Age: 24

Ethnicity: Biracial - White and Asian

Country of birth: United States of America

Country of residence: United States of America

Highest level of education: Bachelor's Degree

Occupation: Mechanical Engineer

**What does Incel mean to *you*?**

To me, an incel is just a man (or woman) who cannot find a dedicated sexual partner, or have sex at all, while desiring sexual relations to a decently strong degree. The reasons for their involuntary celibacy could be many- this could be due to terrible habits or beliefs, but it could just be a result of rotten luck or bullying. I also specify "decently strong degree" because a lonely man who doesn't strongly seek a romantic relationship wouldn't likely get one or be impacted, emotionally, by lacking one.

**Can you describe in as much detail as you feel comfortable the journey you have taken with the incel identity?**

I was and am a lonely man. Throughout my younger days, I was made fun of for being nerdy, thin, and effeminate. I had social anxiety disorder too, but wasn't officially diagnosed until I was 19. Accordingly, I never had a girlfriend until my 23rd year (last June) and I am still a virgin.

Why exactly I fell into the incel hole? It wasn't even really by intention. Yes, I had "nice guy" beliefs about how jerks will get girlfriends and get women pregnant, but good men like me will have to clean up their mess, but ultimately I did not hate women. In fact, I was appalled at how I tended to treat women in high school. I was nearly suspended for sexual harassment, and it was a huge source of guilt. Most of how I was influenced by incel rhetoric was just through casual scrolling of the internet and not specifically incel circles. Many YouTube comments concerning dating or romance, and then Reddit posts, had convinced me that women will never want me. It naturally fed into my internal narrative that I had built up in my head because of bullying and anxiety. - quote

I eventually realized I had a problem. I was beginning to become more misogynistic and as I've become older, my "baby fever" has only reached insane heights. I began to go to therapy to address this and use r/incelexit on Reddit to help me. Ultimately I found that that subreddit was counter-productive to my personal growth, so I asked to be permanently banned there, but therapy has helped a lot.

I go on what I think it a pretty decent amount of first-dates for a man of my age, but seeing as though I seek a wife and active sex, this is not an ideal situation. I don't even see myself as an incel anymore, just a man who's got a loneliness curse.

**What is your take on the blackpill?**

The blackpill is mostly garbage. It's something you really can only believe in if you don't go out and socialize. I am more socially isolated than I generally would want to be, but I've seen men who are the antithesis of their prescribed "Chad" do so, so well with women (or other men). Like, men who are short, fat, with weak jawlines, etc. get plenty of girlfriends. Personality matters a lot, as does grooming. On the same note, I've met women who sound like "femcels" who say that "Men only want women who are small, but with insane hourglasses and huge boobs", and then don't take care of themselves... wondering why they don't attract men. I legitimately was on a date with a woman who talked like this, it was not a pleasant experience!

That all said, I do think that the Halo Effect is definitely real, probably more influential than people are willing to admit. I have received a lot of compliments over the years about my appearance from family and friends, people I should've been listening to instead of bullies and trolls on Reddit, and I think there's a certain appeal I have that I wouldn't have if I were short. For some context, I'm 5'11", but many people guess my height to be 6'1", and for my ethnicity (Vietnamese) that makes me extremely tall. But the strict dichotomy that the black bill states, that is, only perfect men (or women) can get dates is complete fiction. It is disproven with a simple trip to any comic book or nerd merch store.

**As you emphasised to a "decently strong degree", can you explain why you think this need leans people towards the incel identity?**

Surely. It's a matter of priorities in the Age of the Information, or sometimes it feels like the Age of Misinformation. If you are a young person who wants to have an active sex life, you will naturally seek out information on courtship. And in the absence, for many men, of positive role-models, they turn to forums and other dark places on the internet to get their information on that topic of "getting laid". Without that desire and decision to pursue it, there's way less likelihood you come across incel content on the internet. If you already have romantic success, then incel rhetoric falls on its face and you can ignore it, or you'd never even bother seeking this sort of thing.

As for me, while I have a decent male role-model in life, my father, he's pretty hopeless as far as romantic skills go. I'm not entirely sure how my parents got married aside from the ticking clock. They're still married, but for context I was born when my mother was forty. I have learned not very much from my father about dating beyond the basics about consent and being kind.

**You spoke about YouTube comments and Reddit posts, can you remember any specific sites or threads where you encountered these comments?**

I can't say I would recall any specific places, it's just so diffuse within any place online you find dating advice, and there's not a ton of pushback.

**What sort of viewpoints would the comments contain?**

I'd see generalizations which strongly align with red or black pill. Things such as "only tall/attractive men can date otherwise you get nothing".

**Are you able to describe how the incel rhetoric fed into your internal narrative?**

There's a lot of ways it has seriously, and negatively, affected my life and internal narrative. There's a deep hopelessness that it both teaches and enflames. Basically, I already had issues with dating already and self-esteem, and then the idea that I am inherently undesirable as a man fed into what problems I already had. Thus, making things worse. Many people who escape inceldom note that it's a never-ending, vicious cycle, where by saying you can't get laid, you won't. You won't work on yourself or be more attractive. Even the redpill, whose ideas explicitly tell you to improve, tell you to do so only to get women, so when you don't, you feel even worse. You made all this effort for nothing.

**What sort of timeframe would you say encompassed first being exposed to the comments you mentioned and you feeling like you were in the "incel hole"?**

I wish I knew... I've been seeing it for years.

**What sort of changes in terms of your perception of responsibility for inability to find a girlfriend/have sex did you notice as you were exposed more to incel rhetoric?**

As I alluded to earlier, I kinda lost hope and made lots of excuses not to get out there. It still haunts me to this day whenever I try to go out and enjoy time with people my age, the idea I'm just not worthy of a relationship or that women are hardcoded to dislike most men crops up. I hate it.

**As you fell into the incel hole did you ever visit any incel specific forums or sites? If so, how do you think they affected you?**

I don't think I did.

**What was it specifically that made you realise you "had a problem", can you give examples of perhaps thought processes or situations/experiences that led you to that conclusion?**

I specifically remember talking to a female friend of mine over a year ago about my dating struggles and my wants. It was something about calling myself a "up and coming high-value male" or something along those lines. She pulled me aside and asked, very openly and kindly, whether I was reading incel material. I told her that I was, and that I needed to get out of it. I did some reflecting afterwards and realized that a lot of it was just misogynistic rhetoric wrapped up in faux-scientific claims. And I realized that many women that I'd like to attract would want nothing to do with a redpiller.

**What was it about r/incelexit that you found counterproductive?**

I think the problem that sub runs into is that, while well-intentioned, it speaks of a lot of things with a very, very "hyperfeminist" tint and that it also demands a lot of "self-improvement" in the same way redpillers claim. A common theme I found from users there is that "most men aren't dateable and women are increasingly picky because men don't pull their weight in life or in relationships", which is... basically redpill by another name. I also got into arguments about my wanting to be a father and regarding my religion which I do not need in my life.

**How do you differentiate between you as incel and a man having a loneliness curse?**

Irrational and unscientific as this might sound, I think it's an element of supernatural fate, in a sense. I feel like, no matter how I try, even if I'm the most attractive man in the world, I think that I won't meet the right woman because she'll never cross paths with me. That opportunity to meet the woman of my dreams won't come because we'll never bump into each other at church or at the supermarket or at a bar or something. I'll just keep meeting women who aren't right for me. That has nothing to do with women's nature, which is how I think it's distinctive from inceldom. - quote

**Did you ever discuss incel perspectives with your therapist?**

Yes, both to a regular psychologist and my priests

**In what ways has therapy helped you in relation to incel rhetoric and identity?**

I will address both sources of help for me.

A. Regarding therapy, my regular therapist (who is a man) and I have discussed this quite often, and I said that I wanted to stop generalizing women and have more healthy coping mechanisms for being single while having an insane sex drive and very much wanting to be a father. The methods he has suggested have been solid so far. I've journaled and also validated my wants in a very empowering way.

B. Priests tend to live under rocks, even I admit that as a religious man. And accordingly, the ones I talked to had no idea what being an incel was (considering that, in my church, priests are required to be celibate...), but when I discussed these beliefs in private, it seemed to... trouble them. It seemed to them as an undue, hateful, influence on my life which was corrupting my soul and love for not just women but for the human race itself. They recommended that I reflect a lot on why I feel this way and open my heart to reconciliation with, their words, "the wonderful women in your life presently. And if you have none, look at the saints of old." This helped a lot too, especially in seeking the stories of great women throughout history.

**Do you think having sex or getting a girlfriend has any bearing your identity as a man? e.g. have you ever felt ay external or internal pressures?**

I think there's still a big, societal push for a man to get laid a lot, thanks to Hollywood and contemporary media. I think "toxic masculinity" exists but is not nearly as pervasive as people say it is, but this would definitely fall under that umbrella. My parents, also being religious, told me to be careful about sex and really know the girl before sleeping with her. I guess you could say this is a modern version of "waiting for marriage". It's mostly inadequacy and emasculation that drives me nuts about being a virgin, though it doesn't hurt me anymore.

And internal pressure? Yes. I look at happy, successful fathers as being "winners", guys that have it made. Even men with happy wives but no kids, that has to be a better lot in life than being single. I want sex so bad, and as a man, I feel compelled to fix my problems, not just wallow in it.

In a weird way, I find inceldom highly unmanly. It tells men to give up and not solve problems. While I believe women are good problem solvers too, both the sexes are good problem solvers in different ways, and this incel rhetoric only damages the male mind.

**How do you think these generalisations you encountered offer answers to individuals seeking dating advice or answers?**

These generalizations have a tendency to give a simple, quick answer which allows one to evade responsibility for either coping with being single or from even trying. They're ultimately unproductive at best.

**You mentioned that scrolling through the internet convinced you women would not want you, can you touch on how this scrolling achieved this, as in was it the effect of gradual continual exposure, or comments and posts that touched on particular nerves/insecurities, or both, or something else? (Please give as much detail if you can remember of the thoughts and feelings evoked)**

I would say much more that the constant exposure made me feel like it was true. I think we humans believe that things which "many people say" are, in fact, reality. It quite often is the case that the majority is more correct than individual judgement, but not always, and modern social media tends to distort this sense of majority in one's life. If you consume nothing but content about how, say, American eels are not endangered, when they are actually endangered, you will slowly begin to doubt whether eels are threatened. As such, I have come to believe in good habits with social media scrolling... avoid toxicity, step back and mentally combat misinformation which I view, etc. etc..

**What was it about the exposure to incel rhetoric that led you to become more misogynistic?**

A lot of it boils down to the fact that, when you have this idea that women are barbaric and animalistic in their criteria for mate selection, you begin to think of them as, for lack of better word, savages that need to be controlled or lead carrot-on-stick style, instead of as humans who make mistakes and have subjective tastes. I never did believe in the false scientific claims of loose vaginas or other flatly wrong claims about female anatomy that is often brought up in incel circles, however.

**What would you say are the major differences between how you see the dating world and women now to when you were in the incel hole?**

I can name a few major differences. For one thing, I think I have a chance to break my loneliness curse, and I don't feel so crushed by lacking a girlfriend anymore. I also find myself much happier to see successful couples, instead of being envious. I approach women without wanting to get laid immediately. It's great.

**You've touched briefly on two areas of difficulty, being "made fun of" and "issues with dating". Can you give more details on both of these experiences in as much detail as you feel comfortable? For each, try to discuss what were the sort of social interactions that represented this difficulty? Over what period(s) did this occur, how did it progress and how did it affect the way you see yourself.**

I had dealt with bullying throughout my middle school and high school years. Excluded from things, made fun of for the reasons I previously stated, etc. etc.. I think I internalized a lot of this because I believed that people like your family would only tell you what you like to hear, not what you need to hear. It is wrong-minded, of course, and I've worked that quite well. I would also say that my sister has given me a lot of "crap" about different aspects of my life since I've left college (so, about two years now). She hates my manga-style art where I draw pretty women because she doesn't like how I depict women (I do not draw pornography or anything NSFW). She says that my desire for a traditional family, since I seek to work a lot and have a stay-at-home-wife, is highly misogynistic, and that my dating style which incorporates chivalry is very "1950's". Because she often uses her conception of feminism as a cudgel to criticize my life, I felt a bit evil for just being who I am. I've slowly grown to ignore her, however, as the people who support me in my life tell me I'm fine. So I'd rather believe them than people who seek to tear me down.

To be clear, I want a stay-at-home-wife because I do not believe in day-care and I believe in breastfeeding for children. I don't expect her to be my domestic slave or eternally submissive to me, and I wouldn't want a world where women are barred from employment or making money, like many parts of the Victorian world. That's ludicrous. But I have what I believe are very reasonable and scientific reasons as justification for the family style I seek.

However, this was a big source of insecurity for me until recently. Both the high school bullying and my sister's scathing criticisms.

**Given the apparent similarities between redpill and the ethos of r/incelexit, how do you see self-improvement as a means to improving quality of life?**

I think I can give a bit of the ethos I was raised in. My martial arts master said that we should never "live life on autopilot". He said that we should always strive to do better, be better, have discipline, and work hard for our goals. In doing so, we can learn to respect and love ourselves. And that's what I seek to do. I want to build a good life that I am proud of and that makes the people I value cheer.

**What does 'being a man' mean?**

I believe a man is just someone who is born male or someone born female but who medically transitions to being male. But if you're asking about my conception of masculinity, I believe that masculinity encompasses being comfortable with oneself, having a respect for work and for others, and by having a strong sense of protecting and providing for others. Masculinity is about using your strength to help, not to seek or dominate... in realms outside of the bedroom, at any rate. A big source of my belief on masculinity is from the essay, "The Necessity of Chivalry" by C.S. Lewis. I won't go long on it, but it essentially argues that the best kind of man is the man who is tenacious and fierce to the nth and kind and obedient to the nth. A man who is tenacious and fierce but not kind is a barbarian, a violent sort of individual. But a man who is kind and obedient, but not fierce, is a doormat who cannot be relied upon when things get difficult. A knightly man is the best of both, but lacks the evil aspect.

**How do the solid methods offered by your therapist as well as those by your priest differ from what is offered by incel rhetoric?**

They are different because they are innately productive and helpful. Their goal is to, if not help me find my wife, is to at least prevent hatred from festering and to provide me with happiness. I am grateful for it. There is a baseline of human dignity which clearly shows in the words and methods of my therapist and my clergy which is very evidently not there in incel ideology.

**Other than the simplicity of the incel rhetoric, were there any other aspects of the space or ideology** **that you found (or you think others find) seductive?**

I think it was just the feeling that I wasn't alone in being sexless and feeling unlovable. Too many young people can relate to this.

**Can you describe the distortion you experienced within toxic social media, what were the environments like, e.g. comment threads?**

Many of the statements made were stated very matter-of-factly, and often used skewed statistics and studies to justify why relationships are impossible or why mediocre men can't find love. These, in addition to what may be amped-up or falsified stories about toxicity with the women of their lives, make it seem like reality that love is dead.

**What do you think causes/produces the halo effect?**

Biology, mostly. While beauty standards vary by culture, there are things which are generally desirable for both primary genders across every nation, and regardless of what one culture finds attractive, of course beautiful and desirable people have it easier to date. I think that some beauty standards are nonsense, and outside of maybe beauty care companies, I don't think this is "enforced" by some cabal of people insisting on what is beautiful, but rather perpetuated by what the author of a piece of media finds subjectively beautiful. It's like, if some guy is drawing women or heroines, he will likely give her physical characteristics he finds beauty in. There's nothing wrong with this in my opinion, up to a certain point, of course.

**Do you think the "hopelessness that [incel rhetoric] teaches and enflames" interacted with your experiences of rejection and difficulties at school (or vice versa)? If so, how?**

Yes it did. I saw that men who were more stereotypically masculine (read: muscular, deeper-voiced, dominant) had no problems dating in high school, but thin, awkward nerds like me could not get anything. I've seen this happen a few times even outside of school.

**When you mention "constant exposure" can you give an idea of the frequency of exposure, say per day/week/month?**

Probably every day, based on my YouTube, Reddit, and general media consumption feeds. I'd even view this awful stuff at work... now I don't because I've quit viewing this content and because it was hurting my work ethic.

**You mentioned internalising the negative experiences you had at school, how important do you think the social environment was on your ideas and understanding of yourself as a young man at that time?**

It was almost the entire world to me. I always felt like my parents, though good folk, sheltered me too much. Accordingly, I felt as though my peers would give me much less biased, sanitized, ideas on how the world was and what I was worth. Thus, I chose to believe awful people in a difficult time in life as opposed to the two people who have known me since birth, as well as the few, dear, friends I had and still have. Additionally, I always felt like a loser for wanting a girlfriend but never getting one. It was just another penny to add to the piggy bank of social failures. With so few true friends, undiagnosed social anxiety, and a mild amount of distrust I had with my family's parenting, I took to poor examples.

**Can you describe why you see your sister's conceptualisation of feminism as flawed?**

Yes. I believe that she is less of a feminist but more of a female-equivalent of a Chauvinist. She will use scientific or faux-scientific arguments to justify her distaste for men (some of which are true, such as men on average maturing slower and having less feelings of empathy. ON AVERAGE.), and believes that any sort of traditional gender dynamic or role, even if desired by a woman, is inherently sexist. That is to say, she believes that the only correct understanding of female equality is the one which is the least (by American culture's standards) "old-fashioned", and that if any man wants anything old-fashioned, he's a sexist pig, but if a woman wants anything old-fashioned, she's got internalized misogyny. Her entire logic is, in a sense, based on the Bulverism fallacy. She never proves that women should have this narrow view of equality as the only way to attain it, she merely makes assumption that it is correct, and psychoanalyzes those that disagree in an uncharitable light. I will not pretend to act as if I'm the most knowledgeable person ever on women's issues, myself, but I can see this as a bad thing.

**Do you think your sister's conceptualisation of feminism reflects the type of feminism incel rhetoric rallies against, if not, how do you see them as different?**

This is the exact kind of woman I see complained about in incel circles. Women who demean men who are anything except their very narrow standard, who denounce any sort of male-female dynamic as problematic... it made it easy to feel validated by their stance. The problem is that they take it a step farther and actively engage in anti-feminism and overtly misogynistic themes, which I absolutely cannot abide by, at least not rationally.

**Why do you think the incel community have such a visceral antipathy towards therapy?**

Some of it is just toxic masculinity. I think a truly comfortable, secure man would have no problem going to therapy because it's a solution, not a weakness. Incels generally want to be like the supposed "Chad", the superhuman guy who has no issues (especially with bed), and think that he doesn't have mental problems, and that women don't support men in therapy. Also, many incels are in denial about mental problems (whether in the form of having them or in the form of not believing they can be solved/mitigated) they could possess. So, instead, they demonize the practice as useless, since the only problem they have is the lack of sex. Also, I have seen it claimed that vaginal sex penetration is a cure-all for mental health problems such as depression. While I do think it's scientifically true that sex does generally benefit mental health and one's self-image, especially for men, I don't think it's a literal cure in any sense, and its benefits are ephemeral.

**Do you think there is anything specific to modern times that results in too many people feeling "sexless and feeling unlovable"?**

Extreme voices in social media are very judgmental and loud. As people become more separated from their local communities/churches/customs//festivals, people still need community, so social media comes into play. However, social media moderation isn't as effective in providing for good behavior and polite speaking when compared to just... social hierarchy, for lack of better word. This is especially seen in young people...

**Can you describe a typical day of social media/internet usage when it was at its worst (i.e. which sites/threads/platforms, when would you start/ finish, triggers for engaging, patterns of movement between sites/platforms etc.?**

A large amount of the time, I would browse Reddit, Twitter, or Discord, and in a lot of cases it was because I just wanted someone to talk to, someone to validate how I felt, my views, just tell me I'm normal. But that's not what I found at all. Some days I'd spend every waking moment not working or studying on social media. As well, I would use porn three times a day and be tardy to classes as a result.

**Did you ever go to specific sites online or social media looking for information, advice and help in regard to not finding a partner? i.e. to understand you situation of being unable to find a girlfriend, did you seek out advice or help through your own research using online sources?**

Yes, but not until after I graduated college. I've spent many, many hours learning social skills, hangout ideas, plans to boost confidence, learning about mental health conditions, and human psychological needs. I've been avoiding social media for this, and instead sticking to qualified people like my loved ones, psychologists, and advice columns from happily married people. A lot of the advice I've found has been bad, but some of it has been sincerely life-changing in a good way!

**When you say you "felt like a loser for wanting a girlfriend but never getting one", can you elaborate on the way that manifested emotionally and psychologically; how did it affect the way you saw yourself and others, how did it make you feel when you saw couples?**

It would usually make me feel like there was something detestable about me, and then my anxiety and sadness levels would spike. Oftentimes I would remove myself from social situations or mentally "shut down"... even at work, which lowered my productivity. I've in the past felt extreme envy for people who have relationships and sex, and I still feel that way from time-to-time. Nowadays I try to be happy for the fact that these two people have a physical relationship.

**How would you compare the narrow view of equality and essentialist assumptions of male empathy and emotional maturity you described your sister as having with the narrow view of women and the sexual hierarchy in incel rhetoric?**

Two sides of the same coin. Not enough love and understanding for other people, all about the suffering of me, myself, and I. All people, myself included, can fall into this trap. But the fact is trying to overcome it. While I think that there are absolutely differences between men and women, they are not grounds for discrimination, nor does that take away the complete picture of one's humanity.

**Where do you think the traditional male/female dynamic your sister criticises originated?**

Same as a lot of narrow-minded ideas. From friends with bad morals, from negative experiences that are not processed in a healthy way, or just from exposure to maniacs on social media.

**Why do you think that "many incels are in denial about mental problems (whether in the form of having them or in the form of not believing they can be solved/mitigated) they could possess"?**

Seems to me like a big, political thing. They think that mental illness is a sign of weakness, and that nothing is worth doing or fixing because it doesn't guarantee sex.

**Has the way you see what a man 'is' has changed as you have moved away from incel rhetoric? If so, how?**

Yes, absolutely. I believe that being a man is about being a knightly, Lancelot like individual. One who is entirely brave when the situation calls for it, and entirely kind when the situation calls for it. It isn't about being wealthy and sexually successful.

**When you say "that's not what I found at all" in relation to looking for validation on Reddit, Discord etc., what is it you found instead?**

Lots of negative judgements about men, lots of negativity over tiny arguments within fandoms, lots of judgments against Christians, and against Asian men.

**Do you think your use of porn changed the way you saw women?**

It absolutely did, there is no doubt in my mind. I think that pornography contributed to my immediate sexualization of women, myself, or strangers, but especially women... I believed that women were totally desirable and existed for my pleasure (or annoyance), since I had so little exposure to women outside of pornography that wasn't my sister and mother. I do believe in the Christian belief that pornography separates one from respecting the people you're attracted to, and dehumanizes people. People are more than sex.

**How did comments you mentioned on social media affect your anxiety and sadness levels about feeling alone and envy for other couples?**

It would without fail spike my anxiety levels. I don't really have anything to add to that.

**Did you notice changes about the way you coped as you moved away from incel rhetoric?**

Yes. And thanks to the loving support of my friends, my therapist, and my faith, I began to really sit down and improve my mental hygiene. It became a matter of self-affirmation, forgiving myself, and training myself to be patient for my lovelife. It stopped being such a pity party, and it stopped focusing on how women were "ruining" my life. I love it...

**How has the way you see and approach mental health difficulties changed as you moved away from incel rhetoric?**

See above.

**Were there any ways that porn, or the effect it had on your attitude towards women interacted with incel rhetoric and ideology?**

I think it just enflamed my desire for sex, that's all. I don't think I watched anything especially exploitative.

**Did you have any views regarding Elliot Roger or Alek Minassian? If so, have they changed?**

I have always thought Elliot Roger repulsive, but also a disturbing sign of how lonely the world is becoming. I still feel that way. I do not know who Alek Minassian is. Sexlessness is not a justification for violence, even if it can cause anger.

**Do you ever find yourself in situations/online where incel thoughts/ideology creep up, if so, how do you deal with it?**

All the time... I just try to pivot to something that makes me happy, like a funny video or by talking to a loved one.

**If you had to compare your life now to when you were an incel, what would be the three biggest and personally important differences about your**

**a) identity**

**b) attitude**

A - I now see myself mostly as a Christian man now, instead of a loser.  
  
B - I'm still sometimes upset or angry about my sexlessness, but now I'm far less... anxious? Generally happier.