

Opinion: Southgate is right, and it's up to men to help our boys reject the Manosphere

[Editorial Column, Paul Hutchinson](#) 21 March 2025

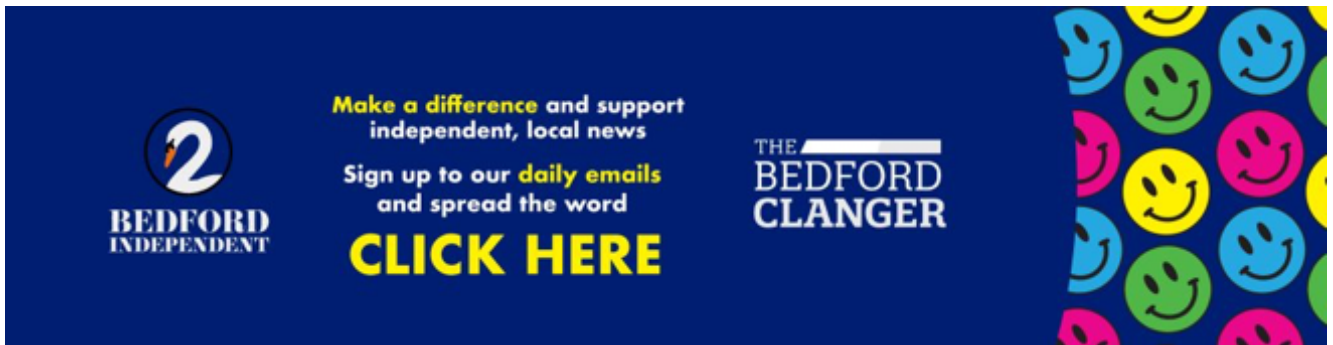


Stephen Graham and Owen Cooper in the Netflix drama Adolescence. Image: Netflix

On Wednesday, former England football manager Sir Gareth Southgate delivered the 47th Richard Dimbleby Lecture, 'The Beautiful Game: Building Belief and Resilience in a Younger Generation' in which he spoke about a subject far too many men are ignoring.

In his speech, Southgate highlighted how young men are

suffering. They're isolated, grappling with their masculinity and their place in society. They are prey to "callous, manipulative and toxic influences", and something needs to be done to stop it.



He's absolutely right.

Watch: [The Richard Dimbleby Lecture, Sir Gareth Southgate](#) (BBC)

Mention the name Andrew Tate and, if they know who he is, most people will thankfully react in disgust. If they don't, then maybe find new friends and if, worse still, they write about him positively, find new publications to read.

Tate has found fame, or rather infamy, with his misogynistic, homophobic and extreme right-wing views yet he manages to elude being held to account.



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In February, despite facing charges including rape, trafficking minors and money laundering in Romania, Andrew Tate and his brother Tristan fled to the US after Romanian prosecutors suddenly lifted a two-year travel ban.

The brothers who hold dual US/British citizenship deny the accusations against them.

But Andrew, in particular, continues to push his toxic rhetoric in an attempt to groom young impressionable men into believing the world, in particular women, are against them.

Although Romanian prosecutors have said the Tates will have to return to Romania and face the charges against them, it's believed the Trump administration pressured authorities to lift the travel ban.

Read: [What is Andrew Tate accused of and why has he](#)

97%

But this isn't just a problem happening somewhere else and in the deep dark depths of the internet.

Men like Tate, and the so-called Manosphere collective of websites and forums promoting masculinity, misogyny, and opposition to feminism online, spout their hatred unhindered on platforms like X (formerly Twitter).

Anyone with access to the internet through a phone, tablet or desktop can watch videos where they belittle men who don't conform to their Neanderthal ideals and preach that women should ["bear responsibility"](#) for sexual assault.

Many of the reports against this sort of content made to the Elon Musk-owned social platform are overruled.

While some may believe their content is easily ignored and that our boys and young men surely recognise that what is being broadcast is wrong, the real-world impact is sadly proving otherwise.

In 2021 the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for UN Women produced a report on the [Prevalence and reporting of sexual harassment in UK public spaces](#).

It found that 71% of the 1,000 women across the UK that

they spoke to reported being sexually harassed in public, but of those women who were between ages 18 and 24, 97% reported being harassed or assaulted.

97%

Say that out loud.

97% of women aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed or assaulted. Women who are our daughters, sisters and nieces and who are more likely to have been in the presence of younger men.

The same young men who are being influenced by the wrong people.

I can't help but feel that if 97% of anything else negative was happening there'd be massive public outcry.

Further to this, a recent study by the [Centre for Social Justice \(CSJ\)](#) found two-thirds of women aged 18 to 24 live in fear of their male peers and that they believe most young men are "pretty frightening".

More than two-fifths of young men (41 per cent) agree with them.

These are statistics that we just can't ignore.

350 women murdered

It's also telling that the APPG report came out in March

2021, the same month that [Sarah Everard](#) was murdered by a Metropolitan police officer who had "long planned to carry out a violent sexual assault".

And just this month, a man who wanted to be made famous for his evil crimes was sentenced to 49 years for the murder of his mum and siblings in Luton. It was also revealed during his hearing that he planned to carry out a mass shooting at his old primary school.

Thankfully, his sentence has been referred to the Unduly Lenient Sentence Scheme by the shadow justice minister as reported by the [BBC](#).

Criticising the sentencing, Conservative MP Kieran Mullan, said: "What exactly does someone have to do in this country to be sent away for life? This was the most serious of crimes – including the murder of two children."

I won't mention that murderer's name here, he does not deserve the notoriety for murder he craved. Instead, he deserves to be forgotten, and, like others, we'll remember his victims.

Juliana Falcon, 48, Kyle Prosper, 16, and Giselle Prosper, just 13.

These three innocent people who, as Bedfordshire Police said, "lost their lives at the hands of someone they loved and should have been able to trust".

But while not connected, it's hard to describe these incidents as isolated. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) continues, despite all the outcry and promises of action by our politicians at the time of each murder.

As of this month, the [*Independent*](#) reports that at least 350 women have died with a man responsible or a principal suspect since Sarah Everard's death.

Operation Moonwalk

While the Tate brothers currently bask in their Miami-based freedom, which has given them a renewed vigour and strengthened their belief that they're not doing anything wrong, the impact is happening right on our doorstep and in your son's bedroom.

Bedfordshire Police has an open investigation into the Tate brothers, following allegations of rape and human trafficking in our county. Not Romania, not the US, Bedfordshire – on our doorstep.

As part of Operation Moonwalk, they obtained an arrest warrant, formerly known as a European Arrest Warrant, for "two men in their 30s" and are working with authorities as part of this investigation.

How the Tate brothers fleeing to the US affects this investigation and Bedfordshire Police even having a chance to question them to see if there is any truth to the allegations remains to be seen.

But even without the Tate brothers being held to account, the way young men view women needs to be influenced more responsibly.

While not a biological parent myself, I do play a parenting role to young girls and I play a part in making sure they know what sort of behaviour from men is acceptable.

When I speak to these girls and young women about the challenges they face, they tell stories of harassment at school, sexualised messaging on social media and chat apps, and drink spiking and sexual assault on nights out.

Shocking as this may be in itself, what's really shocking is that they shrug it off like it's just part of life.

None of this behaviour is acceptable and no one should be shrugging it off.

So while adult men must show young women an example of the kind of man they may later choose to have in their life, even more so we men must lead by example and make sure the boys in our families understand what is acceptable behaviour.

That masculinity isn't determined by how much money, medals or dominance they have or by never showing emotion, but instead what makes a man is how he conducts himself with integrity, how he helps others, is dependable and how he shows empathy.

Adolescence

The Netflix series [Adolescence](#) explores the difficulties around these issues, highlighting how complex the problem is.

As we learn that a 13-year-old is accused of the murder of a young girl, the viewer is given hints about the influences all around him.

Teachers who constantly shout and bark orders, parents who don't challenge why their son is online until 1am each day, a loving father who refuses to show his emotion in front of others, even when faced with devastating news.

While these may not be issues in isolation, together they create a perfect storm where young men who may already have trouble finding their place in life are easy prey for those with sinister intentions.

Of course, there is no book with all the answers for raising children. But, at least when we act as role models we are trying to act in the best interests of the children in our lives.

How you raise your children is, of course, up to you but those that make up the Manosphere do not have the best interests of young men at heart.

"These are callous, manipulative and toxic influences. Whose sole drive is for their own gain... They're as far

away as you could possibly get from the role models our young men need in their lives," warned Southgate and it's time to heed that warning.

This warning is for everyone, but it's especially for men. Dads, uncles, brothers, family friends, it's up to us to start teaching our boys how to be men who are respectful, kind, and emotive and that failure early on is often a foundation to success in later life.

We need to listen to their fears and concerns as they navigate the uncharted waters of their adolescence and we need to help them build the critical thinking skills that will help them understand right from wrong.

The age-old cop-out of "It's not all men" also has to stop being used as an excuse for inaction.

Of course, it's not all men and not all boys will be affected by the Manosphere – there are still many well-adjusted young men out there. But, if just one young boy goes on to sexually abuse, rape or even murder a woman that is one young boy too many.

It's time to stand up and be counted and say together that we no longer want our sons, nephews or brothers to look at women as objects, and that we don't value their worth based on the Manosphere's definition of masculinity.

We need to call on our leaders to do more to challenge free-flowing misogyny, and to bring those who incite

sexual abuse and rape and/or carry out those acts to justice.

And most of all we need to do more to engage, inspire and support boys and girls and young men and young women, because if we don't we know someone else will.

Further reading

If you have been affected by any of the subjects in this opinion piece, you can find further support at:

- [MACS \(Male Allies Challenging Sexism\)](#)
- [The Everyday Sexism Project](#)
- [DVIP \(Domestic Violence Intervention Project\)](#)
- [Stop Hate UK](#)
- [End Violence Against Women](#)

Bedfordshire Police also ask anyone who may have any information related to their ongoing investigation into the Tate brothers to contact them via 101 or [online](#) quoting Operation Moonwalk.