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Examining Digital Hostility Against Black Women: A Thematic Analysis of the Black Manosphere on Twitter

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Examining Digital Hostility Against Black Women: A Thematic Analysis of the Black
Manosphere on Twitter


By
Nekea Sanders

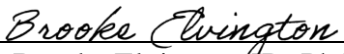
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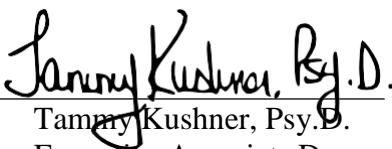
Approval Page

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This dissertation is dedicated to me and every Black girl and woman in the world. May our voices be heard and elevated. May we live and thrive.

Abstract

Examining Digital Hostility Against Black Women: A Thematic Analysis of the Black Manosphere on Twitter. Nekea Sanders, 2024: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice. Keywords: Black Manosphere, Twitter, digital hostility, thematic analysis, misogynoir, Black women

The Manosphere is a collective of powerfully influential men who create and control harmful narratives about women online. Individuals within the Manosphere are disseminating their beliefs and garnering support through various online platforms, including social media. This research study sheds light on the Black Manosphere, a group within the Manosphere that has gone under the radar, despite the detrimental and toxic content they publish online about Black women. This qualitative research study examined the hostile rhetoric published by the Black Manosphere on Twitter (now X) about Black women. The research questions guiding this qualitative examination were: (1) *What types and volume of misogynistic content against Black women are produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* (2) *What is the shared rhetoric regarding the hostility towards Black women propagated by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* Thematic analysis and content analysis were used to examine 352 tweets produced by the Black Manosphere about Black women over a 3 year period.

Six overarching themes emerged from the Black Manosphere's rhetoric: condoning violence, belittling, contempt for Black women, Black women working against Black men, patriarchal rhetoric, and perceived judicial bias. The Black Manosphere's rhetoric exhibited layers of intersectionality and misogynoir, displaying targeted hatred and contempt towards Black women. The data analysis revealed a key persuasive tactic used to spread their hostile beliefs about Black women—flipping the narrative. This tactic was used to center Black men as victims of adverse treatment from Black women and systems of power. This study serves as an integral piece in addressing the lack of empirical studies examining the Black Manosphere to prevent violence against Black women.

Table of Contents

	Page
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Nature of the Research Problem	1
Background & Significance	3
Black Manosphere.....	3
Violence Against Black Women	5
Addressing Violence & Deaths Among Black Women	6
Barriers & Issues	9
Purpose Statement	10
Definition of Terms	11
Chapter 2: Literature Review	14
Intersectionality Framework	14
The Manosphere	15
Black Manosphere	18
Radicalization & Extremism within the Manosphere	22
Online Violence Transferring to Violence Offline	24
Manosphere’s Association with Violence against Women	26
Violence Against Black Women	30
Research Questions	35
Chapter 3: Methodology	36
Qualitative Research Approach	36
Data Collection Procedures	37
Procedures	38
Data Sample	40
Instrument	42
Data Analysis	44
Thematic Analysis	45
Content Analysis	48
Reflexivity	49
Rigor and Trustworthiness	50
Chapter 4: Results	53
Layers of Intersectionality	53
About the Black Manosphere	55
Misogynistic & Misogynoir Content Shared by the Black Manosphere	56
Shared Rhetoric Among the Black Manosphere	57
Condoning Violence	58
Belittling	60
Contempt for Black Women	62
Black Women Working Against Black Men	63
Patriarchal Rhetoric	64
Perceived Judicial Bias	65

Key Insights on the Black Manosphere’s Rhetoric	66
Flipping the Narrative as a Tactic	68
Summary of Black Manosphere Talking Points	69
Chapter 5: Discussion	71
Summary of Key Research Findings	71
Interpretation of the Findings	72
Use of Online Social Platforms	73
Social Norms Minimizing Violence	73
Flipping the Narrative to Center Black Men	74
Prevailing Goal of the Black Manosphere	75
Implications of the Study	75
Beyond White & Well Known Manosphere Groups	76
Social Impact	76
Limitations	77
Future Research	80
References	82
Table	
Themes Developed in Analyzing the Rhetoric of the Black Manosphere Regarding Black Women on Twitter	57
Figure	
Thematic Map of Final Emerging Themes	47

Chapter 1: Introduction

Nature of the Research Problem

Digital hostility is increasing among users on online platforms, including social media platforms. From electoral campaigning to daily social media posts, digital hostility has become deeply embedded in online communications (Esposito & Breeze, 2022; Perreault, 2023; Petterson et al., 2023; Thompson & Cover, 2022). Digital hostility can present in a range of negative behaviors, such as cyberbullying, hate speech, and online harassment (Cover, 2022; Cover, 2023). These negative behaviors often exhibit inflammatory language, threats, insults, and derogatory remarks intentionally directed at individuals or groups of people based on their gender, race, opinions, affiliations, or a combination of characteristics (Cervone et al., 2021).

In recent years, there has been growing concern about the digital hostility that is directed towards women and how this hostility has impacted women online and offline (KhosraviNik & Esposito, 2018). One of the main contributors of this digital hostility towards women is a collective group of males known as the Manosphere (Zimmerman, 2023). The Manosphere is a toxic, antifeminism space immersed within online platforms (Ging, 2019). Various groups comprise the Manosphere, such as men going their own way (MGTOW), involuntary celibates (Incels), Black Manosphere, men's right activist (MRA), pick up artists (PUAs), and traditional Christian conservatives (TradCons; Horta Ribeiro et al., 2021). Although existing research has uncovered the harmful ideologies and rhetoric of various groups within the Manosphere, all of the research has focused on predominantly White Manosphere groups (Farrell et al., 2019; Fitzgerald, 2020; Ging, 2019; Glace et al., 2021; Habib et al., 2022; Horta Ribeiro et al., 2021; Huber, 2023; Jones et al., 2020; Lewis, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2021; Russo et al., 2023; Sganga, 2022; Sugiura, 2021; Zuckerman & Rajendra-Nicolucci, 2021). Although Black males have been a part of the Manosphere and are embedded within White and their own Manosphere

groups, their contributions to the Manosphere have not been examined empirically (Fountain, 2018b; Fountain, 2019; Onuoha, 2022). This study aims to address this gap by examining the hostile rhetoric of a predominately Black group within the Manosphere, known as the Black Manosphere. The Black Manosphere has created unique online spaces enticing violence specifically towards Black women online and now this violence is seeping offline into the physical world (Black Women Wake Up, n.d.; Burley & Reid Ross, 2022; Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Ellis & Sidner, 2014; Fitzgerald, 2020; Habib et al., 2022; Liang Lin, 2017; Texas Fusion Center Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division Texas Department of Public Safety, 2020; Sganga, 2022).

In the United States, every four hours, a Black woman or girl dies from homicide (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], n.d.). Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of Black girls and women killed has increased 54%. Despite representing one of the smallest groups in the United States numerically, Black girls and women have the highest rate of death by homicide among all females (National Center for Health Statistics [NCHS], 2022). Black girls and women are not only experiencing the highest rates of the most extreme form of violence—homicide, but they are also experiencing disproportionately high rates of other forms of violence: domestic violence, physical assault, sexual assault (Barlow, 2020; Beckett & Clayton, 2022a; Beckett & Clayton, 2022b; Coburn Place n.d.; DuMonthier et al., 2017; Green, 2017; National Black Women’s Justice Institute, 2021; Violence Policy Center, 2021). Despite the high likelihood of Black girls and women being victims of violence, their lived experiences and the problems impacting their lives are buried under the differing lived experiences of non-Black girls and women and/or Black males.

One potential association of the increased violence and deaths among Black girls and women may lay within the Black Manosphere. Although there is anecdotal evidence of the association between the Black Manosphere and the increased rates of violence and homicide among Black women, there is a lack of empirical evidence to support this potential association (Onuoha, 2022). As seen with other groups within the Manosphere, the Black Manosphere blames women, specifically Black women and feminism, for many of the problems they face in society (Fountain, 2018a). The rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere about Black women has the potential to influence other's viewpoints and beliefs about Black women (Ali & Khan, 2021; Sakki & Martikainen, 2021). Rhetoric is the strategic use of language used to persuade and influence other's ideas and viewpoints (Hakoköngäs et al., 2020). Moreover, rhetorical strategies, such as stereotyping and dehumanization, are used to demonize individuals and groups and to incite animosity and violence against them (Ali & Khan, 2021; Wahlström et al., 2021). This timely study starts to address this research gap by examining the shared hostile rhetoric that the Black Manosphere produces online on Twitter (now X) about Black women. Although the Black Manosphere occupies space within several online platforms, Twitter is a public and popular social media platform used by the Black Manosphere to amplify and spread their rhetoric about Black women.

Background & Significance

Black Manosphere

The Black Manosphere is a part of a greater group known as the Manosphere. The Manosphere is an online space that comprises various male groups (Ging, 2019). It is estimated that the Manosphere evolved in the early 2000s (Habib et al., 2022). The Manosphere was originally created to elevate the concerns regarding men's rights. However, research scholars are

documenting a shift in the values and social norms of the groups within the Manosphere overtime. Although there has always been an underlying belief within all Manosphere groups that feminine values dominate society and men must fight against this misandrist culture to protect themselves, the initial Manosphere groups focused predominately on men's rights and were milder in the content they produced (Marwick & Lewis, 2017; Marwick & Caplan, 2018; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Contrarily, the Manosphere groups dominating the space within the last few decades have been found to be extreme, toxic, and misogynistic when compared to the original Manosphere groups (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Furthermore, the Manosphere is garnering more attention from research scholars, law enforcement agencies, and mainstream media due to the increasingly violent real-life events that are occurring from individuals within the Manosphere (Burley & Reid Ross, 2022; Ellis & Sidner, 2014; Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Habib et al., 2022).

Although the Black Manosphere is a growing online community, its presence is not well known in the mainstream media or in academic research. To date, there are no published empirical research studies examining the Black Manosphere. Outside of individuals documenting their experiences with members of the Black Manosphere on their social media platforms and blog posts, much is not known about the group, which restricts a comprehensive understanding of what comprises this group (Fountain, 2020; Onuoha, 2022; Young, 2022). There are several reasons why the Black Manosphere must be centered and studied in empirical research studies. Research studies and research policy organizations have identified a positive association between misogyny and White supremacy as well as misogyny and violence (Anti-Defamation League, 2018; Fitzgerald, 2020; Texas Fusion Center Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division Texas Department of Public Safety, 2020; Sganga, 2022; Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.). Additionally, there is evidence of an association between the Black Manosphere and the

increased rates of violence and homicide among Black girls and women (Black Women Wake Up, n.d.; Onuoha, 2022). However, empirical research on this group has not been conducted to confirm this association.

Violence Against Black Women

Research has identified key characteristics associated with violence against Black women. Just as with all women, Black women are more likely to be victimized by someone they know, such as a spouse, intimate acquaintance, or a family member (Beyer et al., 2015; Cooper & Smith, 2011; Ponton, 2018; Violence Policy Center, 2021). Furthermore, the majority (91%) of Black females are killed by males that they know and most homicides of Black females (90%) are intra-racial (Violence Policy Center, 2021). Thus, most of the Black girls and women are victimized at the hands of Black males. Notably, not only do Black women have the greatest risk of dying from intimate partner violence (Azziz-Baumgartner et al., 2011; Della Giustina, 2018; Petrosky et al., 2017), but they are also disproportionately represented among victims of non-intimate partner homicide (Beyer et al., 2015; Petrosky et al., 2017). In addition to intimate partner homicide, Black girls and women are being shot to death while doing daily routines, such as getting off the city bus, walking their baby down the street, sitting in their car, pumping gas, dancing in their bedroom, working at their job and while sleeping in their bed (Page, 2023). Black girls and women are experiencing a broad range of violence that is killing them (Page, 2023; West 2002; West 2004).

Homicide is the most extreme form of violence that one can experience. In the United States, among all girls and women, Black girls and women are most likely to be murdered (Monteiro et al., 2021; NCHS, 2020). However, this finding would be impossible to uncover without using an intersectional lens for analyzing the data by race and gender. It is vital to review

the victimization rates of Black girls and women with an intersectional lens. National homicide victimization and offender rates analyzed by race, ethnicity, and gender revealed Black women were the only subgroup of women who had homicide victimization rates higher than White men (CDC, n.d.; Gaston & Sewell, 2021).

Contrary to the widely accepted belief that men are more likely than women to become victims of homicide, research findings showed that Black women are more likely to be killed than White men (Gaston & Sewell, 2021; Threadcraft & Miller, 2017). This finding has remained true from 1990 to 2016 (Gaston & Sewell, 2021). Black men, followed by Hispanic men, had the highest homicide victimization rates and Black women had the third highest rate of homicide victimization. Thus, not only are Black girls and women more likely to die from homicide than any other race and ethnicity group of girls and women, but Black women are also the only group of women to have higher homicide rates than a group of males. Although this trend has been present for over a decade, this surprising disparity in homicide rates is nonexistent in scholarly literature and commentary (Threadcraft & Miller, 2017). Gaston and Sewell (2021) suggest that the homicide risk of Black women who sit at the intersection of racism and sexism must be studied. For 20 consecutive years, homicide has been one of the leading causes of death for thousands of Black girls and women, but their deaths continue to remain a hidden, unaddressed health and safety problem (NCHS, 2020; Threadcraft & Miller, 2017). Within these 20 years, the Black Manosphere created collective spaces on various social media platforms to publish hate filled and harmful rhetoric about Black girls and women (Dee, 2023).

Addressing Violence & Deaths Among Black Women

The high rates of violence and deaths experienced by Black girls and women are notable crises; however, little to nothing is being done on the state and federal level to effectively

address what is happening daily to countless Black girls and women in the United States. On September 11, 2020, Representative Kelly introduced a bill in the United States 116th Congress titled *H.R. 8196 (116th) Protect Black Women and Girls Act of 2020* (Congress.gov, 2020). This bill proposed that an interagency task force be established to examine the experiences and conditions of Black girls and women in various facets of life, including justice and civil rights. This bill did not receive a vote and died in Congress. On December 14, 2021, Representative Kelly reintroduced the bill in the United States 117th Congress (*H.R. 6268 Protect Black Women and Girls Act of 2021*; Congress.gov, 2021). The outcome of this bill has not been realized. In the Wisconsin State Legislature, Senate Bill 825 was introduced by Senators Johnson, Agard, Bewley, Roys, Larson, and Carpenter (Wisconsin State Legislature, 2021). This bill is proposing the creation of a task force on missing and murdered African American women and girls. The outcome of this bill has not been realized. On May 20, 2021, Senator Biaggi introduced Senate Bill S6924 in the New York State Senate, to propose the establishment of a task force to address the lack of care and concern for missing and murdered girls and women who are Black, indigenous, or girls and women of color through policy development (The New York State Senate, 2021). The Minnesota Legislature approved the establishment of the *Missing and Murdered African American Women Task Force* to examine the systemic causes of violence against African American girls and women (Office of Justice Programs, n.d.). This task force was signed into law by Minnesota's governor Tim Walz on November 29, 2021. Minnesota is the first state to establish a task force on missing and murdered African American girls and women. Minnesota is the only state to implement a strategy to address the crisis of homicide among Black girls and women. Overall, the advocacy and prevention measures to address the

violence against Black girls and women is piecemeal, only occurring officially in one state and hopefully in three other states.

On the contrary, there have been major gains for girls and women irrespective of race in the fight against gender-based violence on the national level. On February 9, 2022, the *Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization Act of 2022* was introduced in the United States Senate by Senator Feinstein to expand the prevention efforts and protections for survivors of gender-based violence (e.g., domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking) as well as establish new programs, and make changes to federal criminal law (Congress.gov, 2022). In 2021, the White House announced that the Department of Health and Human Services will allocate \$49.5 million in grants to provide funding for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault to address anti-Asian bias and gender-violence (The White House, 2021a). Also, in 2021, President Biden signed an executive order on improving public safety and criminal justice for Native Americans and to address the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous people (The White House, 2021b). Considering these prominent federal legislative wins, Black girls and women, who experience the highest rates of violence and homicide, have not received national acknowledgement, resources, or orders to address the violence and murders. The nation is showing that it understands the harmful impact of gender-based violence through President Biden and his administration's support for the VAWA reauthorization (The White House, 2022).

It is now time that the nation acknowledges and works to address the violence against Black girls and women. Black girls and women are contributing citizens to this country. Black girls and women are innovators, sisters, community leaders, CEOs, dreamers, daughters, business owners, grandmothers, and so much more. Black girls and women are individuals who

deserve to thrive and not just survive the terrorism of violence and murders they face on a constant basis. Action must be conducted to eliminate the violence and homicide against Black girls and women in the United States. Although violence is not a new deadly dilemma impacting the lives of Black girls and women, the impact of COVID-19, social injustices, the uptick in hostile rhetoric and violence against Black girls and women, and the lack of legislation to address these problems is creating an urgent need to confront this dilemma.

Understanding the hostile rhetoric towards Black women among the Black Manosphere may portray a better understanding of the high rates of violence experienced by Black women online and in the physical world. The findings from this research study can help document rhetoric that can later be used to develop prevention measures and counteract influences of digital hostility online and offline to ultimately reduce violence and deaths among Black women and girls.

Barriers & Issues

The researcher had the commitment of a dissertation committee chair and two dissertation committee members. Social media research and social media data extraction techniques were new research domains for the three individuals. However, the committee chair and members have been essential in overseeing the dissertation project by extending their expertise to provide guidance in ensuring the researcher conducted a sound research study with a constructive design and methodology. The committee chair is an adjunct professor and accomplished criminal and juvenile justice researcher who studies prominent issues through a gendered lens. Additionally, she has decades of experience as a principal investigator and co-principal investigator conducting qualitative research studies. One of the committee members is a lead professor, associate dean, and head of the school of criminal justice at a research

university. He has extensive knowledge as a principal investigator and co-principal investigator in conducting program evaluations and teaching college courses on research methods and qualitative research. The other committee member is a lawyer and professor who has experience in studying and prosecuting individuals from extremist and far-right groups. Each brought a unique research and practical background and was eager to emerge themselves in the field of social media research.

Securing Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Nova Southeastern University promptly to examine data from a Twitter archive database was a potential issue. X, formerly known as Twitter, has been under scrutiny for actions conducted by its newest owner, Elon Musk (Mac & Hsu, 2023). The company has been privatized and there has been speculation about the social media platform shutting down. The researcher sought to obtain approval from IRB prior to any major executive decisions occurring that will prevent data extraction from the platform. However, the academic research track that granted researchers free access to Twitter Application Programming Interface (API) to extract data was terminated. Upon obtaining IRB approval, the researcher had to purchase a pro developer account to gain access to the Twitter API to extract data for the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study is to examine the shared rhetoric that the Black Manosphere publishes online about Black women. Although research scholars are conducting research to learn more about various groups within the Manosphere, most of the research focuses on White male-centered Manosphere groups. This has created a significant gap in the research to understand the diverse dimensions of the Manosphere. It is important to conduct research on the Black Manosphere to obtain a more detailed picture of their ideology because the amount of

misogynistic and violent content published online by the Black Manosphere is steadily increasing. Furthermore, the lack of awareness and examination of the Black Manosphere has created a unique space for them to grow online while going undetected. Fortunately, some scholars have presented a call to action for researchers examining digital misogyny, White supremacy, far-right, and extremism groups to incorporate Black males and other non-Black males of color roles and contributions in their studies examining these groups (Fountain, 2019; Onuoha, 2021). This qualitative research study aims to examine the hostile rhetoric produced by the Black Manosphere regarding Black women on Twitter.

Definition of Terms

Application Programming Interface- is a tool that allows two or more computer programs to communicate with each other and will be used for data extraction purposes.

Black- an individual having origins in Africa, but of any ethnicity, including but not limited to African American, Haitian, Jamaican, Bahamian, Hispanic, and Latino/a.

Black Manosphere- an online group composed of Black males who incite hatred and encourage violence against and killings of Black girls and women.

Extremism- the holding of ideologies that advocate for harmful and violent measures by promoting extreme views that are remotely disconnected from the ideologies found within most of society. Extremism is often connected to political or religious domains but can also be associated with racial and gender domains as shown in this study.

Female- the gender assigned to those born with a reproductive system often denoted as a girl or woman.

Far-right groups- in the context of social media, far-right groups are groups who create content to advocate for their differing opinions and ideologies, which may be harmful and violent. Far-right groups often overlap and become extremist groups.

Intersectionality lens- a framework that is used to explain the connectedness between race, gender, class, and other social constructs to understand the unique lived experiences of individuals and the ways they experience oppression.

Manosphere- an online collective of male-centered spaces generating communication outlets for various topics generally discussing their displeasure with women and their choices.

Misogynistic content- content that is published online that displays hate, contempt, or prejudice against girls and women.

Misogynoir- anti-Black misogyny that is portrayed in the media and in real life due to the unique intersections of Black women being woman and Black in society. Misogynoir can oppress and cause bodily and deadly harm to Black girls and women.

Passive harassment- is a type of harassment that targets numerous victims rather than one victim through broadly harassing statements or images.

Radicalization- the intentional actions of creating a space to actively engage and recruit others to adopt radical ideologies and rhetoric.

Rhetoric- strategic use of language aimed at persuading and shaping other's perspectives and opinions.

Social media platform- a tool that allows for online communication of information, ideas, images, and videos to be shared to others. Social media platforms can be websites, applications, and blogs where users create online profiles to engage with other users.

Social media content- various media that are created, published, and shared on social media platforms. Social media content can include written words, images, videos, graphics, documents, and website links.

Symbolic violence- an informal or formal force to enforce strict respectability and responsibility as the standard for women online and offline.

Toxic language- a tool used to dehumanize, direct anger, and objectify individuals.

Twitter- a social media platform, recently renamed X. This social media platform serves as a communication outlet for various individuals, groups, and fields. This platform provides a way to quickly communicate with individuals all over the world. Despite this name change, the website domain continues to redirect users to <https://twitter.com/> and many people still refer to the platform as Twitter (X, n.d. -f).

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

The Manosphere has garnered public concern and recognition for their extreme rhetoric and beliefs about women, yet there is still a lot to learn about the collective groups of males. Various research studies are starting to examine the Manosphere to better understand the group's association with violence against women both online and offline. This is in response to the shifting values and social norms of the Manosphere groups moving from focusing predominately on men's right to elevating hateful and violent messages about and towards women. This literature review will focus on the overarching theme emerging repeatedly throughout the literature, violence against women. Major themes that emerged from the literature that are specific to the Manosphere are toxic language, misogyny, radicalization and extremism, and the transformation of violence online to offline. More specifically, the literature documents how the Manosphere's online hate towards women is increasingly manifesting offline through physical violence causing injury and death among women (Habib et al., 2022; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Using an intersectionality lens, the available literature is summarized about the Black Manosphere's impact on violence towards Black women. Although the literature represents various information and themes about the Manosphere as a collective, this study will incorporate the information and themes to examine the content produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter (now X) about violence towards Black women.

Intersectionality Framework

Crime and other issues regarding lived experiences and violence are often studied by race, class, or gender autonomously. However, when examining the harms committed, these independent analyses often prevent critical findings that are unique to experiences of Black women from being uncovered. Black feminist scholars and activists have developed impactful

theories, frameworks, and concepts to better explain the lived experiences of Black women and the distinctive ways violence is perpetrated against them (Bailey, 2021; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Turner et al., 2021; West, 2004). The intersectionality framework provides a way to explain the connectedness between race, gender, class, and other social constructs in developing a more comprehensive picture of the crime and issues being studied. Black feminist scholar and critical race theorist, Kimberlé Crenshaw, developed intersectionality theory to provide a framework that can be applied to understand the lived realities of all women (Crenshaw, 1989). More explicitly, Crenshaw and other prominent Black feminist scholars argue the importance of centering Black women's experiences to understand their unique position within many margins of society (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Turner et al., 2021; West, 2004). Focusing on the intersections that comprise Black women allows the unique issues they face to surface from their invisible state—being dominated by Black men's experiences with racism and White women's experiences with sexism (Madden et al., 2018). Furthermore, White women have controlled the symbolic production of the gender-based violence narrative (Threadcraft, 2021). The more frequent, brutal violence that Black women experience from their current and ex-intimate partners, family members, community members, and state agents (e.g., law enforcement) does not fit the dominating narrating story of gender-based violence. This literature review will integrate an intersectionality framework in examining the current literature on the Black Manosphere and their association with violence against Black women.

The Manosphere

Since the emergence of the modernized online space and social media, a toxic antifeminism space has been created among online networks and platforms, known as the *Manosphere* (Ging, 2019). In Western culture, the Manosphere has become the dominating

communication arena for men's rights. There are various groups that make up the Manosphere, such as men going their own way (MGOW), involuntary celibates (Incels), the Black Manosphere, men's right activist (MRA), pick up artists (PUAs), and traditional Christian conservatives (TradCons). However, these groups share the underlying belief that feminine values dominate society and they must fight back against the overbearing misandrist culture to protect their existence as men (Marwick & Lewis, 2017; Marwick & Caplan, 2018). Men use the unchecked misogyny in the Manosphere to mobilize and create narratives of personal suffering at the hands of women and feminism (Ging, 2019).

The Manosphere is an online mega-group that consists of various web-based misogynistic movements that hold a common sentiment that feminism has gone too far and men are the oppressed gender (Ging 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2020). The members of the Manosphere use various social media online platforms, such as blogs, podcasts, and forums to spread their beliefs and obtain support and members (Lewis, 2019). Manosphere groups can be found on large public social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, or on small fringe platforms, such as 4chan and 8chan (Russo et al., 2023). The individual users who make up the Manosphere groups meet online, form a community, and build a shared belief system (Pelzer et al., 2021).

Communication & Social Norms. The various groups that comprise the Manosphere are known as interest-based communities where strangers come together to connect through mutual interests (Allison, 2022). Within these online communities, the members have created communication norms that are rooted in hostility and aggression, which is often directed at non-members who criticize or offend the members. In a study that examined literature on hostile communication occurring online, the researcher found trolling and flaming to be two common examples of communication tactics that Manosphere members use to be cyber-aggressive

towards non-members and allows the members to connect while committing collaborative destruction (Jane, 2015). Trolling occurs when individuals write inflammatory messages online to elicit an emotional reaction from a stranger. Flaming occurs when individuals repeatedly send hostile messages to strangers (Jane, 2015). Similarly, another study found cyberbullying, doxxing, and flaming to be some of the various forms of cyber-aggressions that are manifested online (Allison, 2022). These cyber-aggressions are social norms that have been created and evolved overtime within Manosphere groups.

Examining the history of the Manosphere has revealed striking shifts within the collective overtime. In a study that examined the Manosphere's growth online over a 14-year period within multiple social media platforms, the researchers found major shifts in the groups comprising the digital ecosystem and the interactions among the users (Ribeiro et al., 2021). In analyzing 28.8 million posts, the data showed a distinct shift in active users migrating from the milder, older, and original Manosphere groups (i.e., MRA and PUA) to newer and more extreme Manosphere groups (i.e., Incels and MGTOW). These extreme Manosphere groups are found to be more toxic and misogynistic than the original Manosphere groups (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Consequently, younger generations of males are being exposed to the continuous loop of misogynistic content produced online (Sugiura, 2021).

Diverse Motivations & Engagement. Although there are many groups within the Manosphere, they should not be seen as homogeneous. Furthermore, various groups within the Manosphere must be examined because research suggests that there are differences and motivations for engagement across the groups (Huber, 2023). Additionally, it is essential to study groups within the Manosphere across platforms because the groups will migrate to other platforms when they receive moderation measures, such as bans from using social media

platforms (Horta Ribeiro et al., 2021). The groups migrate to other online platforms that currently have less stringent policies and rules in place where antisocial behaviors, such as trolling and harassment, are widely accepted (Russo et al., 2023). Research suggests that banning or placing moderation measures in place has the potential to reduce the members' activity (e.g., less content published, fewer newcomers, and less active members; Horta Ribeiro et al., 2021). Concurrently, moderation measures could also increase the group's association with toxicity, which strengthens the infrastructure of the group resulting in radicalization (Horta Ribeiro et al., 2021; Zuckerman & Rajendra-Nicolucci, 2021). Even when groups are banned or receive other moderation measures, these measures are often at the community-level (Russo et al., 2023). Therefore, individual users are not banned or moderated. This allows the users to continue to exist as active users within the online platforms for which their host-group has been banned. Also, these users now become co-active members who continue to engage on the platforms their group has been banned from and in the new platform that the group has migrated to (Russo et al., 2023). These co-active users are often exposed to the increased toxicity and misinformation on the new platforms which further increases their participation in harassing, doxxing, and defaming users on the banned platform (Freelon et al., 2020).

Black Manosphere

Studies examining the Manosphere are overrepresented by White scholars studying predominantly White and well-known Manosphere groups (e.g., MGTOW and Incels; Farrell et al., 2019; Fitzgerald, 2020; Ging, 2019; Glace et al., 2021; Habib et al., 2022; Horta Ribeiro et al., 2021; Huber, 2023; Jones, 2020; Jones et al., 2020; Lewis, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2021; Russo et al., 2023; Sganga, 2022; Sugiura, 2021; Texas Fusion Center Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division Texas Department of Public Safety, 2020; Zuckerman & Rajendra-Nicolucci, 2021).

Although Black males have been a part of the Manosphere and are embedded within these well-known Manosphere groups, their contributions to the Manosphere have not been intentionally examined (Fountain, 2019). Beyond documenting the racism towards non-White males within these predominant Manosphere groups, scholars typically focus solely on the White males in the groups, often overlooking Black and other non-Black males of color. An even more critical examination is absent in understanding Black males' transition from participating in these predominant Manosphere groups to creating their own Manosphere sector within digital spaces (Fountain, 2019). This sector is known as the *Black Manosphere*. Empirical information and studies about the Black Manosphere are deficient. What is mostly known about the Black Manosphere are personal recalls about individual's experience with the group in online spaces (Bellamy, 2022; Black Girls Texting, 2022; Dee, 2023; Fountain, 2018b; Fountain, 2020; Young, 2022).

Distinctive Manosphere groups are being created within the Black, Asian, and Latino communities, yet there is a lack of research examining how these groups are using their groups to promote and incite violence against Women online and offline (Fountain, 2019). Furthermore, these diverse Manosphere groups are being created under the pretense of uplifting their group of men and addressing differing problems they face from the women in their individual communities (Fountain, 2018a; 2019). Nevertheless, the Black Manosphere shares the same ideology that men, particularly Black men, are being oppressed by Black women and most of their content centers around the belief that Black women's behavior has solely destroyed Black society (Fountain, 2018a; Procope Bell, 2023). Some of the common rhetoric shared by popular Black Manosphere members on social media platforms include Black women deserving of violence and/or being killed when they date/marry someone non-Black, Black women going to

school and earning degrees being worthless, and Black women being undesirable and at the bottom of the barrel in dating so things such as sexual violence is not a problem for Black women (Fountain, 2019; Procope Bell, 2023).

Black Male Privilege. Black males have not only created their own Manosphere sector, but they are still a part of the predominating Manosphere groups that use far-right and extreme talking points that are often rooted in racism (Fountain, 2019). The Black Manosphere is seeking male privilege that is on par with White American men by a way of demeaning Black women (Fountain, 2018a). Ways in which Black males can be oppressed but can also serve as oppressors is rarely discussed (Lewis, 2010). This is Black male privilege. It is important to note that Black male privilege is centered relative to Black girls and women and is not relative to White male privilege. This privilege gives Black males an advantage to dominate the narrative and dialogue on what should be addressed (e.g., racist criminal justice system) and what should be ignored or dismissed (e.g., violence against children and women; Lewis, 2010). Black male privilege shields Black males from accountability and this extends to Black males who are a part of far-right and extremist groups (Lewis, 2010; Onuoha et al., 2023). Despite the violent rhetoric that is common among the Black Manosphere, this group is going under the radar and not being tracked for their hate and violence against Black women because most of the focus on the Manosphere is geared towards focusing on White males and how their misogyny has spread online and into physical spaces (Onuoha, 2022).

Violence Perpetrated by the Black Manosphere. Two noteworthy acts of violence have been documented from Black males who were a part of the Manosphere. In 2009, Anthony Powell murdered Asia McGowan at Henry Ford College in Michigan where she attended college (Indianapolis Recorder, 2009). McGowan was a YouTube content creator who vlogged about her

love for dancing and comedy. Powell was also a YouTube content creator, but his content displayed videos of him spewing hate and violent rhetoric towards Black women and atheists. Powell and other individuals targeted McGowan sending her threatening and degrading comments on her YouTube channel. McGowan created a video speaking about the degrading comments published on her channel. Soon after, McGowan was killed by Powell as she attended college (Indianapolis Recorder, 2009). Powell's YouTube channel has since been removed from the YouTube platform (Lost Media Wiki, n.d.).

The other noteworthy violent act involving a member of the Black Manosphere was the mass shooting conducted by Frank James. On April 12, 2022, James entered a crowded subway in Brooklyn setting off smoke grenades and open firing into a subway car (Office of Public Affairs, 2023). Twenty-three people were injured: 10 gunshot victims and 13 people suffered from non-gunshot related injuries. This mass shooting has been categorized as the worst shooting committed in a New York City subway. He was charged with 10 counts of committing a terrorist attack or other violence in a mass transportation vehicle (Office of Public Affairs, 2023). James has been connected to members of the Black Manosphere. The Federal Bureau of Investigation questioned members of the Black Manosphere upon finding James' YouTube channel where he published discourse about racism, terrorism, war, and Black women (Sisak et al., 2022; Bromwich et al., 2022).

Furthermore, there is evidence of the association between the Black Manosphere and the increased rates of violence and homicide among Black women (Onuoha, 2022). However, empirical research has not been conducted to confirm this association. It is important to conduct research on the groups that constitute the Manosphere to obtain a more detailed picture of their ideology. This can then be used to develop prevention measures against their online harassment

and targeted aggression towards women online and offline. Scholars and activists must find ways to counteract the discourse of the persistence of hateful and degrading content about women as a normative and moralized belief system. Additionally, scholars must also be intentional in including races and ethnicities beyond White American males in studying the Manosphere.

Radicalization & Extremism within the Manosphere

The Manosphere is rapidly growing its membership and producing deteriorating discourse online (Habib et al., 2022). Not only has research documented the Manosphere encouraging misogyny and violent threats towards women online, but the Manosphere has also been found to be key in radicalizing lonely and voiceless men. Radical groups are strategically using social media algorithms to promote and prioritize their content to users as a recruitment strategy (Habib et al, 2022). Among the Manosphere, extreme ideologies are being adopted using social media algorithms. Using online platforms to recruit individuals into extremist groups is not a new phenomenon and can be traced back to as early as 2010 when Islamic groups used social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) as tools for recruiting individuals to join their cause (Weimann, 2010).

Radical online communities using social media platforms to plan and celebrate violent events are not limited to the Manosphere. The January 6, 2021 U.S. Capitol attack and the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville are two radical and violent events that were organized using social media platforms (Frenkel, 2021; Diep, 2017). In analyzing the overlap and migration between alt-right and anti-feminist groups, a cross-platform analysis revealed a significant overlap within the two groups with anti-feminist groups being a potential gateway to engaging in Alt-right groups (Mamié et al., 2021). Outside of the prominent misogynist content created by the extreme online groups, radical and extreme groups have also been linked to spreading

medical misinformation and conspiracy theories, which negatively impact real life events (McIlroy-Young & Anderson, 2019; Zeng & Schafer, 2021; Sipka et al., 2022). They have a heavy influence over memes and news that is shared on the internet (Zannettou et al., 2018).

Social Media as a Recruitment Tool. Research suggests that there are specific types of social media engagement with the Manosphere that influences individuals to develop traits that are associated with radicalization. In examining the role of user-to-user social engagements, researchers have found keyways social engagements influence the adoption of extreme ideologies (Habib et al., 2022). Once an individual joins the Manosphere, they have a significant likelihood of exhibiting warning behaviors because of joining the Manosphere. When individuals receive a solicitation from an influencer within the Manosphere, their warning behaviors worsen. Moreover, social rejection in real life and social acceptance within the Manosphere strongly influences warning behaviors (Habib et al., 2022).

Moreover, it is important to understand the radicalization and extremism among the Manosphere to understand how these groups are coming onto law enforcement agency radars. In response to the recent rapid rise in domestic extremism within online communities, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has listed two major factors contributing to the current evolution of both international and domestic terrorism threats: lone offenders and the internet and social media (FBI, n.d.). The lone offender has evolved from large-group conspirators in which individuals are being radicalized online and mobilizing to violence quickly. Through the internet and social media, international and domestic violent extremists are using messaging boards to produce images, videos, and publications creating a large presence online. The internet and social media are used to facilitate extremist groups' ability to recruit and radicalize individuals (FBI, n.d.). In a report produced together by the FBI and the United States Department of

Homeland Security (2021), the federal agencies revealed that extremist groups are using online resources to encourage individuals to commit violent acts.

Online Violence Transferring to Violence Offline

Although the history of the Manosphere has been estimated to start around the early 2000s, the Manosphere is starting to gain more attention due to the increasingly violent real-life events that are occurring from individuals within the Manosphere (Burley & Reid Ross, 2022; Ellis & Sidner, 2014; Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Habib et al., 2022). The groups reside online, but their harmful rhetoric and violence can transfer offline into reality. For example, in 2014, Elliott Rodger killed six people and injured an additional 14 people in Isla Vista, California (Ellis & Sidner, 2014). He was deeply immersed in the Manosphere and it is alleged that he went on this killing spree to punish young women for rejecting him and other men's sexual advances. More recently, mass murderer Lyndon McLeod and mass shooter Frank James had digital trails exposing their connections to the Manosphere (Burley & Reid Ross, 2022).

Violent Risk Factors Associated with the Manosphere. In a report produced together by the FBI and the United States Department of Homeland Security (2021), the federal agencies revealed that lone offenders and small groups of individuals connected to extremist groups as one of the most significant and current terrorism threats to the United States. Gill et al. (2014) analyzed sociodemographic network characteristics and behaviors of 119 lone terrorist offenders. Although this research did not identify a uniform profile of lone terrorist offenders, the researchers found that many lone offenders have warning behaviors prior to them committing the violent or terrorist attack (Gill et al., 2014). Therefore, it is vital to analyze and uncover potential warnings in their communications online to prevent their attacks. According to Reid et al. (2012), warning behaviors are behaviors that occur prior to a targeted violent act or behaviors

that may predict that a violent act will occur. Warning behaviors can be used as indicators to determine the increasing likelihood of an individual committing a targeted act of violence. Some examples of warning behaviors include fixation, grievance, anger, negative outlook, power, and toxicity.

Scaptura and Boyle (2020) conducted a self-reported online survey examining an “incel” trait measure they developed. The findings of this study suggest that men who feel they are challenged by women and that their masculinity is threatened reported higher frequencies of violent fantasies of mass and gender-based violence. Additionally, Scaptura and Boyle (2022) found a significant association between men’s perception of threats and their positive attitudes towards guns and endorsing aggressive reactions to disrespect and shame. The shift from fantasizing about violent acts to acting out violent fantasies is a severe problem that must be studied and addressed. According to the United States Secret Service (2022), misogynistic violence not only occurs as mass violence, but occurs more frequently in prevalent acts of violence, such as domestic abuse and stalking.

In addition to the Manosphere capturing the attention of the Secret Service, Texas Department of Public Safety and Homeland Security Affairs have also publicly acknowledged the threat of harm caused by the Manosphere. In particular, the Manosphere group known as Incels has been denounced as an emerging domestic terrorism threat due to its association with many high-profile cases of fatal violence (Fitzgerald, 2020; Texas Fusion Center Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division Texas Department of Public Safety, 2020; Sganga, 2022). It is important to note that public acts of violence have made the Manosphere more visible from its online communities into mass media (Liang Lin, 2017).

Manosphere's Association with Violence against Women

Online communities are invading offline boundaries across the world. The Manosphere has created unique online spaces enticing violence towards women online and now this violence is seeping offline into the physical world (Burley & Reid Ross, 2022; Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Ellis & Sidner, 2014; Fitzgerald, 2020 Habib et al., 2022; Liang Lin, 2017; Texas Fusion Center Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division Texas Department of Public Safety, 2020; Sganga, 2022). The types of violence discussed in the literature are symbolic, passive harassment, and verbal aggressive acts. Moreover, these negative behaviors exhibit forms of digital hostility that is constantly increasing in the Manosphere (Cover, 2022; Cover, 2023; Farrell et al., 2019). It is important to understand the effects of online communities to build resilience and obtain gender justice (Barratt, 2018).

Online Violence Towards Women. In examining the rise of the Manosphere, Sugiura (2021) shed light on the virtual war against women perpetrated by the Manosphere. This virtual war is enabled by digital technologies and without both the internet and digital technologies, the Manosphere would not exist. Harmful ideologies and rhetoric are being regurgitated, validated, and normalized leading to extreme manifestos of misogyny. According to Sugiura, (2021), this online violence must be recognized as legitimate male violence committed against women and not as generalized gender-based violence to shift the focus to address the perpetrators and not the women experiencing the violence. In online spaces, verbal aggressive acts have emerged as a real threat of gender-based violence and these acts function as symbolic violence (Barratt, 2018). *Symbolic violence* is a force that enforces strict respectability and responsibility as the standard for women both online and offline. Through content analyses on two high profile court cases, Barratt (2018) demonstrated how gender-based violence manifests as symbolic violence and how

this serves as a real threat in online spaces to chastise women and to shame, blame, police, and construct femininity as a failure. Both court cases involved girls and women who had nude pictures and videos shared and sold without their permission. In both cases, community members held the victims to a harsher standard than the males who committed crimes against them. Furthermore, the research findings indicated that when girls and women fail to uphold the standards that the public deems as feminine standards of respectability and responsibility, then she should not be viewed as a victim (Barratt, 2018). She is then in the right to be subjected to misogyny and not deserving of justice. Dickel and Evolvi (2023) conducted a qualitative thematic analysis of various articles and comments written about #metoo and found that criticism and verbal abuse against women was prevalent in the written content. For example, some websites where the articles were posted were more likely to use racial slurs, curse words, and were more overtly misogynistic. Furthermore, the website users' discussion of #metoo were also charged with racism and sexual stereotypes with comments often being more hostile and abusive towards women than the written articles published on the websites (Dickel & Evolvi, 2023).

Anti-feminist Online Violence. In a national qualitative study, researchers examined women who debate feminist politics and experience online abuse and found online abuse is conceived as a form of abuse or violence against girls and women, which creates similar gender inequalities that are seen offline in the real world (Lewis et al., 2017). Online abuse is not simply a form of communication but acts of gender-based violence. In a qualitative thematic analysis, Ging (2019) examined five groups within the Manosphere. The researcher observed a more malicious form of anti-feminism online that has increasingly spread online because of the Web's ability to disseminate information quickly across boundaries and platforms online. Furthermore, this study suggests that the newer online anti-feminist view is extreme and permeated with

misogyny and violent rhetoric. Moreover, online environments have formulated gateways for abusive behaviors to flourish (Simões et al., 2022). A unique demand has been created in deconstructing anti-feminist and misogynist ideas online because misogynist groups took advantage of the tools provided by online social media platforms to create social movement learning. However, not only have online platforms created a gateway to spread misogynist ideals, but these online platforms have also created opportunities for these ideas to spread across various online platforms (e.g., from Reddit to YouTube; Banet-Weiser, 2015). Both the accessibility of the internet and ordinary digital devices (e.g., smartphones) provide facilitation tools to engage in abusive behaviors (Banet-Weiser & Miltner, 2016; Marwick & Caplan, 2018; Turley & Fisher, 2018).

In a study that examined content produced by the Manosphere group Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW), the researchers found that passive harassment made up most of the data sample (Jones et al., 2020). *Passive harassment* targets many victims rather than a single victim through a broadly harassing statement or image. The type of harassment with the highest frequency count was sexist statements. MGTOW blamed women and feminists for the struggles men experience from societal expectations of masculinity. Furthermore, the research findings revealed that members of MGTOW conform to the ideals and notions of toxic masculinity and display harassing behavior to reclaim, prove, or gain their masculinity to the MGTOW influencers and community and the broader society (Jones et al., 2020). In a study that analyzed the Incel community, researchers found that Incels perform a hybrid masculinity where they claim lower status than women on the social hierarchy while simultaneously calling other men weak and powerless because they claim to not have access to traditional masculine status (Glance

et al., 2021). The research findings showed Incel's hatred for women and themselves conveyed into them advocating for violence against women and themselves (Glance et al., 2021).

Toxic Language. Toxic language is one of the major themes that emerged from the literature as a tool used by the Manosphere to create misogynistic content. Similar to the shifts observed in the types of groups making up the Manosphere, there has been a shift in the language and interests of the Manosphere groups. The original Manosphere groups focused on men's rights and family law, but the current popular and better-known groups of the Manosphere are discussing more explicit content using violent, racist, and homophobic language (Farrell et al., 2019). The use of toxic language is a common finding from research on groups within the Manosphere (Farrell et al., 2019; Habib et al., 2022; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Toxic language is a tool that is used to dehumanize, direct anger, and objectify the Manosphere's opponent, which is usually women. Farrell et al. (2019) created nine lexicons to analyze specific misogynistic rhetoric: physical violence, sexual violence, hostility, patriarchy, stoicism, racism, homophobia, belittling, and flipped narrative. Using these lexicons, the researchers examined the evolutions of language both within and across misogynistic groups. Similar to other research studies, this study found that violence and hostility towards women is increasing online (Farrell et al., 2019; Habib et al., 2022; Marwick & Caplan, 2018). Furthermore, misogyny and violent rhetoric are occurring simultaneously (Farrell et al., 2019). Abusive language is a prominent problem occurring online because of the nature of the digital world, where individuals can say things anonymously and individuals can spread their message in a matter of seconds (Gong et al., 2021). According to Waseem et al. (2017), abusive language can be directed at a specific target or be generalized to a group of people that individuals do not belong to. Another typology of abusive language is explicit (i.e., unambiguous abusive language) versus implicit language.

Proliferation of Toxic Language Online. Through the use of social media platforms, an individual's aggressive, sexist, and racist tweets can easily become amplified and spread hate and discrimination. For example, on the social media platform, Twitter, the algorithm highlights tweets that gain substantial attention from users. Thus, when a tweet is retweeted (i.e., re-shared), the message spreads well beyond the reach of the original poster. In a study that examined the patterns of engagement (e.g., retweets, likes, replies) with messages that referenced Black women on Twitter, the research findings revealed a modest positive effect on retweets of overtly insulting language towards Black people and women (Inara Rodis, 2021). Marwick and Caplan (2018) explored the discourse of the Manosphere and its association to online misogyny and harassment. The researchers found that common language and terms, such as "misandry," were used by the Manosphere members to reinforce a misogynistic nature and paint feminism as a man-hating movement that victimizes boys and men to justify their networked harassment of women. This use of language spreads across platforms and mindsets and is then correlated with increased violence against women. Khosravi Ooryad (2023) conducted a digital ethnographic study using visual and conceptual analyses to examine Farsi Manosphere in Iran and the misogynistic, anti-feminist, and anti-queer content published across social media platforms using memes (i.e., digital images). The findings revealed that memes contributed immensely to the spread of gender-based hate online internationally. More specifically, there is an entanglement between gendered-based online hate and alt-right and white supremacist memes and there is an escalation in the mobilization of these memes (Khosravi Ooryad, 2023).

Violence Against Black Women

The online discourse produced by the Black Manosphere about Black women is growing both online and offline. Similar to research findings of other well-known and studied groups

within the Manosphere, the Black Manosphere is disseminating harmful content filled with negative messages, beliefs, and rhetoric about women, but specifically Black women (Onuoha, 2022 & Fountain, 2019). Also like to the trajectory seen of online violence into offline violence with various Manosphere groups, the Black Manosphere violent ideologies and discourse are also being transferred into physical spaces (Indianapolis Recorder, 2009; Sisak et al., 2022; Bromwich & Davis O'Brien, 2022; Fountain, 2019). To understand the possible impacts of the Black Manosphere on violence against Black women online and offline, the lived experiences of Black women must first be expounded.

Misogynoir. It is critical to understand and study the intersection of the multiple dimensions (e.g., female, Black, Christian, middle class, and heterosexual) of Black women (Crenshaw, 1989; West, 2004). Black women are experiencing multiple oppressions influenced by racism, classism, and other forms of discrimination (West, 2004). Thus, it is the victim's position within the systems of oppression that will determine her vulnerability to violence, societal perceptions toward her victimization, and her access to services (West, 2002). In understanding the intersectionality framework, a term was created by Black feminist, Moya Bailey, to conceptualize anti-Black misogyny portrayed in the media and in real life—*misogynoir*. The term *misogynoir* was created to describe the unique ways that Black women are disparaged because of both their gender and race. According to Bailey, also known as “Moyazb”, (2010; 2014), *misogynoir* shows the deeply rooted hate and prejudice against Black women creating an intersecting form of oppression by being both Black and woman. *Misogynoir* gives guidance to understand how contempt for Black women can be presented by anyone (e.g., Black males, White women, and non-Black people). *Misogynoir* intentionally allows Black women to

explicitly identify the ingrained prejudice that is actively happening against them (Bailey 2021; Moyazb, 2010).

Misogynoir was coined in the early 2000's in response to noticing the negative ways Black women were depicted in the media (Moyazb, 2014). Moreover, there was recognition that Black women were being treated differently than other women of color. Black women are not simply women of color existing in public space, but women who are experiencing a combination of anti-Blackness and misogyny to be defamed and harmed. This combination is the underlying root for the unique ways in which Black women are negatively regarded in mainstream media and society (Moyazb, 2014). Furthermore, misogynoir works to address the significant limits that terms such as, people of color, women of color, and misogyny, have when explaining the lived experiences of Black women.

Bailey further conceptualized misogynoir in relation to digital spaces in a book she authored titled *Misogynoir Transformed: Black Women's Digital Resistance*. In conjunction with other critical frameworks (i.e., intersectionality), this book helped build the connections between Black women's representation in mainstream media and society and the lived experiences of Black women (e.g., healthcare discrimination, street harassment, and intimate partner violence; Bailey, 2021). Understanding the role that the media plays in shaping society's perceptions of Black women is essential to addressing the misogynoir that Black women face daily, everywhere. It is through the negative media representations that misogynoir trickles into the everyday lived experiences of Black women (Bailey, 2021). The harmful ideas and rhetoric that circulate digital spaces and other media outlets have severe consequences for Black women.

Implications of Unaddressed Misogynoir. Although Black women's experiences are absent from research examining far-right and extreme groups, Black women are often centered in

their media consumption of hate towards women (Onuoha, 2022). The creation of harmful and negative ideas and stereotypes about Black women are prevalent in far-right and extreme groups (Onuoha et al., 2023). This extends to both famous and not widely known Black women. For example, Serena Williams, one of the world's greatest tennis players of all time, was consistently denigrated within mainstream media and far-right groups because of their dissatisfaction with her dominance in the Association of Tennis Professionals since the late 1990s up until her retirement in late 2022. From being called a man, bully, wild-eyed, ugly, and monkey, Serena's celebrity status never protected her from the misogynoir she constantly experienced in the media (Davis & Gopal, 2022; Lane, 2019; Mushnick, 2022). Another prime example of a Black woman who publicly faced misogynoir regardless of her celebrity status is Megan Thee Stallion. Although Megan was shot at multiple times, which resulted in her being shot in her foot, there was dominating discourse that doubted Megan's claim and the hospital's evidence of her being shot (Simoes Decarvalho, 2022). She was mocked and blamed her for being shot. These harmful narratives were created to produce rhetoric and beliefs that Megan was deserving of violence, which is commonly rooted in misogynoir (Olutola, 2023).

A prominent example of a non-widely known Black woman being centered in far-right groups and the media's consumption of hate towards women was in the media's response to the death of Breonna Taylor. Breonna Taylor was a 26 year old Black woman who was murdered in her own home in Louisville, Kentucky when White police officers served a no-knock warrant for suspicion of drug related activity committed by ex-boyfriend that she was no longer associated with (Oppel et al., 2023). Far-right groups and other extreme groups and individuals created content to strategically mobilize misinformation about Taylor to incite violence towards Taylor and other Black women and to justify her murder (Onuoha, 2021). Despite public outcry and

international protest demanding the arrest of the officers responsible for Taylor's death, there has been no progress in charging the officers with Taylor's death (Oppel et al., 2023). This is in striking contrast to the swift response of the firing, arresting, and eventually convicting the officers responsible for the killing of George Floyd whose death also resulted in international protest in 2020.

These are examples of the many ways misogynoir is perpetuated in the mainstream media and by society to intentionally cause harm against Black women and girls. Misogynoir are the rooted reasons for the lack of news coverage for missing Black women and girls, the causes for Black women having the highest homicide and maternal mortality rates in the United States going unaddressed, and the reason Black girls and women from all levels of society experience anti-Black misogyny (Bailey, 2021). Misogynoir is used to simultaneously devalue the worth of Black women in society while normalizing and excusing the harmful narratives and violence committed against them.

In conclusion, there is an urgent need to gain a more in-depth understanding of the Manosphere because the amount of misogyny and violence is steadily increasing in the Manosphere (Farrell et al., 2019). Although there are various research studies that have examined the Manosphere as a collective and as individual groups that are within the Manosphere (i.e., MGTOW, Incels; Dickel & Evolvi, 2022; Farrell et al., 2019; Hopton & Langer, 2022; Jones, 2020; Jones et al., 2020; Trott et al., 2022), there is a lack of literature and empirical research specifically studying the Black Manosphere. Due to the Black Manosphere going under the radar despite their extreme beliefs and rhetoric and the uptick in violent attacks and killings of Black women (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.), this study will intentionally bring focus to the Black Manosphere. This qualitative research study aims to

understand the Black Manosphere collective attitudes, beliefs, and language about violence against Black women.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this qualitative investigation were: (1) *What types and volume of misogynistic content against Black women are produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* (2) *What is the shared rhetoric regarding the hostility towards Black women propagated by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?*

Chapter 3: Methodology

Federal police organizations, legal organizations, and researchers are gaining a better understanding of the various aspects of the Manosphere and their association with violence against women online and offline (Anti-Defamation League, 2018; Fitzgerald, 2020; Liang Lin, 2017; Texas Fusion Center Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division Texas Department of Public Safety, 2020; Sganga, 2022; Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.; United States Secret Service, 2022). However, there is a gap in research examining Manosphere groups who are not geared towards White males (Fountain, 2018b; Onuoha, 2022). This qualitative research study examined the hostile rhetoric produced by the Black Manosphere about Black women on Twitter. In this chapter, the researcher describes the research methodology, including the strategies of inquiry, study dataset, instruments, procedures, data collection, and data analysis that examined the research questions. The research questions that guided this qualitative investigation were: (1) *What types and volume of misogynistic content against Black women are produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* (2) *What is the shared rhetoric regarding the hostility towards Black women propagated by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* Lastly, the steps to consider rigor and trustworthiness and ethical considerations when working with data extracted from Twitter are discussed.

Qualitative Research Approach

This study used a qualitative research design to examine the shared hostile rhetoric about Black women produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter (now X). Qualitative research seeks to understand social phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). Qualitative research operates from the understanding that individuals socially construct their reality, ideas, and meaning of things. A qualitative approach offered a comprehensive and

nuanced way to understanding the content produced by the Black Manosphere about Black women by providing valuable insights into the written text and its underlying context.

Qualitative research allows researchers the ability to explore the depth and richness of text (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). Qualitative research was relevant for this study for several reasons, including contextual understanding, in-depth data collection, flexibility, voice, and building research capacity.

Using a qualitative approach enabled the researcher to delve into the cultural and social contextual understanding of the Black Manosphere's written text. This allowed for a nuanced understanding of the data within the broader context of the dataset. The qualitative research approach permitted the researcher to collect and examine in-depth data extracted directly from the Black Manosphere, which provided elaborate insight into their beliefs and rhetoric that may not have been captured through quantitative research. Conducting qualitative research allowed for the flexibility in data collection and data analysis to adapt to the characteristics of the Black Manosphere to examine emerging themes within their written text. Moreover, flexibility allowed for the adjustment needed in the methods used to examine the data. Qualitative research amplified the voice of the Black Manosphere reflecting their perspectives. Overall, utilizing a qualitative research approach allowed the researcher to build research capacity to understand the rhetoric of the Black Manosphere and to add to the growing literature about the Manosphere.

Data Collection Procedures

Twitter (now X) was the online social platform that was used to examine the written content of the Black Manosphere. Although there is not a definite number of the members within the Black Manosphere, a preliminary overview shows that the members frequently post content on Twitter daily. Twitter (now X) is a widely used social media platform to conduct qualitative

and quantitative social science research because it allows researchers to extract data on its members through Application Programming Interfaces (Vicente, 2023). Application Programming Interface (API) is a software interface that allows two or more computer programs to communicate with each other (IBM, n.d.). More specifically, APIs create an accessible way for developers to extract and analyze data from websites and web applications.

This study used a Twitter Application Programming Interface (API) v2 to extract and analyze data from the Twitter platform. The Twitter API v2 allows researchers and developers to access publicly available data from Twitter (Bogen et al., 2022; Jones et al., 2020; Inara Rodis, 2021, X, n.d. -c; X, n.d. -e). The Twitter API v2 was used in this study to conduct a full-archive search. This full-archive search allows for access to Twitter data dating back to March 2006 (X, n.d. -e). The researcher obtained the X Pro Account to access the Twitter API v2 to collect and extract data from the full-archive of publicly available tweets (X, n.d. -a).

Procedures

The procedures for conducting this research occurred through the following steps:

1. The Nova Southeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the research study.
2. Upon IRB approval, the researcher registered and applied for a Pro Developer Account via X to gain authorized access to the Twitter Application Programming Interface (API) v2 and the full-archive data.
3. A new academic project was created within the developer portal to organize and monitor usage of the Twitter API.
4. A new application was created for the project, which was a holder for the Twitter API keys and token needed to make requests to Twitter API.

5. Once the project and application were created, the API key, API key secret, and the Bearer token were generated to connect the new project and application to the endpoints in the Twitter API v2.
6. The API key, API key secret, and the Bearer token were copied and stored in a password protected excel file as this was important and confidential information that is only displayed once for security purposes.
7. A Postman account was created to assist the researcher in interacting with the Twitter API v2.
8. Within the Postman application, a fork of the Twitter API v2 collection and environment was added.
9. The API keys and access tokens were added into the forked Twitter API v2 collection.
10. The full archive search for the HTTP method was added to access the search all Twitter API v2 endpoint.
11. The researcher built search requests to collect tweets from the Black Manosphere by passing parameters for the start time, end time, and query.
 110. The timeframe for the data extraction was from July 1, 2020 -August 31, 2023.
 111. The following hashtags were used to define the queries to identify members of the Black Manosphere on Twitter: #blackmanosphere, #passportbros, #IBMOR and #SYSBM.
12. All responses were received in JSON format and converted to a CSV file.
13. The CSV files were imported into Microsoft Excel.
14. All the data extracted using the Twitter API v2 was de-identified by Twitter and assigned a unique ID upon data extraction.

Data Sample

The Black Manosphere occupies online spaces through various platforms, such as websites, online forums, blogs, podcasts, and social media platforms (Fountain 2018; 2020). The study's target population were the members of the Black Manosphere within the social media platform, Twitter (now X). This study utilized a secondary dataset from the Twitter's Application Programming Interface (API) v2. This secondary dataset exclusively contained publicly available data. The data extraction was aligned with both the Twitter Developer Agreement and Policy and Nova Southeastern University Institutional Review Board. More specifically, the data sample was extracted from individuals with a public Twitter profile and who contributed to the Black Manosphere space by publishing content regarding Black women. The content published on Twitter was extracted from any user that publicly used the Black Manosphere's defense hashtags #blackmanosphere, #passportbros, #IBMOR and #SYSBM on Twitter (Ging, 2019). This study only analyzed written content within tweets. Users were de-identified by Twitter upon data extraction and further de-identified by the researcher.

The data extraction enabled a collection of 3,008 tweets using the hashtags #blackmanosphere, #sysbm, #passportbros, #IBMOR that were published between July 1, 2020 – August 31, 2023. Once the dataset was cleaned and the tweets containing the excluded criteria were removed, the study sample was 352 tweets (see exclusion criteria on page 40). In reviewing other research studies that used similar data methods using Twitter data, these studies also had large data extractions that were reduced to a significantly smaller dataset from the initial extraction (Criss et al., 2023; Farrell et al., 2019; Talbot et al., 2020). All 352 tweets were original tweets created by the Black Manosphere members.

The data extraction timeframe was selected for several reasons. Rapper Megan Thee Stallion was shot in her foot on July 12, 2020, by a Black male rapper (Tsioulcas, 2020). This act of violence is one of the most recent, well-known public displays of violence against a Black woman and much online discourse was held about this violent act (Haile & Phan, 2022). More strikingly, in response to this violent event, male members of the Black community declared summer of 2020 #shotgirlsummer replacing the popular slogan used by Megan Thee Stallion, #hotgirlsummer (Lee & Brown, 2020). The year 2021 was the last full year that one of the most influential Black Manosphere members, Kevin Samuels, was alive and at his peak before he died (Victor, 2022). Kevin Samuels was one of the only Black Manosphere members who crossed into mainstream media (Bellamy, 2022). His rhetoric and ideas about Black women being low value and Black men, and men in general, being high value were used and spread among various communities and audiences outside of the Black Manosphere. This timeframe also reflected the duration of the trial of rapper Tory Lanez who was accused of shooting rapper Megan Thee Stallion from jury selection, his guilty verdict, and his sentencing (Bekiempis & Haylock, 2023; Dalton, 2022; Dalton, 2023). Although Tory Lanez was convicted of three felonies in relation to him shooting Megan, there is continuous discourse exposing misogynoir towards Megan and other Black women victims of violent and deadly acts.

The exclusion criteria included the following factors: 1) data that did not pertain to women or Black women, 2) data that did not contain text in the English language, 3) data that only contained the examined hashtags (e.g., #blackmanosphere or #passportbros , 4) data that contained images and videos, 5) data that contained links with no text, 6) individuals who use any of the four hashtags examined to denounce the Black Manosphere and bring awareness to

the misogynistic content and 7) tweets that contained duplicate text. All of these were removed from the dataset.

Instrument

The lexicons of misogyny developed by Farrell et al. (2019) was created to examine the flow of extreme language within and across misogynistic groups. There is a total of nine lexicons of misogyny that were built with the terms and expressions that describe a range ideas and categories of misogyny: physical violence towards women, sexual violence towards women, hostility towards women, belittling of women, homophobia, racism, promotion of patriarchy or male privilege, stoicism, and flipping the narrative. The lexicons are grounded in the findings from feminist scholars that there has been a shift in the language of Manosphere groups from focusing on men's rights to language that encourages misogyny and violence towards women online. The researcher first used a deductive qualitative method using priori codes established by Farrell et al. (2019) to code the data to classify the type of content produced by the members of the Black Manosphere.

According to Farrell et al. (2019), the following are explanations of the nine categories of the lexicons of misogyny:

1. Physical violence – any terms or expressions that explicitly refer to physical violence only (e.g., punch, choke).
2. Sexual violence – any terms or expressions that explicitly refer to sexual violence only (rape, gangbang).
3. Hostility – includes violent verbs and slurs that are not racists or homophobic (e.g., cunt, bitch).

4. Belittling – terms and expressions that are disrespectful towards women or that degrades women’s experiences (e.g., stupid cow, femoid).
5. Homophobia – terms and expressions related to being homosexual or that mock being homosexual to show general violent attitudes towards anyone who is homosexual regardless of gender (e.g., dyke, faggot).
6. Racism – terms and expressions that are used to represent a specific group of individuals based on their race or ethnicity or where they are from (e.g., nigger, black).
7. Promotion of patriarchy/male privilege – terms or expressions related to women being inferior to men and men being better than other men due to having traditionally masculine qualities (e.g., alpha male).
8. Stoicism – the use of terms to express the endurance of pain or hardship because of his lack of intimacy or beauty (e.g., hypergamy).
9. Flipping the narrative – terms and expressions of men being directly and indirectly oppressed by women and other men (e.g., beta, men’s rights).

In conducting the thematic analysis, a disconnect between the themes emerging from the current research study and the proposed predetermined codes from the Farrell et al. (2019) study was realized. The lexicons of misogyny generated by Farrell et al. focused on terms and expressions shared by individuals. This tool provided a good starting point for capturing misogyny. However, the data sample for this study composed of rich content that goes beyond simply identifying terms and expressions to capture misogyny. Thus, the Farrell et al. (2019) themes limited the researcher’s ability to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the shared viewpoints and messaging among the Black Manosphere, which was the aim of this study.

The data analyzed in this study captured the belief systems and attitudes of the Black Manosphere about Black women through their rhetoric that is written and shared online. As a result, the researcher shifted from conducting a thematic analysis using a deductive framework to using an inductive framework. Shifting to an inductive framework gave the researcher the ability to capture the nuance and depth of the layers of intersectionality that Black women exist as and are seen as. The data analyzed produced an expansion of the conceptualization of misogynoir. The dataset displayed rhetoric filled with hatred and contempt that was specifically directed towards Black women. Using the priori codes from the Farrell et al. (2019) study to code the dataset did not suffice because the hate and contempt of misogyny is general to women overall and does not address the intersections of Black women who experience disdain for being women who are Black.

Data Analysis

In this research study, two qualitative research methods were used: thematic analysis and content analysis. Thematic analysis was used to examine the 352 tweets extracted to produce themes and content analysis was used to quantify the themes and provide descriptive analysis (e.g., frequency of themes) of the qualitative data. Content analysis was conducted to examine research question one: *What types and volume of misogynistic content against Black women are produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* Thematic analysis was used to analyze research question two: *What is the shared rhetoric regarding the hostility towards Black women propagated by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* Together, the two data analysis were used to analyze and interpret the data of the shared rhetoric about Black women produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter (now X). Note that the thematic analysis was conducted prior to the

content analysis. This allowed for the development of the themes first from the thematic analysis, followed by the determination of the frequency of those themes through the content analysis.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a qualitative method that provides a flexible, but rigorous approach to analyzing qualitative data for patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis allows researchers to identify and analyze shared experiences, thoughts, and/or behaviors across a dataset. Thematic analysis was conducted to focus narrowly on the overarching themes in the data produced by the Black Manosphere about Black women (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). This study employed the most widely used thematic analysis framework published by Braun and Clarke (2006; Kiger & Varpio, 2020). This framework is widely used because the researchers provide clear and concise guidelines for how to conduct a thematic analysis method that both honors the flexibility of the method while simultaneously providing rigorous action steps to ensure that the research findings and interpretations are trustworthy. This specific thematic analysis framework is recursive in nature granting researchers the space to repeat steps as the data evolves and new data or themes emerge requiring further analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The research first analyzed the dataset using thematic analysis. This study used five phases of the thematic analysis approach to examine the data and develop themes in relation to research question two (Braun and Clarke, 2006):

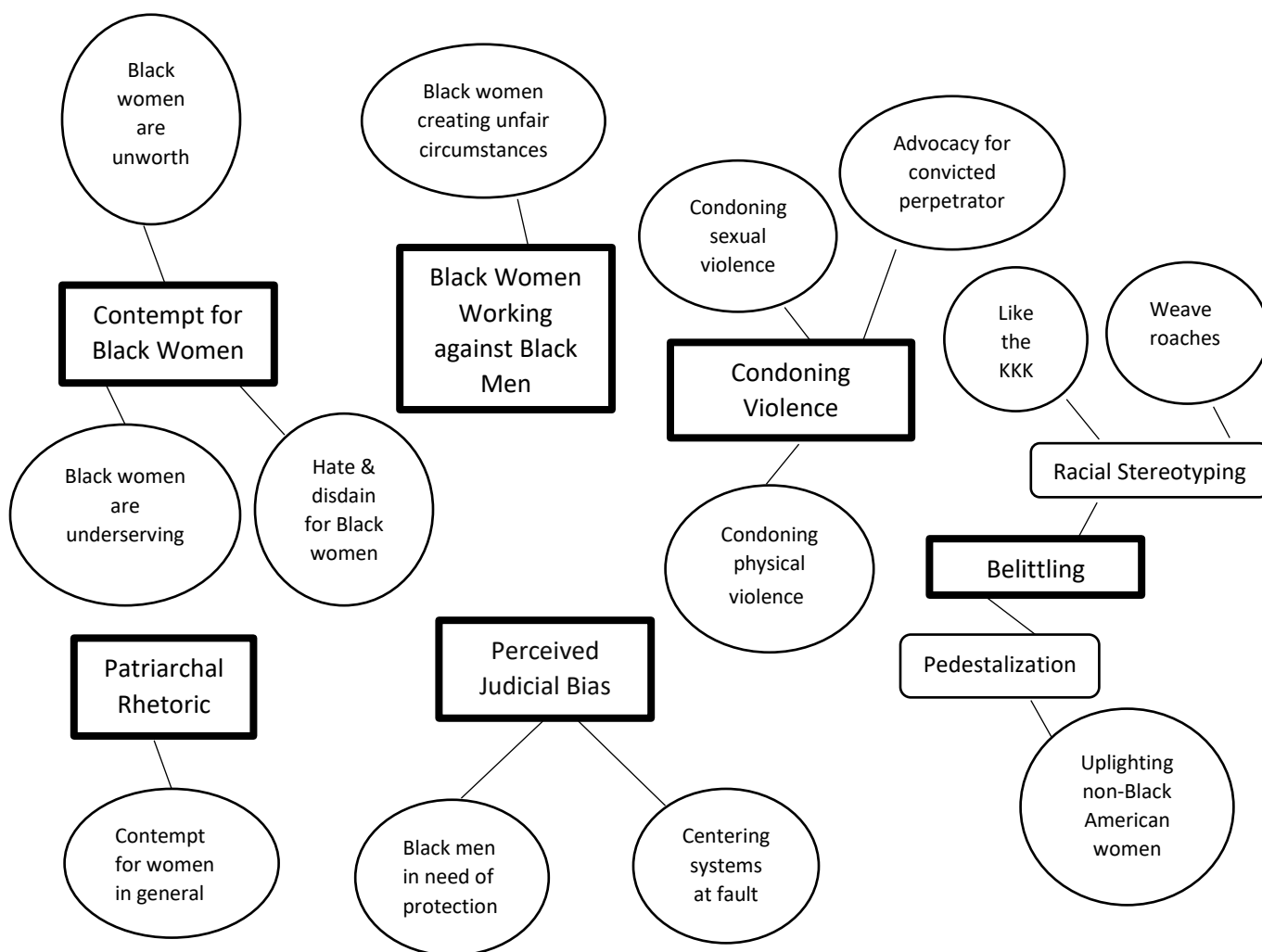
1. Familiarization with the data- the researcher immersed herself in the data to become familiar with the entire dataset by repeatedly and actively reading the data to provide a valuable orientation of the raw data. For this step, the researcher read the entire dataset three times.

2. Generating initial codes- the initial coding framework was deductively guided by the nine lexicons of misogyny developed by Farrell et al. (2019). The initial themes generated were aligned with the Farrell et al. study: physical violence, sexual violence, hostility, belittling, homophobia, racism, stoicism, promotion of patriarchy, and flipping the narrative. However, in noting interesting aspects in the data in relation to the research question two, the researcher noted that the data would benefit from an inductive coding framework to capture the uniqueness and depths of the content about Black women, which expands beyond misogynistic content. Once the researcher made this coding shift, she developed a codebook and then manually coded the entire dataset.
3. Searching for themes- the researcher analyzed the codes manually to sort them into potential overarching themes. A thematic map was created to analyze the relationship between the codes and themes. This step developed a collection of potential themes and the data extracts coded in relation to them.
4. Reviewing themes- this phase involved two levels of review. In level one of the reviews, the researcher reviewed the themes identified in step three to modify, refine, combine, keep, or discard any themes. The researcher ensured that the data within each of the themes had commonality and coherence. Additionally, the researcher ensured that the data was clear and distinctive enough to justify the separate themes. In level two of the review, the researcher ensured that the themes fit properly in relation to the entire dataset by having an accurate representation of research question two. The researcher re-read the entire dataset to ensure that the themes were aligned with the dataset. In conducting this review, the researcher sought to see if additional data within the themes was missed and in need of being coded. As new themes developed, the researcher coded and re-coded the

data that fell within the newly created or modified themes from this phase. The researcher conducted additional reviews and refining of the themes until a satisfactory thematic map was composed (Figure below).

Figure

Thematic Map of Final Emerging Themes



Note. This thematic map demonstrated the final themes that emerged and were interpreted within this study. The rectangles represent the six overarching themes: condoning violence, belittling, Black women working against Black men, contempt for Black women, patriarchal rhetoric, and perceived judicial bias (see Table in Chapter 4 for frequency of themes). The two rounded

rectangles represent the two sub-themes within the belittling theme: racial stereotyping and pedestalization. The circles represent a summary of the themes to provide context.

5. Defining and naming themes- the researcher defined and continued to refine the themes by identifying the important aspect of each theme and the data captured in each theme.

Six overarching themes emerged from the inductive coding thematic analysis: condoning violence, belittling, contempt for Black women, Black women working against Black men, patriarchal rhetoric, and perceived judicial bias. The researcher wrote comprehensive definitions with example text for each theme.

The thematic analysis process was completed manually using Microsoft Excel. This thematic analysis framework produced intra-coder reliability (Van den Hoonaard, 2008). Additionally, to produce inter-coder reliability, the codebook was shared with the dissertation chair to code a sample of the data for consistency between coders.

Content Analysis

Content analysis uses a descriptive method to code data and produce counts of the codes to aid in interpreting how the codes explain the issue or phenomenon being studied (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Krippendorff, 2018; Morgan, 1993). A content analysis was conducted to quantify the occurrence of themes generated by thematic analysis within the entire dataset.

Taking the coded dataset, content analysis was conducted using the following steps outlined by Coe and Scacco (2017):

1. The unit of analysis was the six themes produced from the thematic analysis: condoning violence, belittling, contempt for Black women, Black women working against Black men, patriarchal rhetoric, and perceived judicial bias.

2. Each theme's frequency in relation to misogynistic content produced was analyzed within Microsoft Excel.
3. A summary table displaying the frequencies by theme was created.

The priori codes covered nine misogynic themes: physical violence, sexual violence, hostility, belittling, homophobia, racism, stoicism, promotion of patriarchy, and flipping the narrative (Farrell et al., 2019). From inductive thematic analysis two of the nine misogynic themes remained: belittling and patriarchal rhetoric. Four themes that emerged from the dataset were grounded in misogynoir. Misogynoir is a distinct form of misogyny that only targets Black girls and women (Moyazb, 2010). One theme was distinctive to the perceived experiences of Black men. Additionally, although the misogynistic theme belittling remained, this study expanded the context and definition of this theme from addressing how women are belittled in general to address the unique ways Black women are belittled as captured in the study's dataset.

Reflexivity

In the early 2010s, while exploring music videos on YouTube, a video suggestion popped up of a Black man. In the title of his video was the words Black women. Curiously, the researcher clicked on the video and was instantly met with the vitriol from the content creator. He was displaying his face while yelling into his microphone that Black women were masculine, beasts, and hair-hat hooligans. Appalled at his rhetoric, the researcher exited out his video. However, his channel continued to be suggested on YouTube and over the years his popularity grew and he is now known as an American radio host and has been invited to national news outlets. For the safety of the researcher, this individual name is not shared.

Over the last decade, the researcher has observed content produced by the Black Manosphere on various online social platforms (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Blogs). In

these settings, the researcher participated in discussions and interacted with participants to gain insight into their behaviors and attitudes. Countless hours have been dedicated to studying the Black Manosphere to gain a deep understanding of who they are and what they represent. In studying this group, the researcher has seen the complexity that saturates the group's ideology and rhetoric. Although the Black Manosphere is not a homogenous collective within these varying platforms, there are common themes of disdain and contempt for Black women and girls and the need to separate themselves from them among the Black Manosphere. Over the years of observing the Black Manosphere, the researcher has witnessed a shift from the Black Manosphere sharing their disdain for Black women online to them outright calling for violence, both physical and sexual violence, against Black girls and women. It is from this lens that the research questions and design were developed.

In working to dismantle the Black Manosphere, the researcher and many other Black women have worked to amplify the rhetoric of the Black Manosphere and the adverse lived experiences of Black girls and women. This qualitative research study has been crafted based on what is known from years of observing the Black Manosphere. This research study was also designed to bring forth an empirical examination of the Black Manosphere and add to the research examining the collective of the Manosphere.

Steps to Ensure Rigor and Trustworthiness

Researchers and research institutions have established best practice guidelines to ensure that researchers who use Twitter data in their research studies abide by the X Developer Agreement and Policy. According to these best practices, it is vital to receive informed consent from users whose content you will publish for several reasons (Gold, 2020 & Williams et al., 2017). One reason for receiving informed consent includes having the ability to continue

publishing data after the data has been removed from the Twitter application by the user.

Another reason includes the understanding that although users sign Twitter terms regarding how their content and information will be used and retained by Twitter, users may not be providing informed consent for their content to be used for research purposes (Kaphle et al., 2022).

Moreover, most users may not read the terms they are agreeing to and are only accepting the terms to gain access to the platform (Ahmed et al., 2017; Kaphle et al., 2022). Although it may be best ethical practice to retain informed consent, researchers have found that receiving informed consent from a large group of users to display their tweets in published research studies to be challenging (Ahmed et al., 2017; Chew & Eysenbach, 2010).

Approval from Nova Southeastern University Institutional Review Board was sought since the Twitter data is derived from a human and anonymity can be compromised if the data is traced back to the content creator through the platform's search engine (Gold, 2020). Steps were taken to ensure that the content creators identify remained private. The data presented in this study is only reported in an aggregate form and direct quotes of the content were not included to adhere to X's Developer agreement and policy. However, short excerpts of tweets are shared in Chapter 4 (starting on page 59) to support the findings.

As a Black woman, the researcher has been impacted by the actions and content produced by members of the Black Manosphere and these experiences could potentially cause biases in the research. To counteract these potential biases, thematic analysis was selected as the coding method to provide structure and rigor. Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis was not only selected for this study to examine the shared ideas and rhetoric within the Black Manosphere, but also because this method to analyzing qualitative data acknowledges the research as having an

active role in the process of the analysis. Additionally, this thematic analysis has a built-in reflexive approach in analyzing the data.

In conclusion, this chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the research approach, design, and procedures used in this study. Outlining the qualitative methods used to collect, analyze, and interpret the data established the framework for the research findings shared in Chapter 4. A qualitative research approach allowed the researcher to examine the rhetoric of the Black Manosphere in a way that centered the complexity and nuance of the group. The use of a secondary dataset and systematic qualitative research analysis procedures ensured the reliability, validity, and credibility of the study's findings. The next chapter will delve into the results to provide insight into the research questions.

Chapter 4: Results

This qualitative research study examined the Black Manosphere by analyzing their written content published on Twitter (now X), focusing on their collective values, beliefs, and rhetoric regarding Black women. This chapter describes the research findings of the thematic analysis conducted using a dataset consisting of 352 tweets published by the Black Manosphere regarding Black women. The research questions guiding this qualitative investigation were: (1) *What types and volume of misogynistic content against Black women are produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* (2) *What is the shared rhetoric regarding the hostility towards Black women propagated by the Black Manosphere on Twitter?* The findings provide an overview of the themes identified from the thematic analysis that were related to the shared rhetoric among the Black Manosphere regarding Black women. Brief excerpts from the dataset are included to support the findings. Key insights on the rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere on Twitter, including use of talking points and flipping the narrative as a key tactic are presented.

Layers of Intersectionality

Originally, this study was proposed to use a deductive qualitative method using priori codes established in a research study that examined Twitter content of the Manosphere (Farrell et al., 2019). In the Farrell et al. study, the lexicons of misogyny were developed to examine the flow of extreme language within and across misogynistic groups within the Manosphere. Misogyny encompasses the hatred, contempt, and prejudice against women and girls solely based on their gender (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Misogyny occurs in various forms, from objectification and belittlement of girls and women to violence against girls and women. Misogyny is directed towards all women and girls due to it being hatred and prejudice against women and girls in general. The lexicons of misogyny were proposed to be used as a priori codes

to code the data to classify the type of content produced by the members of the Black Manosphere. There is a total of nine lexicons of misogyny that were built with the terms and expressions that describe a range ideas and categories of misogyny: physical violence towards women, sexual violence towards women, hostility towards women, belittling of women, homophobia, racism, promotion of patriarchy or male privilege, stoicism, and flipping the narrative.

However, in conducting the thematic analysis, a disconnect between the themes emerging from the current research study and the proposed predetermined codes from the Farrell et al. (2019) study was realized. This disconnect was twofold. The codes from Farrell et al. were used to code terms and expressions whereas this study conducted a more in-depth analysis of language patterns, beliefs, and attitudes that were used to share the hostile viewpoints and messaging of the Black Manosphere regarding Black women. Therefore, the themes from the Farrell et al. study were limiting to this study. The other part of the disconnect is the Farrell et al. codes are based on misogyny, which is the disdain for women in general (Ribeiro et al., 2021). The data analyzed in this study goes far beyond general disdain for women and specifically targets harmful rhetoric towards Black women, which is misogynoir. Therefore, the proposed priori codes from the Farrell et al. study were not adequate in capturing the essence of the contempt and disdain that is directed at Black women.

Misogynoir describes the hatred, contempt, and prejudice that is specifically directed towards Black girls and women (Bailey 2021; Moyazb, 2010). The term misogynoir was coined to center the unique experiences of Black women who are often overlook and marginalized within mainstream feminism. Misogynoir and intersectionality go hand in hand. Misogynoir focuses on how Black girls and women experience hatred, contempt, and prejudice based on

their intersection of being Black and woman. Misogynoir intentionally highlights the intersecting identities of Black women to recognize and address the specific needs and experiences impacting Black women. Akin to misogyny, misogynoir also manifests in various forms, such as discrimination, belittlement, and violence, which works to marginalize and oppress Black girls and women. Black women not only experience misogyny from the greater patriarchal society, but they also experience misogynoir from the greater patriarchal society and the interconnected patriarchal society within the Black community.

As a result of the type of data captured in the dataset, the researcher shifted from conducting a thematic analysis using a deductive framework to using an inductive framework to capture the types and volume of misogynistic content produced. Shifting to an inductive framework gave the researcher the ability to capture the nuance and depth of the layers of intersectionality and the unique experiences that Black women exist as and are seen as.

About the Black Manosphere

The Black Manosphere is a subgroup within the Manosphere. Within the Manosphere there is the belief that men are being oppressed and treated unfairly because of women and feminism. However, the Black Manosphere specifically tailors their beliefs to Black men by sharing rhetoric that centers Black women as a threat to the livelihood of Black men and the Black community and family.

Two groups within the Black Manosphere were represented in the dataset: Save Your Self Black Men (SYSBM) and Passport Bros. SYSBM is a collective within the Black Manosphere that denounces Black women to encourage Black men to get into relationships with non-Black American women. Passport bros is a subset within the SYSBM and Black Manosphere collective that denounces Black women and encourages Black men to get their

passports to find women outside of the United States. Both SYSBM and passport bros share the belief that their basis for denouncing Black women is because Black women are non-traditional women in the sense that they lack femininity, they are not submissive in their actions towards their romantic partners, and they are not in good physical shape. These collective groups within the Black Manosphere are united through their rhetoric that is embedded in misogynoir to specifically target Black women. Their misogynoir-based rhetoric is used for systematic messaging to center Black women, specifically Black American women, as the single cause of the negative outcomes that Black men face and the disadvantages of Black people.

Misogynistic & Misogynoir Content Shared by the Black Manosphere

The analyses found common themes and counted the frequency of the rhetoric produced by the Black Manosphere. The six overarching themes offer insight into the rhetoric among the Black Manosphere: condoning violence, belittling, contempt for Black women, Black women working against Black men, patriarchal rhetoric, and perceived judicial bias (see Table below). Located in the note section of the table are definitions of each of the themes. There was no positive rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere about Black women in this dataset.

Table

Themes Developed in Analyzing the Rhetoric of the Black Manosphere Regarding Black Women on Twitter

Theme	Frequency
Condoning Violence ¹	103
Belittling	65
Racial Stereotyping ²	53
Pedestalization of Non-Black American Women ³	12
Contempt for Black Women ⁴	60
Black Women Working Against Black Men ⁵	49
Patriarchal Rhetoric ⁶	32
Perceived Judicial Bias ⁷	29

Note. ¹ Black Manosphere condoning violence (i.e., sexual, physical) against Black women to protect Black men.

² Black Manosphere using harmful stereotypes that have a historical significance of bringing harm against Black women in the United States to share their disdain for Black American Women.

³ Black Manosphere expressing disparaging beliefs that demean Black American women in relation to non-Black American women.

⁴ Rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere about Black women being underserving, undesirable, unfit and/or unworthy.

⁵ Rhetoric that Black women are working against Black men to bring them down or to create unfair circumstances for them.

⁶ Rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere to share their beliefs related to women being inferior to men.

⁷ Rhetoric shared about the Black Manosphere that asserts that Black men are directly harmed by the system and therefore need protection. It also encompasses rhetoric that distorts facts to promote their beliefs of false allegations against Black men.

Shared Rhetoric Among the Black Manosphere

This section provides an overview of the shared rhetoric of the Black Manosphere published on Twitter regarding the hostility directed towards Black women to further describes the themes that emerged above. Rhetoric is intentionally using language to persuade and influence an audience by strategically using certain words and language patterns to share beliefs

and opinions in a compelling and persuasive manner (Hakokongas, 2020). This study focused on a specific mode of social media communication to examine the rhetoric among the Black Manosphere—tweets. Tweets are messages published by individuals on Twitter (now X) to communicate and connect with others quickly (Vicente, 2023). The rhetoric examined in this study comprises the written content within the tweets that the Black Manosphere utilized to disseminate their messaging aiming to spread hostile and demeaning viewpoints about Black women.

The data revealed a key tactic utilized by the Black Manosphere as a persuasive strategy to spread their rhetoric. In this study, this tactic is labeled as flipping the narrative. The themes are presented first to display the shared rhetoric among the group and then the underlying tactic—flipping the narrative—is discussed to show how the Black Manosphere is intentionally using this tactic to persuade and influence their audience to accept or consider their hostile beliefs and attitudes regarding Black women.

The six overarching themes are shared below with brief excerpts from the dataset included to support the findings. It is important to note that direct quotes from the tweets are not presented in this study to comply with Twitter’s Developer agreement and policy. The example text provided from the dataset is succinct to convey the information for each theme without disclosing the entirety of the tweet. Additionally, elements of misogynoir are included within the relevant themes.

Condoning Violence

The most prevalent theme that emerged within the corpus was condoning violence. Most of the tweets displayed rhetoric that either supported and/ or excused the violent actions of Black males convicted of crimes against Black girls and women, exhibiting misogynoir. Within this

theme, numerous tweets from the Black Manosphere condoned the sexual predatory violence and shooting perpetrated by two well-known Black celebrity males: R. Kelly and Torey Lanez. The data extraction period for this research study coincided with the arrests, trials, and convictions of musician R. Kelly and rapper Torey Lanez. Despite these individuals being arrested and found guilty of serious crimes that harmed and injured Black girls and women, the Black Manosphere shared rhetoric that undermined the role of the judicial system in condemning violence by addressing and removing individuals from the public who commit crimes. Although guilty verdicts were rendered in each of the cases mentioned in the tweets, the sense of support for violent predators who targeted Black girls and women was strong within the Black Manosphere.

#FreeRKelly

#IStandWithRKelly

I'll be praying for @torylanez tonight and idgaf about @theestallion

She should have walked away

cancel Tory over a flesh wound without even hearing the full story?

Y'all still supporting Meg after all this?

Free Tory lanz until he free

Give Kellz another year or two and he is walking a free man #FreeRKelly

Fuck all them money hungry scamming ass leeches! #FreeRKelly

#ISupportToryLanez

DAILY REMINDER: #FreeToryLanez

accusing the WRONG PERSON of sh00ting her (well grazing her 🐮)

Mad Tory lanez is not enjoying his Christmas right now

Tory Innocent

Belittling

Belittling was frequently observed as a tactic employed by the Black Manosphere to diminish the significance and worth of Black women, positioning them as inferior to Black men and non-Black American women. The tweets embodying the belittling theme encompassed two sub-themes: racial stereotyping and pedestalization of non-Black American women.

Racial stereotyping. These tweets from the Black Manosphere involved attributing negative characteristics, traits, and behaviors to Black women. The negative stereotypes identified in the dataset were specific to Black women, displaying misogynoir. The Black Manosphere's stereotypes about Black women used derogatory and inflammatory language that was harmful to the image of Black women. The tweets encompassed a range of racial stereotypes, which simplified or exaggerated beliefs and impressions about Black women. The tweets conveying racial stereotypes paint a demeaning narrative that works to dehumanize Black women and calls for Black women to not be treated as women because Black women have been deemed as too masculine, unfit, not submissive, and promiscuous by the Black Manosphere. The Black Manosphere tweets also perpetuated harmful stereotypes rooted in historical oppression against Black women in the United States to express their disdain for Black American Women. Many of the racial stereotypes were rooted in historical inaccuracies, associating Black women as domestic terrorists of the Black community by saying Black women function like the KKK and slaveowners. Most of these racial stereotypes conveyed in the tweets are rooted in white supremacy talking points where Black women were demeaned in a way that allowed the normalization of harmful treatment towards Black women.

Black women be like some mammy for the Pro Slavery KKK

Why are Black Women so Masculine?

Black women are the Chads and Karens of the black community

Fewer Weave Walkers a Black Man has in his life the happier he'll be

#JustSayNoToWeaveWalkers

reason Black Men are Not marrying Black Women, is because most of them are Hoes

Black women ARE the Devil's lap dog

#Black #women behave like slaveowners

Pedestalization of non-Black American women. The misogynoir exhibited in this theme conveyed the belief held by the Black Manosphere that Black women are inferior to non-Black American women. The inferiority of Black women is manifested in the tweets as idealization and elevation of non-Black American women as superior, presented in a disparaging and discriminatory manner. These tweets reflected the Black Manosphere's perception of non-Black American women as flawless (e.g., feminine, fit, friendly, and submissive). This pedestalizing promoted negative attitudes specifically towards Black American women as being unworthy as a woman in comparison to all other groups of women. In this theme, the Black Manosphere uses the comparison to explain why Black men should avoid and abandon all Black American women.

Get them a submissive white queen and breed her

#TeamWhiteQueens4Ever

Other races of women do it better

surround yourself with fit feminine & friendly White Women

[Indian women] are very humble, feminine & don't let there education & money ruin there feminine energy.

South African women should be higher on the list for Black American men

find black women overseas

get women from the Philipians or a African woman

Contempt for Black Women

The theme contempt for Black women exhibited the attitudes and beliefs of the Black Manosphere towards Black women. The contempt for Black women was evident in several forms, including deliberate disrespect and derogatory remarks. Numerous tweets from the Black Manosphere conveyed a strong sense of disdain, scorn, and disrespect towards Black women, reflecting the belief that they are insignificant and undeserving of respect.

The misogynoir displayed in this theme conveyed the Black Manosphere's belief that Black women are unworthy. This served as the basis for the Black Manosphere's argument that Black men should save themselves and avoid and abandon Black women at all costs. These tweets promoted a space of hate and animosity towards Black women. The disrespect and hostility displayed in the tweets represented verbal attacks and dismissive gestures towards Black women by the Black Manosphere. The harboring feelings of disdain and scorn towards Black women added an additional layer to the harmful perception of Black women, which further perpetuates the Black Manosphere's reasoning for separating themselves from Black women.

Black men should stop paying attention to black women

it's time we as black men collectively walk away from these monstrosities in pursuit of women worthy of us

Black men don't owe anybody anything, not even Black women.

another reason Black America women should be avoided at all cost

Don't listen to black women...your lives will be better

U know that Black Women need to humble themselves per #KevinSamuels

black women...brings them no net positives.

Passport bros movement is a direct reaction to modern black women

stay the hell away from a lot of these black women out here.

Black women are horrible human beings.

The world would be a better place without that black woman in it.

Black Women Working Against Black Men

Another prevalent theme found in the corpus was rhetoric from the Black Manosphere regarding Black women working against Black men. The tweets expressed the beliefs that Black women are deliberately working to obstruct the interests and welfare of Black men. Additionally, the tweets shared the notion that Black women are colluding with powerful entities, such as the federal government and domestic terrorist groups like the KKK. The tweets conveyed beliefs that Black women are conspiring against Black men, extending from personal interactions to manipulating the legal system to create negative consequences for Black men. The tweets reflected a consensus that there is collaboration and cooperation to generate adverse outcomes for Black men.

The misogynoir displayed in this theme conveyed the divisive rhetoric that Black women are an enemy of Black men. Tweets within this theme undermined the solidarity and support of Black women towards Black men. Although both Black women and men experience systemic challenges that cause racial inequality, discrimination, and social injustices, this rhetoric alienated Black women from their lived experiences with these challenges. The Black Manosphere shared a narrative that they are solely experiencing these systemic challenges and they are experiencing them largely in part due to the actions of Black women.

There is no CODE with Black Women

Black women...feel like black men deserve the worst while they deserve the best.

Meg is trying send a black men to prison for 20 years

Black Women harm and kill little black boys the most.

the white man did they job now our own women hate us...it all started with government assistance

black women continue to ignore the input of black men

Tory Lanez verdict shows how back men are targeted by black women

Most American black men...have been trained to accept the gynocracy rule of black women in their life.

You found out your woman has been working against you this whole time

Black man! [Black women] really really really hate you!

the overwhelming majority of our problems in this community comes from black women+government.

Patriarchal Rhetoric

The theme of patriarchal rhetoric was the only one not specific to Black women and encompassed beliefs about women in general. This theme emerged in the corpus as rhetoric published by the Black Manosphere asserting that men are superior to women. Tweets within this theme covered various typical patriarchal rhetoric, including discourse about power and control, gender inequality, and socialization. Additionally, this theme contained common rhetoric found among various groups within the Manosphere.

stop getting mad at how God designed men & women

stop living in lust you realize how uninteresting a lot of women can be

keep her out of your business

Men are waking up to Toxic Female Nature & are leaving their girls & wives

There aren't enough female 'exceptions' in America

Can a Women be submissive in 2023

Penis & vagina are not same. So MEN & WOMEN are not same.

Gender equality is bullshit!

Perceived Judicial Bias

The theme perceived judicial bias emerged within the corpus as the Black Manosphere published rhetoric that shifted the perspective and focus of a situation to assert the belief that Black men are being treated unfairly by systems of power. This theme also encompassed the Black Manosphere sharing false narratives and misinterpretation of information to promote their beliefs of false allegations against Black men. Two major hashtags were captured within this theme: #ProtectBlackMen and #IStandWithBlackMen.

The #protectblackmen is a hashtag used by Black men to collectively share their disdain for judicial outcomes impacting well known Black men who have been convicted of violent and sexual crimes against Black girls and women. The shared rhetoric is that Black men are facing unfair treatment within the judicial system by the court and by their victims, Black girls and women. Using this hashtag the Black Manosphere demanded that convicted criminals to be freed from prison for several reasons. Some of these reasons include the shared rhetoric that they were wrongfully convicted, the system is intentionally working against Black men, and Black female victims and other Black women are working with the system to bring Black men down.

The #IStandWithBlackMen is a hashtag used by the Black Manosphere to convey their support and advocacy by standing in solidarity with individuals who have been convicted of crimes against Black girls and women. The Black Manosphere used this hashtag to show their

willingness to align themselves with the convicted criminals over the Black female victims. In using both the hashtags, #ProtectBlackMen and #IStandWithBlackMen, the Black Manosphere publicly expressed solidarity in the belief that Black men are facing injustice and are in need protection from systems of power.

y'all had no evidence and Tory still was the monster

THE POLICE REPORT CLEARLY SAYS NO ONE WAS SHOT

#WrongfullyConvicted #WomenLieToo

#StopLyingOnBlkMen

They are coming for all black men

Black men are the real voiceless victims of the system.

we have a black man who's defense clearly debunked everything yet he is guilty

the govt playing dirty af to get the wrongfully convictions

I love how the whole innocent until proven guilty doesn't exist ever

@theestallion @nbcsnl You forgot #ProtectBlackMen

no matter how blatantly innocent they are the legal system will not protect them

#ProtectBlackMen

I love seeing tweets questioning this verdict...#IStandWithBlackMen

Megan should be thrown in jail for lying on a innocent man.

helping black women escape accountability while falsely placing it on black men

The system is broken! You Cant tell me BLACK men are protected

Key Insights on the Black Manosphere's Rhetoric

This section summarizes the pivotal findings revealed in the dataset, providing a condensed overview of the significant insights. The rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere on

Twitter about Black women were hostile, dehumanizing, and demonizing. The hostility from the Black Manosphere directed at Black women contained aggression and resentment. These tweets portrayed Black women as evil and reduced them to stereotypes and immoral beings denying their worth and humanity. The racial discrimination and stereotyping rhetoric were unique because it is coming from the counterparts of Black women—Black men. The Black Manosphere attributed negative characteristics, intentions, behaviors to Black women, which may lead to further devaluation, marginalization, and discrimination of Black women. Sweeping generalizations were made about Black women based on stereotypes and prejudices.

The research findings revealed that the most prevalent type of content produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter regarding Black women stemmed from misogynoir. In most of the themes, misogynoir was displayed showing the disdain and hostility towards Black women from an unusual suspect, Black men. Strikingly, the most frequent theme found in the dataset was condoning violence. Most of the tweets in the study's dataset exhibited rhetoric that either supported and/ or excused the violent actions of Black males convicted of crimes against Black girls and women. This disdain and hostility were not directed at Black women because they are simply women but were directed at them because they are Black women. Additionally, non-Black women were used to further the Black Manosphere's rhetoric of Black women needing to be physically and emotional isolated and disregarded. In all, the tweets displaying misogynoir were all connected to the shaming and degrading of Black women by the Black Manosphere.

Another commonality found among the rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere about Black women was centering Black women, specifically Black American women as the root of the problem. At the heart of all the tweets published by the Black Manosphere about Black women was blame and criticism. The Black Manosphere assigned fault to Black women for

various ills in their lives without offering constructive feedback or resolutions apart from abandoning Black women. The tweets were divisive in nature to separate Black women from Black men. The rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere strategically placed Black women in a unique position that ignored the challenges they face while unfairly placing them in a position of power to bring harm and detriment to Black men. The Black Manosphere shares the belief that they are victims who need protection from Black women and from systems of power. When it comes to relationships, the Black Manosphere shares the narrative that without Black American women they will be able to have a more valuable life and better outcomes.

Flipping the Narrative as a Tactic

Elements of flipping the narrative were found in the tweets within most of the themes: condoning violence, Black women working against Black men, belittling, contempt for Black women, and perceived judicial bias. Within these themes, flipping the narrative functioned as a tactic used by the Black Manosphere to advance the misogynoir filled beliefs they hold about Black women. This tactic employed several strategies: shifting the focus, reinterpreting and misinterpreting facts, reframing issues, and using emotional appeal.

The shifting the focus strategy was seen in the condoning violence theme where the Black Manosphere continuously worked to shift the focus from the victims of the violence to the Black men who perpetuated the violence. In shifting the focus, support is garnered for the perpetrators and support was not garnered for the victims who were Black girls and women. The strategy of the Black Manosphere reinterpreting and misinterpreting facts was presented in the Black Women working against Black Men theme where the Black Manosphere distorted the reality to paint Black women as an enemy who needs to be handled for working against the best interest of Black men. The tweets in this theme also employed the strategy of reframing issues to

center Black women to be the root cause of the problems that Black men are dealing with. The strategy of using emotional appeal is found in the belittling themes and the contempt for Black women theme. In each of these themes, the Black Manosphere appealed to hateful and harmful emotions to garner support in seeing Black women as inferior to both Black men and non-Black women and as unworthy of human decency.

Flipping the narrative as a tactic is a persuasive strategy used by the Black Manosphere to undermine accountability and genuine dialogue about the issues and challenges they are facing. This tactic seeks to control the narrative in their favor and the narrative conveyed in this dataset is that Black women are harmful to Black men causing adverse outcomes for them. This tactic was simultaneously used to center systems of power as the other major factor of adverse outcomes for Black men (as seen in the perceived judicial bias theme), removing all accountability from Black men.

Summary of Black Manosphere Talking Points

The rhetoric can be described as talking points that are used to promote the Black Manosphere's beliefs and attitudes about Black women to individuals within Black Manosphere and beyond. The following is a summary of the most prevailing talking points found within the dataset:

- Black women are undesirable and unworthy.
- Black women have a deep disdain and hatred for Black men.
- Black women are untrustworthy.
- Black women are not submissive, fit, and friendly.
- Black women are unattractive.
- Black women are masculine.

- Black women single handedly destroyed the Black community.
- Black women should be avoided at all costs by Black men.
- If Black men want a happy life, he must leave Black American women and find women abroad.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study examined the hostile rhetoric towards Black women shared by the Black Manosphere on Twitter (now X). This chapter summarizes and interprets the study's findings, drawing meaningful conclusions and contributes to the advancement of understanding the Black Manosphere. Additionally, implications of this study and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Summary of Key Research Findings

This study conducted a thematic analysis of tweets published by the Black Manosphere regarding Black women over a 3 year period. The study specifically examined the rhetoric produced by the Black Manosphere to persuade and inform other individuals about their hostile beliefs and attitudes about Black women. One distinguished tactic was found throughout the dataset as a strategy used by the Black Manosphere to persuade its audience—flipping the narrative. Flipping the narrative was revealed as a tactic used by the Black Manosphere to advance the misogynoir-filled beliefs they hold about Black women. This tactic was used to center Black men as victims to adverse treatment from Black women and systems of power.

Six themes were generated from this analysis to understand the shared beliefs and attitudes and the layers of intersectionality: condoning violence, belittling, contempt for Black women, Black women working against Black men, patriarchal rhetoric, and perceived judicial bias. The most frequent theme found in the dataset was condoning violence. Within this theme, the Black Manosphere's tweets supported and/ or excused violent physical and sexual assaults that Black males committed against Black girls and women.

All the themes, except for patriarchal rhetoric, were specific rhetoric that the Black Manosphere held about Black women. The patriarchal rhetoric was not directed to Black women,

but to women in general. Within each of the specific themes centering Black women, there was an overarching theme displaying misogynoir. Misogynoir describes the hatred, contempt, and prejudice that is specifically directed towards Black girls and women (Bailey 2021; Moyazb, 2010). In examining the data for misogynoir, the researcher was able to capture the nuance and depth of the layers of intersectionality of how Black women are seen by Black men. The data displayed rich text about the hate and contempt directed at Black women from the Black Manosphere. These tweets portrayed Black women as immoral beings, reducing them to negative stereotypes to deny their worth and humanity. Integral to the misogynoir was the blame and criticism that Black women are the underlying cause of the problems Black men face in the United States. When the Black Manosphere does not center Black women as the root cause of the problem, the Black Manosphere shifts this blame to systems of power. This rhetoric prevents holding themselves and other Black men accountable for their lived experiences and outcomes. In general, the shared rhetoric among the Black Manosphere regarding Black women were hostile, dehumanizing, and demonizing.

Within the theme perceived judicial bias, the Black Manosphere shifted the focus from Black men being the perpetrators of violent crimes to Black men being treated unfairly by systems of power. Two major hashtags were captured within the dataset: #ProtectBlackMen and #IStandWithBlackMen. In using both hashtags, the Black Manosphere publicly expressed solidarity in the belief that Black men are facing injustice and are in need protection from systems of power, undermining the integrity of the legal system.

Interpretation of the Findings

This study aimed to understand the potential association of the increased violence and deaths among Black women in the United States and the Black Manosphere. Although a clear

explanation of how the Black Manosphere is linked to the increased violence and deaths of Black women was not revealed in the study, this study is a starting place to understand the impact of the hostility directed at Black women by the Black Manosphere. The hostility from the Black Manosphere towards Black women is complex and multifaceted but may hold the key to understanding the association between the Black Manosphere and the increased violence against Black women.

Use of Online Social Platforms

The Black Manosphere is strategically using online platforms to outrightly express hostility towards Black women to demean and dehumanize them. The Black Manosphere works to demean Black women by framing them as disobedient and masculine in a way to explain how their masculinity is being undermined by Black women, which leads them to experience adverse outcomes in life. The Black Manosphere also uses racial stereotypes to frame Black women to be seen as non-human or equated with racial terrorists to dehumanize them. Furthermore, the Black Manosphere perpetuates harmful beliefs about Black women that amplifies the beliefs White supremacists created about Black women (Fountain, 2018a; Onuoha, 2022; Onuoha et al., 2023, Shokunbi, 2023). This creates a culture that normalizes the dehumanization of Black women so that Black women are perceived as less deserving of respect and empathy, making them more vulnerable to experiencing violence (Essed, 2020; Krook, 2022).

Social Norms Minimizing Violence

The socialization and cultural norms that are occurring among members of the Black Manosphere is establishing an environment that condones and minimizing violence against Black girls and women. The tweets analyzed from the Black Manosphere downplayed the seriousness of sexual and physical violence against Black women and while supporting and

advocating for the perpetrators of the violence. This trivialization can lead to the normalization of violence against Black women (Htun & Jensenius, 2020). The normalization of violence against Black women may lead to desensitization among individuals, diminishing their inclination to intervene or prevent violent acts against Black women (Canto et al., 2020; Deater-Deckard & Lansford, 2017). Furthermore, violence against Black women may be seen as acceptable and normal rather than a serious health issue facing Black women (Deater-Deckard & Lansford, 2017; Htun & Jensenius, 2020).

Flipping the Narrative to Center Black Men

Delving deeper into the aspect of the Black Manosphere minimizing violence against Black women uncovered a culture of impunity for convicted Black male offenders while advertently victim-blaming the Black female victims. This culture of impunity can embolden perpetrators to escalate their abusive behavior and potential perpetrators to act on their violent fantasies and thoughts. If these perpetrators believe that their actions will not be taken seriously and that they will receive unjustified support, they may feel empowered to commit violent acts. This normalization of violence can make Black women less likely to seek help amid experiencing violence (Kluttz-Leach, 2021). When violence is normalized and minimized, underreporting occurs leading to an underestimation of the prevalence and impact of the violence (Wagner, 2022). As a result, policymakers and stakeholders may underestimate the magnitude of the violence causing them to not allocate adequate resources to effectively address the violence.

Moreover, the Black Manosphere uses hostility to assert their power to control the narrative that Black women are creating harsh and unfair circumstances that are harmful to Black men. In creating this narrative, the Black Manosphere is strategically casting Black men in the role of a victim. When Black women are not centered as the fault of the problems Black men

face, the Black Manosphere then blames systems of power for their problems. This victimhood mentality among the Black Manosphere is like the victimhood mentality shared among the Manosphere, except the Black Manosphere is specifically centering Black women and systems of power as their oppressors whereas the Manosphere centers feminism as their oppressor (Ging, 2019; Mamié et al., 2021).

Prevailing Goal of the Black Manosphere

When examining all these layers together cohesively, the data suggest that the overarching goal of the Black Manosphere is to garner support to establish a divide between Black men and Black women in the United States. According to the Black Manosphere, this division is needed because 1) Black women are working against Black men to bring them down, 2) Black women are unworthy and undesirable, and 3) Black women have a deep hatred for Black men. There is a strong belief that Black women are a threat to the livelihood of Black men. As a result, the Black Manosphere vigorously advocates for Black men to disregard and leave behind Black women in all aspects of their lives. Overall, the hostility towards Black women from the Black Manosphere can create a breeding ground for violence to flourish (Simões et al., 2022).

Implications of the Study

As of now, there is a notable absence of empirical studies examining the Black Manosphere to understand who they are, their values, their beliefs, or their rhetoric. Although the Black Manosphere's presence is known and seen on various online platforms, they are excluded in studies analyzing the greater collective of the Manosphere. This study serves as an integral piece in increasing the knowledge regarding the hostile rhetoric shared by the Black Manosphere that could be related to the aggressive and harmful attitudes and behaviors towards Black

women, and ultimately to the adverse outcomes experienced by Black women in the United States (e.g., high risk of assaults and homicides). In studying the Manosphere, researchers have found that the communication and social norms of the groups within the Manosphere are rooted in hostility and aggression (Allison, 2022, Habib et al., 2022; Jane, 2015). Furthermore, researchers are documenting a shift in Manosphere groups becoming more violent and misogynistic in the content they are producing online about women (Ribeiro et al., 2021; Sugiura, 2021).

Beyond White & Well Known Manosphere Groups

This study centered the Black Manosphere's hostility towards Black women because the Black Manosphere specifically share their disdain for Black women on various online platforms (Bellamy, 2022; Black Girls Texting, 2022; Dee, 2023; Fountain, 2018b; Fountain, 2020; Young, 2022). The findings from this study contributes to and expands the theoretical understanding of intersectionality and online rhetoric regarding Black women by documenting the misogynoir-filled content created and shared by the Black Manosphere. Additionally, this study starts to document the intersectionality of Black males and how they uniquely center themselves within far-right groups promoting white supremacy rhetoric against Black women.

Social Impact

Research is showing that groups within the Manosphere are getting more extreme and radical and are recruiting younger boys to join their groups (Habib et al., 2022; Onuoha, 2022; Onuoha, 2023). In a recent civil ruling from a New York Supreme Court Case, the judge denied a motion from top social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, Reddit) that their platforms did not play a role in radicalizing a mass shooter to commit a hate crime that killed 10 people and injured three others (Alonso, 2024; Sullivan, 2024). Thus, not only is it important to

understand the rhetoric that is shared by the Black Manosphere, but it is also vital to understand the tactics they are using to garner support from others and to recruit Black boys and men to join their collective and its social impact. This study provided an example of a tactic that was used by the Black Manosphere on Twitter to share their rhetoric about Black women—flipping the narrative. The Black Manosphere is anti-Black woman and it is important to name it and call out their explicit misogynoir directed at Black women. This study provides a baseline for understanding the talking points of the Black Manosphere regarding Black women, which can be used to educate the public on harmful negative rhetoric spread about Black women online to develop strategies to confront and call out this rhetoric.

Limitations

Qualitative research is a valuable approach to understanding a complex phenomenon that has not been examined. Nuanced judgements and subjectivity are important parts of conducting qualitative research (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). However, it is essential that the researcher accounts for the significance of potential personal and interpersonal factors that may produce research bias. For the past 10 years, the researcher has observed the Black Manosphere across multiple online spaces. Additionally, she has been subjected to the hostile content produced by the Black Manosphere within this same timeframe. Potential researcher bias may have existed in this study because the researcher's experiences with the Black Manosphere influenced the scope of the research topic, including the research questions and interpretation. Additionally, the researcher's prior experience with coding qualitative data, developing codebooks, and creating theme definitions had a direct impact on her ability to apply this expertise in the study analyses. The researcher engaged in conversations with her dissertation committee to discuss the

limitations associated with using priori codes, highlighting her concerns of misogynoir not being adequately represented within the prior codes.

To manage the potential bias, the research methods (i.e., thematic analysis and content analysis) in this study were used to provide the needed structure to reduce the impact of researcher biases on the data analysis and interpretation. Moreover, the researcher actively engaged in reflexivity throughout the data analysis process. The researcher maintained a journal to document each step in coding and re-coding the data. As themes emerged, she took the time to reflect on the emerging themes and noted the shifts that occurred throughout the data analysis. Furthermore, as a Black woman who is both a researcher and has been negatively impacted by the study's subject, potential bias may exist in the researcher wanting to address the research gap about the violence directed towards Black women and to use digital data to provide examples of misogynoir. Although the researcher utilized an instrument to assist with the thematic analysis to code the dataset, the researcher saw a need to expand the terminology and examples of contempt and hostility towards women in general to a narrower focus of contempt and hostility specifically directed towards Black women. However, the themes produced in this study and the interpretations were grounded in the context of the content produced by the Black Manosphere on Twitter.

The data extracted and analyzed in this study was limited to the tweets that were publicly available and still in existence during the timeframe of the data extraction (X, n.d., -e). Tweets that are behind a private account and tweets that were deleted from the platform prior to the data extraction were not captured in this study. Furthermore, this study only focused on one online platform occupied by the Black Manosphere, Twitter, and due to the nature of the data extraction, generalizations cannot be made that the rhetoric exhibited in this study represent

rhetoric of the members of the Black Manosphere who published content outside of the extraction timeframe on Twitter. Additionally, generalizations from this study cannot be made for Black Manosphere members who published content on other online platforms other than Twitter.

Although the data analyzed in this study only contained publicly available data accessed from Twitter (now X), Twitter has built in efforts to keep the given data as private as possible (X, n.d. -d). When tweets are extracted using the Twitter API, the content is not connected to the user's Twitter ID, but is assigned a unique identification number. Twitter implements strict conditions for data usage in the X's Developer Agreement and Policy (n.d. -b). Furthermore, Twitter (now X) states that all analyses should be conducted in an aggregate and that twitter users' information must remain protected (X, n.d. -d). Therefore, direct quotes of the tweets were not able to be displayed in this research study. It is also noteworthy that Twitter, now officially known as X, has gone through major shifts within the last year (Mac & Hsu, 2023). Over the last year, Twitter received a new owner and a major executive decision was made to terminate the academic research track that granted researchers free access to Twitter Application Programming Interface (API) to shifting to an extremely costly account to extract data from the API (X, n.d. -a). The researcher had to purchase a pro developer account to gain access to the Twitter API to extract data for the study.

Another limitation of this study was the reliability of coding the content data with a single coder. There should be a team that codes the data to produce inter-coder reliability (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). Having multiple coders that can consistently code and re-code the same data in the same way produces inter-coder reliability. Additionally, a group of coders would allow for the testing of the inter-coder reliability through *Krippendorff's Alpha* (Creswell

& Creswell, 2018; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). To overcome this threat to reliability, a small sample of the data was coded by a member of the committee to test for inter-coder reliability.

Future Research

Online communities are growing rapidly and we cannot afford to neglect studying the Black Manosphere. Understanding the impact of the Black Manosphere is complex and will require multiple approaches for analyzing. From research studying the Manosphere, the Black Manosphere should not be seen as homogenous, but as a collective that has diverse motivations and engagement (Huber, 2023). The Black Manosphere exists on multiple online platforms. Therefore, research needs to continue to study the rhetoric of the Black Manosphere across multiple online platforms to understand the various subgroups within the Black Manosphere and the similarities and differences in the messaging they are propagating about Black women online. Additionally, research must be conducted to examine how the Manosphere's language is permeating mainstream society to normalize violent attitudes and beliefs towards women and the social media platforms' role in this connection.

Future research is needed to examine the relationship between online misogynoir and violence. Although this study's data did not exhibit the Black Manosphere making direct threats of violence against Black women, there is documentation of the Black Manosphere encouraging violence against Black girls and women (Black Women Wake Up, n.d.). Furthermore, there is evidence of how members of the Black Manosphere who shared negative and harmful rhetoric online about Black women went on to commit violent acts, such as murdering a Black woman or committing a mass shooting (e.g., Anthony Powell and Frank James; Bromwich & Davis O'Brien, 2022; Indianapolis Recorder, 2009; Sisak et al., 2022). Understanding how the hostility of the Black Manosphere directed towards Black women translates into physical acts of violence

against Black women is crucial for addressing the high rates of homicides among Black females. Moreover, it is vital to know to what degree the Black Manosphere's advocacy for Black men to leave behind Black women is associated with the physical harm and violence that Black women experience.

There is a need to expand the knowledge of how prominent the flipping the narrative tactic is in the Black Manosphere successfully spreading their rhetoric and in the recruitment of Black males. Additionally, continuing to examine rhetoric produced by the Black Manosphere will allow researchers to analyze other potential tactics. Understanding these tactics will allow for the development of relevant and practical strategies to prevent the recruitment of young Black boys into the Black Manosphere (Onuoha, 2021).

Finally, the perspective of Black women about their experiences with the Black Manosphere and their experience with being devalued and dehumanized by Black men using White supremacy and far-right talking points must be included in research. It will be essential to understand the self-resilience factors that help Black women overcome and confront the hostility directed at them online. Concurrently, it is just as important to examine how Black women internalize being demeaned and dehumanized by the Black Manosphere and if this leads to them experiencing violence offline.

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