



# How to Stop Being an Incel:

## Finding effective methods to combat online anti-feminism

Jordan Pollard, Nick Cardenas, Hussam Habib, Rishab Nithyanand  
University of Iowa



### Introduction

The internet acts as a place where individuals find their ideas supported and echoed by other like-minded individuals. The Manosphere is an example of this, where users risk being exposed to anti-feminist extremism.

### Manosphere

The Manosphere is a collection of online radical anti-feminist communities.

### Background

In the previous year's study, it was uncovered that online interaction events in the manosphere caused an increase in extremist anti-feminist personality traits.

### Goal

To determine which online interaction events, cause a decrease in the extremist anti-feminist traits of internet users in the Manosphere.

### Motivation

There is a lack of effective online de-radicalization techniques and strategies as well as a lack of understanding of the online de-radicalization process.

### Hypotheses:

- Leaving the Manosphere will decrease the extremist traits of a user in the Manosphere.
- Seeking out discourse with a user outside the Manosphere will decrease the extremist traits of a user in the Manosphere.
- Social acceptance from other areas of society will decrease the extremist traits of a user in the Manosphere.

## Methodology

### 1. Keywords

A list of common feminist keywords was collected and expanded on using the snowballing technique.



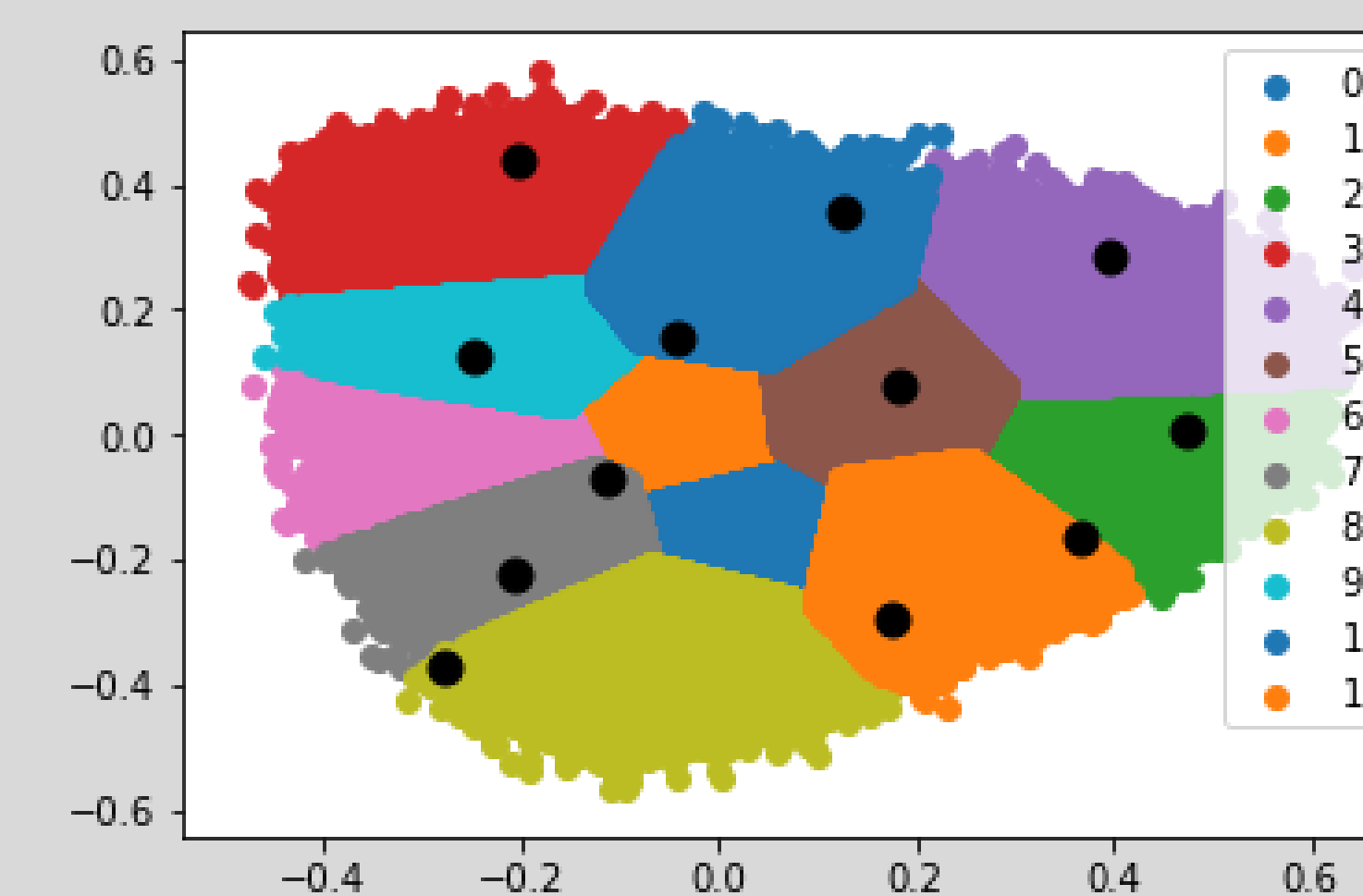
### 2. Getting Comments

Using a database containing all Reddit comments from 2015 to 2020, every comment that contained at least one feminist keyword was selected.

Comment
sjws talk a good game but none of them ever want to lick my nipples bunch of fucking hypocrites
never change reddit long live misogyny
i think i might be more sexist after seeing that get back in the fucking kitchen
id make an ugly woman guess im already halfway there to being a feminazi
if you havent been called a racist bigot homophobe xenophobe islamophobe or sexist by a liberal you must be doing something wrong

### 3. Clustering

The comments were then grouped into clusters based on context to eliminate false positives.



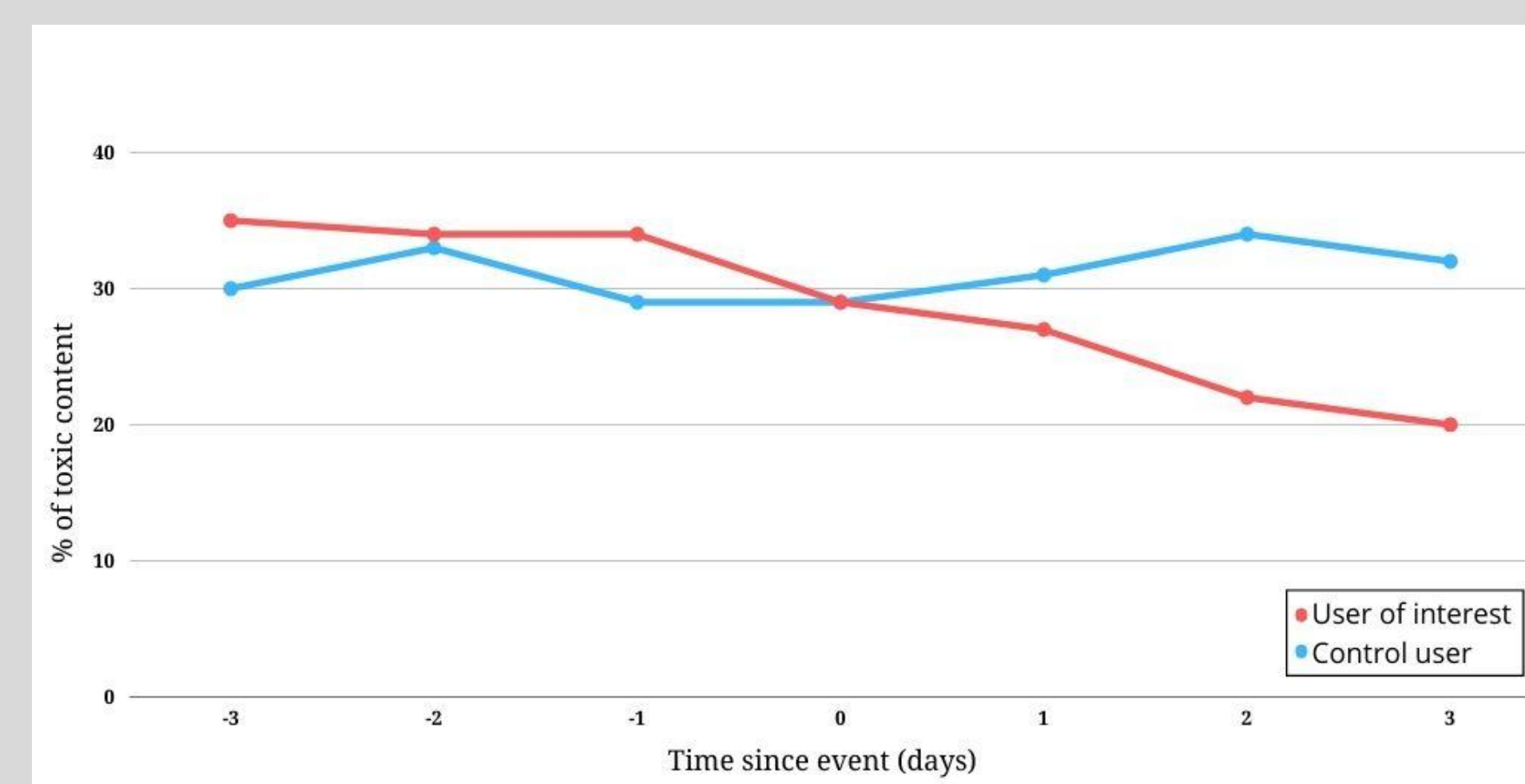
### 4. Assigning Extremist Scored

The users responsible for the each comment were assigned scores for each extremist trait.

User:	rescue_ranger10
Trait	Score
Fixation	65
Grievance	4
Power	6.9
Anger	19
Negative Toxicity	6.5
	24
Ingroup	-3.4
Outgroup	10.8

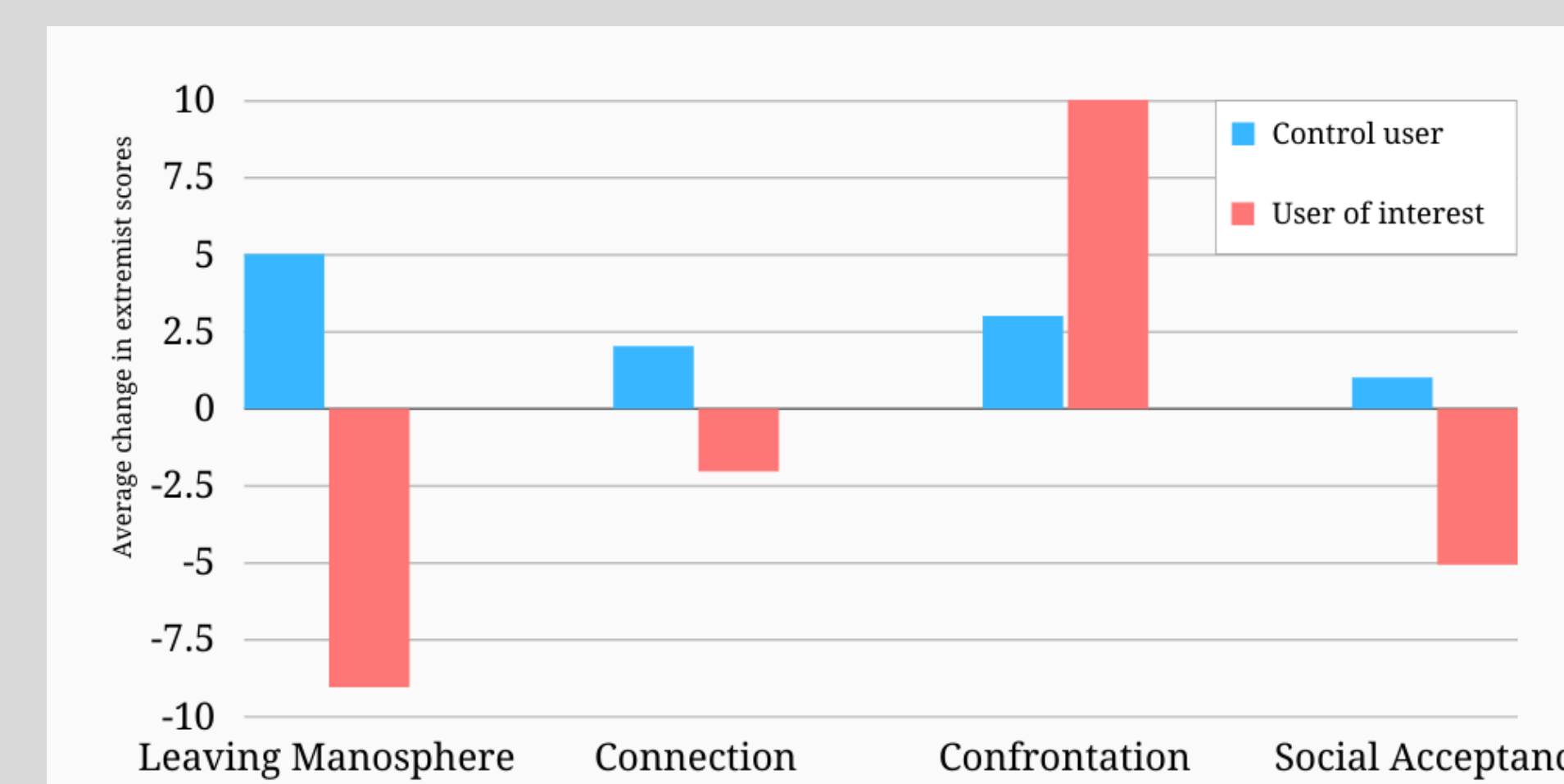
### 5. Measuring Impact

The trait scores of each user were compared to the trait scores of an assigned control user before and after an event.



### 6. Highlight Effective Events

The events that resulted in a significant decrease of extremist traits are considered effective de-radicalizing events.



## Findings:

We expect to find that leaving the Manosphere, seeking out discourse with people who hold differing opinions, and social acceptance from other areas of society besides the Manosphere will be the events that cause the largest downward impact on anti-feminist traits.

## Future Use:

In the future we hope to be able to put our findings to use by creating effective measures and strategies to counter online anti-feminist extremism. One example of this could be building a program that automatically detects a user at risk of becoming an anti-feminist extremist and uses the events in our findings to combat their radicalization.

