

The “Top G”: Andrew Tate’s Arrest and the Loyalty of the Manosphere.

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Seminar 2

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12th December, 2023

- **Introduction.**

Andrew Tate, who is also referred to as the “Top G” by devoted fans, is a self-proclaimed businessman, famous media personality and a former professional kickboxer. He first gained proper attention in the year 2016 when he appeared on a popular British reality show known as Big Brother – which was launched on June 7th, 2016. This reality show served as the starting point for Tate as he was well known for his rather “loud” extroverted personality as well as his rather questionable statements. He was, however, kicked off the show due to a rather controversial video that came to light where he was caught striking a woman. This would only be the beginning however as Tate soon rose to fame once again for his “in-your-face” rants which were found in videos he would make and were catered towards young men who sought more from life. In these videos, he would give out “motivational” speeches that were aimed towards helping men figure out the dating world as well as encourage them to engage in hustle culture as material wealth and success were the only true ways of showing one's worth as a “man”.

Although there are several motivational quotes from other businessmen swarming the internet; Andrew Tate’s videos, quotes and entire internet persona blew up as his daring and loud views came with not-so-subtle hints of sexism and misogyny. His outrageous remarks angered many but others- specifically men; felt heard and seen as they saw Tate’s words as the “gospel” truth. The Tate name and brand continued to flourish in the media until finally, Andrew and his partner – who just so happened to be his brother, Tristan; got arrested in Romania in December 2022 after a simple Twitter interaction that occurred between Andrew Tate and popular environmental activist, Greta Thunberg. This single event, in my opinion, opens a new window that allows one to study the activities and influence of an audience that is entrenched in the ways of the Manosphere which shall be the focus of this paper. This essay goes on to explore the influence of

Andrew Tate in the Manosphere as well as the significance its audience plays in the construction of identity, perception of masculinity as well as the toxicity surrounding it and the construction of nonexistent connections with online personalities.

- **The Arrest of Andrew.**

As was stated earlier; the event that led to the “downfall” of Andrew Tate was a simple interaction between him and Swedish activist, Greta Thunberg- who is well known for constantly challenging not just national leaders but individuals as well to do better for the sake of climate change. It began when Andrew made a rather odd yet mocking tweet to Greta Thunberg about his sports car collection as he wanted to boast about just how many cars he had – and combining the dangers cars cause for the environment as well as Greta’s cause for society; he hoped to get a reaction from that as a way of (hopefully) getting even more fame. This rather odd tweet and need to mock women – in this case, a teenager; embodies Andrew’s entire career and Greta’s response to his statement (see Fig 1) demonstrates, according to Allen & Green-Bartlett (2023), “a persistence-cum-resistance against hegemonic power structures that both deny climate change and make it acceptable for grown men to publicly mock teenage girls.” This response rubbed Andrew the wrong way and as he went on to respond to Greta on Twitter, calling her a “slave to the matrix” all whilst smoking a cigar and fiddling with a pizza box. It has been alleged that the ordinary pizza box was the main thing that led to Andrew’s arrest as it supposedly helped police track Andrew to his home, but this was never confirmed nor denied. However, a couple of hours after this; Tate was arrested and charged for rape, human trafficking and forming a gang that was made to sexually exploit women and DIICOT, Romania’s anti-organized crime agency, eventually released a statement based on the reason behind said arrest. McGrath and Alexandru (2023) stated in an article published by CTV News that Andrew, Tristan and two other people

came together to form a trafficking circle that worked in not just Romania but in the United States and Britain as well. Seven women came out and stated that they were “lured with false pretenses of love and transported to Romania where the gang sexually exploited and subjected them to physical violence...the women were allegedly controlled by intimidation, constant surveillance and claims they were in debt” (2023). Many considered his arrest to be rather comical especially when one takes into account the situation that led to it but his arrest also uncovered the “real” Andrew and many were outraged by this and demanded justice for the women he took advantage of, however, his devoted fans had other things to say and were not shy to place their opinions over the internet.

- **Toxic Fandom in the Manosphere.**

The Andrew Tate audience, as mentioned earlier, falls under the collective society that is known as the Manosphere, “a community/group of loosely incorporated websites and social media communities where men’s perspectives, needs, gripes, frustrations and desires are explicitly explored” (Farrell et al., 2019). This outward exploration of men's frustrations and desires “...appeals to its audience because it speaks to the very real lives of young men under the above factors – romantic rejection, alienation, economic failure, loneliness, and a dim vision of the future” (Rich & Bujalka, 2023). This community/space is however, held together by anti-feminist ideologies, negative views on gender and toxic masculinity. Valkenburgh (2019), states that the manosphere is said to create a virtual space in which deviant misogynists are free to become further radicalized and this freedom allows this community to preach and make known a man's hegemonic masculinity and power that comes with said masculinity in society. This power is communicated through the excessive emphasis on ‘beta’ masculinity, the formations of incels and alpha males as well as the need to get ‘revenge’ against women. The concept of the Red Pill-

which was derived from a film called *The Matrix* (1999), plays an essential part for those in the Manosphere. As was referenced in the movie; taking the red pill helps many realize the ugly truths of the world and this in turn helps one ‘escape’ the Matrix. In this case, as was stated by Marche (2016), “the reality lies in the ‘fact’ that women run the world without taking responsibility for it, and that their male victims are not permitted to complain. This makes *The Red Pill* a continuous, multi-voiced, up-to-the-minute male complaint nestled at the heart of the so-called manosphere”. Tate himself makes reference to this idea of the Matrix several times as it is the foundation of his message to his audience as he sets this delusion to be the enemy; an enemy that is not only after him but his entire fan base as well (see Fig.2). Although the idea of this movie concept being taken seriously is a rather comical thought; many of his users abide by this and this influences the very way they in turn see the people and the world at large around them (see Fig.3). The principles surrounding the Manosphere are already inherently toxic and Tate’s principles, ideologies and great influence on his audience makes the participatory culture around this community somehow even more dangerous and harmful for not just those who are not actively involved in this community but for the fan base itself.

- **#FreeTate:**

Andrew’s arrest caused a great commotion on the internet as many were amused by what exactly led to his arrest – as seen on X: user @Esqueer quoted his arrest as ‘totally epic.’ (see Fig. 4). However; many of his fans were appalled and outraged by it as they still believed that Tate was innocent no matter the severity of the allegations. Several of his supporters believed it was all a big hoax, something to bring the ‘Top G’ down...the work of the Matrix even. It is, in Ross’s (2023), words a “real testament to the power of the patriarchy and the determination of many to support toxic, selfish and dangerous men” as several supporters went on to not only

show their support by listening to the latest Tate brothers' Emergency meeting podcast episode before they were arrested by the police but many went on to tweet about it – as can be seen by X user; @catturd2, who stated that:

“Whether you're Julian Assange, Donald Trump, or Andrew Tate ... If you speak truth to power, the corrupt governments of the world will try to jail, bankrupt, and erase you” (see Fig 5).

This support did not just stop at simple tweets regarding Tate's arrest, but it also led to the creation of various hashtags which were used to show their fan love and loyalty. These hashtags ranged from the simple #FreeTate to #EscapingTheMatrix and these two hashtags were on the rise and are still being used on X today. X user (and Andrew Tate supporter) @Abdulahibedrii1 made a post which stated:

“Never seen such a truth being told by a man who's got everything and yet chose to serve for the people with truth regardless of how he's being treated by the matrix.” #FreeTate (see Fig.6).

Another supporter on X (@BenjaminBasnett) tweeted:

“If the media wants to put an innocent man in jail. They could just show people old unrelated clips, and that would be enough to make people think he is guilty...” #FreeTate (see Fig.7).

This loyalty and inability to see the bigger picture of Tate's arrest all in the name of undying love for this internet star is indeed rather alarming to see but it does paint an even bigger picture for not just Tate stans but those that are involved in the Manosphere too.

- **Gender Identity, Masculinity and Parasociality in the “Tate-dom”**

Identity plays a huge part in our day to day. It is with this identity that we figure out ways to “fit into” certain categories as permitted by society and gender plays a key part in this identity. Seeing as we live in a society that (unfortunately) depends on gender norms and roles; the need to stick to a particular category to “fit in” with the rest of society serves as an unconscious reminder of our places in society. It can be argued that the issue of identity and the need to fit into these gender roles – specifically the masculine aspect, in this case, serves as a driving force for those who are involved in the Tate fandom. Masculinity has indeed evolved over the years but the traits and norms that are involved in the definition of what a man is have remained prominent nonetheless. The need to stay strong, remain calm, think only logically and be independent no matter the situation has indeed made its way into modern times as well and although many men have come to realize the beauty of self-expression and vulnerability; many have, unfortunately, not done this and they wish to tap into their “true”, “masculine” self. This need to belong and find out how to be a man can be seen as the leading cause of Tate’s popularity as Tate can be seen as an “influencer who may try to preserve these traditional stereotypes and/or masculinity”. (Frejsjö & Birgersson, 2023, p.9). Seeing as social media brings like-minded individuals together; it is easy to see how and why the Tate community as well as the Manosphere merge together so well as many begin to look up to him for guidance as the new age of technology allows “users online replace real-life relationships with influencers or other users online...these influencers work as an inspiration to fans online, often seen as trendsetters for opinions and behaviours” (Frejsjö & Birgersson, 2023, p.11).

This ‘connection’ that is built between Tate’s audience and his messages, videos and persona leads many to believe that “...they relate to the creator so much so that they actually know them (Dembergh, 2023, p.45) and that by following his advice and sticking to his words;

they will become him – a successful person who is the true definition of what a man is. This feeling and supposed connection that is built is known as parasociality. This is, according to Uwagba (2022), a “term that describes people forming intense – and crucially, one-sided – attachments to celebrities or public figures”. This one-sided connection gives many a sense of reassurance; it comforts them in a way as they begin to feel like they aren’t alone, and this is the exact case with the ‘Tate-dom’ as “Tate’s viewers, through the parasocial relationship, feel connected to him. They resonate with him while also idolizing him and perceive his persona and social media brand as “real” despite his generated content.” (Dembergh,2023, p.45). This false connection serves as the main source of loyalty to Andrew and his content even amid all the claims he was facing. This loyalty, false connection and love for Tate serves as the main drive for the audience’s participation on social media as can be seen in a post made by a Tate supporter on X: @8future_milf8; where they stated that Tate had: “..changed the way that I think, the way that I take decisions and the way that I treat women and friends” (see Fig.8). Another supporter came forward and stated that they were willing to support Tate even until death (see Fig.9).

- **Conclusion**

The singular event of Andrew Tate’s arrest opened various portals for the study of identity and masculinity, the impact of celebrities on not just social media but the lives of individuals as well as the effects of said impact which is embodied in the form of parasocialism. Tate’s presence is firmly rooted in the Manosphere and although he is not the originator of this vile space online; his word carries a heavy impact on the minds of young men who seek guidance in this world. The effects of celebrities go beyond the digital realm as is seen in the tweets, comments and posts that were made by actual people who have embodied Andrew’s

“guide” to life and this adoration and devotion which is based on the false and deluded connection in which his audience believed they share with him crosses over into their behaviours as well as the very perception of themselves. To tackle this issue as well as overthrowing the power of the Manosphere won't be an easy task as it is so firmly rooted in the minds and lives of many. However, daring to challenge the perception of masculinity as well as parasocialism is a bold yet necessary step. Recognizing the power dynamics that are involved in the ways of celebrity culture and encouraging a space, which is not held together by gendered opinions nor anti-feminist ideologies, where all can come together and seek out ways to handle/tackle issues and feelings without fear of being judged can contribute to a much more compassionate and understanding environment. Making use of “good” toxicity to battle out negative toxicity – as could be seen in the comments, posts, and tweets of those who called out Tate and his fan base for his ill actions serves as a stance against hegemonic ideologies.

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[#freetate](#)

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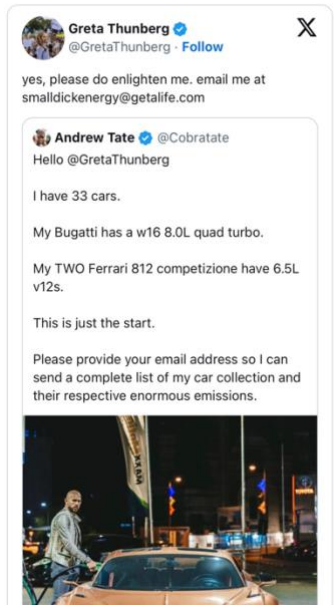
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- Appendix:

-Appendix A



(Fig.1)

Appendix B:



(Fig.2)

Appendix C:



(Fig.3)

Appendix D:



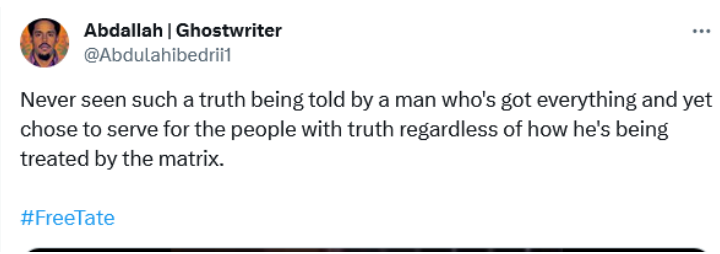
(Fig.4)

Appendix E:



(Fig.5)

Appendix F:



(Fig. 6)

Appendix G:



(Fig. 7)



Appendix H:

(Fig 8)

Appendix I



(Fig 9)