

# HOW DO THE USERS OF A LARGE INCEL FORUM **DISCUSS THEMSELVES AND OTHERS?**

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# **RESEARCH** BACKGROUND INFORMATION

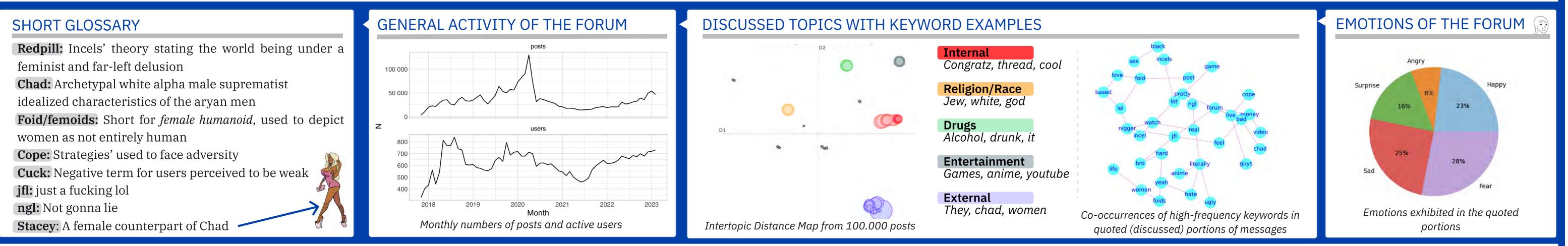
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Well, hello there! 🍑

Incels, involuntary celibates, indicate people who feel unable to find a sexual or romantic partner and express hatred towards those they blame for this. They divide themselves and others in fuzzy subcategories based on identity-related attributes. This phenomenon is part of a broader masculinist backlash. They share: The RedPill ideology, hostility towards women, ethnicity, and LGBTQA+ individuals, slang, practices, and a reliance on pseudo-scientific theories to justify essentialist views and perpetuate stereotypes.

# **i BACKGROUND**



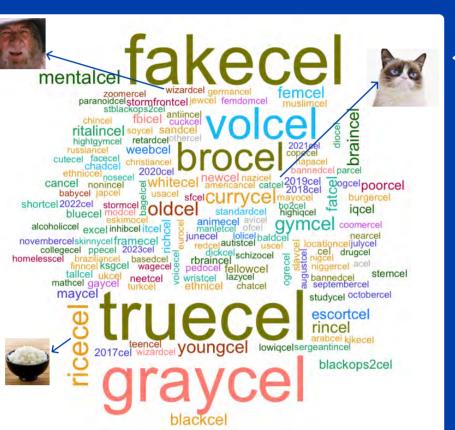
# **RESEARCH** > EXPERIMENTS **△ SELF-REPRESENTATION**

# **IN/OUT-GROUPING STRATEGIES**

# **DISCUSSION DYNAMICS**

### -CEL IDENTITY

The members of the forum use the -cel suffix very productively to negotiate identity. Altogether **10,987 different constructions** were identified, of which the 149 on the right (categorised by type) appear at least 50 times.

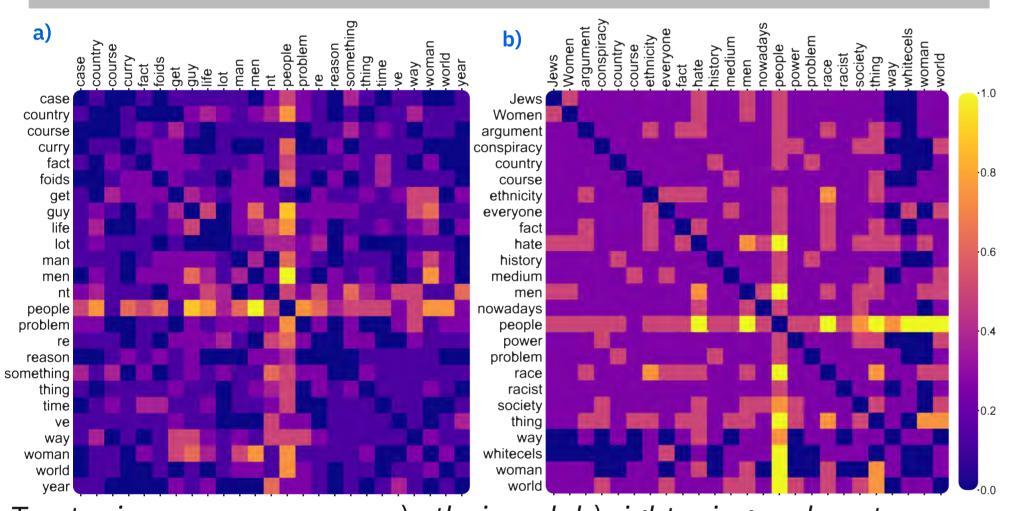


# INCELDOM IS UNDER CONSTANT NEGOTIATION

Through **close reading** of 72 threads, what unites the forum is framing women as the common enemy. Yet, opinions vary:

- Only whites can be truecels  $\leftrightarrow$  all races pretty much same
- Women are the true enemy  $\leftrightarrow$  women are talked about and sexual encounters wanted
- Normal morals don't apply ↔ own strict behaviour codes
- Chads are stupid ↔ incels are worse than average people

# SUBIDENTITIES: STORM

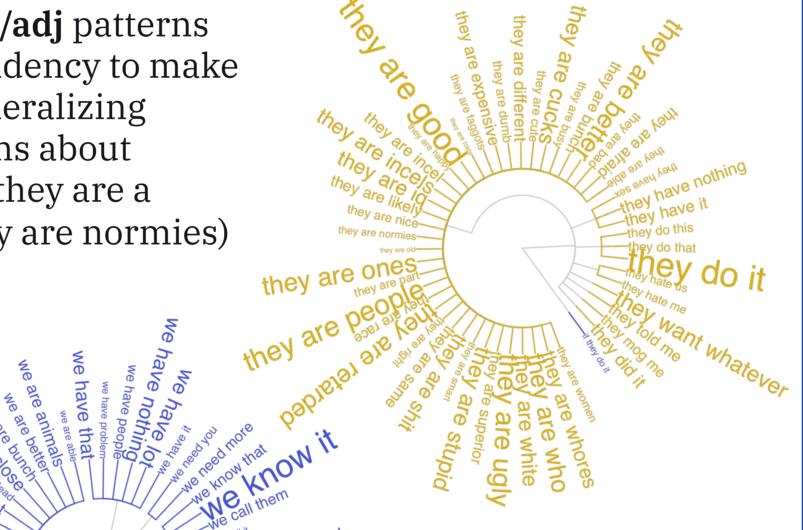


*Top topic co-occurrences: a) ethnic-cel, b) right-wing -cel posts.* 

Right-wing *stormcel* discussions are tightly focused compared to *ethnic-cel* discussions.

#### PATTERNS IN TALK ABOUT IN- AND OUTGROUPS

They + vrb/adj patterns imply a tendency to make strong, generalizing assumptions about outsiders (they are a bunch, they are normies)

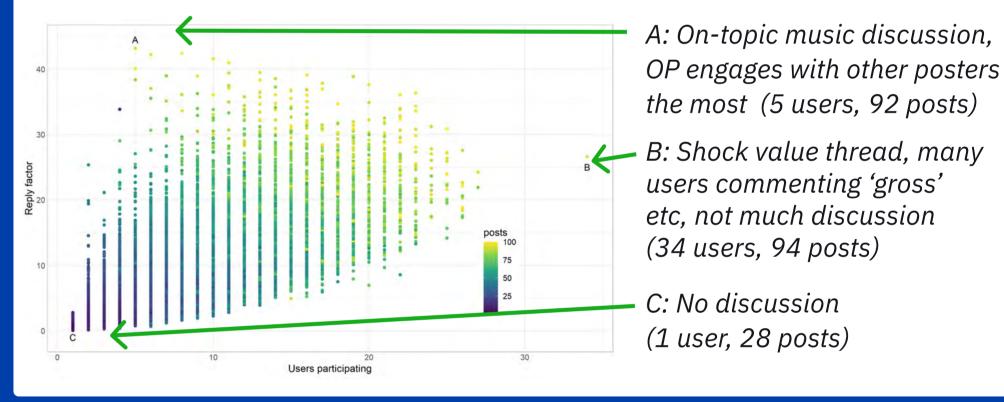


# **TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT**

Looking at **threads with lots of unique posters** and **posts** that get lots of replies:

- Most engaging posts: short posts and opening posts
- Most engaging threads forum-wise:
  - Language sub-communities (e.g. Polish, Portuguese)
  - Large megathreads (e.g. image, World Cup threads)

• New Zealand shootings (event that interests incels) At the same time, most threads have less than 100 posts. Below are a few examples:



# (DIS)AGREEMENT

appreciate

on the side

*Top 10 expressions* 

why → potentially a request

for further explanation or

openness to discussion

agreement, e. g. *redditor*,

• indicators of clear dis-

• Disagreement found

• Race and ethnicity,

infrequent

• Inceldom,

• Religion, and

• Men/Women

think so

Extracting markers of agreement and disagreement using a custom keyword list yielded insights on 28

While the topic *people* is the most prominent in both sets, topics related to it are different: *people-country*, *people-guy, people-life* for the *ethnic-cels*, and *people-hate, people-race, people-whitecel* for *stormcels*.

While both groups engage in the racist discussions, the sheer number of topics *ethic-cels*' cover **dilutes the racist** discourse, making them invisible.

# AT THE SAME TIME, -CEL IS NOT ENOUGH! MANY LINGUISTIC VARIABLES CODE IDENTITY

**Close reading** 138 posts covering In only 26% of the incel-focused and other topics, we posts, Incel extracted 726 expressions of opinion, register was used! experience, group self-determination/ differentiation, choice of language, etc. The number and style of expressions varied immensely. E.g., opinion markers appeared 0.2-2.5 times per post.





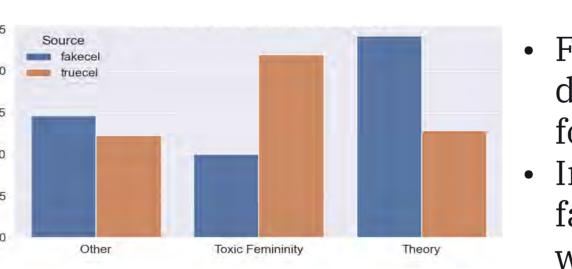
We + vrb/adj patterns create a sense of emotional belonging to the group (we are friends, we are proud)

Outgrouping patterns

### Ingrouping patterns

Passive verbs reflect a perceived lack of agency (we are used). **Definitions** can be contradictory (they are retarded/they are smart).

# **TRUECELS AND FAKECELS**

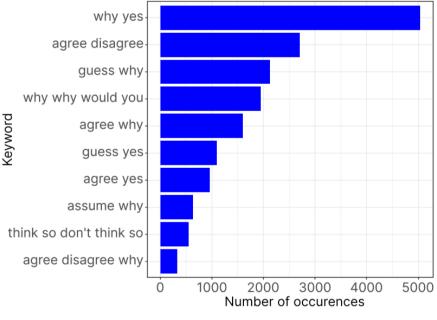


*Truecel/fakecel use across* moderation tags

- Fakecels and truecels are discussed across the forum.
- In *Theory*, discussion of fakecels dominates, while under *Toxic Femininity*, discussion centers on truecels
- The frequent association of different 'cel'-identities with fakecelness

on in the forum

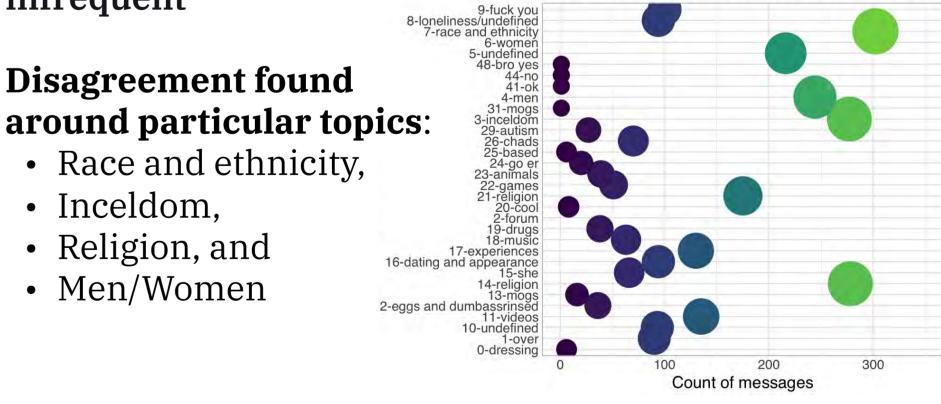
#### indicators across the dataset (further 459 posts)



*Top 10 expression co-occurrences* 

- *agree disagree*: maybe part of agree to disagree
- why would you  $\rightarrow$  might **indicate** disagreement

Topics in disagreement messages ('disagree'

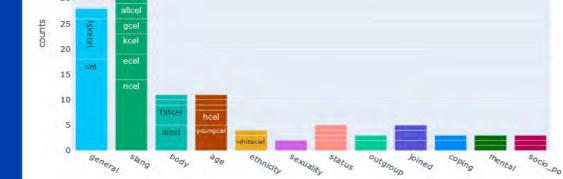


#### CONVERSATION STRUCTURE ('FAKECEL' MENTIONED)

**sub-conversations** started by

Typical paraphrased expressions in incel unrelated (left) and related (right) threads.

Thus, methodologies focusing only on the incel register **miss a significant part** of the dynamics!



Cels described as fakecels in the forum

'fakecel' posts are **not long** ((avg = 2.4 posts) highlights the amount of identity negotiation going Posts by active users Posts with 'fakecel' sub-conversation posts with 'fakecel' receive **more replies than normal** posts (p < 0.05) Long line conversations happen between 2 users, more users could shorten the conversation

#### CONCLUSION RESEARCH



While incels construct strong boundaries around their community under the duality of hatred and desire of women and basing on strong opposites (good vs evil), they also constantly disagree on identities and boundaries. Inside the forum, there are distinct sub-communities around sexuality, ethnicity, social roles and classes. To facilitate this discussion, the incels employ sophisticated customs and strategies of politeness. Mostly, their conversations are short, with long exchanges happening between closed pairs of users. Yet there are also "super contributors" who inject themselves into conversations. Still, the cornerstone of discussion is the notion of the true- and the fake-cel.