

**To the Left, to the Left: Incel Experiences on Dating Apps**

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On May 23, 2014, Elliot Rodger took the lives of six people and injured fourteen others during a violent rampage in Isla Vista, California. Hours before the attack, Rodger released a YouTube video and a manifesto outlining the rationale behind his “retribution,” expressing his contempt toward women for thwarting his sexual advances. Nearly four years later, Alek Minassian praised “Supreme Gentleman” Elliot Rodger on Facebook, noting that “the Incel Rebellion has already begun!” before driving a rented van into a crowd of pedestrians in downtown Toronto. While Incels, short for Involuntary Celibates, have made their motives for these attacks incredibly clear, there has been little research conducted to determine what has brought rise to this suddenly growing group (Papadamou et al., 2020). While rejection and sexual frustration are certainly not novel experiences in the dating world, the rise in the use of dating apps such as Tinder has exponentiated the pace in which one can view, meet, and be rejected by singles in your region. Thus, the present study sought to examine Incel experiences with dating apps and their association with a host of attitudinal, health and relationship-based outcomes. Compared to non-Incels, Incels reported higher levels of depression, dating-based anxiety, fear of being single, and insecure attachment, which were all related to their self-reported popularity on dating apps. Not surprisingly, Incels also reported elevated rates of rejection sensitivity and beliefs that females are sexually deceptive. These results offer a better understanding of the Incel community and suggest potential avenues for therapeutic intervention. Further, results of the present study also support future research looking at the relationship between dating app usage and outwardly violent attitudes and behaviours (particularly toward women).

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**References**

Papadamou, K., Zannettou, S., Blackburn, J., De Cristofaro, E., Stringhini, G., & Sirivianos, M. (2020). Understanding the Incel Community on YouTube. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2001.08293*.