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Angry White Men - Analytical Essay

In *Angry White Men*, Michael Kimmel introduces the work of radio show host, Michael Alan Weiner, drawing comparisons to the work of German philosopher, Herbert Marcuse, as he believes Marcuse's proposed, "repressive desublimation", has a contemporary application for the angry white men (AWM) that consume Weiner's radio show (Savage Radio). I think the book's publication date provides an important lack of perspective; I'm specifically alluding to the hindsight granted post-January 6, 2021, and after the dismantling of DEI in 2023. Michael Kimmel proclaims that the concept of repressive desublimation allows AWM to blow off steam and feel contempt with their anger by consuming Savage Radio. This notion insinuates that right-wing radio shows are strictly the means of refuge for grieving white men. In 2024, we can attest that Kimmel's stance on AWM's position of authority over diversity in America has been falsified and that tremendous efforts have been made to "make America great again". In the following text, I seek to explain Kimmel's inability to anticipate the recent acts of white supremacy in the United States.

The first reason Kimmel does not foresee the angry white man's revolt against DEI or the attack on the Capitol is that he underestimates the poor white man's ability to bring white supremacy back to fruition. One might assume that the angry white men Kimmel describes lack education, but the statistics he provided on downwardly mobile white male college graduates lead me to believe that there are no substantial educational differences between successful white males and angry white males. This supports the notion I propose: there are no prohibiting differences between the means of angry and non-angry white men. Although he acknowledges the AWM's white privilege, he fails to recognize the poor white man as similar to the affluent white man in the context of access to power. He makes a critical error in concluding that economic class variations amongst white men distribute different denominations of white currency in the United States political space. This faulty assumption is part of the reason he does not expect the AWM to garner substantive change to legislation and society.

As Kimmel tries to understand the AWM's frustration and anger, his position as a successful, affluent white male prohibits him from genuine assimilation into the AWM's "aggrieved entitlement". Therefore, he cannot accurately predict, or expect the lengths to which AWM will go to resurrect their "lost" privileges. As previously mentioned, Kimmel takes a very bullish stance on DEI and his perception is that America has reached a neo-race-relations reality: that white men must learn to tolerate minority access to upward social mobility. The psychological framework induced by taking the stance that he does emits a disconnect between Kimmel's and the beliefs of AWM. Kimmel is unable to imagine the dismantling of diversity, equity, and inclusion, whereas many of the AWM he introduces in the book strive for the abolishment of such institutions. It is his underestimation of the means and access to power held by poor, working-class white men, coupled with his inability to imagine, let alone consider the abolishment of DEI as feasible, that led to his notion of right-wing radio shows being merely a facility of repressive desublimation.