

Social Media & Toxic Masculinity: Let's Talk About Andrew Tate

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Who is Andrew Tate?

- ▶ British American kickboxer
- ▶ Poses with fast cars, guns, women and cigars. Estimated worth \$30 million. Part of his attraction?
- ▶ Quoted as saying:
 - Depression “isn’t real”
 - “Bang out the machete, boom in her face and grip her by the neck. Shut up bitch”

Who is Andrew Tate?

- ▶ Hustlers University: Subscription based service manipulating his social media reach. Some supporters publish 300 videos/ day, which he encourages
- ▶ Webcam porn business
- ▶ October 2022 converted to Islam
- ▶ “I am going to find myself a nice Islamic a***wife, and build up a pile of rocks in case she gets fresh.”
- ▶ Detained on allegations of human trafficking and rape

Who is Andrew Tate?

According to Hope Not Hate:

- ▶ He has admitted to criminality, including bribing officials and police
- ▶ Associate of far-right extremist Tommy Robinson and far right in US
- ▶ “All I really believe in is a strong immigration law, protecting your country and putting your country first.” And “I love Trump, he’s the best we could ever have hoped for.”
- ▶ Tate has talked about Muslims outbreeding white people in the UK
- ▶ <https://hopenothate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Andrew-Tate-Briefing-Final.pdf>
- ▶ But this is all in the past.

Influence In Schools

- ▶ Algorithms mean boys and girls as young as 11 are exposed to repetitive content (by Tate)
- ▶ Teachers are concerned:
 - “We have had to deal with the use of quite strong words, such as rape, being used without younger children understanding the seriousness of that word...”
 - “It is easy to see how Tate’s philosophy may blight their (boys) chances of forming healthy and respectful relationships in their teenage years – and in later life.”
- <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/andrew-tate-kids-school-court-case-b2259988.html>

The Muslim Response

- ▶ Prominent YouTube Muslim personalities celebrated Andrew Tate's conversion
- ▶ In contrast:
- ▶ Bilal Ware, Professor of History at University of California said, "Giving platforms to unrepentant misogynists, whether converts or lifelong believers sends a clear message: abusers welcome." "The Muslim manosphere has become a preserve for emasculated, intimidated men to play tough by bullying women. This is not Islam."
- ▶ Joseph Lombard, Associate Professor of Quran Studies said, "Too many Muslim men are seeking to give him a pass, claiming *husn al-dhann* and that Islam wipes away all sins." "These are indeed important Islamic principles that apply in the vast majority of cases, but not when they are employed to excuse violent misogyny, grifting, and all manner of *fiṣq* and *fasād* that AT's social media platforms continue to promote."
- ▶ *Husn al-dhann* is assuming good of people, giving benefit of the doubt, etc.
- ▶ Reference <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/11/22/andrew-tate-red-pill-muslim>

The Muslim Response

- ▶ Is Andrew Tate a role model as per the sunnah: his language, his desire for wealth/success etc..? **Shouldn't Muslim men (and men in general) look for role models and motivational speakers in somebody else?** Why rely on such a flawed person to look up to?
- ▶ **Role-models in the Qur'an and Sahaba!**
- ▶ Is wealth a marker of success in our theology? What should we do with our wealth? (societal care and action)
- ▶ Allah will judge us all. May we all be forgiven for our sins. However, sins against people are forgiven **by the victims**. *Husn al-dhann* does not apply here

Why Does Andrew Tate Have Such Appeal?

Young Men Are Facing Difficulties

Deliberate upon these hypotheses. There is truth to many of the statements below:

- ▶ In the past, men were hunters, warriors, providers and sole bread winners. Boys now lack purpose and a clear sense of their place in society
- ▶ Young men lack positive role models
- ▶ 'Masculine' characteristics are painted as negative/toxic: eg strength, protection, success, ambition, decisiveness, to be head of household, to be less emotional
- ▶ Pushback against traditional gender roles and the categories of gender themselves lead young men to identify with AT; looking for certainty
- ▶ Men have been sidelined and demeaned by extreme strands of Feminism

But is Andrew Tate the Islamic response to the problems above?



Why Does Andrew Tate Have Such Appeal?

The Problem with Feminism

Feminism is a broad church. Strands of **extreme** Feminism stand accused of:

- ▶ Referring to marriage/home as servitude
- ▶ Backing colonial/neo-colonial wars; freeing the brown woman from the brown man
- ▶ Career promotion defines a woman's worth, demoting family
- ▶ Promoting the ideal of work despite exploitation of poorer women, e.g. fashion industry
- ▶ To be valued, women must be 'like men'
- ▶ Ignoring women of colour/faith e.g. Iraqi and Afghan women die due to Western wars that petition for their education/votes. Selectivism
- ▶ Being anti-men, anti-gender roles, pro LGBTQ
- ▶ **Remember: Feminism is a broad church. It means different things to different people**

The Balanced Response:

Ummatan Wasatan

- ▶ Red pill culture is white, far right and Islamophobic
- ▶ *Would Muslims want to associate with this?*
- ▶ Muslim reactions must be balanced/calm; not reactive.
Polarisation and division is not the Islamic way

Islamic Masculinity:

- ▶ Hard in protection and provision; soft in love and compassion. Red pill movement overlaps on a few points (gender roles) but NOT on SO many. Beware wholesale commitment to such ideologies
- ▶ Courage/chivalry of soldiers balanced with tenderness of worshipper who cries in prayer
- ▶ Our Prophet (saw) drank from a cup from the same place A'isha RA placed her lips
- ▶ “O Anjashah! Be gentle when driving the camels that carry the fragile vessels” (meaning the womenfolk)
- ▶ He (saw) helped in the home, mended his own shoes, gave everyone importance, had humility
- ▶ Masculinity encompasses the differing characteristics of ‘Umar RA, Uthman, Abu Bakr, Julaybib and The People of the Bench: all are manly. Not one way to be a man.

Islamic Femininity

- ▶ Encompasses Khadijah RA; the businesswoman → to A'isha RA; the scholar
- ▶ The outward facing and the inward facing personalities
- ▶ Nusaybah bint Ka'ab; defended our Messenger on the battlefield
- ▶ At the time of our Prophet AS, mothers often did not raise nor breast-feed in the early years. The Prophet (saw) himself was sent into the desert as a newborn
- ▶ **There is no one way to be a Muslim woman. Do not be duped by the YouTube personalities who describe one feminine way.** Their arguments are a modern response to a modern issue; the failing family. Their response is not from our tradition; no matter how loud they shout.
- ▶ Family is under threat yet the response is multi factorial. Traditional societies: working women rely on a village to raise their children. Modern YouTube speakers decry the working woman.

Islamic Gender Interactions

1. Respect and honour yourself before you can respect anyone else

It is hard to respect others should you not have self respect

“Truly, We have **honoured** the children of Adam...” (17:70)

“Surely We created man in the **best** mould.” (95:4)



Islamic Gender Interactions

2. Pairs

Cosmic duality in Allah's creation: the sun/ moon, day/night

“And of everything We have created **pairs**, that you may remember” (51:49) “Zawjayn”

The male and female complement one another as beautiful signs of Allah's Majesty

We define ourselves in relation to our complementary pair

Our differences; physical and emotional are ordained and to be honoured. Motherhood, marriage and family are sacred institutions



Islamic Gender Interactions

3. We Came From The Same Origin

Our origin is one, indicating **spiritual equality**. We are better **only** in the level of taqwa.

“Oh mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from **one soul** and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women.” (4:1)

“Oh mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you...” (49:13)



Islamic Gender Interactions

4. Wilaya: Allies, Protecting Friends

The male is not like the female. We have strengths and natural dispositions

As Muslim men and women, we are **protecting allies** of one another.

The Islamic model would be one of ally-ship and **partnership**

“The believers, men and women, are **awliya**’ of one another. They enjoin the good and forbid the bad, they observe salat and give zakat and obey God and His Prophet.” (9:71)

