cultural shifts, state oppression, geopolitics, and online ecosystems. This is an important insight as research indicates structural factors, such as deprivation of liberties and opportunities of a group, can create conditions in which extremist ideologies can thrive, by amplifying feelings of exclusion, grievance, and purposelessness (Neumann, 2013).

We will now explore the sub-themes of Structural Conditions that were identified as relevant to male radicalisation by HSC participants.

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Online Radicalisation: Technology and Social Media

All participants identified online spaces as a critical structural driver of male radicalisation. Young males often engage with extremist forums with minimal adult supervision, encountering content that reinforces ideological immersion and desensitisation to violence (Whittaker, 2022; Kenyon et al., 2022). Participants stressed how online algorithms intensify these messages, creating echo chambers (Vidino, 2011). As Participant 8 remarked:

> "*Young males can't communicate their thoughts and feelings, and so go onto online communities, chat rooms and gamification*." (Participant 8).

Others highlighted the appeal of these online spaces as offering a sense of being "*wanted*," of "*belonging*" and "*acceptance*". For some, the process starts with simply being "*made to feel they belong*." With limited supervision and heightened isolation, young males were drawn into binary spaces that offered "*easy answers to difficult questions*." One participant noted that those experiencing low self-esteem or suicidal ideation often found online communities that "*resonate with them and others who feel that way*," creating "*echo chambers*" that reinforce hatred.

Participants stressed that the internet distorts truth and reinforces hypermasculine ideals through violent imagery, particularly in gaming, memes, and humour. This supports findings that online extremism is often gendered, with males and females recruited through different affective pathways (Blee, 2020; Skoczylis et al., 2022; Kingdon, 2022). Research shows how online gaming cultures often expose teenage males to racist and misogynistic content, socialising them into traditional and often toxic masculinities (Kenyon et al., 2022). Participants reported that during the COVID-19 pandemic, increased online activity exacerbated this issue. Some professionals described working with young males, emotionally dysregulated, highly isolated, and researching terrorists online and expressed admiration for figures such as the 'Unabomber' Ted Kaczynski, with the intention of replicating their notoriety. This resonates with research showing that online radicalisation frequently plays a central role in attack planning, particularly among lone actors (Kenyon et al., 2022), alongside research that indicates lone actor terrorists may be more likely to have mental health needs than 'group based' terrorists (Corner & Gill, 2015).

JOURNAL FOR DERADICALIZATION
Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Furthermore, participants explained how online spaces reinforce male victimhood and offer simplified "*us vs. them*" binaries that legitimise violence, which is reflected in wider literature (Berger, 2017). During the COVID-19 pandemic, these trends intensified (Cox et al., 2021). Online forums glorify action, with radicalised males portrayed as warriors (Johnson, 2018). Individuals like Andrew Tate also promote a hyper-masculine identity based on dominance and misogyny; framing women as property, blaming women for sexual abuse, and reinforcing harmful gender norms (Smith, 2022; Das, 2022). Participants expressed concern about the role of algorithms in deepening radicalisation by reinforcing harmful content and reducing exposure to counter-narratives.

Participants emphasised that online friendships could feel stronger than offline ones, providing validation that extremist spaces exploit. Participants concluded that social media algorithms accelerate radicalisation by continuously exposing users to extremist content and amplifying grievance-based narratives that disproportionately target disaffected males.

Online environments mediate this gendered process by offering grievance-based narratives that validate distress, reinterpret vulnerability as injustice, and frame difficulties through gendered explanations. Drawing on Connell (1995), they reproduce and reshape *hegemonic masculinity*, reinforcing ideals of dominance and control, while marginalising alternative masculinities, reframing isolation or failure as loss of masculine status. Moreover, Kimmel's (2018) *aggrieved entitlement* explains how personal dissatisfaction is transformed into collective grievance, positioning young men as deprived of recognition, power, or belonging. These spaces therefore arguably function as sites of masculine reconstruction, normalising patriarchal narratives that valorise strength and opposition, and link unmet needs and threatened identity to radicalisation pathways. Participants advocated for digital literacy, offline support, positive male role models, and tailored safeguarding to meet these males' unmet needs in a constructive and pro-social way.

Relative Deprivation in a Political and Socio-Economic Context

Participants highlighted that males who perceive themselves as being in decline or "*left behind*" are particularly susceptible to radicalisation. Extremist recruiters exploit these feelings of status loss and socio-economic insecurity (UNDP, 2017; Waring, 2019). As participant 18 explained, if a young man feels "*someone else is better off than you*," this can

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

lead to perceptions of inferiority and "*looking for someone to blame – e.g. scapegoating refugees"*.

As participant 4 noted too, radicalisation is often rooted in:

> "*local history, a socio-economic climate, shapes how propaganda is communicated…young people born into a situation with no prospects for housing, jobs… identify blame by looking at extremist content*". (Participant 4).

There was broad consensus that macroeconomic inequality, inadequate social services, and polarised political narratives exacerbate resentment and fuel community vulnerability to extremist exploitation. Participants also pointed to the galvanising effect of geopolitical crises, such as the conflicts in Gaza or Ukraine. These global injustices provide ideological rallying points for young men who fantasise about transforming themselves into heroic protectors or violent avengers. Such fantasies align with the highly gendered narratives in both Islamist and far-right propaganda, which promise status, meaning, and honour through violence (Pearson et al, 2023). Participants described how males often displaced class-based grievances onto identity-based issues, particularly those related to gender, ethnicity, or religion. However, participants also argued financial stress can be experienced in a gendered way, creating internal distress and creating susceptibility to extremist violence, as Participant 20 reflected:

> *"Things like unemployment impacts their masculinity if males are not able to be the breadwinners… Not being able to provide and how people perceive them – not being able to perform to society expectations which are internalised that feeds the anger – that therefore the anger comes out at a random person. It is not rational or sensible – rather responding to the anger" (Participant 20).*

Sociological Change and 'Culture Wars'

Several participants described how progressive social changes have provoked a reactionary backlash amongst a cohort of males, particularly when perceived as threatening traditional gender roles or male privileges; reflecting wider literature (Kaiser, 2022).

Participants reflected that progressive changes could lead to reactionary movements noting that some males feel "*under attack*," or that it has become "*difficult to be a male in the current climate*" and that "*a lot of men are not feeling part of society*" and perceive themselves as "*losing privileges*". As stated earlier, this ties neatly into work by Kimmel (2018) in the *aggrieved sense of entitlement* that can radicalise males into reactionary movements. This sense of sociological change can lead to backlash from a cohort of males, as Participant 13 expressed some of their male cases wanted to:

> *"kick against progressive changes e.g. feminism, anti-racism".* (Participant 13).

A perceived "*crisis of masculinity*" was also linked to broader cultural and historical constructions of male identity. Participant noted that males were once:

> "*bred into men who want to fight…our culture has developed to see men fight in wars*". (Participant 17).

This lack of cultural guidance, direction and structure for males can leave some feeling lost and uncertain. Participants believed that as economic and cultural changes shift male realities, it can create a vacuum of support for males struggling to navigate this uncertainty. There is a rich body of literature that argues the Far-right, Islamist, and Manosphere ideologies all actively exploit this cultural dislocation and fear of diminished masculine roles (Kimmel, 2018; Ging, 2017; Pearson et al, 2023). Misogyny and anti-feminism were consistently cited as central narratives in these so-called "*culture wars*," fuelled by "*patriarchal standards*," "*socialisation into misogyny*," and a "*lack of positive male role models*" (Participant 14).

Where vulnerability is framed as weakness, violent ideologies become more appealing, promising a path to reclaim lost status and power. Participants reflected that structural inequalities and lack of belonging contribute to the politicisation of personal grievances.

Ideology and Male Extremism

Across ideologies—far-right, Islamist, or incel—extremist movements offer identity, validation, and a route to reclaim masculine status. Existing literature underscores how extremist ideologies manipulate masculinity and gender norms to recruit and mobilise (Kimmel, 2018; Gentry & Sjoberg, 2015; Pearson et al., 2023; Ging, 2017). As noted, Islamist narratives emphasise honour, purity, and martyrdom (Winter, 2018), far-right discourse champions a return to male dominance in the face of feminism or immigration (Mudde, 2019), and Manosphere ideologies often rationalise violence against women as a response to romantic rejection or societal marginalisation (Ging, 2017). These ideologies frequently frame violence as a masculine, justified response to humiliation or existential threat.

Participants observed that ideology often serves to connect global and structural issues to personal grievances. One participant explained that ideology helps "*make these young males connect it all*," forming a central "*narrative [that] things are under attack*," which is used to justify a duty to "*protect*" one's community. Several participants reflected on the contradictory logic of extremist ideologies, which portray the in-group as simultaneously victimised and superior. Far-right and jihadist groups alike validate violence as necessary defence in the face of perceived existential threats.

Participants shared multiple functions of ideology, such as construction of violent masculinities:

> "*can exploit emotions such as anger… it builds into finding unity and belonging with a group… 'being a man' and the idea we've got to fight for what's ours*". (Participant 25).

Others highlighted the seductive simplicity of these ideological narratives:

> "*The messages are simple. Them and Us… suddenly you understand everything – you are special and part of the inside club*". (Participant 13).

Another said that ideology provides clarity:

JOURNAL FOR DERADICALIZATION

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

> "*ideology provides a certainty… There is right and wrong – a clear, certain worldview*." (Participant 17).

The binary logic of extremism reframes a complex world into easily digestible moral oppositions, identifying clear enemies and rationalising violence. Participants repeatedly identified grievance as ideologically central. As another stated, "*It gives you a justification for your anger. Grievance is the biggest driver and most effective thing to try to mitigate that risk*". Extremist ideologies frame followers as righteous victims, thereby legitimising harm against others in the name of defence, justice, or revenge.

Ideology, then, becomes a vehicle for expressing male distress. As one participant reflected, "*ideology provides a sense of maleness, a call to arms*." Another commented on the symbolic appeal of masculinised violence used in propaganda:

> "*Daesh and Al-Qaeda use the Call of Duty (meme)…. Sonnenkrieg use skulls and gun images… boys told to look up to those with a gun" (Participant 13).*

Participants also routinely reflected misogyny and masculinity as ideologically integral:

> "*Masculinity goes into everything. Violent extremist groups… are using gender roles to control their members*." (Participant 16).

Others viewed extremism as constructing "*historic ideas of 'what is masculinity'… with males as the warrior, the leader*," reinforcing roles such as "*foot soldier*," "*protector*," or "*provider*". Overall, participants identified extremist ideologies utilise misogyny and male supremacy as core themes, with ideologies presenting feminism, immigration, and social change as threats to male identity; reflecting wider literature on the subject (Ging, 2017; Kaiser, 2022).

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Theme 3: The Radicalisation of Masculinity

This study conceptualises male radicalisation as a gendered process shaped by Unmet Needs, Structural Conditions, and the exploitation of masculinity by extremists. I term this process as the *Radicalisation of Masculinity*, whereby males functionally engage in extremism to reclaim certain unmet needs such as a sense of masculinity, belonging, purpose and status. Acknowledging the functional nature of male radicalisation in this way offers a balanced perspective to the polarised tensions within the literature between identifying structural causes or individual vulnerabilities, and emphasising vulnerability or agency, in explaining radicalisation (Finch et al, 2021; Kundnani, 2014; Cottee, 2023).

Reflecting Connell's (1995) notion of hegemonic masculinity, participants consistently described how males often experience emotional distress, identity confusion, and isolation, compounded by rigid gender norms and societal expectations of masculinity. Participants reflected that young men were often "*alienated*" and navigating a world where "*male identity can experience challenges around masculinity and where one belongs*", summarised by one participant as "*you have a lot of testosterone and lots of questions".* As stated, there is a body of literature that finds extremist ideologies exploit these vulnerabilities by offering belonging, power, and a reclaimed masculine identity through exclusionary group identities (Ging, 2017; Roose et al, 2022; Pearson et al, 2023; Kaiser, 2022; Bates, 2020). Participants understood this vulnerability to foster a fragile or unstable masculinity that can be constructed to align with anti-feminist and misogynistic narratives common across the Manosphere, far-right, and jihadist ideologies.

The Radicalisation of Masculinity conceptualisation aims to also capture participant's assessment that extremist ideologies provide an outlet for unprocessed male internal distress, often unspoken or hidden from family and peers.
As several participants articulated:

> *"Male violence is more accepted... Men are taught to externalise this, women may be socialised to internalise problems and not get active*" (Participant 7).
> *"There is a systematic cultural influence where females internalise emotions and males externalise emotions… Linked to masculinity." (Participant 25).*

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

> *"There can be a lack of working through emotions… the easy response is anger and violence… extremism uses dehumanisation which draws on this anger and violence." (Participant 20).*

This aligns with Kruglanski et al.'s (2019) framework of needs, narratives, and networks, with ideology functioning as a coping mechanism for shame, trauma, and perceived failure. These radical groups therefore provide a socially sanctioned outlet for male pain, often targeting perceived out-groups. Participants explained that when trust in political systems is low:

> "*Extremists offer a solution to these complex problems such as violence against an out-group…Anger [is]bottled up leading to an explosion of this anger". (Participant 25).*

This reflects studies that found shared experiences of trauma, adversity, and lack of role models among former extremists (Kimmel, 2018), with European jihadists often coming from second-generation migrant backgrounds with histories of marginalisation or petty crime (Roy, 2017). Research and policy reviews show that multiple, intersecting vulnerabilities shape radicalisation pathways (Vidino, 2011; Home Office, 2015; UK Government, 2017). Moreover, participants emphasised that there is no singular profile of a radicalised male, reflecting wider research (Neumann, 2013; Horgan, 2005).

Participants likened extremism to gangs, both offering identity, structure, and belonging to males experiencing trauma or alienation. This reflects a gendered narrative of redemption and power in which radicalisation enables dominance, revenge, and culturally sanctioned masculine performance. Exposure to violence and norms discouraging emotional expression heightens vulnerability, while extremist groups provide certainty through rigid in-group/out-group worldviews.

Masculinity is shaped by intersecting inequalities of race, class, culture, and religion (Hopkins & Kahani-Hopkins, 2009), alongside "under siege" narratives such as the "Great Replacement," a war on Islam, and feminism (Kundnani, 2014; Ging, 2017; Berger, 2018). These narratives resonate when compounded by bullying, low self-esteem, or unmet needs

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

linked to neurodiversity and isolation. Far-right, incel, and jihadist ideologies reframe distress through dominance and aggression, legitimising violence (Roose & Cook, 2022). Radicalisation is therefore a functional, gendered process shaped by unmet needs within structural conditions.

Applying the *Radicalisation of Masculinity* framework, unmet needs (e.g. trauma, isolation, mental health) interact with inequality to render extremist narratives compelling (Kimmel, 2018; Gottzén, 2025; Miller Idriss, 2025). Mediated through hegemonic masculinity norms privileging restraint, dominance, and self-reliance (Connell, 1995), vulnerability is reframed as failure, producing "gendered vulnerability" and aggrieved entitlement (Kimmel, 2018). Radicalisation functions as identity repair through restored masculinity, belonging, and recognition.

Masculinity operates as structured social practice enacted through emotional suppression, peer validation, and online engagement as "doing gender" (Connell, 1995; Messerschmidt, 2019). Online spaces construct alternative masculinities, reinforcing radicalisation as relational and identity-driven. Social work offers a relational, trauma-informed, intersectional response addressing vulnerability and agency (Crenshaw, 1989; Ruch et al., 2018; Dominelli, 2012). Participants encouraged *professional curiosity* to understand how bespoke cases of radicalisation emerges through unmet needs, marginalisation, and gendered identity, externalising distress into out-group violence via aggrieved masculinity (Connell, 1995; Roose et al., 2022; Pearson, 2023).

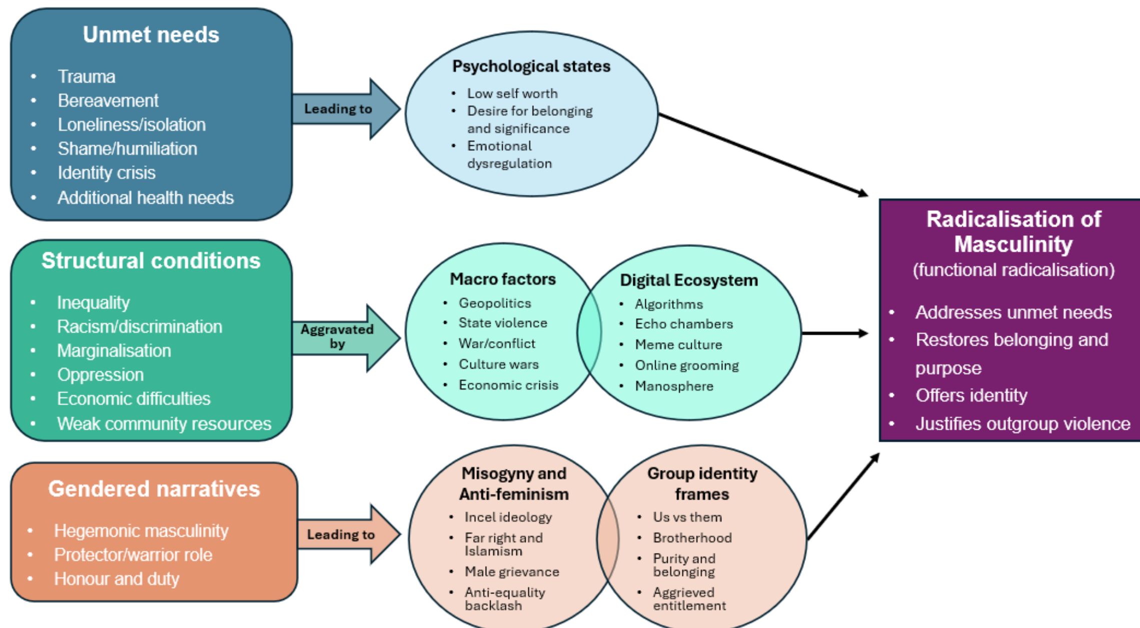

Figure 2. The Radicalisation of Masculinity: A holistic and functional analysis of male radicalisation

Discussion

This study makes an original contribution to the limited qualitative social work literature on male radicalisation by centring the views of frontline health and social care (HSC) professionals. Drawing on a rich repository of knowledge on male radicalisation, participants described male radicalisation as a *functional* response to Unmet Needs within certain Structural Conditions, with extremist groups exploiting these gendered vulnerabilities. This study frames such processes as the *Radicalisation of Masculinity*: a pattern wherein extremism provides opportunities for males to reclaim hegemonic masculinity, belonging, purpose, and control (Connell, 1995; Roose & Cook, 2022). This conceptualisation extends Kimmel's (2018) notion of *aggrieved entitlement* and Connell's (1995) theory of *hegemonic masculinity*, demonstrating how radicalisation can offer a route to reclaim socially valued masculine roles in reaction to perceived threats to their position and status. Bourdieu's concept of *symbolic violence* further illuminates how violent masculinity may also offer a performative value, shaped by extremist ideology.

A critical synthesis of the literature and HSC professionals' perspectives suggests that male radicalisation simultaneously exploits vulnerabilities (such as unmet needs) and involves active individual agency and decision-making. This reflects a longstanding social work debate that seeks to balance structural explanations (e.g. inequality, marginalisation, and state policy) with recognition of individual responsibility, engagement, and choice, with neither position sufficient in isolation. A nuanced and original position therefore recognises male radicalisation as an unstable and contingent process, shaped by the intersection between the bespoke characteristics of the individual male and a specific configuration of wider social and political conditions at a given time.

Participants consistently reported common experiences of trauma, childhood adversity, and internal distress among males at risk. Lacking healthy coping mechanisms, extremism provided these males an opportunity to repurpose their "*internal distress*" into *"externalised blame"*, dehumanising and rationalising violence against the external group. These ideologies positioned males as victims of emasculation and reinforced hegemonic masculine ideals, such as emotional suppression and dominance over others, creating identity scripts that legitimated violence (Connell, 1995; Neumann, 2013; Kimmel, 2018; Roose & Cook, 2022; Pearson et al, 2023).

Radicalisation research has historically focused on male subjects without explicitly theorising masculinity, reflecting androcentrism in which male experience is treated as neutral and gender is rendered analytically invisible. This study contributes not by introducing men as a subject, but by foregrounding masculinity as an explicit analytical lens for understanding radicalisation. By treating masculinity as a central organising category rather than an implicit backdrop, it provides a more precise account of how identity, power, and social norms shape pathways into extremism.

Safeguarding

HSC professionals emphasised the primacy of building meaningful rapport grounded in trust, open dialogue, and confidence in engaging with sensitive or extremist views. Creating safe relational spaces enables young men to feel heard and validated, supporting a deeper understanding of their perspectives and unmet needs, and is seen as essential to grasping the *functional* dynamics of male radicalisation.

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Establishing meaningful structure and routine to address holistic needs was viewed as central to enabling constructive responses to wider structural pressures, consistent with social work framings of radicalisation as both an individual and social problem (Haugstvedt, 2019). Participants advocated bespoke, early, gender-informed, trauma-informed, strengths-based, and multi-agency safeguarding interventions, including relationship-based practice, motivational interviewing, non-judgemental ideological mentoring through Prevent Channel Panels, and tailored engagement in sport, volunteering, or education to foster belonging and resilience.

Participants noted that, in the absence of positive outlets, males could become more susceptible to online ideological grooming, with unmet needs further compounded by certain structural conditions such as economic inequality, political instability, cultural change, and perceived threats to male status (Mudde, 2019; Bértoa & Rama, 2021).

Overall, the findings highlight the need for anti-oppressive, context-aware safeguarding grounded in professional curiosity and reflective practice, which holistically and intersectionally assesses individual unmet needs alongside structural conditions. These are safeguarding principles embedded within much of social work and HSC practice. Bespoke partnership working with males and wider services was seen as essential to providing viable alternatives to the radicalisation of masculinity, whereby extremist movements are used to meet otherwise unmet needs.

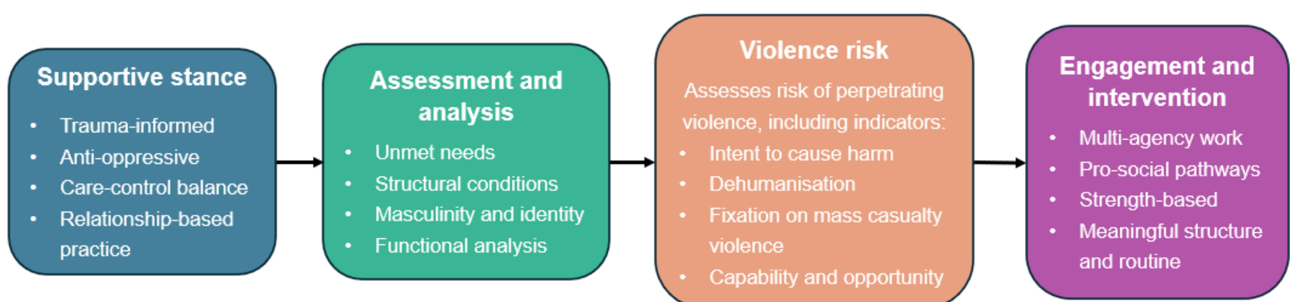

Figure 3: Safeguarding Against Violent Extremism (SAVE model).

These insights have been synthesised in the *Safeguarding Against Violent Extremism* model (SAVE) that proposes four components to safeguarding against male radicalisation: *Supportive Stance*: establishing a trauma-informed, relational, trust-based and non-judgemental approach; *Assessment and Analysis*: exploring the intersection of unmet needs, structural conditions, masculinity/identity and offering a holistic functional analysis; *Violent Fixation*: assessing risk through indicators such as intent, dehumanisation, and capability and opportunity for harm; and *Engagement and Intervention*: delivering multi-agency, strengths-based support to address needs and promote pro-social pathways away from violence.

The SAVE (Safeguarding Against Violent Extremism) model supports frontline practitioners to deliver structured, evidence-informed interventions for males at risk of radicalisation. Evidence consistently highlights that bespoke, non-judgemental, holistic approaches outperform ideologically focused deradicalisation. Social reintegration interventions—including education, housing, employment, mental health support, and structured pro-social activity—are associated with stronger outcomes than cognition-focused belief change approaches (Hassan et al., 2021).

This reflects a broader shift towards psychosocial, resilience-oriented CVE practice. Resilience theory prioritises strengthening protective factors and adaptive capacity rather than deficit-based risk framings (Grossman et al., 2017), while socio-ecological models situate vulnerability within structural, relational, and political contexts, enabling context-sensitive interventions (Buttner et al., 2018). SAVE incorporates trauma-informed practice, recognising adverse childhood experiences, loss, violence, and socio-economic adversity as key vulnerabilities, with radicalisation functioning as a maladaptive coping response (Yuzva Clement et al., 2026). Strengths-based approaches further emphasise self-determination, existing coping strategies, and recognition of "wins," reinforcing agency (Heinonen & Spearman, 2010).

Operationally, SAVE centres relational engagement, strengths-based practice, and meaningful routines. Relational engagement creates safe, non-judgemental, structured spaces to express grievances without sanction, grounded in trauma-informed, relationship-based practice emphasising consistency and containment. Therapeutic rapport is central to intervention success (McCoyd et al., 2022), including in CVE social work (Haugstvedt, 2019; Yuzva Clement et al., 2026), supported by non-judgemental, needs-focused engagement

(Yuzva Clement et al., 2026). Creative, flexible approaches to building this rapport outside of formal office environments can help support this rapport, such as walks, cafes, and demonstrating sufficient attention to their interests (e.g. sports or gaming).

Strengths-based practice redirects capacities into pro-social domains, supported by motivational interviewing to enhance intrinsic motivation (Wahab, 2005; McKenzie & O'Brien, 2024). Meaningful routines provide stability, purpose, and belonging through sustained engagement, often co-produced to ensure relevance, which may include volunteering, sports, creative work, male mentoring, community engagement,learning new skills or access to professional development. Collectively, SAVE offers a pragmatic, relational, evidence-informed framework for frontline CVE practice to support building a meaningful structure and routine that reduces risk of radicalisation.

Key implications and contributions

The radicalisation of males presents a complex and evolving challenge for human rights and social work values. Social work can contribute a unique role in mitigating against this dynamic risk of male radicalisation. This study calls for a holistic, gender-informed multi-agency response to male radicalisation, recognising how extremist ideologies exploit unmet needs, structural conditions, and masculinity to recruit males into extremism. Through interventions that offer an intersectional gendered analysis, social workers can understand radicalisation often serves a function for a cohort of males in certain structural conditions. Social work safeguarding responses must therefore seek to holistically understand that function and work creatively and constructively with males and other agencies to meet their bespoke needs in pro-social ways that reduce the appeal of extremism.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all participants who took part in this study. I am grateful for your time and offering your unique and important insights on male radicalisation.

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

References

Allely, C., Jouenne, E., Westphal, A., Staufenberg, E. & Murphy, D. (2024). 'Autism spectrum disorder, extremism and risk assessment', *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 34(2)., pp. 182–196.

Amar, P. (2011). 'Middle East masculinity studies: discourses of "men in crisis", industries of gender in revolution', *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 7(3)., pp. 36.

Andersen, J. C. (2022). The Symbolic Boundary Work of Incels: Subcultural Negotiation of Meaning and Identity Online. *Deviant Behavior*, 1-21. doi:10.1080/01639625.2022.2142864

Atkinson, R. (2001). *Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies*, Research Gate

Bakker, E. (2006). *Jihadi terrorists in Europe: their characteristics and the circumstances in which they joined the jihad: an exploratory study*. The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael.

Bates, L. (2020). *Men Who Hate Women: From Incels to Pickup Artists, The Truth about extreme misogyny and how it affects us all*, Simon and Schuster

BBC (2020). *Rugby teenager Paul Dunleavy jailed for terror offences*. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-coventry-warwickshire-54659038

Berger, J. M. (2017). "*Extremist Construction of Identity: How Escalating Demands for Legitimacy Shape and Define In-group and Out-group Dynamics*," The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague 8, no. 7 (2017). http://dx.doi.org/10.19165/2017.1.07

Berger, J. M., (2018). *Extremism*, Cambridge: MIT Press

Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research, 15*(2)., 219–234. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468475

Bértoa, F. & Rama, J., (2021). Polarization: What do we know and what can we do about it? *Frontiers in Political Science*, doi: 10.3389/fpos.2021.687695

Bhui, K.S., Hicks, M.H., Lashley, M., Jones, E. (2012). A public health approach to understanding and preventing violent radicalization. *BMC Medine,* 10, 16 (2012). https://doi.org/10.1186/1741-7015-10-16

Bjørgo, T., & Gjelsvik, I. M. (2015). Forskning på forebygging av radikalisering og voldelig ekstremisme: En kunnskapsstatus.Oslo: PHSForskning

Blee, K. 2020. “Where Do We Go from Here? Positioning Gender in Studies of the Far Right.” *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 21 (4).: 416–431. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2020.1851870(open in a new window)..

Borum, R. (2011). Radicalization into violent extremism I: A review of social science theories. *Journal of Strategic Security, 4*(4)., 7–36.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). ‘Using thematic analysis in psychology’, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2)., pp. 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., Clarke, V. and Hayfield, N. (2022). “‘A starting point for your journey, not a map’: Nikki Hayfield in conversation with Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke about thematic analysis”, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 19(2)., pp. 424-445, DOI: 10.1080/14780887.2019.1670765

Brown, K. (2013). *Gender and Counter-Radicalisation: Women and Emerging Counter-Terror Measures*. London: Routledge.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Busher, J., Choudhury, T., Thomas, P. and Harris, G. (2017). *What the Prevent Duty Means for Schools and Colleges in England: An Analysis of Educationalist's Experiences* (London, The Aziz Foundation).

Buttner, P., Gahleitner, S. B., Hochuli Freund, U., & Röh, D. (2018). Soziale Diagnostik: Eine Einführung. In P. Buttner, S. B. Gahleitner, U. Hochuli Freund, & D. Röh (Hrsg.), *Handbuch Soziale Diagnostik: Perspektiven und Konzepte für die Soziale Arbeit* (S. 11–30). Berlin: Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V.

Cardenas, I. (2017). *Radical Social Work*, Journal of Progressive Human Services, 28(2)., 55-57. https://doi.org/10.1080/10428232.2017.1292491

Carroll, D. (2022). *Leaving Hate: Social Work and the Journey out of Far-Right Extremism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Carter, B. (2013). *Women and Violent Extremism*. GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 898. University of Birmingham: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre.

Chisholm, T., & Coulter, A. (2017). Safeguarding and radicalisation (Research Report for Social Science in Government). Department of Education. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/635262/Safeguarding_and_Radicalisation.pdf

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2014). *Thematic analysis*. In Encyclopedia of critical psychology (pp. 1947-1952). Springer New York.

Clement, D. (2024). *'Better equipped'? Examining The Role of Social Work in Clinical Countering Violent Extremism*. Master's Thesis. Wilfred Laurier University.

Clement, D. Y., Gheorghe, R. M., Walkenhorst, D., Hutchinson, J., & McKenzie, A. (2026). *Social work and countering violent extremism: Case management, direct practice and multi-sectoral collaboration*. Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-07086-9

Clemmow, C., Bouhana, N., Marchment, S. & Gill, P. (2023). 'Vulnerability to radicalisation in a general population: a psychometric network approach', *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 29(4)., pp. 408–436.

Collins, C. J., Murphy, M. G., Reid, K., & Clark, J. J. (2024). Incel Perpetrated Violence: Distal and Proximal Risk Factors and Pathways. *Deviant Behavior*, 1-19. doi:10.1080/01639625.2024.2417824

Connell, R.W. (1995). *Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cook, J., Herschinger, E., De Leede, S. & Andreeva, A. (2024). *Radicalisation and Gender: What do we know?* ICCT Report.

Corner, E. & Gill, P. (2015). 'A false dichotomy? Mental illness and lone-actor terrorism', *Law and Human Behavior*, 39(1)., pp. 23–34.

Costello, W., Whittaker, J., & Thomas, A. G. (2025). The Dual Pathways Hypothesis of Incel Harm: A Model of Harmful Attitudes and Beliefs Among Involuntary Celibates. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. doi:10.1007/s10508-025-03161-y

Cottee, S. (2023). Radicalisation Discourse: Consensus Points, Evidence Base and Blind Spots, Rethinking Extremism, Commission for Countering Extremism,

Cowden, S. & Picken, J. (2019). 'Safeguarding or Surveillance? Social Work, Prevent and Fundamentalist Violence', *Feminist Dissent*.

Cox, K., Ogden, T., Jordan, V., Paille, P (2021). *COVID-19, Disinformation and Hateful Extremism: Literature review report*, Commission for Countering Extremism

Crawford, M. (2020). 'Ecological Systems theory: Exploring the development of the theoretical framework as conceived by Bronfenbrenner', *Journal of Public Health Issues and Practices*, 4(2)., p.170. https://doi.org/10.33790/jphip1100170

Crenshaw, K. (1989). 'Demarginalising the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine', *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1)., pp. 139–167.

Creswell, J., Poth, C., (2023). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Choosing Among Five Approaches*, Fifth Edition, Sage

Dalgaard-Nielsen, A. (2013). Promoting exit from violent extremism: Themes and approaches. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 36(2)., 99–115. doi:10.1080/1057610X.2013.747073

Das S. (2022). How TikTok bombards young men with misogynistic videos. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/aug/06/revealed-how-tiktok-bombards-young-men-with-misogynistic-videos-andrew-tate

Dixon, J. (2023). *Adult Safeguarding Observed: How Social Workers assess and manage risk and uncertainty*, Policy Press

Druitt, F., Smith, D., Spaaij, R., Kernot, D., & Laver, A. (2023). Do autism spectrum disorders (ASD). increase the risk of terrorism engagement? A literature review of the research evidence, theory and interpretation, and a discussion reframing the research-practice debate. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, *18*(3)., 307–332. https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2022.2158361

Duriesmith, D., Ryan, L. & Simmerman, S. (2018). 'Misogyny as Violent Extremism', *Australian Institute of International Affairs*, 7 November. Available at: http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/misogyny-as-violent-extremism/

Ellis, B.H. & Abdi, S. (2017). 'Building community resilience to violent extremism through genuine partnerships', *American Psychologist*, 72(3)., pp. 289–300. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000065

Fenton, J. (2014). Can social work education meet the neoliberal challenge head on? *Critical and Radical Social Work*, *2*(3)., 321-335. https://doi.org/10.1332/204986014x14074186108718

Ferguson, I., & Woodward, R. (2009). *Radical Social Work in Practice*. Policy Press.

Feve, S., & Elshimi, M. (2018). Planning for Prevent: A Framework to Develop and Evaluate National Action Plans to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism. Global Center on Cooperative Security. Available at: Planning for Prevention: A Framework to Develop and Evaluate National Action Plans to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism - Global Center on Cooperative Security [Accessed 9th March 2026]

Finch, J., McKendrick, D. (2019). '*Securitising social work: Counter terrorism, extremism and radicalisation'* in S. Webb (ed). The Routledge Handbook of Critical Social Work. London: Routledge

Flick, U. (2018). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (6th ed.). Sage Publishing

Fraser, H., Beddoe, L., & Ballantyne, N. (2017). Is there a renaissance of radical social work? *Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work*, *29*(2)., 1-5.

Gentry, C. E., & Sjoberg, L. (2015). *Beyond Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Thinking About Women's Violence in Global Politics.* Zed Books.

Gheorghe, R. M., & Clement, D. (2025). 'It's time to put the copes down and get to work': a qualitative study of incel exit strategies on r/IncelExit. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, 17*(4), 477-497. doi:10.1080/19434472.2023.2276485

Ging, D. (2017). 'Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere', *Men and Masculinities*, 22(4)., Article 1097184X17706401. https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X17706401

Grossman, M., Ungar, M., Brisson, J., Gerrand, V., Hadfield, K., & Jefferies, P. (2017). *Understanding youth resilience to violent extremism: A standardised research measure* (Final Research Report). Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University, and the Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University.

Hassan, G., Brouillette-Alarie, S., Ousman, S., Savard, É. L., Kilinc, D., Madriaza, P., Varela, W., Pickup, D., Danis, E., & the CPN-PREV Team. (2021). *A systematic review on the outcomes of tertiary prevention programs in the field of violent radicalization* (Report No. 2021-INT-EN). Canadian Practitioners Network for the Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence (CPN-PREV).

Haugstvedt, H. (2019). 'Trusting the mistrusted: Norwegian social workers' strategies in preventing radicalisation and violent extremism', *Journal for Deradicalisation*, 19, pp. 149–183.

Heath-Kelly, C. & Strausz, E. (2018). The banality of counterterrorism "after, after 9/11"? Perspectives on the Prevent duty from the UK health care sector. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*. 2018 Jul 17;12(1).:89-109. doi: 10.1080/17539153.2018.1494123. PMID: 31057664; PMCID: PMC6474731.

Heinonen, T., & Spearman, L. (2009). *Social work practice: Problem solving and beyond* (3rd ed.). Nelson Education.

Home Office (2015). Channel Duty Guidance - Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism - Statutory guidance for Channel panel members and partners of local panels. London: HM Government

Home Office. (2025). User guide to: Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, England and Wales. Available at: User guide to: Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, England and Wales - GOV.UK [Accessed 21st November 2025]

Horgan, J. G. (2005). *The Psychology of Terrorism*. Abingdon: Routledge

Hutson, R (2021). Prevent Violent Extremism and Social Work: Recent US History and Prospects, *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 6 (1)., December, 2021, DOI:10.1007/s41134-021-00177-x

Idris, I. (2019). Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism Programming on Men, Women, Boys and Girls. The Institute of Development Studies and Partner Organisations. Report. https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12413/14748

Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD). (2025). Terror without ideology? The rise of nihilistic violence. Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Available at: Terror without ideology? The rise of nihilistic violence – An ISD Investigation - ISD [Accessed on 21st November 2025]

Jensen, S. Q & Larsen. J. F. (2021). “Sociological Perspectives on Islamist Radicalization: Bridging the Micro/Macro Gap.” *European Journal of Criminology* 18, no. 3: 426–443. https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370819851356.

Johnson, J (2018). ‘The Self-Radicalisation of White Men: “Fake News” and the Affective Networking of Paranoia.’ Communication, Culture and Critique 11(1).: 100– 115.

Johnson, M., True, J. (2019). *Misogyny & Violent Extremism: Implications for Preventing Violent Extremism Policy Brief*, UN Women.

Kaiser, S. (2022). *Political Masculinity: How Incels, Fundamentalists and Authoritarians Mobile for Patriarchy*, Polity

Kelly, L. (2019). Lessons learnt from Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE). programmes amid ongoing conflict. K4D Helpdesk Report 668. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

Kenyon, J., Binder, J., and Baker-Beall, C., (2022). “Understanding the Role of the Internet in the Process of Radicalisation: An Analysis of Convicted Extremists in England and Wales.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2022.2065902.

Khalil, J., Zeuthen, M., & Marsden, S. (2023). *A Guide to Deradicalisation & Disengagement Programming*. CREST Research. Available at: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/guide-to-deradicalisation-disengagement-programming/

Khosrokhavar, F., (2021). *Jihadism in Europe: European Youth and the New Caliphate*, Oxford University Press

Kimmel, M. (2018). *Healing from Hate: How Young Men Get Into—and Out of—Violent Extremism*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Kingdon, A. (2022). *Video-gaming & violent extremism: An exploration of the current landscape, trends, and threats*. Terrorism and Social Media: International Conference, Swansea University, Swansea, United Kingdom. 28 - 29 Jun 2022.

Kruglanski, A., Bélanger, J., Gunaratna, R (2019). *The Three Pillars of Radicalisation: Needs, Narratives and Networks*, OUP USA

Kundnani, A. (2014). *The Muslims Are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*. London: Verso Books.

Langdon-Shreeve, S. & Nickson, H. (2021). *Safeguarding and radicalisation: Learning from children's social care*. London: Department for Education. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/994789/DfE_Safeguarding_in_CSC.pdf

Lewis, D. (2022). Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism, Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament

Lightfoot, C., Cole, M., Cole, S (2018). *The development of children*, 8th ed, New York, NY: Macmillan

Lounela, E., & Murphy, S. (2024). Incel Violence and Victimhood: Negotiating Inceldom in Online Discussions of the Plymouth Shooting. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 36*(3), 344-365. doi:10.1080/09546553.2022.2157267

McCauley, C. & Moskalenko, S. (2011). *Friction: How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McGilloway, A., Ghosh, P. & Bhui, K. (2015). ‘A systematic review of pathways to and processes associated with radicalization and extremism amongst Muslims in Western societies’, *International Review of Psychiatry*, 27(1)., pp. 39–50.

McGuire, M. (2017). *Technology and Terrorism: The Dark Side of the Digital Age*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

McKenzie, A., & O’Brien, D. (2024). The evolution of estimated time of arrival: The City of Toronto’s CVE program. *Journal for Deradicalization,* 39, 94–128. https://doi.org/10.2363-9849

Moghadam, A. (2008). ‘Motives for martyrdom: Al-Qaida, Salafi jihad, and the spread of suicide attacks’, *International Security*, 33(3)., pp. 46–78.

Möller-Leimkühler, A (2017). *Why is Terrorism a man's business?* Cambridge University Press

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

Morrison, J. F., Silke, A., Maiberg, H., Slay, C., & Stewart, R. (2021). *A Systematic Review of Post-2017 Research on Disengagement and Deradicalisation*. London: Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST).

Mudde, C (2019). *The Far Right Today*, Polity
Neumann, P.R. (2013). *The trouble with radicalisation,* International Affairs, Volume 89, Issue 4

O'Malley, R. L., & Helm, B. (2022). The Role of Perceived Injustice and Need for Esteem on Incel Membership Online. *Deviant Behavior*, 1-18. doi:10.1080/01639625.2022.2133650

Ortlipp, M. (2008). Keeping and Using Reflective Journals in the Qualitative Research Process. *The Qualitative Report*, *13*(4)., 695-705. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1579

Parton, N., Campling, J., O'Byrne, P (2000). Constructive Social Work: Towards a New Practice, Palgrave

Pearson, E., Winterbotham, E and Brown, K (2023). *Countering Violent Extremism: Making Gender Matter*, Rethinking Political Violence, Palgrave Macmillan

Ragazzi, F. (2017). "Countering Terrorism and Radicalisation: Securitising Social Policy?" *Critical Social Policy* 37 (2), 163–179. doi: 0.1177/0261018316683472. [DOI] [Google Scholar]

Rashid, N (2014). '*Giving the silent majority a stronger voice? Initiatives to empower Muslim women as part of the UK's "war on terror"*', Ethnic and Racial Studies 37: 4, 2014, pp. 589–604; Brown, 'Gender and counter radicalisation'

Rink, A., & Sharma, K. (2018). The determinants of religious radicalization: Evidence from Kenya. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 62(6). Available at: The Determinants of Religious Radicalization - Anselm Rink, Kunaal Sharma, 2018 [Accessed 4th December 2025]

Romaniuk, P., & Durner, T. (2018). The politics of preventing violent extremism: the case of Uganda. *Conflict, Security and Development*, 18(2)., 159–179. https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2018.1447863

Roose, J., and Cook, J. (2022). *Supreme Men, Subjected Women: Gender Inequality and Violence in Jihadist, Far Right and Male Supremacist Ideologies*, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, Routledge

Roy, O. (2017). *Jihad and Death: The Global Appeal of Islamic State*. C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd

Schwandt, T. A (2000). Three Epistemological Stances for Qualitative Inquiry: Interpretivism, Hermeneutics, and Social Constructivism, pp 189-213 in Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd ed., edited by N. Densin and Y. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Shall, S. (2023). *Social Work's relationship with the PREVENT duty,* Insight, 74, available at [Social work's relationship with the PREVENT duty | Iriss]

Shaw, J., Leonard., S & Walter, F. (2019). *Susceptibility to radicalisation in those with Autism Spectrum Disorder*, University of Manchester

Shawcross, W., (2023). Independent Review of Prevent, UK Government

Silke, A. (2013). Risk assessment of terrorist and extremist prisoners. In A. Silke (Ed.)., *Prisons, terrorism and extremism: Critical issues in management, radicalisation and reform* (pp. 108–121). Routledge.

Silverman, D. (2020). *Qualitative Research*, Fifth Edition, Sage

Sivenbring, J. & Malmros, R. (2019). Mixing logics: Multiagency approaches for countering violent extremism. Sivenbring, J. & Malmros, R. A. (2019). Mixing Logics – Multiagency approaches for countering violent extremism. Gothenburg: University of Gothenburg

Skoczylis, J., & Andrews, S. (2022). Strain theory, resilience, and far-right extremism: the impact of gender, life experiences and the internet. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, *15*(1)., 143–168. https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2022.2031137

Smith, R. (2022). Who is Andrew Tate? As misogynist is kicked off TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook. *Daily Mirror*. https://www.mirror.co.uk/3am/celebrity-news/who-andrew-tate-tiktok-star-27715249

Stanley, T., & Guru, S. (2015). Childhood radicalisation risk: An emerging practice issue. *Practice: Social Work in Action*, 27(5)., 353–366. https://doi.org/10.1080/09503153.2015.1053858

Stanley, T., Guru, S. and Gupta, A. (2018). Working with PREVENT: social work options for cases of 'radicalisation risk', *Practice*, 30 (2)., 131–146. doi: 10.1080/09503153.2017.1414176

Swann, WB., Jetten, J., Gómes, A., Whitehouse, H. (2012). When group membership gets personal: a theory of identity fusion. *Psychol. Rev*. 917 2012; 119(3).: 441–456.

Tener, D. (2024). The journey to becoming a qualitative social work researcher: seven mile-markers. *Social Work Education*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2024.2340701

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2017). Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives, and the Tipping Point for Recruitment. New York: UNDP

Vidino, L., (2011). Radicalisation, Linkage and Diversity: Current Trends in Terrorism in Europe. Santa Monica, CA, RAND

Vink, D., Abbas, T., Veilleux-Lepage, Y., & McNeil-Willson, R. (2023). "Because They Are Women in a Man's World": A Critical Discourse Analysis of Incel Violent Extremists and the Stories They Tell. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1-17. doi:10.1080/09546553.2023.2189970

Wahab, S. (2005). Motivational interviewing and social work practice. *Journal of Social Work, 5(1), 45-60.* https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017305051365

Walter, F., Leonard, S., Miah, S., Shaw, J. (2020). Characteristics of autism spectrum disorder and susceptibility to radicalisation among young people: A qualitative study, Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology (32(1).:22- DOI: 10.1080/14789949.2020.1854831

Waring, A. (2019). *The New Authoritarianism: Vol. 2 - Populism and the Far Right*, Ibidem Press.

Warrell, H. (2024). Weaponised autism and the extremist threat facing children, Financial Times, Available at: Weaponised autism and the extremist threat facing children

Whittaker, J. (2022). *Online radicalisation: What we know*, Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN).

Whittaker, J., Costello, W., & Thomas, A. G. (2024). *Predicting Harm Among Incels (Involuntary Celibates): The Roles of Mental Health, Ideological Belief and Social Networking*. Swansea University

Winter, C. (2018). *Apocalypse, later: a longitudinal study of the Islamic State brand*. Critical Studies in Media Communication, *35*(1)., 103–121. https://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2017.1393094

Yin, R. K. (2016). *Qualitative research from start to finish* (2nd ed.). London: Guildford Press

Zimmerman, S. (2024). The Ideology of Incels: Misogyny and Victimhood as Justification for Political Violence. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 36*(2), 166-179. doi:10.1080/09546553.2022.2129014

JOURNAL FOR DERADICALIZATION

Summer 2026
No. 47
ISSN: 2363-9849

About the JD Journal for Deradicalization

The JD Journal for Deradicalization is the world's only peer reviewed periodical for the theory and practice of deradicalization with a wide international audience. Named an "essential journal of our times" (Cheryl LaGuardia, Harvard University) the JD's editorial board of expert advisors includes some of the most renowned scholars in the field of deradicalization studies, such as Prof. Dr. John G. Horgan (Georgia State University); Prof. Dr. Tore Bjørgo (Norwegian Police University College); Prof. Dr. Mark Dechesne (Leiden University); Prof. Dr. Cynthia Miller-Idriss (American University Washington D.C.); Prof. Dr. Julie Chernov Hwang (Goucher College); Prof. Dr. Marco Lombardi, (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Milano); Dr. Paul Jackson (University of Northampton); Professor Michael Freeden, (University of Nottingham); Professor Hamed El-Sa'id (Manchester Metropolitan University); Prof. Sadeq Rahimi (University of Saskatchewan, Harvard Medical School), Dr. Omar Ashour (University of Exeter), Prof. Neil Ferguson (Liverpool Hope University), Prof. Sarah Marsden (Lancaster University), Prof. Maura Conway (Dublin City University), Dr. Kurt Braddock (American University Washington D.C.), Dr. Michael J. Williams (The Science of P/CVE), Dr. Mary Beth Altier (New York University) and Dr. Aaron Y. Zelin (Washington Institute for Near East Policy), Prof. Dr. Adrian Cherney (University of Queensland), Dr. Wesley S. McCann (RTI International), and Dr. Daren Fisher (Hampton University).

For more information please see: www.journal-derad.com

Twitter: @JD_JournalDerad
Facebook: www.facebook.com/deradicalisation

The JD Journal for Deradicalization is a proud member of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

ISSN: 2363-9849

Editor in Chief: Daniel Koehler