

THE FRACTURING OF THE ALT RIGHT: CONFLICTING ONLINE DISCOURSES
OF WHITE NATIONALIST COMMUNITIES

By

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Dedication

This is dedicated to my mother, who supported me during my entire academic journey and my good friend, Thy, who suffered alongside me.

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Abstract

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This thesis describes the philosophy, recruitment methods, and intellectual activities of the alt right, a predominantly online culture based on notions of white supremacy and patriarchy. Cyberculture, cyber harassment, right-wing extremist language, dissemination methods, meme culture, and political satire as a form of countercultural protest are key components explored in this study. The ethnographic focus is on three websites: American Renaissance, the Daily Stormer, and Reddit's most popular Donald Trump supporter subreddit. Data on these sites was collected by navigating and using the sites in a form of digital ethnographic observation. This thesis argues that the differences and similarities between the websites are integral to understanding a movement that is profoundly anti-Semitic, racist, and misogynistic, with the power to incite violent activities. This thesis also analyzes the key difference between different factions of the alt right, specifically the pseudo-intellectual, the profanely humorous, and the politically motivated. This thesis argues that the dissent amongst alt right factions strengthens the alt

right by creating more diverse alt right arguments and appealing to a wider audience but also weakens it by diversifying the previously unshakable solidarity of alt right thought.

Chapter One: An Overview of White Nationalism Studies Online

On August 12th, 2017, in Charlottesville, Virginia, 20-year-old Alex Fields Jr. drove his car into a crowd of people, killing a 32-year-old woman named Heather Heyer, and injuring 19 others (Shulleeta, 2017). His murder of Heyer occurred after an emotionally charged battle between members of the so-called “alt right” and counter protesters who came out to protest white supremacy and neo-Nazism (McLaughlin, 2017). Alex Fields Jr. was known to have neo-Nazi beliefs in white supremacy as far back as middle school (Pilcher, 2017). He was one of many white supremacists who arrived in Charlottesville to protest the removal of a symbol of “white culture,” a statue of Confederate commander Robert E. Lee, from Emancipation Park. The Charlottesville rally or “riot,” as it would also come to be known as, aroused a national discourse centered around the political beliefs of the “alt right.”

Richard Spencer, a loose figurehead of the movement and one of the most recognized members of the alt right, first coined the term “alternative-right” around 2008 in the magazine *Taki's Magazine*, which was dedicated to right wing politics, but was run by Taki Theodoracopoulos, a critic of the mainstream conservative right (Hawley, 2017, 54). The term “alt right” might have been coined by Spencer, but he admits to having

been influenced by the ideas of paleoconservative scholar Paul Gottfried, who had noticed the rise of a new right-wing movement that would challenge the mainstream right (Hawley, 2017, 51). It was Richard Spencer who founded the alt right philosophy, but although he is a prominent name amongst the alt right and a name commonly cited by mainstream media outlets in relation to the alt right, he is not the leader of the movement because this movement has no leaders. Unlike Richard Spencer, who uses intellectual white supremacist rhetoric, being careful not to use open slurs and instead opting to use academic jargon to advocate for white nationalist ideology, the alt right thrives off vulgarity and offensiveness (Hawley, 2017, 68). It does not attempt to present itself as a political movement with an agenda or a ritualistic, serious movement such as the more established Ku Klux Klan. It uses the internet to create offensive and taboo “memes,” or online jokes based on shared images and symbols that get spread through multiple virtual communities. The alt right instead is an umbrella movement that encompasses anything deemed “anti-PC” or anti-politically correct. Politically correct culture is viewed as the belief that straight white men are not allowed to voice their opinions. It is also viewed as a culture based on not allowing people to say how they truly feel or else risk ostracism. Politically correct culture is, in the alt right view point, against free speech, “telling it like it is,” and honest discussions.

The alt right has taken on a new life outside of Richard Spencer’s intellectual white nationalism, becoming a symbol of a new internet counterculture that does not necessarily seek political or social change, but rather mocks established political and social beliefs. In discourses related to the alt right, especially following the

Charlottesville incident, some of the most pressing questions include: To what extent are members of the Alt right dangerous? Can the Alt right philosophy of using cyber communities to foment an online atmosphere of hatred radicalize individuals? Is this incitement to violence the same as committing acts of violence?

Not all members of the alt right are going to openly engage in violent activities such as Alex Fields Jr. or any of the alt right protesters who instigated several physical confrontations at the Charlottesville riot. People who talk big on the internet have no obligation to carry through with any threats they make and most can simply be offensive online and go back to their daily lives, with their families, and friends, and coworkers, none the wiser. However, the culture of the alt right must be addressed and challenged because of its ability to spread its messages online, where anyone can consume their content. It becomes more and more clear that these hateful messages and harmful rhetoric seep into real life. Robert Bowers, the man responsible for walking into a synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and killing 11 people, was highly active on alt right social network site Gab, where, following the shooting, multiple Gab users professed admiration for Bowers and hatred for Jews (Sommer, 2018).

The complex sociocultural symbols and language of alt right online communities call for an anthropological study of its members, their interactions with one another, and their relationship with outsiders. In order to understand the nature of online hate speech, promotion of violence against minorities, and how the anonymous culture of the internet not only enables such activities, but is defined by them, the alt right must be viewed as more than a “movement” or a group of individuals advocating for political or social

change. It is a culture, filled with diverse individuals that share the same visual symbols and coded language to express their beliefs in white supremacy. Whether self-avowed or not, young and old white supremacists flock to this irreverent internet culture, thriving off hatred for liberals and conservatives alike, mocking non-white people and non-white cultures, members of the LGBT community, women, and anyone who is deemed “overly sensitive.” The alt right’s belief in being as offensive as possible is not race or gender neutral in any sense; it specifically targets non-white people and traditional enemies of straight white male social and political supremacy. The alt right is full of a wide variety of ideologies, yet if one central tenet can be used to define its philosophy, it would be white cultural and political superiority over all other ethnic and social groups.

The alt right, while somewhat united by an anti-PC, anti-mainstream ideology of racially provocative slogans and rejections of progressive social norms, is still prone to fractures and individual disagreements that could potentially challenge and weaken their continued unity and/or promotion of violent activities. At the same time, these fractures could also strengthen the community by expanding it, opening it up to people who would have been turned away from its more extreme messages. By examining these alt right websites, this thesis aims to show that there are three key fractures in the white supremacist discourse online. One fracture, the alt right represented in American Renaissance, is the pseudo-intellectual, traditional white supremacist movement that believes in eugenics, the separation of the races, and the purity and nobility of white blood. Another fracture is the alt right strain of thought represented by the Daily Stormer, a website which virulently hates women, non-white people, and PC-culture but at the

same time thrives off not taking anything seriously, lampooning serious social issues and progressive thinking. The third fracture is the alt right represented by the subscribers of r/The_Donald, a pro-Trump subreddit that also despises PC culture, but disguises its more obvious racist tendencies. This latter group does agree with the white supremacist sentiments of the greater alt right but is also more dedicated to visual humor and meme culture as a form of political protest. I argue that the dissent both strengthens and weakens the movement and culture of the alt right: it strengthens the alt right by creating more diverse and more creative alt right arguments that appeal to a wider audience but also weakens it by diversifying the previously unshakable solidarity of alt right thought.

Reinterpretations of Territory-Based Nationalism to Understand Cyber Nationalism

The alt right can be referred to as a political movement or political philosophy, depending on the context in which it is being analyzed. For my own study, due to the lack of organization of the alt right and its varying degrees of intercommunal and interpersonal connections, the philosophy and methods of communication will be analyzed as a reactionist internet counterculture. It will be studied as an ideology, as a constantly evolving culture with familiar symbols, outbursts of creativity, and coded language full of meaning.

The alt right's dedication to simply being against mainstream culture means that its cultural traits can be difficult to pinpoint. However, one of its most central traits is its dedication to white supremacy and white nationalism, two terms that often overlap. A white supremacist espouses the belief that the white race is superior. A white nationalist

espouses the belief that the white race is superior, but not always explicitly. Sometimes a white nationalist claims that the white race is not superior, but simply incompatible with the other races and must be allowed to exist separately from them in order to maintain its purity. These beliefs still inherently believe that the white race is superior; one is simply more political minded, conceiving of a perfect imagined white society, while the other technically could want the same thing, but also would be satisfied with non-white subjugation. American Renaissance regularly promotes the former belief, while the Daily Stormer and the Donald regularly promote the latter. All three are still a part of the same movement, and can be classified as falling under the same branch: white supremacy. Thus, a white nationalist and a white supremacist in this thesis are functionally the same, with only minor differences and plenty of room for overlap. The alt right is as diverse as the groups they despise. Their opinions on a perfect white society vary. What does not vary, however, is their dedication to fighting against the corruption of their nation by brown-skinned people and cultures. This aspect of the alt right is referred to as white nationalism.

Nationalism has been conceptualized in countless studies related to genocide, national cultures, subcultures, and immigration discourses, but it must be re-interpreted in this context to understand how nationalist groups interact with one another, and others, on the internet. Ernest Gellner, social anthropologist and formative scholar on the concept of nationalism, describes the nationalist attitude as an attitude that defines the limits of the nation, or “unit,” by deciding that the institutional leadership, or “state,” must be controlled by members of the national culture (1997, 6). He argues that nationalism sees

itself as universal and inherent in all human beings. If nationalism is universal, then all people belonging to different nations feel that it is only natural for them to claim that their nation is their own and must not be polluted by outside cultures. They then logically should be against living with people of a different culture and would “resent being governed by them” (Gellner, 1997, 7). He argues that this is the theory behind nationalism, but that nationalist belief systems are flawed because they are false and the way they are touted as “inherent” in human nature makes it difficult for nationalists to see that nationalism is only a theory. Additionally, nations are filled with subcultures and countercultures that go against the homogenized national cultures, and when the state only chooses to cater to the needs of the desired members of the national culture, it creates a “norm” which is difficult to even view, much less challenge (Gellner, 1983, 55).

The nation is understood to be tied to a territory, in which privileged members of the nation take steps to prevent or keep less ideal members from gaining access to the same benefits as themselves (Hage, 1998, 36). In relation to the alt right, nationalism is best understood not only as a desire to keep one’s “nation” pure, but as a pride in a white nation. The white nation concept is unique in that “whiteness” is a flexible construct, one which must be actively obtained and maintained. It is not tied to one particular white culture but to one’s “white race” as a symbol of belonging to the nation. The “white nation fantasy” is a fantasy because it would be impossible, or at least improbable, for a wholly, one hundred percent “white” nation to be achieved (Hage, 1998, 67). White nationalism thus urges for a reality that cannot exist because of the very people who yearn for it to come into existence. Hage calls this fantasy an “empowerment fantasy”

because nationalist sentiments come from people who seem both “empowered” and “disempowered.” They are empowered because of their whiteness and adherence to the desired national culture, yet “disempowered” in a multicultural society because of a growing acceptance of multiculturalism, which challenges their position as the dominant power. They do not claim total disempowerment, but feel they “ought to be more empowered” (Hage, 1998, 69). To argue that whiteness is important is to challenge the naturalness of whiteness. It also challenges the desired reality of a white nation, as it acknowledges that non-white people must exist within their borders.

Both Ernest Gellner and Ghassan Hage argue for the importance of a “particular territory” that must tie a nation’s citizens and a national culture together. However, white nationalists on the internet do not necessarily have a shared physical territory. Instead they reach across continents to link to one another and share viewpoints on what a white nation should look like. Thus, the older conceptualization of nationalism in which a group of people is united by their shared territory and shared culture is less relevant in relation to the white nation, which transcends both territory and culture, since white nationalist communities online can be composed of multiple nationalities.

Benedict Anderson’s conceptualization of nationalism is more integral to a study of the alt right because he argues that nationalists do not need to belong to a particular territory. Anderson argues that the nation is more of an imagined construct than Gellner argued. Although he did not anticipate the ambiguity and complexity that the internet would create in terms of imagined national boundaries, Anderson argues that technology bridges the gaps between cultures and creates new identities that re-define and re-

interpret nationalist constructions. In the case of the alt right, the internet not only challenges the concept of a territory-based nation; it challenges the idea of a shared national culture. The alt right's internet-based culture is not necessarily American or German; memes can and will be appropriated by members of any nation to criticize and mock any aspect of their own culture. My research into the alt right's cyber culture seeks to show how the alt right's memes can be understood universally and how white supremacists can turn their beliefs in a racial hierarchy into derogatory jokes that can be shared between white supremacists of any nation without needing a detailed cultural translation.

The Nationalism of Cyberspace

The alt right's nationalism may not have a physical territory, but it now has a digital space where it dominates a collective discourse and can challenge the mainstream discourse of other sites and the real world. This space, while it can be progressive and offer an anonymous voice to oppressed groups, has been appropriated by racist radical movements. They have new criticisms of modern society, but with familiar themes of anti-black, anti-Jewish, anti-female, anti-immigrant, and anti-LGBT rhetoric. Although it is difficult to determine how large secretive hate groups are, and how many were recruited off the internet, "the sheer number of hate websites...has increased by the tens of thousands in the last five years alone, along with traffic low to these online communities, and so, a revitalized and highly vocal hate movement is nonetheless burgeoning in the digital world" (Klein, 2015, 5). This increase in hate spaces indicates that hate groups are seeing more activity to their sites, possibly from both supporters and

detractors, and their discourses, whether criticized or praised, are seeing more mainstream attention due to the “mainstreaming” power of the internet with its easy accessibility. The alt right can create websites dedicated to news articles about the “Jewish threat” and have their sites as easily accessible to the mainstream public as a New York Times article (although without the brand name recognition, and such sites if crude and vulgar enough can be removed from search results by companies such as Google).

Scholars of the internet, specifically scholars of white nationalism, argue that white nationalists use the internet to coordinate rallies, convene for meetings, and spread their message further (Klein, 2015; Bowman-Grieve, 2011; Zickmund, 1997). They argue that the ambiguity of the internet’s factual content benefits white supremacy because false information and conspiracy theories thrive when internet users do not bother to, or do not want to, fact check the information they consume (Klein, 2015; Bowman-Grieve, 2011; Zickmund, 1997). Virtual hate spaces become something of an online nation, where discourses are dominated by a dedication to an imagined nation where the information they spread, factual or not, is the truth and anyone who denies it is an enemy of their state. Additionally, within these spaces, only particular people with specific attitudes, beliefs, and a presumed culture are true members. Their identities may be anonymous, but as they exist within their virtual community, they are citizens within an “imagined” nation (Klein, 2015; Bowman-Grieve, 2011; Zickmund, 1997).

Cyberspace is a difficult territory to navigate. Multiple websites dedicated to the same topic are radically different from one another depending on moderator rules,

individual content creators, individual contributors, and the variety of users. However, like any other human-controlled social space, cyberspace possesses a particular collective voice. This voice dictates how the space is manipulated to create a “repository” of collective cultural memory. This repository retains the narratives of the individuals who occupy this space (Fernback, 1997). In these spaces, and not just alt right spaces, but any internet space in which politics and social issues are discussed, there is a collective ideology that can be embraced in different ways by members, but must be embraced in some way for one to belong to the community (Fernback, 1997).

How do members of the alt right online space negotiate with one another, accounting for their shared beliefs in being anti-PC, yet also coming from different economic backgrounds, regions of the United States, and even other countries? Although it is easy to assume that the internet brings people “together,” bridging physical gaps to create emotional connections over continents, it can just as easily bring together people with radically different life experiences and consequently differences in opinions. Studies of the alt right, and other right-wing extremist groups, could benefit from a perspective of the dissimilarities between individual groups and individual members rather than just their similarities as expressed online.

History of Right-Wing Extremism Studies: Comparing Traditional White Nationalist Groups and the Alt Right

To understand the uniqueness of the alt right, a movement based around the internet and the philosophy of an internet culture, one must first understand traditional neo Nazism and white supremacy, both of which have been extensively studied.

Traditional neo Nazis had a unique culture based on local ties and traditional beliefs in white supremacy as a quasi-religious political system. Their counterculture was perpetuated by the help of the internet; it was not defined by the culture of the internet.

In the 1980s and 1990s, studies of white nationalism tended to argue that extreme right movements, although violent and responsible for notorious terrorist acts like the Oklahoma City Bombing of 1995, were on the fringe (Scheinburg, 1997; Klein, 2015; Ezekiel, 1996; *Hate Groups in America: A Record of Bigotry and Violence*, 1988). The right-wing extremist groups that were most visible at the time, and who seemed the most dangerous were the neo Nazi skinhead groups. Like the Alt right, these groups thrived off being counterculture. While the number of traditional American white nationalist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, the John Birch Society, and the Liberty Network decreased, racist skinhead groups had gained support in the 90s and militant Aryan groups had revived in new forms (Scheinburg, 1997, 56).

Also during this time period, American Jews enjoyed great economic success, “constituting half of all the billionaires and a substantial portion of the faculty in elite universities” (Scheinburg, 1997, 56). Anti-Semitism thus evolved to take on a class tone, allowing for poor whites to insist that Jewish overlords became wealthy off their hard work, infusing anti-regime and anti-state movements with anti-Jewish rhetoric. The skinhead movement was made up of shaven-headed young men with tattoos and military attire with an affinity for punk rock, revolting against the long-haired middle-class establishment of the day (Scheinburg, 1997, 61). The alt right, similarly, proudly proclaims itself to be anti-mainstream. However, the alt right’s brand of humor and use of

specific symbols such as Pepe the Frog, while certainly not unfamiliar to traditional skinhead groups, are propagated and transformed by the internet. The early skinhead movements would use the internet, but not be defined by their tech-savviness or their memes.

The start of digital hate culture in America was under traditional forms of white nationalism. Tech-savvy Don Black was a member of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in 1975 under David Duke, a well-known and publicized racist and anti-Semite. David Duke's popularity and ability to bring more white supremacists into his fold was based on how he portrayed himself as the respectable racist. He presented himself not as a KKK Grand Wizard, wearing the full regalia and engaging in Klan rituals, but as the leader of a white nationalist movement, with a legitimate cause. His attempts to appear more mainstream, more acceptable to the average American, influenced Don Black to normalize white nationalism; only he would use the internet to do so (Klein, 2015, 21-22). Black launched Stormfront in 1995, the first white nationalist website. In time, other white nationalists would create their own sites, linking them to Stormfront, putting their viewpoints in a public space where millions, and later billions, could access them. On the internet, white nationalists could reach people around the country, around the world, and communicate with one another, and new recruits, quicker and more efficiently than before (Klein, 2015, 23). However, their attempts to appear mainstream made use of the internet to share "intellectual" white nationalism. Their "skinhead" culture was still present in their websites, but it was toned down to reach a broader audience. The alt right's disdain for mainstream culture, while similar to skinhead groups' dislike of

middle-class respectability, has almost the opposite desire: they use anti-PC culture as a way of both defying the mainstream and presenting themselves as mainstream. They can use mainstream websites such as Twitter to easily link their obscure hate websites to public forums, while simultaneously arguing that they are against the mainstream culture that dominates Twitter (Graham, 2015).

White nationalists fall into multiple categories which can overlap with one another. Neo-Confederates glorify the Confederacy and possess nostalgia for the white past. White supremacists believe in white superiority over all others. White nationalists believe that the races should be separate but can claim that they do not believe themselves to be superior. There can obviously be a great deal of overlap between these groups, and they can also all fit comfortably within the paradigms of the alt right, which welcomes anything that classifies as offensive and anti-mainstream (in a pro-white, pro-masculine way). However, certain strains of the alt right are characterized as being young and “snarky,” sharing contempt for mainstream liberals, conservatives, feminists, and immigrants, but lacking any political goal to separate the races or explicitly support white social and political supremacy (Skutsch, 2017). The alt right is more than another strain of white nationalism. The alt right is reactionary, lashing out against progressive culture and cultural “sensitivity,” using heterosexual white male privilege as a basis, but it also does not define itself as purely interested in a white ethno-state or a return to pre-Civil War values or anti-Semitism. The alt right does not share any particular “goals,” but rather shares a philosophy of fighting progressive discourse and demeaning feminism, the LGBT community, and appreciation for non-white cultures (Skutsch, 2017).

There is a tendency in white supremacy studies to emphasize shared religion and culture as integral unifiers of white supremacist groups, which is not wrong in studying particular groups, such as the KKK or neo-Hitlerites or neo-Confederates, but which is somewhat irrelevant when studying the alt right (Fletcher, 2017). The alt right's lack of respect for any established social norms is not limited to feminism. It also mocks organized religion, feeling itself above the sacred. Profane images involving violence, sexual deviancy, and drug use will mock religious piety and religious values while simultaneously supporting social constructs related to religious foundations, such as female deference towards males.

In order to evaluate how the alt right distinguishes itself from older, more religiously and politically conscious white nationalist groups, the online aspect of the alt right must be given greater attention and analysis. Advances in communication technology, the increase of news source options, greater quantity of private owned websites and blogs, and accessibility of opinions that could previously not be shared without legal or financial backlash, are incredibly influential in shaping public opinions. In 2003, the internet was “the most important source of information for more than 70% of Americans, ranking higher than books, newspapers, television, and radio” (Klein, 2015, 23). Today, it is no doubt one of the first places the majority of people, young and old, go to find information, from how long to cook pork chops to how old a celebrity is to what is happening politically in their sphere of the world. The alt right's digital spaces are worthy of study not only because they offer a glimpse into the minds and lives of its members, who may be inclined to incite or be involved in physical and digital

harassment, but also because their rhetoric can and does spill into more mainstream digital spaces. Studies of hate speech and white nationalism online must account for how often white supremacist speech spills into mainstream internet communities.

The Academic Discourse of White Nationalism: White Economic Anxieties and Online Constructions of Identity

Scholars of American white nationalism from the late 1990s to the early 2010s tend to frame white nationalism around the idea of white economic anxiety (Swain and Nieli, 2003; Swain, 2004; Gilliard-Matthews, 2011). They emphasize white fears of economic and political inferiority to blacks and Jewish people as key “pull” factors for disgruntled lower-class whites attracted to white nationalist movements (Ezekiel, 1996; Scheinburg, 1997; Zickmund, 2002). White nationalism scholars of this time period argue that believers in white pride are opposed to non-white immigration, feeling that whites need to be taken care of first. White nationalists voice opposition to white discrimination and perceive whites as being overtaken economically and politically by non-whites. Many, if not all, white pride and white power believers voice the opinion that non-whites were much more likely to be criminals and were inherently more violent or less productive than whites (Swain and Nieli, 2003; Swain, 2004; Zickmund, 2002; Scheinburg, 1997). Studies of more traditional forms of white nationalism (the KKK, skinhead neo Nazis, intellectual white nationalists) suggest that concerns over perceived unfairness in the distribution of educational, political, and social resources are mostly economic (Ezekiel, 1996; Picciolini, 2017; Swain and Nieli, 2003). Racial hatred and

social factors are emphasized as well, but they are only a framework to view lower-class whites' economic anxiety.

Studies conducted using data from white nationalist websites cannot focus on economic anxieties as readily as in-person interviews, public polling data, and demographic studies since in the online environment, one can only guess at a person's economic status. White nationalism online studies thus look more into the ideology of whiteness, cyberspace, and constructed white identities. In cyber communities dedicated to white pride, there is an understanding 1) that whiteness exists, 2) it is pure and is to be valued and 3) it is in danger of being polluted by outside forces (Dentice and Bugg, 2015; Simi and Futrell 2004; Simi and Futrell, 2006). Cyber communities dedicated to white pride assume that they are morally, culturally, and biologically superior, or at the very least distinct, to all other races. In their private spaces, they are "safe" from the opinions of non-white and dissenting whites who disagree with them. However, this does not discount individual interactions, personal bonds, intercommunal bonds, and the language that develops between members of similar-minded communities. From the outside looking in, white nationalism online scholars tend to agree that white nationalists are united by their internet communities, their special languages, and ability to form deep connections with people they will never meet (Bowman-Grieve, 2011; Dentice and Bugg, 2015; Simi and Futrell, 2004; Simi and Futrell, 2006). These concepts are integral in studies of cyberculture because online communities are defined by how they maintain themselves with the absence of physical meetings and face-to-face human interactions. Identity, interpersonal relationships, and communal bonds are radically transformed by

digital culture, its special rules, its different methods of conveying emotions, and its coded language. However, scholarship is more lacking in the areas where white nationalists do not agree, or do not conform to the group's collective voice. Although it is tempting to view white nationalist groups as unified voices speaking as one, dissent often occurs even in united community spaces. In a digital age where anyone can communicate with someone else, from any part of the world, clashes of differing perspectives and life experiences are likely, even in virtual white nationalist communities. Scholarship on dissenting voices that still promote white nationalism, but disagree with other white nationalist voices, is vital in understanding the alt right because its ideology thrives on being outrageous and offensive and thus is even more at risk for fractures in ideologies and communities.

The Alt Right: A New Way of Thinking and Spreading Messages of White Supremacy

The alt right is a loose congregation of online savants who use the internet to harass, intimidate, or simply argue with others. Their messages are similar in rhetoric to white nationalist rhetoric from the 1980s to the early 2000s, but the evolution of the internet and social networking has changed how they interact with one another, the mainstream internet, and the mainstream public. Those who study the alt right tend to focus on several themes: identity politics, coded language, conspiracy theories, social justice warriors, and anti-establishment culture (Wendling, 2018; Niewart, 2017; Main, 2018; Hawley, 2017). However, though several common phrases such as identity politics and white genocide are often repeated, scholars of the alt right focus on different aspects

of the alt right. Hawley, for example, focuses on the alt right in terms of key players, using centrist and far-right wing politicians, as well as key identified members of the alt right such as Richard Spencer to categorize and explain how the movement manifests online (2017). Some scholars emphasize the importance of the alt right more as a method of discourse, a “bridge” between white nationalists and the mainstream (Hartzell, 2018; Cohen-Almagor, 2018; Carr, 2015). They warn that the alt right must be taken seriously, as their websites are recruiting grounds and their language can encourage instances of violence in real life (Bowman-Grieve, 2011; Cohen-Almagor, 2018). Main, similar to Hartzell and Cohen-Almagor, argues that the alt right “sees itself not as a constituency with political goals but as an intellectual movement that shapes how people think about politics” (115, 2018). This statement about the alt right seems to fall in line with common analyses of the alt right’s activities, which range from spiteful harassment of liberal politicians on Twitter, to posting real life addresses online (commonly referred to as doxing, which is an incitement to harassment) and sending death threats to celebrities, to actually ramming a car into a group of counter protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia (Wendling, 2018; Nagle, 2017). Analysis of the alt right also tends to conflate the Alt right with Trump supporters, leading many such studies to also be critical of Donald Trump’s presidency (Zuylen-Wood, etc., 2017; Niewart, 2018; Wendling, 2018).

Studies of the alt right, being an extremely new player in the field of white nationalist group studies, lack some of the diversity in scholarship of older forms of white nationalism. The most obvious angles of approach include the political leanings of the alt right, the influence of gender and sexuality, the strength in numbers, possible economic

anxieties, the foundations of xenophobia and misogyny, and the anonymity of the internet. However, a less obvious, but no less important approach is the effect of the internet on the *dissimilarities* between individuals and individual groups. The internet may bring diverse groups of people together, to talk and argue and share content, but people who have the capacity to be together do not always have the willpower, or the desire, to stay together once their individual personalities begin to challenge one another, or the community they belong to.

Methods of Study

Studies of American white nationalism have tended to emphasize white economic anxiety, the history of white supremacy movements, anti-Semitism, homophobia, and misogyny as key tenets of white nationalist movements (Swain and Nieli, 2003; Swain, 2004; Gilliard-Matthews, 2011; Ezekiel, 1996; Scheinburg, 1997; Zickmund, 2002). Studies of online white nationalist communities have tended to focus on identity, notions of white power, the power of anonymity, and communal bonds of cyber communities. They have also chosen specific hate sites to track, focusing on forum discussions, exchanges of images, music, video games, white online dating sites, and more. Their studies of the virtual spaces of white nationalism are more modern, but still ultimately see white nationalism online as an extension of white nationalism in its traditional forms (Bowman-Grieve, 2011; Dentice and Bugg, 2015; Simi and Futrell, 2004; Simi and Futrell, 2006). Meanwhile, studies of the relatively new alt right have studied all these aspects, as they lay down necessary theoretical frameworks for studying older forms of white nationalism, while also contending with the alt right's erratic and inconsistent

political beliefs and lack of internal organization (Hawley, 2017; Zuylen-Wood, etc., 2017; Wendling, 2018; Niewart, 2017). However, one of the issues in the latter is the inclination to incorrectly label the alt right as the same or very similar to these older forms of violent right-wing white nationalist movements (Reid and Valasik, 2018; Zuylen-Wood, etc., 2017; Skutsch, 2017). The alt right is not a monolithic new voice of white nationalism that has suddenly become mainstream. It is a new ideology against politically correct culture that appeals to conservative minded, but also younger and more tech-savvy people while also staying in the ideological range of the older white nationalist groups. In my study of the alt right, I analyze three disparate segments of the movement through three different virtual communities. Unlike other scholars who have analyzed white nationalist websites through the lenses of traditional neo Nazi linguistic and symbolic paraphernalia (i.e. sharing of swastikas, special terms like “ZOG,” or Zionist-Controlled Government, and the number 88), my goal is to compare dissimilar views on white nationalist websites, not emphasize the importance of the “unified” white nationalist voice. Unlike other scholars of the alt right, I will also be focusing on analyzing the social dynamics between members of their closed communal spaces rather than what they claim the entire alt right community believes in. I have chosen these spaces to focus my research on the fractures in alt right online communities and ideologies.

The alt right is an online movement, or a movement based in the internet with the express goal of spreading its ideologies and content to other web communities and real life, if possible. It is difficult to track and determine how many communities exist online,

as anyone can claim to be a part of the alt right and thus be a part of it. However, three notable alt right communities are well-known amongst the alt right and other internet communities. I have chosen these three due to their name recognition, their prominence in the alt right community, their outreach, and most importantly, their cultural impact.

The first site is run by Jared Taylor, mentioned in many, if not every source related to intellectual white nationalism, who still runs the white nationalist online magazine he founded in 1990, "American Renaissance." His site represents an older form of white nationalism, in which neo Nazis, wanting to appear more mainstream and less like stereotypical counterculture skinheads, attempt to present themselves as more cultured (Klein, 2015, 21-22). The second site was founded by Andrew Anglin, the neo Nazi head writer behind The Daily Stormer, another white nationalist website, but one known for its brazen vulgarity and use of slurs in articles. The Stormer is more representative of white neo Nazism as it manifests in the alt right's less intellectual side, the side dedicated to irreverent memes and hateful, offensive content. It is also less mainstream, as the use of traditional neo Nazi symbols such as swastikas and blatantly hateful language are typically viewed with discomfort or outright dislike even by more conservative internet users.

By comparing the language of these two sites, I evaluate and analyze these radically different approaches to white nationalism. Their strongly differing methods and potential audiences indicate a growing strain between intellectual members of the alt right and the memeing and carefree members who simply like the outrageousness of anti-PC culture and often lack tangible political goals.

The third community resides on popular news and content sharing website Reddit. On this popular website, the sub communities dedicated to particular topics, such as politics or world news, are known as subreddits. One notorious popular subreddit is known as r/the_Donald. R/The_Donald is a highly controversial subreddit dedicated to Donald Trump, making it a community of Trump supporters. Posts on The_Donald are typically links to news articles, Donald Trump's tweets, or to high profile political supporters of Donald Trump. For the purposes of my study, The_Donald's userbase, concerned with right wing economics and politics, but also highly critical of "the establishment" (i.e. the federal government, people who support PC culture, conservatives who do not support Trump) will be representative of mainstream white nationalists (Serwer, 2017). The subreddit currently (in April of 2019) has over 730,000 subscribers, a significant amount for Reddit ("The_Donald"). Donald Trump being president of the United States, and a recently self-avowed nationalist, brings white nationalism into the mainstream political discourse (Baker, 2018). The subreddit dedicated to him does not represent mainstream America, so much as it represents mainstream right-wing politics on the internet.

Reddit is not a site like the Daily Stormer, which had to move to the dark web after being cut off by GoDaddy and Google following an article mocking Heather Heyer's death in the Charlottesville rally (Cox, 2017). It is also not a site like American Renaissance, which is older, more sophisticated appearing, and has less appeal for younger, more internet-active and visual-humor-obsessed alt right members (Beirich and Potok, 2018). The_Donald can also be found by anyone who uses Reddit, the third most

visited site in the United States (Anon, 2018). The_Donald thus is easier to find and more mainstream since Donald Trump is an American politician, and his opinions have a wide range of influence.

Unlike the other two sites, this subreddit does not write commentary pieces on news articles. It merely shares them, or occasionally shares comics or smaller content they have created. The most important information to be gleaned from The_Donald is how Donald Trump supporters who use Reddit regularly interact with one another and with news and information about Donald Trump. Their opinions, being more mainstream than the opinions of Daily Stormer users or American Renaissance users, are compared with the language and data presented by the other two sites of research to reveal discrepancies in opinions and disagreements in thought processes.

I chose to analyze content produced and posted on all three communities over the time span of a week in February, from February 10th to February 16th of 2019. All mentions of the dates of February 10th to February 16th in this thesis refer to February of 2019 unless otherwise stated. I considered doing a longer time frame, however, these sites, particularly the Daily Stormer and the Donald, produce enormous amounts of content in just a single day. Seven days was long enough to absorb not only the speed of content, but its relevancy and how swiftly it covered current events as well as micro shifts in internet culture. Memes become outdated in days, or even hours, as internet users grow bored with certain formats or start to see certain memes as being old news or no longer topical. American Renaissance posted less content, but still pushed a powerful and more outwardly complex message of white nationalism in the same time frame as the others. I

took screenshots of articles, images, content, memes, and forum discussions underneath the articles posted on all three sites, some of which are included with analysis of their place in the running narratives of the Daily Stormer, American Renaissance, and the Donald. By recording and analyzing the daily content created and commented on by writers and users of the three sites, I was able to gain an insider's perspective of the alt right and an understanding of how their logic works in their own digital spaces.

In Summation

The world wide web allows for a greater diversity of ideas and perspectives to be shared en masse, in record time, and made accessible across the globe. White nationalism and ideologies of white supremacy can be spread both through communities dedicated to them, and through more mainstream sites such as Reddit and Twitter, where multiple political and social viewpoints can be expressed. To continually expand the discourse of online white supremacy studies, I argue that new research on these groups should address the increasing diversity and discrepancies of white supremacist groups that have traditionally been viewed as monolithic hiveminds. These three radically different sites, with radically different interpretations of white nationalism, share the same perspectives on racial inequality and political representation in the United States, but they are also indicative of different forms of online communities, not just white nationalism and right-wing extremism. Their websites are also designed to evoke the desired reaction (of disgust and contempt for ethnic minorities) out of visitors.

American Renaissance represents the traditional, historical American view of a racial hierarchy based on the dehumanization of non-white populations. It represents a

community of disgruntled white and even non-white internet users with pre-established notions of a racial hierarchy that is defined by IQ, blood purity, and genetics, racial concepts foundational to American sociopolitical culture. It represents racism with class and no vulgar language. It is also a mostly civil online community that engages in polite, if somewhat irritable and onerous, discourse. The Daily Stormer is not a place for discourse, but for crude jokes, vulgarity, the enjoyment of the profane, and trolling culture. Andrew Anglin's unrestrained and uncurbed psychopathic humor reveals the double-edged sword that is the freedom of speech. When combined with the anonymity of the internet, such discourse becomes even more radical and intentionally anger-provoking. The Daily Stormer represents the darker side of meme culture, revealing the sadistic aspects of an online culture that is usually light-spirited and gently teasing more than it is cruel. The_Donald, like the Daily Stormer, also reveals the darker side of memeing, but it also represents an online community that has an overinflated sense of importance. It represents a small, extremely radical and dedicated group that manipulates online algorithms and trolls important figures (such as politicians) to make themselves appear more powerful.

These three communities and the alt right movement are here to stay. Internet communities can come and go, but the alt right's ideology of white supremacy and anti-multiculturalism are rooted in pre-established notions of a racial hierarchy. These ideas have never truly died in any sense, and even in a future where such ideas seem antiquated, and are no longer as widespread, online communities dedicated to the strangest and smallest niche ideas can still manage to be active. That is clearly not the

case with the alt right and may never be. So, the question becomes not, “how long will these Alt right communities exist?” but “how long will they stay relevant?” More importantly: Will their hateful language continue to radicalize more and more individuals?

Although the internet is a new tool, and a transformative one, at its core, its power lies in its ability to connect diverse individuals. In this case, it brings together diverse individuals who despise human diversity. They experience the world online through a hostile lens, are radicalized by violent sentiments, and become entrenched in a self-contained culture with no compromises, no middle grounds, and no room for doubt. The alt right community is convinced that certain groups of humanity are always out to get them. If they cannot be dragged out of their safe, self-contained internet bubbles and continue to listen to the preaching of one heavily biased and hateful group, then they will only continue to spread their toxic ideologies and commit acts of violence. If these internet spaces are not either closed down, or diluted with other opinions, then they will remain radicalizing spaces as long as people can access them and be transformed by their odious atmosphere.

Chapter Two

American Renaissance: Intellectual White Nationalism and Fears of White Genocide

American Renaissance is the website chosen to represent the fracture of the alt right that proclaims itself to be intellectual and based in pseudo-scientific racial theory. It was chosen due to its seniority and prominence in the alt right community today. Samuel Jared Taylor is the founder of the New Century Foundation, a white nationalist think tank responsible for American Renaissance. He was born in September of 1951 and currently resides in Oakton, Virginia. He received his B.A. from Yale University in 1973 and his M.A. in international economics at the Paris Institute of Political Studies in 1978 (The Anti Defamation League, 2011). He is the author of the books, *Paved With Good Intentions: The Failure of Race Relations in Contemporary America* (1992) and *Shadow of the Rising Sun: A Critical Review of the Japanese Miracle* (1983) and has edited and contributed to books such as *A Race Against Time: Racial Heresies for the 21st Century* (2003) and *The Real American Dilemma: Race, Immigration, and The Future of America* (1998). In these books, he criticizes affirmative action and scoffs at the notion of racial equality, insisting that America is a “white nation” and its white citizens, its true citizens, are in danger of being driven out or “polluted” by the nonwhite citizens and dangerous

dark-skinned immigrants. His website advocates for “race realism” or the understanding that the white race has superior intellect and superior genetics.

When I first entered American Renaissance’s space doing initial research into the site, I was struck by its orderly appearance. It looked like a well-maintained and well-executed personal blog. It had a modern and streamlined theme, with an aesthetically pleasing color scheme of a white background with yellow and navy-blue letters that were easy to read. Its font was scholarly and its right-wing titles were not particularly outrageous, usually more along the lines of sardonic and disapproving. Although its articles were obviously white nationalist titles reeking of pseudoscientific claims and not even vaguely scientific claims, it would not immediately strike any conservative or centrist as being an extremist website. But the line between conservatives and hard right-wingers often blurs on the internet. All in all, American Renaissance looks like a reliable source of information due to its visual appeal and digital structure. A modern and streamlined theme is important to the success of a website. Websites that look outdated, confusing, or non-stylish in other ways often are unappealing to the casual visitor.

Theme-wise, American Renaissance appears as a particularly organized personal blog that would strike the casual visitor as professional and intelligent. Content wise, the website organizes itself under the tabs, “News,” “Commentary,” “Features,” “Videos,” and “Podcasts.” These subsections are easy to find, show up on the home page, and are self-explanatory. Articles are underneath a digital slide rule which highlights feature stories with accompanying photographs or videos. To the left are news articles, in a long list extending down until the next page indicators, and to the right are the titles of the

news articles with written commentary by AmRen writers. Below the articles with commentary are podcasts, links to their Gab, RSS Feed, and YouTube channel. There are also other things such as links to RSVP to AmRen conferences, buy books written by American Renaissance writers, and ways one can donate to the organization.

Visitors unfamiliar with the site could be forgiven for not knowing it was a white nationalist website. The article titles are not filled with slurs or outright statements that the white race is superior. Although there are certainly articles that make their contempt for affirmative action clear and their disdain for either people of color, or advocates for people of color obvious, they could easily be mistaken for a regular American right-wing conservative web blog. However, their obsession with race in social, political, economic, and cultural contexts reveals their difference from other conservative news commentary and aggregate sites. They are adamantly convinced that the solution to all problems lies in “race realism.” They do not believe equality is achievable or even desirable. They equate social justice to socialism, communism, and the suppression of the white race.

The term race realism is integral in understanding not only American Renaissance, but the alt right in general. Those who do not embrace being called racist or “Nazis,” i.e. those on American Renaissance and the Donald (and somewhat on the Daily Stormer) would rather be called white nationalists or a term like race realists due to the connotations of the words racist and Nazi. They can still advocate for white supremacy without using a term as distasteful and arrogant-sounding as “white supremacist.” This ideology of using the term race realism “helps to conceal their [the alt right’s] ideological affinity with overtly racist white power groups and serves to sterilize the otherwise

unambiguously neo-Nazi dogmas that guide the movement. Ultimately, this is a distinction without a difference, but it has proven to be an effective façade that enables alt right adherents to deny their supremacist inclinations” (Jacobs 2017). In turn, the notion of white nationalism draws intellectual inspiration from European philosophies of “identitarianism.” European identitarianism is a philosophy that rails “against the imagined treacheries of the European left and its support for multiculturalism, immigration, and diversity” (Atkinson, 2018). However, American identitarianism has something of a “bulwark against identitarians’ fetishization of ‘blood and soil’ nationalism” (Atkinson 2018). This bulwark is America’s immigrant history, its foundational “mixing pot” of various European, Latin American, and other world cultures (Atkinson, 2018).

Race realism is simply another term referring to scientific racism, where “in contrast to most modern scholars, ‘race realists’ argue that race is not a construction. They contend that race and racial difference are immutable biological facts that inform disparities in intellectual ability, educational ability, and so on. At the same time, there is a strong current of misogyny – or ‘gender realism’ as they like to call it – embedded in every facet of the alt right project. Much like race, proponents of this idea believe that gender is a biological fact and not a social construction. And much like adherents of the allied ‘Men’s Rights Movement,’ alt right supporters insist that feminism has served only to emasculate and undermine men, who must aggressively reassert their masculinity to avoid being beta males or ‘cucks’” (Hayden, 2017). All alt right websites share this belief in anti-progressivism, wanting a return to traditional American notions of gender (female

subjugation), race (white superiority), and social order. However, they express these beliefs in a multitude of ways, and all have their own ideas about methods that need to be used to achieve their white utopia. American Renaissance is unique in that unlike other alt right sites, it is not openly anti-Semitic, despite associating with violently anti-Semitic groups and individuals, and typically does not use slurs. It makes its hatred of the non-white races clear, but does not resort to such unprofessional language (although the same cannot always be said for its users).

Many American Renaissance descriptions of articles are very tongue in cheek. They use news articles that report neutrally on different events to subtly and not so subtly create an anti-immigration, anti-non-Christian, and anti-nonwhite perspective of world events. Racial and cultural mixing disgust them and they see black culture as utterly incompatible with white culture, necessitating a divide between races. They also see black genetics as inferior and unworthy of mixing with white genetics. They also see discrimination as natural and a matter of personal choice that only preserves the natural order of races. They despise PC culture and see it as oppressive to white cisgender heterosexual males. They feel they have been demonized and that those who criticize white males are illogical, bordering on subhuman shrieking harpies (people who are almost senseless with righteous fury).

Before social justice culture and outrage culture became more prominent, reported on, and thus seen as more ridiculous and powerful, Jared Taylor had a knack for attributing racist thoughts and actions to the natural aversion one has towards those of other races. In an interview with Russ Nieli in 1999, he states that blacks have a “racial

consciousness, and they have group interests that they make no bones about expressing and advancing. It's whites for whom the idea of racial consciousness has been turned into something that is, if not irrelevant, then even loathsome" (Swain and Nieli, 2003, 89). He also insisted that "race, of course isn't the only source of group conflict. Probably language may be the most fertile source of conflict after that, but any kind of group identification, be it religion, language, race, culture, tribe, all of these things are sources of friction- far from being the kind of source of strength we have been encouraged to take them to be" (Swain and Nieli, 2003, 91). This was stated in 1999, a time before the online social justice warriors were in full gear, before "politically correct culture" was propagated as being a "huge" problem (as it is today). Already Jared Taylor felt that whites are being silenced and made to feel ashamed of their race when no other race is. Already he also divided people along the lines of culture and language, along lines of human religions and lifestyles that keep people from truly caring about one another. Similarly, American Renaissance would express this opinion of white "silence" and white "genocide" being perpetuated by white and non-white desires for multiculturalism. They would also accuse critics of white male hegemony of being anti-men.

Nowadays, American Renaissance still hocks the same ideas, just with different, more updated words, claiming that "leftists" and social activists are attempting to silence white men and treat them as inferior citizens. They feel that affirmative action is "handing" inferior people better or equal jobs for less work. They also feel that affirmative action is just another government program designed to "coddle" black people and take care of them instead of productive white citizens. They share stories of black on

white crime to fit their rhetoric of perpetually childlike and beast-like black men and women who are uncivilized and unworthy of white civilization. White civilization, in their minds, is the only truly civilized society that exists in the world, full of upstanding and responsible white citizens who contribute to society and live harmoniously alongside one another. They believe non-whites and liberal whites are attempting to ruin this civilization by bringing themselves and their evil ideals inside.

To the alt right, white civilization is the default civilization, a truly perfect society, one worthy of emulation. It is the human civilization, while all other humans are standing on the outside, looking in. White civilization and culture, the alt right fears, is being diluted by the cultures of non- white people. These cultures promote laziness and indulgence, two concepts that they apply to anything from welfare exploitation to high crime rates in cities. AmRen writers and commenters push the lines of offensive in the most reasonable way possible in order to demonize black people. For example, an article was written about how a white high school teacher who worked in high minority population districts witnessed black students cheering at 9/11. She describes how black children are loud, crass, and actively hate learning. She also claims that they did not feel they had to work hard because affirmative action would get them into colleges with less effort and less credentials than white children. This story is told with a borderline hysterical tone and seems highly unlikely, given the stereotypical way black students are portrayed. However, this one, although lurid, is not the same as a Daily Stormer Jewish overlord conspiracy theory or a claim made by a Donald Trump supporter who would

insist that anything Trump says is not only completely true, but the most true statement ever made by any American politician in the history of ever.

The alt right often argues that leftists are the fascists trying to eliminate free speech and destroy democracy. Although they use better vocabulary and syntax than the other sites studied, American Renaissance still expresses the belief that the left is full of lunatics who are too PC for their own good and are, at best, foolish and optimistic, and at worst, genocide enablers. These sentiments are shared by the Daily Stormer and the Donald. The key fractures in these thoughts lie in disagreements over how dangerous leftists truly are and how they should be dealt with.

Community Discussion and Discourse: The Civil Forum

The comments of American Renaissance allow for users to reply to one another and upvote one another, similar to Facebook and Reddit. The commenters do not often argue, but the times that they do, it is usually over semantics and deeper understandings of society. They try to be civil in how they criticize one another, but have deeper antagonistic sentiments based on history, assumed ethnicity, or upbringing, and other factors. To illustrate this point, I will describe a discussion that AmRen users had on February 10th of 2019, which was related to a book written by Jon Michael Spencer, an Associate Professor of Popular Culture at Bowling Green State University, called *The New Colored People*.

In this book published in 1995, Spencer argues that the increase of interracial relationships has created a new class of people who complicate and muddy the waters of race relations. He comments on the “new” (at the time) mixed-race movement, which

sought to add the category of “multiracial” to racial classifications, arguing that it will only further divide minority power and multiracial individuals will ultimately want to identify with the socially advantageous race, thus further disempowering blacks and maintaining a white-superior racial hierarchy. Thomas Jackson, an AmRen writer, provides commentary on *The New Colored People*, claiming that Americans once thought racial mixture was against the laws of God and that the mulatto, or person born of two different races, would be psychologically damaged by not having a firm identity and being unable to truly belong to either. Jackson argues that miscegenation was made illegal to prevent such tragedies from occurring. He then goes on to refer to people of mixed-race backgrounds as hybrids who appear exotic and are lauded as an example of the “mixed multicultural” America that all non-bigots strive for, but ultimately warns in his review of the book that the mixing of races leads to confusion and dissent amongst the black community. He also more subtly warns white people that mixing with blacks creates children who will either violently reject their white side or wholly embrace their black side, thus rejecting their white parenthood completely. Jackson also mocks Spencer for hating his own black side by being so suspicious of people with white heritage and fearing that they will always side with the oppressors rather than the oppressed. He emphasizes that Spencer’s criticism of multiracial individuals, and his fear that biracial black individuals are “stealing” black culture and history from the “100% black” Americans, is hypocritical, since he wants to “do away” with the biological construct of race, yet at the same time feels that it is necessary. Jackson argues that “even black

people” want to stick to their own race and only have their own interests in mind. His ultimate argument is that blacks have a racial identity, same as whites (Jackson, 2019).

American Renaissance users and writers explicitly and implicitly state that being white is now considered a crime, and that only non-white people can be proud of their identity. On this article, user jaye VBellis calls politically correct people “Orwellian” in reference to the classic dystopian novel *1984*. They claim that PC culture wants to believe that race is a social construct, but also that the white race is evil. User Rich at Large agrees with them, making an almost identical comment, just with less mental flexing.

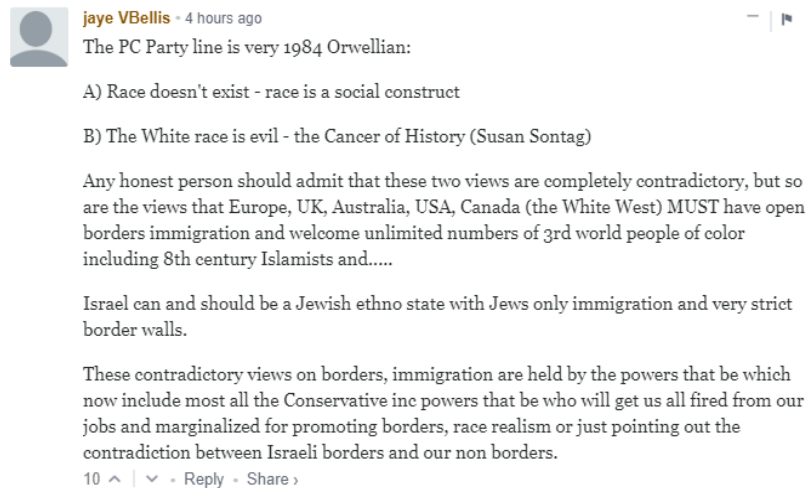


Figure 1. User jaye Vbellis' comment in comparison to Rich At Large's

Jackson, Thomas. "The Tragic Mulatto." *American Renaissance*, March 31, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/02/the-tragic-mulatto-new-colored-people-jon-michael-spencer/>.



Figure 2. User jaye Vbellis' comment in comparison to Rich At Large's.

Jackson, Thomas. "The Tragic Mulatto." *American Renaissance*, March 31, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/02/the-tragic-mulatto-new-colored-people-jon-michael-spencer/>.

User Sigurd then mentions Colin Kaepernick, a biracial NFL athlete who in 2016 began to sit during the playing of the National Anthem at his games to protest racial injustice and systematic inequality in the U.S. Sigurd claims that it was his “white parents” and white upbringing that made him a successful athlete. The ensuing discussion then argued that his “unruly” behavior is his black side.

User Roy Hobbs then starts a discussion on self-hatred, arguing that mixed-race people always hate their white side, and that non-white DNA always “rejects” its white DNA. User De Deplorable Doc then claims that it is not biological, but cultural, as it is now fashionable to be a victimized race and it gives people a voice they wouldn’t have had if they didn’t claim victim status. They continue to interact with one another, Roy Hobbs wondering if it is more natural for mixed-race people to want to fit in culturally or for non-white DNA to fight white DNA. He asserts that mixed-race people either reject

their white side because culturally, it is popular to do so, or because biologically, white blood simply does not mix with non-white blood. He then makes a reference to Mad Max, feeling that in a post-apocalyptic society, the non-whites will go wild and he doubts mixed-race individuals will stick to their white side. De Deplorable Doc then says that they don't understand why whites hate themselves so much nowadays. User THE WAY on the "Tragic Mulatto" article argues that miscegenation is white genocide and evil. User ky_native also argues that "the mother instinct" in white women seeks to protect "negroes." They argue that white women "with the brains of silly putty" mate with black men, creating freaks who are more dangerous than full-blooded blacks.

These opinions are clearly the general consensus of the site, as they are upvoted and made by users who have account names and are not anonymous. These names are often under AmRen articles, usually making the same arguments about black inferiority and white superiority. However, more notable than the hivemind opinions are the dissenting opinions. For example, on this article, user a multiracial individual begins to argue politely with other users:



Figure 3. User a multiracial individual claims not to be ashamed of their white side.

Jackson, Thomas. "The Tragic Mulatto." *American Renaissance*, March 31, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/02/the-tragic-mulatto-new-colored-people-jon-michael-spencer/>.

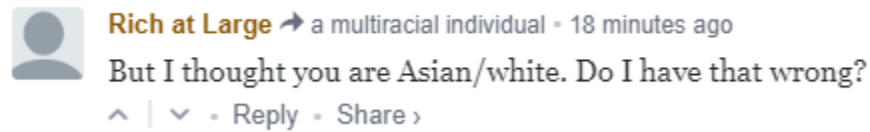


Figure 4. Rich at Large accuses a multiracial individual of being Asian/white.

Jackson, Thomas. "The Tragic Mulatto." *American Renaissance*, March 31, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/02/the-tragic-mulatto-new-colored-people-jon-michael-spencer/>.

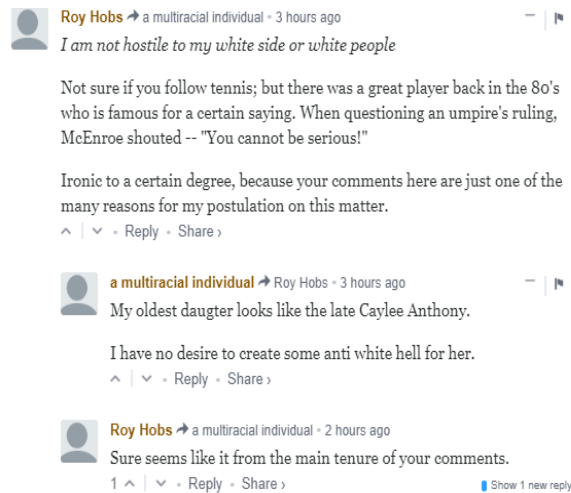


Figure 5. The ensuing argument with a multiracial individual.

Jackson, Thomas. "The Tragic Mulatto." *American Renaissance*, March 31, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/02/the-tragic-mulatto-new-colored-people-jon-michael-spencer/>

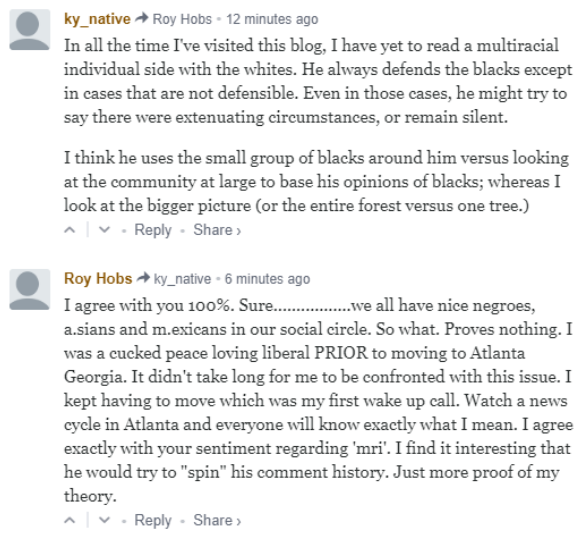


Figure 6. Users continues to attack a multiracial individual.

Jackson, Thomas. "The Tragic Mulatto." *American Renaissance*, March 31, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/02/the-tragic-...>

Roy Hobbs and others seem to dislike a multiracial individual. They seem to take their comments as evidence that a multiracial individual is against their white side. User ky_native claims that they are too sympathetic to blacks except in cases where they are “not defensible.” They also imply that a multiracial individual is a regular user of the site, whom ky_native has run into on multiple occasions defending blacks. This user also seems to keep track of who is commenting on which posts, since they also claim that in the “non defensible cases,” a multiracial individual tries to claim “extenuating circumstances” caused their inexcusable behavior, or “remains silent.” This hostility might stem from the user’s stated multiracial background, or they might simply be seen as not anti-black enough.

The ultimate conclusion of this discussion seems to be that multiracial individuals who hate their white side are likely to go full black and will exhibit unruly behavior. Those who love the white side are, in their minds, more likely to be well-mannered and successful and go on to lead fulfilling lives. Additionally, AmRen users attribute the success of not fully black celebrities to the white side. However, more important than this fear of impurity and desire for racial and genetic purity is the argument that occurred between user a multiracial individual and a few other regulars. A multiracial individual is assumed by Rich at Large to be Asian. They also seem to have a comment history that rankles other members of American Renaissance. They seem to be a contentious member, who is viewed as being too sympathetic to their non-white side. Although they are only one among many others, who all claim the same opinion, just with different spins on the argument, their presence recalls the individuality of each and every American

Renaissance user. They have a hivemind mentality, especially when it comes to American race relations, but they all possess distinctive voices and opinions.

Diane Dentice and David Bugg, in a study of Stormfront, a notorious and well-known (in white supremacy circles) hate website, discuss the tendency of the website's forums to obsess with whiteness and the importance of "protecting" a white culture at risk ("Fighting for the Right to be White: A Case Study in White Racial Identity," 2015, 104). White supremacists on Stormfront feel that white culture is morally superior to non-white culture, non-white people have not contributed to "advanced civilization," and white people are more "moral" than non-white people (Dentice and Bugg, 2015, 107).

Similarly, Peter Simi and Robert Futrell conducted an ethnographic study between 1996 and 2005 on the white power movement in which they conducted interviews with activists, studied WPM websites, and engaged in participant observation research within WPM groups. Their main focus was on cyberspace and how it directly correlates with group organization and movements in real life. Cyberspace, they argue, is an important tool because it helps white power groups meet in real life "safe" spaces (Simi and Futrell, "Cyberculture and the Endurance of White Power Activism," 2006). In a different study, they analyze the fluidity of "identities" and group power dynamics ("Free Spaces, Collective Identity, and the Persistence of U.S. White Power Activism," 2004). They also study "codes" and ways that identities are formed through online interactions and information sharing. However, they also emphasize the way these groups and individuals use free spaces. These spaces are transformed, and transform, the way people talk to one another through the internet. Particularly important in their analysis of

“free spaces” is the idea of mobilization. Some free spaces create greater and more compelling calls for mobilization; others do not.

Studies of white nationalism and white supremacy online focus on the importance of collective identities and community in fostering white pride and non-white hatred. Dentice and Bugg, and Simi and Futrell, analyze the rhetoric of hate sites, the individual interactions that operate under a wider framework of a social networking site. Studies of hate groups online also focus on the recruitment tactics of these sites, emphasizing the importance of creating personal bonds to bring new people in their folds, as well as the group dynamics within white supremacist groups that lead to multiple methods of recruitment. They emphasize white power music, white power video games, and white only online dating services, all methods of increasing group solidarity and possibly leading to coordinated real life meetings (Bowman-Grieve, 2011). Like Dentice and Bugg, Bowman-Grieve also has studied Stormfront, choosing to similarly tackle the site through lenses of identity, interpersonal relationships, and communal bonds. These concepts are integral in studies of cyberspace culture because online communities are defined by how they maintain themselves with the absence of physical meetings and face-to-face human interactions. Identity, interpersonal relationships, and communal bonds are radically transformed by digital culture, its special rules, its different methods of conveying emotions, and its “coded” language.

However, one of the weaknesses of many white supremacy online studies is the tendency to see white nationalists as a monolithic group that only strengthens ties with one another and grows stronger through the “unifying power” of the internet. In these

studies, they seem to feel that the internet only “draws” white nationalist groups together, creating a greater and more connected unit than before (Back, 2002; Crabill, 2007). They argue that cyberculture is complex, layered with nuances and meanings, yet mostly seem to emphasize how it is harmonious due to its ability to “shut out” undesirables and interact with its members without challenge to its discourses (Dentice and Bugg, 2015; Simi and Futrell, 2004; Crabill, 2007; Back, 2002). Their studies of white supremacist discourses as they appear on sites such as Stormfront analyze the complexities of linguistic usage and interpersonal bonding that occurs through forum interactions, or from coded language in content created by white supremacists (Back, 2002; Hale, 2012; Rhodes, 2014). They also emphasize how dangerous white supremacist sites are because of their primary goals, which are: information sharing, fundraising, social networking and recruitment, publicity, and risk mitigation (Clemmitt, 2017; Futrell and Simi, 2006; Bowman-Grieve, 2011). However, one aspect of white supremacy online that many scholars of the subject do not explicitly focus on is the disharmonious factions of white supremacist groups. The internet may bring people from all over the world to talk to one another in one space, but these people are not going to necessarily get along simply because they found the same site related to their shared interest.

The presented evidence suggests that even users on sites like American Renaissance can disagree. Another similar instance of dissent occurred on February 14th of 2019. User Lhathaway got into a small spat with user Eternally_Antifascist by claiming that “the majority of advanced degrees in math and science have been awarded to foreign students” and that this is only done to prevent the success of white students

who are being discriminated against. Eternally_Antifascist then berated them, asking them where they got such a statistic, wondering if they are a student of an “advanced degree in math or science” or if they simply made that statistic up. They then claim to be a nuclear physicist who thinks this “statistic” is wrong.

More notably, on February 15th, users argued on an article discussing Donald Trump’s calling of a national emergency over the Border Wall, most insisting that Donald Trump was doing all he could to build his wall, and that he still had “their” vote, but some users criticizing him for signing the Open Borders Bill, seeing it as a betrayal that makes the wall useless. User King even suggested that Trump is making a mistake, pushing for the wall, since it won’t “work” and is actually just a moneymaking scheme for construction companies with connections in D.C. User Hubert Cumberlande, a reference to YouTube horror series “Salad Fingers,” argues that “building the wall” is the only reason they voted for him and that he needs to get it done. “Salad Fingers” is a dark and twisted horror story about a mentally disturbed man living in an empty apocalyptic wasteland who often murmurs strange statements to himself and gives dark hints about what happened to him, his friends, and family. The alt right is often obsessed with apocalyptic scenarios, a holdover from white supremacists’ dark suspicions that the world is heading for a race war that will destroy the white race if they do not fight back.

User Le Fox and hondo get into an argument over Trump’s signing of the Open Borders Bill. Hondo accuses Le Fox of being a “hopeless defeatist” while Le Fox insists that they’re not defeatist, just seeing “reality.” Hondo then accuses Le Fox of trying to gain sympathy but says they aren’t going to give it to them, and that they (the community

of AmRen) “don’t do hugs.” They then get into a strange battle of semantics that ultimately forgets what they were talking about. User Le Fox makes further comments about how Trump has “let them all down.” User Asmodeus Rex then disagrees with Trump’s calling of a national emergency, arguing that the act sets a precedent for future presidents declaring national emergencies to seize control. They seem anxious about the idea that future presidents might be able to declare themselves presidents for life simply by calling a national emergency.

These small disagreements reveal the dissenting opinions on a site with a mostly uniform opinion on race relations and current events in America. Some users are proud of Donald Trump and support him, others are less optimistic and view him with suspicion. There are also users such as a multiracial individual, who tries to offer a more “moderate” opinion that is viewed with distaste and discomfort.

On March 22nd of 2019, another small argument arose between users Charles-Martel-InfidelGoy and user the scorpion in your boot over the Daily Stormer. They argued on an article snippet related to the terrorist attacks at the Christchurch mosque in New Zealand that the alt right was being unfairly “accused” of being violent. Charles-Martel-InfidelGoy insists that it is Andrew Anglin’s fault that they look “violent:”

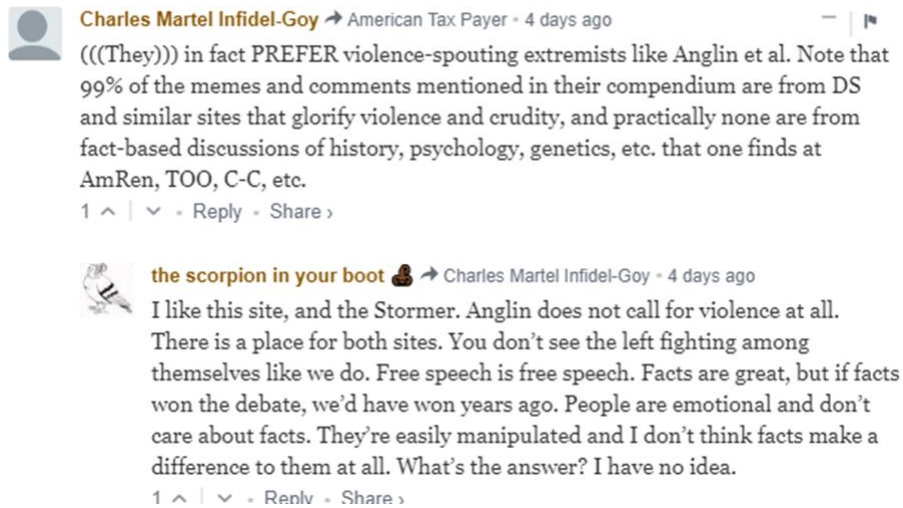


Figure 7. Users disagree about the status of the Daily Stormer.

Carmon, Yigal, and Katrina Lantos Swett. "Commit to Fighting the Hater Next Door." *American Renaissance*, March 23, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/03/commit-to-fighting-the-hater-next-door/>.

They seem to feel that Andrew Anglin is an extremist. Meanwhile, another user claims that Anglin does not call for violence and is not an extremist. They then insist that the left does not fight “among themselves” the way they do. They argue that the Daily Stormer might appeal to “emotions,” but is still “factual.” Another user then weighs in:



American Tax Payer → Charles Martel Infidel-Goy · 3 days ago



I've only read one article from the Daily Stormer and I was not impressed. It basically glorified prostitutes (I don't believe in bashing prostitutes but I don't believe in glorifying the "profession" neither) while simultaneously bashing on White Women. Certainly not ideal for bringing Whites together and especially not for bringing White Men and White Women together, that's for sure.

And, like you, I see no need for threats or vulgarity neither 'cause you can easily cut people off at the knees with facts.

And speaking of Anglin and the rest, people love to say, 'the klan is all cops' but I bet you anything right now that those vulgar people/websites, are probably cops too 'cause you as said, the goal is to make us look bad.

^ | v · Reply · Share >

Figure 8. American Tax Payer criticizes the Daily Stormer.

Carmon, Yigal, and Katrina Lantos Swett. "Commit to Fighting the Hater Next Door." *American Renaissance*, March 23, 2019. <https://www.amren.com/news/2019/03/commit-to-fighting-the-hater-next-door/>.

American Tax Payer argues that “vulgar people” such as Andrew Anglin are secretly trying to make people who are more moderate such as AmRen users, “look bad.” They also feel that the Daily Stormer bashes on white women and would not bring white men and white women “together.” They feel that you do not need vulgarity because facts are good enough. Intriguingly they also dislike Andrew Anglin’s bashing of cops, which is a point shared just as strongly on the radical left, which believes the power of the police is more often than not abusive.

The most vocal users of AmRen thus feel differently about how to achieve goals, both amongst themselves and within the alt right itself. They disagree over which politicians are more malicious than others and how to best interact with one another. An important aspect to emphasize about community discourse is that AmRen, unlike the Daily Stormer and the Donald, does have more hostility in its comments. The Donald

Trump does not seem to have any dissenting opinions, even in its comment section, nor does the Daily Stormer, although users have expressed slightly differing opinions (which were not challenged aggressively). AmRen users, who enjoy spouting intellectual pseudo-scientific racism and cultural racism, are not above criticizing one another, as they view themselves as calm, logical, and practical. This view causes users to clash with one another, as “civil” debate is assumed to be a healthy aspect of AmRen participation. Thus, American Renaissance is not only fractured off from the greater alt right community, which enjoys crude meme humor and crass slurs, but fractured within itself. Although it will likely not break completely, the fact that there are disagreements among users indicates that fracturing does occur on the individual level.

Racism Against Blacks: White and Black Billiard Balls

As expected of a white nationalist website, anti-black sentiments are common. Like many white nationalist websites, American Renaissance frames its hatred for black people in the context of both cultural and intellectual inferiority. For example, articles from February 11th include multiple pieces that emphasize black crime. Comments always insist that this is why blacks and whites will never coexist peacefully. Other commenters demand for sterilization and deportation. Some mourned the white children whose productive lives were snuffed out by “ape-like” negroes with subhuman intelligence. User Roy Hobs made a comment claiming that young black “juveniles” who commit crimes are always defended by the excuse that the brain is not developed yet, but white kids never receive similar treatment in news coverage.

Articles from February 12th are similar. One relates to a Yoruban nanny accidentally drowning a child with milk. One commenter ask why you would ever trust a black nanny. One user claims that “third world” nannies are not to be trusted and recounts a personal anecdote from their own life:

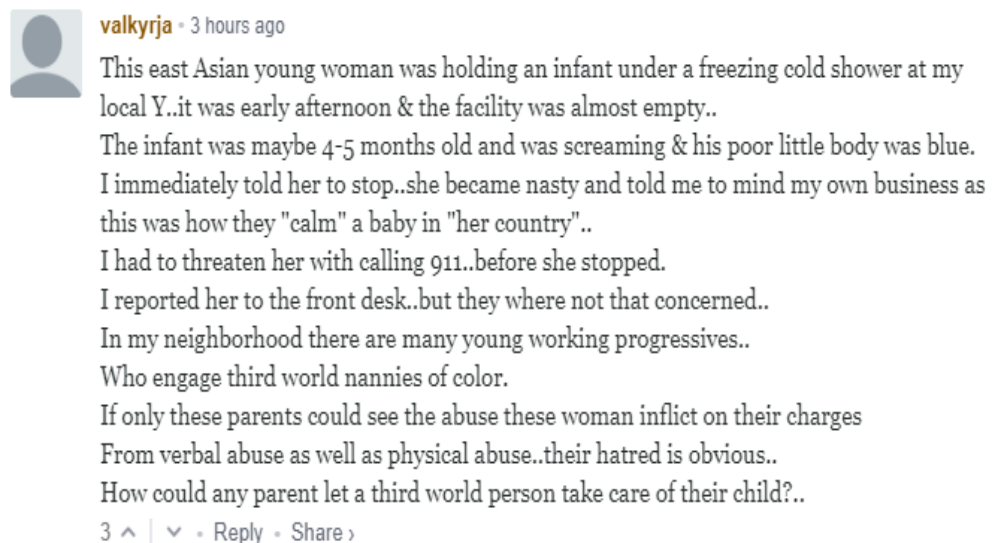


Figure 9. User valkyrja tells a story about her local Y.

“Nanny Oluremi Adeleye Drowned Her Charge in Milk.” *American Renaissance*, February 12, 2019.
<https://www.amren.com/news/2019/02/nanny-oluremi-adeleye-drowned-her-charge-in-milk>

This article is one of many throughout the week related to a crime concerning a black perpetrator. Whether the victim is black or white, the “depraved” black perpetrator is portrayed as being a typical example of their race, but also the worst of the worst, and a plague on white society. User valkyrja paints a narrative in which she, an innocent white bystander, stepped in on behalf of a defenseless baby, who was being mistreated by a

silly and barbaric woman of color under the guise of “cultural differences.” This portrays both the woman’s race and her culture as two dual negatives against her competency as a caretaker. Additionally, the story can be false, exaggerated, misinterpreted, or possibly true, but it would not matter on this site, because the discourse of American Renaissance is full of anecdotes that paint white people as reasonable and more intelligent than non-white people by default. As long as the story exists, other users can enthusiastically believe in it, contribute their own stories or opinions on such stories, and continue an isolated digital narrative of white superiority.

Another article that sparked outrage among American Renaissance users and is a particularly powerful example of how AmRen writers and users vilify and demonize African Americans was an article quoting Kamala Harris, a Senator from California. The article itself quoted Kamala Harris as saying she supported slavery reparations for the descendants of slaves, but was met with hostility from AmRen users, who insisted that slavery reparations were a waste of money that blacks would simply blow through. They also stated that it was wrong to make people who immigrated to the United States after slavery to “pay for” slavery. Others felt that African tribes “sold out their own people” and sent them into slavery and should also be culpable for it. Some users also commented that Irish people and other oppressed whites were not being paid similar reparations.

Most argue that African Americans are a waste of resources, a violent species that only squanders the kind help whites offer. They feel that they could be making great technological advances if not hindered by blacks living on welfare and being taken care of despite being childish and intellectually stunted. User rok43 suggests that blacks pay

for the cost of the Civil War. User Roger Cliftonville-Acton then argues that blacks would have been enslaved in Africa “much longer” than whites enslaved them in the U.S., so blacks owe whites in reparations for five generations of “uncompleted” slavery. This reflects the sentiment that whites saved blacks from slavery in other countries and thus are not to be blamed for owning blacks as slaves. User rls976 suggests that “welfare” is the form of reparations that blacks have received. The rest of the discussion is thick with several users arguing that blacks will always vote Democrat because they are anti-white and enjoy the benefits of welfare policies supported by Democrats. They also accuse Democrats of encouraging larger and poorer black populations in order to maintain their “voter base.” This goes along with their belief that Democrats are not understanding that it is not systematic racism that is hindering blacks but their “low IQ” and poor work ethic.

The users of American Renaissance clearly feel that blacks are their enemies in every way, mentally inferior, culturally inferior, and incapable of being worthy of white help. They may disparage liberal white men and women, but they do not view them as subhuman, simply incomprehensible. Race is an important component of their disdain for “PC culture” and what they view as “anti-white” sentiments.

Another article and discussion of note involves the personal anecdotes of a New York City teacher at Washington Irving High School. She claims that the students, implied to be predominantly black or simply non-white, were lazy, noisy, and violent. They actively tried not to learn and bullied people who did. She claims she was insulted, abused, and could not control the students at all without being labelled “discriminatory.”

She claims that the administration was always on the side of the students, who were vitriolic towards her due to her race. She also argues that the culture of the school glorified gang violence and was anti-white. The former teacher also claims that black students didn't feel they had to work hard to get into college, openly admitted that "because they were black," they could get in anywhere. She also claims that she was at this school during 9/11 and that when the towers were hit, students "cheered," as aforementioned. She goes on to describe in lurid detail how schools she taught at with minorities were lax on discipline and that minority children had no discipline.

Comments share anecdotes about how "non-white" people did not care about 9/11 because only "rich white people" died. Some users claimed that black culture was despicable, advocating for gangster life styles over education. They also argued that black intelligence was also naturally always going to be lower, and thus there was no point in even trying. They blamed temperament as well, insisting that black rage was directed at their own intellectual inferiority. However, others insisted that the rage was simply biological, due to testosterone imbalance.

Most of the comments were a mixture of people believing that IQ had everything to do with black educational inferiority and people who insisted black culture was the reason for bad minority test scores. They also believe that "black privilege" exists and that subpar black students, both badly behaved and believing in "social justice principles" with low IQs and bad work ethics, are being accepted at university instead of white children simply because they are black. The community members also argue that black children are unruly. They are loud, obsessed with gangster culture, and thus dismiss and

hate white culture, which is their “black privilege.” Teachers cannot control them without threats of violence and the administration is “helpless” to stop them because if they try, they will be labeled racist. AmRen users claim that Democrats and progressives are ruining education by allowing black students to coast by. They are also brainwashing white people to hate themselves and see themselves as inferior. The ultimate “solution” towards the end is to remove black people altogether, because they simply “could not” and would not adhere to white morality or white culture.

These comments indicate a conformity of thought when it comes to race. However, there is still diversity amongst comments, as some users choose to emphasize different aspects of racial genetic inequality. For example, on February 14th of 2019, an article written and published by the Chronicle of Higher Education was received with reactions similar to the article written by the Washington Irving High School teacher recalling the unruliness of black students. User MekongDelta69 insists that the author, and other authors, refuse to admit that “lower IQ” is why blacks fail to graduate from colleges and why black males in particular drop out sooner and have greater college debts. User Thinking Critically then agrees, saying that whites and Asians from similar economic backgrounds are capable of “adapting” to the environment and becoming successful, but blacks, being less intelligent, cannot.

But in contrast with these users, user Raymond Kidwell argues that the “success of the parents” matters more than race. They claim that rich black parents will raise a child more likely to be successful than the child of poor white parents. They blame this on affirmative action, asserting that affirmative action benefits rich minorities, and that

“less than average” minority students will be more successful as long as their parents are rich. They feel that affirmative action should be based on socioeconomic background, since race based affirmative action just allows worse students to pass into higher education. User Frank DeScushin then mentions “Mismatch Theory,” a theory first suggested by former Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. It argues that black students are being accepted at schools they are not qualified for. This, Frank DeScushin claims, leads to higher black dropout rates and less qualified blacks not being hired.

Thus, different users agree with one another, but on AmRen, they choose to cite different sources or emphasize certain aspects of their racial theory to one another. In forums related to education, black children are symbolic of the greater “gangster” culture that is responsible for black degeneracy. Additionally, white Democrats are enabling this culture as a part of a greater conspiracy to maintain political control. This article recounting the “horrors” a white teacher experienced teaching “non-white” student furthers the narrative that whites and blacks simply cannot get along.

American Renaissance represents this pseudo-intellectual pro-white discourse that the alt right both explicitly and implicitly hocks on many of its sites. They add to a decades-old discourse of pro-white, anti-black sentiments by insisting white people are the new victims of racism. This is unique because previously, white nationalists could simply say they are better, that black culture is inferior, that white culture is the epitome of human culture and society. Now with “politically correct culture” and “inclusiveness” in politics and entertainment, they can also insist that white culture is undervalued, degraded, and in “danger.” This extra element of victimhood allows for them to craft and

maintain a narrative of both paranoia and urgency. The white race is not only superior, but in danger of being overrun and perverted by non-white races.

Anti-black sentiment is not a fracture amongst the American Renaissance community. It is arguably more of a glue, which, despite some individual dissent, keeps users united in opinion. The reigning discourse on these sites goes like this: Blacks are always inferior due to their cultural and biological differences. Black males are always aggressive, brutish, and unintelligent. Black females are sexually desirable while also being revolting and poor mothers. Black children are unruly versions of their parents. They are the cause of all social ills in white society.

People who do not believe that the races should be separated, or at the very least, are not made equal would presumably not be a consistent visitor of the site. Although there are discrepancies and differences in opinion, there is a ruling thought that makes the space unique, and that is the “race realism” rhetoric. It is rhetoric that also underlines the Daily Stormer and the Donald, but AmRen uses a different site layout, rules of acceptable conduct, and language to convey its unique white nationalist angle.

Gender and Sexual “Abnormality”

American Renaissance’s view of women is traditional, believing in female submission to men and female suitability more as a caretaker and wife more than anything else, yet it is not as hostile as other alt right communities, which often mock or demonize women, feminism, and the female body. For example, on the “Tragic Mulatto” article posted on February 11th of 2019, user ky_native stated that only white women with the brains of silly putty would mate with blacks. Although this attitude is condescending

and hostile, it still seems to feel that white women who mate with black men are silly rather than directly dangerous. They are dangerous only so far as they create more dangerous people. On the same article, user jaye Vbellis argues against ky_native's point, claiming that mixed-race women are less hostile and understand how dangerous lower-class black men are. AmRen believes women are thus less threatening, white or non-white, however can still present a threat if they reproduce and create more undesirables. They argue that white women are of course desirable, if they possess the right mindset, but mixed-race women can also be desirable if they act the right way.

This mindset of "desirable women" is also present in another highlighted article on February 11th which relates to Hungarian minister Viktor Orbán's new tax benefits for Hungarian women with 4 or more children. Comments were off, but the article was highlighted because American Renaissance users would approve of plans designed to increase white populations within national borders. Orbán's statements on his new tax policy indicate that "true Hungarians" must combat the declining birth rate, not increased immigration. True Hungarians are thus not immigrants, but people who know true Hungarian culture, practicing the proper religion and being born in Hungary. Immigration and American Renaissance's opinion of women are tightly intertwined, as women are the vessels for the crowds of illegal immigrants that they fear.

The dangerous woman also takes the form of the wrong kind of politician. An article written by American Renaissance writer Robert Hampton argues that Somali Muslim Congresswoman Ilhan Omar is a "direct challenge" to American society and American history. He argues that she is a perfect representation of what immigration and

“identity politics” have wrought upon the American government. He argues that she is anti-white, does not care about her white constituents, and blames white people for all of America’s problems. He claims that she is not American, but an alien. Many commenters took affront to her religion, feeling that Muslims do not belong in an American Congress. They also took offense to her Somalian background, some hoping she could be deported.

Clearly women have an important role in American society, as desirable or undesirable, with the right or wrong opinions, depending on their political affiliation. They are less threatening to American Renaissance’s community, while at the same time are incredibly dangerous if left uncontrolled and allowed to “mate” with the wrong kind of men. In the Yoruban nanny accidentally drowning a child article forum, a multiracial individual stirred the pot by mentioning the need for a “Universal Base Income” that would eliminate the need for a dual income, which would allow women to stay home and be proper mothers. User gerald carbonneau then argued that women want careers. A multiracial individual argued back that most women would want to stay home and take care of children. In this exchange, one can see an American Renaissance user’s traditional view of women as homemakers and caregivers. However, one can also see that another user disagrees, feeling that women do want to work and be successful. These discrepancies in opinion highlight the individuality of each American Renaissance user, despite their universal belief in white superiority and female inferiority. The role of women might also be a contentious one, as white women fulfill the role of doting housewives in right wing minds, but at the same time, white women are not as lazy as

black or other non-white women, and thus they can be allowed to have careers and professional lives.

Further into this discussion, user Captain Sweden then argued that America needs smarter people of the white race and that they support eugenics programs which would ensure that high IQ white women have more white kids with white men. Interestingly, they do also agree that a universal base income is necessary. They argue somewhat on how a UBI (universal base income) would be funded, a multiracial individual suggesting raising taxes, and others arguing that they are against raising taxes. This argument demonstrates two integral American Renaissance views of women. The first view is that women, specifically white women, belong in the home, and are responsible for raising well-mannered children and instilling in them a strong work ethic. If they “breed” with non-white men, then they are foolish, delusional, and/ or traitorous. The second view is that women, non-white women, are a threat as child bearers who may bring more illegals and dark-skinned people into white countries and ruin their white civilizations. There are also women, both white and non-white, who are liberal and feminist minded. They are threatening in a different way. In the article recounting a New York city teacher’s experience teaching child of color, user anna miller claims that they have had the most attitude issues with female students and she wonders if it’s because feminist thinking has made them unrulier. She also asks why there is a national teacher shortage. User a multiracial individual claims that it is because “we don’t pay teachers.” Another user, Parkerpolhill, insists that teachers have high-paying jobs, they just don’t feel safe. User Luca D. then insists that students are “dumbed down” by socialist anti-American rhetoric

and this encourages low or no standards in education, which is what leads them to vote for Democrats. This brainwashing is also coming from Hollywood and the media. Thus, they relate feminism to liberal brainwashing, poor social control, and the rise in violence and political manipulation. AmRen believes women to be both less dangerous people and more dangerous people, due to their role as child bearers. They are beneficial if they produce productive white children who vote Republican, but harmful if they produce mixed-race children or liberal children.

The alt right's opinion of women is vastly different on the Daily Stormer, but not too different on the Donald. On the Daily Stormer, women are stupid, illogical, amoral, and soulless. They are ridiculed, despised, regarded as intellectually and morally inferior, and are incapable of doing anything right without the control of a good white man. If left to their own devices, they will obey Jewish brainwashing and breed with non-white men. On the Donald, they are viewed as inherently in need of good, loving husbands and children to nurture. Women who are liberal or viewed as resisting their gender roles too much are subhuman, shrieking harpies and SJW (social justice warrior) whales. However, they are not viewed as inherently amoral or repulsive. They can be good if they only reproduce with the right men and support Donald Trump wholeheartedly. There is even an element of feminism on the Donald (not called feminism of course because feminism is considered a cancer), in which the Donald insists that Donald Trump empowers women and being in support of him makes a woman a strong and powerful woman. Thus, American Renaissance, like the Donald, recognizes good women and bad women.

AmRen is less crude about how it criticizes enemy women, but it acknowledges that good white and non-white women exist.

Aside from gender, there is also racism that conflates with homophobia and notions of sexuality on American Renaissance. On February 13th, there is an article related to the disheartening experiences of people of color on dating apps, but it was removed by February 26th, 2019. The comments on this snipped article were derisive, asking why this “matters at all.” Some users mockingly assert that those who complain about dating discrimination are just ugly, the implication being that ugly black people are just angry that beautiful white people are not interested in them. User Simonetta sneers that homos only want to have sex with models, not “third world homos.” User Magician claims that Asian women, even the ugly ones, are highly desirable, but expresses confusion over why gay Asian males are not more desirable, since they are notoriously feminine. User Rich at Large then says that “discrimination is the basis of dating.” They also disdainfully note that dating app companies are letting the “no fats” preference slide. User a multiracial individual idly comments that the dating world is tough for black females and Asian males. In this discussion, multiple users express hatred for the “homosexual” lifestyle and sneer at the frivolity of dating apps. In this instance, the goal of American Renaissance content compilers and editors seems to be to mock non-white people who have trouble on dating apps, where others see them as undesirable due to their skin color. This news is less urgent, less destructive, as it implies that white people using dating apps are discerning and will not date non-white people. Also, in this case, gender and sexuality are intertwined with racism, as AmRen users discuss the trope of the

hyper attractive Asian female, the feminine Asian male, and ugly sexually frustrated black males.

This disdain for dating apps and general distaste for communication technology is representative of an older, more traditional white nationalist site. This is a notable difference from r/The_Donald, which prides itself on being tech-savvy and internet-knowledgeable. The Daily Stormer would most likely also identify itself as modern, youthful, and full of energy based on how their articles are written and how humor is constructed on their site. The alt right might encompass AmRen and other slower and more political-minded white nationalist communities, but the more high-energy communities contrast heavily with the more dignified and elderly white nationalist communities.

AmRen, along with having the traditional view that dating apps are silly and black males are unattractive and too beast-like for white women to like (unless they are also foolish) explicitly expresses hatred for black women. One featured article comments on how Michelle Obama's stylist, Meredith Koop, dislikes the lack of diversity in the fashion world and doesn't like styling a bunch of white women. Her interviewer, Constance C.R. White, then replied "Isn't that racist against white people?" Koop then responded that she didn't think white racism existed. AmRen users mocked her for this statement, saying that one day the non-whites will turn on her. They also scoffed at the idea that racism against whites did not exist. User Joy Whitelash then pronounced they were glad she doesn't style white women, as her dresses were like "sacks." They also claimed that Michelle Obama received undue attention and praise despite wearing

horrible clothing and looking “frumpy.” They also state that fashion trends never emulated Michelle Obama’s wardrobe, thus proving that fashion industries knew not to copy her ugly looks. Additionally, user IstvanIn mocked Michelle Obama for wearing “boob belts” and going “sleeveless,” which is inappropriate for a first lady. Like r/The_Donald, comments joked about Michelle Obama’s wardrobe, describing her as “masculine” and “built like a linebacker.” They joke about her possibly being a man, both to denigrate her and to mock former President Barack Obama as being weak, feminine, and the “bottom” in their relationship. Homophobia, transphobia, racism, and misogyny intersect whenever Michelle Obama is discussed by white supremacists. Along with accusing Michelle Obama of “having a bulge,” they also compare her to Chewbacca. Other users call Michelle Obama fat and compare her to skinny European women in politics. User Carmine Dalle expresses the opinion that black women are jealous of white women and their beautiful skinny bodies, but then says many white women are also in the “same shape” as black women. User GraveDave then says, “Mostly leftwing feminist women.” User VknGVron then replies to Carmine Calle, saying that black women are resentful rather than jealous because “they are proud of their strong, voluptuous, shapely bodies and most men find them sexually desirable.”

AmRen’s treatment of Michelle Obama reveals a strong distaste for powerful, influential black women with successful political and professional careers. They criticize her wardrobe and her behavior, as they claim that going sleeveless is inappropriate for a first lady. They joke about her being a man with a bulge who is comparable to furry and beast-like Star Wars character, Chewbacca and call her overweight. Their hostility falls

under multiple matrices of oppression, targeting her for her race, calling her animal-like; her gender, calling her ugly and overweight and possibly male; and her political affiliation, calling her domineering and her husband, Barack Obama weak and feminine. These hostilities overlap with their general distaste for black people, black women, and black women in politics specifically. They compare Michelle Obama to other white women in politics, as well as in fashion, and insist that she is subhuman due to her lack of ability to conform to their standards. Yet their standards are inconsistent, as Melania Trump has worn sleeveless dresses, as have many first ladies, and only fit their narrative of black women being both ridiculously ugly as well as overtly sexual, masculine, and unintelligent.

These interactions come from a long history of viewing black bodies as hideous, yet simultaneously sexually desirable. American society has identified the black body as being “polluted,” as opposed to the purity of the white body (Vesely-Flad, 2017, 195). The black body is “associated with weakness and wantonness- dependency on welfare, drugs, and violence. They are distinguished from white moral bodies, which, in the eyes of conservative thinkers, are associated with self-discipline, self-denial, and obedience to authority. Whereas people who are seen as moral move about freely, people associated with immorality are subjected to policing forces and rigid systems of discipline” (Vesely-Flad, 2017, 195). In this instance, both Michelle Obama and her husband Barack Obama are polluted bodies. Michelle Obama is called ugly and animal-like, as well as non-gender conforming, while Barack Obama is feminized. By having their gender roles reversed by American Renaissance, they are then viewed as sexual and gender deviants.

Polluted black bodies in this instance are not simply amoral in the sense that those who possess them are criminal; they are amoral because they purportedly are not conforming to gender roles, which are moral in American Renaissance's eyes. This narrow-minded, transphobic, and gender-fluid intolerant perspective allows for American Renaissance to dehumanize and mock important black political figures while simultaneously demeaning transgender individuals.

On gender and sexuality, the members of AmRen agree. They believe the LGBT community is worthy of scorn, by not conforming to traditional gender roles or racial norms. They also believe that women have one primary role: caretaker. However, they differ from the Daily Stormer in that they do not express open hostility and contempt for women. One AmRen user even expressed a distaste for the Daily Stormer because of this, arguing that white men and white women should not be fighting one another. American Renaissance may still expect women to be obedient mothers and wives, but it does not call women sexual deviants who need to be controlled in order to be considered people the way the Daily Stormer does. This disagreement is notable because in the alt right community overall, women's primary function is procreation. Whether they are parasites, bringing their brown-skinned parasitic children with them, or wise and gentle white mothers who must raise white citizens, they only have one role, and that is to give men children. The little differences, such as outright hatred and disdain for women vs. coddling condescension and light contempt affect the atmospheres of the two sites, making them entirely unique while also a part of a larger discursive group.

PC Culture and the Anti-White Agenda

Going along with the idea that black culture is undesirable is the belief that white culture is superior and must be emulated for one to be considered human. American Renaissance explicitly and implicitly states that being white is now considered a crime, and that only non-white people can be proud of their identity. This narrative of white victimization is commonly referred to as white genocide, or the act of destroying white culture with multiculturalism and the pure white bloodline with mixed-race relationships. In more moderate discussions, white genocide is merely implied, as AmRen users often argue that white people are being shamed for their identity and are underprivileged because of it. One instance of this narrative occurred on February 13th. A story that drew particular ire in the AmRen forum that day was one vindicating the Covington Catholic School boys who were involved in a viral video that sparked a national outcry, as it depicted the boys harassing a Native American activist named Nathan Phillips during a slight skirmish between March for Life protesters and Native American protesters in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. This harassment was later proven to be fictitious, as one of the most prominent boys implicated stepped forward to say that he and his classmates had not been harassing the Native American protesters and that the opposite was true, they had been harassed by African American protesters before the confrontation caught on video. AmRen users supported the boys, saying they “stayed classy” and exhibited great self-control.

User Mark Zuckurburg, who usually replies in character as Mark Zuckerberg, says, “But one of them smiled, and here in these woke comprehensive times, we just

can't allow physically attractive white cisgender heterosexual men to be happy, or be listened to, or be on magazine covers." User John R then replies, "I agree with you, Marc. Seriously, the nerve of these Catholic school boys. You know how they are don't you? I mean, they have all that, you know, privilege and stuff. I can only tolerate students like this if they bow their heads and humbly beg forgiveness for the White male Christian heterosexual privileges that they enjoy. They should have never been allowed to show any kind of pride in themselves, because you know full well, Marc, that once White people have pride, the ovens of Auschwitz are next. In addition, only successful White people like you should be allowed wealth. Someone has to keep the masses in line. There, I don't care what others here say, I got your back, Marc!"

Other users posted similar comments, all along the vein that the white cisgender heterosexual males of America are held to higher standards than any other group and are demonized and bullied for "being who they are." They insist that liberals hate white people, hate white culture, and actively protect non-white cultures and people because they are either self-hating white people corrupted by PC culture politics or nonwhite people who use white people for their own greedy purposes and thrive off of their self-hatred. Multiple articles on February 14th also focused on this anti-white narrative. They involve immigration concerns and the fear that whites are "more afraid of being called racist" than losing their "past." This past being lost is seen as a threat to the future, in which the white race may "cease to exist."

A similar forum discussion occurred on February 15th, when there was an article related to an incident in Fort McMurray, Atlberta, Canada. There was a public outcry

over a viral video in which members of a minor hockey team danced to the song *Electric Pow Wow Drum* by a Tribe Called Red. In this video, the team was dancing in a manner deemed racially insensitive, which caused the Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association to make a public statement denouncing the participants. The team was forced to forfeit a match due to safety concerns, as they received death threats and other forms of harassment on social media. Parents felt that the Hockey Association mishandled the situation by publicly branding their children as racists, especially considering that two of the boys involved were indigenous themselves.

AmRen users responded with the usual assertion that hysterical social justice culture is insane. They accuse the radical left of being prone to violence and harassing children, as well as being anti-white. However, this incident, although hardly unique, has a rather strange interaction related to it. Two users named American Tax Payer and belajadevotchka2 began to bond and share personal information in one of the forum conversations below. American Tax Payer scoffed at the left's use of the word "devastating." He recounts a story about how he went to a local SPCA shelter and saw a cat that looked just like his cat. When he came home, his foster mother said that his cat ran away, and he never saw the cat again. It was only years later that he realized the cat he saw at the SPCA was in fact his cat. American Tax Payer then stated that that is "true" devastation, not seeing a video with offensive dancing in it. User belajadevotchka2 then comforted them by posting a photo of their own cat. They then begin to chat, since they apparently had known each other before, and live in the same state. They exchange emails and regret that one lives in Pittsburgh while the other lives in "Filthadelphia." This

exchange is interesting because this is the first time AmRen users have shared a story that wasn't openly condemning people of color for something. It was also told with sadness rather than vitriol, and the response was kind, and lacked racial epithets. Later, the same user would argue that lynchings are condemned without considering what blacks might have done to deserve them, so clearly animals are more deserving of pity than black people.

This view that "PC culture" has gone overboard is one that often swings into more mainstream territory. Hysterical internet culture is hardly fictional, as instances of internet hysteria can and have trickled into real life, creating the impression that people will be offended about anything. Anti-white rhetoric thus can be legitimized by the internet and liberal internet users, like the alt right, can use the internet to make themselves more heard. The internet's mainstreaming effect via easy accessibility is a double-edged sword for extremists on both sides.

What is this "white culture" that AmRen users are trying to defend, aside from a culture of hard work, independence, and self-control, which no culture other than white culture possesses? AmRen believes it is Confederate culture, Southern culture, a culture related to states' rights, a weak federal government, strict racial segregation, and a capitalist economy. For example, on February 15th, there is an article related to the removal of Confederate statues and the state laws that prohibit such actions. AmRen users react with derision and loathing, claiming that whites do not care about their culture or history anymore. User Simonetta suggests that "only AmRen" users are capable of logic and understanding why statues dedicated to Confederate figures should not be

removed. Multiple users joke that white tax payers are being disrespected by having their histories erased, and that black taxpayers is an oxymoron, and their wishes are thus irrelevant. They express their usual anti-black hostility, but also emphasize their pride in white culture which is tied to the Confederacy and the idealized racial and gender hierarchy of the past.

Perhaps if they did not feel white hegemony was being challenged by a celebration of multiculturalism and human diversity, then they would not be so interested in Confederate history and white culture. Margaret Andersen asserts that whiteness has become more focused on in scholarship, for several reasons not limited to: “the emergence of racial identity politics; the backlash against affirmative action; increased and widely acknowledge population diversity-including news about the decline of whites as a majority population; the growth of academic feminism, and the absence of a nationally visible antiracist movement” (2003, 22). She also argues that, “Assertions about political correctness, the professed decline of ‘standards,’ and the class for traditional values are indications of a profound sense of white racial angst; many think that being white is a handicap, even though the system of white privilege remains” (2003, 23). In the American Renaissance community and the rest of the alt right, there is an underlying fear of being replaced or upstaged by people of color, whose accomplishments are thus downplayed, denied, or made a mockery of. Without that underlying fear of being replaced, the white past would not perhaps not be quite as appealing or interesting to the white subscribers of American Renaissance, whose interests might have laid elsewhere.

However, American Renaissance's avid obsession with "identity" politics, a glorious white past, and subsequent conclusion that all identities are celebrated except the white identity, also displays flagrant disregard for other forms of human life, while also subtly revealing their fears of being marginalized and truly oppressed one day by people they consider their inferiors. There is to be no compromise, no multicultural world where the races exist in peace because they cannot believe that the races were made equal, and thus a world where they are treated the same would be an apocalyptic and lawless one.

American Renaissance, and indeed, the Daily Stormer and the Donald as well, often refer to black people as the source of all of white society's woes. This tendency to use black people as scapegoats for all white problems is not limited to just white supremacist websites, but white American citizens in general. Derrick Bell argues that, "throughout history, politicians have used blacks as scapegoats for failed economic or political policies. Before the Civil War, rich slave owners persuaded the white working class to stand with them against the danger of slave revolts- even though the existence of slavery condemned white workers to a life of economic privation. After the Civil War, poor whites fought social reforms and settled for segregation rather than see formerly enslaved blacks get ahead...the 'them vs. us' racial ploy---always a potent force in economic bad times- is working again: today whites, as disadvantaged by high-status entrance requirements as blacks, fight to end affirmative action policies that, by eliminating class-based entrance requirements and requiring widespread advertising of jobs, have likely helped far more whites than blacks" (Bell, 1993, 8). By opposing black

advancement, poor white people can maintain a sense that they, despite their own poverty, are still “at least” superior to their black neighbors.

On white supremacist websites, users’ economic statuses are difficult to discern, and are probably impossible to gauge precisely. Additionally, rich white people are more than capable of believing in white supremacy. However, there is a general disdain for “elite white liberals” who try to appease ethnic minority communities. They dislike these elite white liberals because on a class level, they themselves are (probably) not rich and view rich liberal whites as being uppity and snobbish, and only pretending to care about minorities to appear more morally righteous. Thus, economically they may feel jealous of rich whites, and politically, they feel resentful of rich whites who are not only rich but open-minded and accepting of multiculturalism. The fact that their “fellow whites” are not on their side perhaps is what drives their anger the most, as being white should be a point of solidarity for all whites.

One example of this behavior of despising elite white liberals was displayed on a forum related to Jussie Smollett, who staged a hate crime against himself with the help of two Nigerian accomplices. At the time the article was released, the two Nigerian men were not yet confirmed to have been involved in the hate crime. User Herman asked how much money Chicago police wasted on this fake crime just to appease black people. User Widenose Privilege then responded, saying that it was more to appease rich “virtue signaling” whites, and that this is how they “make friends” with minorities. They then claim that they used to do the same thing before Trayvon Martin, where you had to be on his side or be a racist. They then argued that those who supported Trayvon Martin, and

later, Black Lives Matter, were trying to stifle free speech. They claim that this is what lead them to come to sites such as Stuff Black People Don't Like, AmRen, and other alt-lite and alt right sites.

In this discussion, Herman suggests that black people often complain about trivial matters. He diminishes their complaints and concerns as frivolous and superficial by asking how much money was wasted on this obviously fake crime. User Widenose Privilege then claims that “virtue signaling” whites are the ones who waste money trying to be “friends” with minorities. Virtue signaling, in the alt right perspective, is the act of blatantly signaling one's (usually) liberal values in order to present one's self as highly moral and righteous. Virtue signaling is typically viewed as negative because the alt right believes it is only done by white liberals desperately trying to prove they are morally conscious and care about minorities when they only care about looking good.

This hatred of virtue signaling and belief that liberal whites are only attempting to get on minorities' “good side” by pretending to care about minority issues accentuates the alt right narrative that to be “not white” is to be hip and fashionable. On a more serious note, this narrative also claims that the problem is glorifying gang culture, primitive non-white indigenous cultures, and quashing white cultural pride.

This love and pride for white culture only exists side by side with hatred for a perceived black culture of negligence and savageness. They cannot celebrate white culture without denigrating black culture because they are not professing a love for Irish dance or for Swedish food; they are specifically proud of having white skin and being a part of a specific culture that hates non-white skin. They share this in common with the

Daily Stormer and the Donald but use longer syllabled words. They also avoid saying the uglier words, but still ultimately spread the same hateful rhetoric.

American Renaissance at its core believes in white supremacy, both white genetic supremacy and superior white IQ, as well as white culture supremacy. In America, and other “white” countries, AmRen users feel that whites deserve recognition, praise, and the privileges of a society dominated by and run by whites. They are a diverse group of individuals with slightly varying social and political beliefs, but in the end, simply by participating on the American Renaissance website, they fundamentally believe that anti-white cultures exist, and thus whiteness as a culture is under threat and must be preserved. They also believe that being male, heterosexual, and cisgender are identities that frequently come under “attack” by liberals and Democrats trying to destroy the fabric of normal and functional society, i.e. white society. Their discourses are typically pseudo-intellectual, referring to racially biased social research written by proponents of eugenics and racial hierarchy. They are generally polite to one another and attempt to engage in civil discussion with people they feel are not taking white genocide seriously enough.

However, an important aspect of American Renaissance to note in light of the study overall is that American Renaissance represents an older form of white nationalism. American Renaissance is a part of the alt right, being against the traditional conservative right and critical of Republicans, but they do not possess the same digital culture that made the alt right so popular or so prominent, both online and in real life. Their articles relate to political, economic, and social issues in as academic a tone as possible. Their users thus adjust their behaviors accordingly, arguing over semantics, using proper terms

for political ideologies, and refraining from using slurs or offensive language. They do not come across as jocular or light-hearted either; their discussions are serious and usually melodramatic, bemoaning the fate of the white race.

The alt right communities of the Daily Stormer and r/the_Donald are atmospherically different from American Renaissance. Their belief systems may be similar, founded on a principle of straight white male solidarity, but their methods of criticism and resistance are radically different. American Renaissance is not visually oriented at all. Articles do not have photos in them, nor do they have photos that accompany them on daily feeds. The Daily Stormer and the Donald thrive off satire, crude depictions of politicians in unflattering caricatures, light-hearted “heckling” or trolling culture, and challenging the mainstream right, and left, with visually based humor. American Renaissance operates as a strong example of an older branch of white nationalism evolving to operate and promote itself online. It is a white nationalist organization that uses the internet as a tool to further its goals of spreading its message. The alt right is a more unique phenomenon than the faux-intellectual version of white nationalism, as it revolves around digital culture, the evolution of communication technology, the mainstreaming power of the internet, and cyberspace as a contested discursive space.

Chapter Three

Andrew Anglin, the Daily Stormer, and the Sadistic Art of Angering People You'll Never Meet on the Internet

Introduction to Andrew Anglin and the Daily Stormer

In October of 2018, the Anti-Defamation League confirmed that fliers accusing Jews of being responsible for sexual assault allegations appearing all over the country were the work of the “Stormer Book Club.”



Figure 10. Example of a Stormer Book Club flier.

Dolsten, Josefina. "Neo-Nazi Group Is Behind Those Fliers Blaming Jews For The Kavanaugh Allegations." *Times of Israel*, October 18, 2018. <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/neo-nazi-group-is-behind-those-fliers-blaming-jews-for-the-kavanaugh-allegations/>.

The fliers, “depicting Brett Kavanaugh surrounded by black and white photos of Jewish caricatures with Stars of David on their heads, appeared on college campuses and at organizations in six states: California, Iowa, New York, Virginia, Massachusetts and Illinois. The organization behind them claims they put up the posters in seven additional states” (Dolsten, 2018). The Stormer Book Clubs are small groups, made up of 2-10 people who spread anti-Semitic and racist messages. They are the real-life versions of the “troll army” Andrew Anglin is known for. Anti-Defamation League senior investigator Carla Hill theorizes that there are only about fifty members across the country. Yet despite their low numbers, their posters still drew attention, as did their message. Hill claimed that the alt right was dying because of low attendance of their most recent rallies. Yet, the alt right is more than the Daily Stormer and those who adhere to its principles.

The alt right is not composed solely of neo Nazis that insist Jews are evil. It is also more than Andrew Anglin's troll army. Daily Stormer adherents are representatives of a greater force: the lawless chaos of the online world. The Daily Stormer represents a fracture of the alt right that revels in chaos, "trolling," and harassing those who disagree with them. Its website also reveals how a fracture of the alt right operates using offensive humor, slurs, and outrageous claims to be relevant, entertaining, eye-catching, and thus, more appealing.

In the digital landscape, there exists a world with and without rules. On the one hand, the internet is lawless. People share controversial opinions, confess dark secrets, argue against mainstream social norms, challenge one another to think outside of the cultural landscape they are born into. Groups of people whose sole delight is to upset and harass other users by making the most outrageous statements they can think of, also known as "trolls," run rampant through the metaphorical streets. They use slurs, advocate for incest, mock rape survivors, dehumanize women via pornography and misogynistic humor, joke about pedophilia, and sneer at attempts to be controlled by "politically correct culture." Every disturbing fetish not only exists online, but has a dedicated community of people that discuss all manners of sexual and non-sexual depravity on a daily basis. These communities share a hivemind-like ideology, espousing similar opinions and critiques of society ad nauseam. These ideas then become standard, common, almost mainstream in communities that forget that in real life, their hobbies are frowned upon or even offensive. In this way, the internet is a free space, the human id in digital form, allowing for every range of human thought, for better or for worse.

But at the same time, the internet is also regulated by corporations, by IP providers, by moderators, and by social convention. Any sociocultural spaces inhabited by humans will have specific languages, words they can and cannot use, or ideas that cannot be expressed without challenge. Many larger and more accessible internet communities do not allow slurs and will ban anyone who uses them. Many represent very real communities, which will stand up for individuals or for themselves when attacked by outside groups, physically or verbally. Others will challenge societal thought, but will stick to their own moral codes and rules for acceptable conduct.

The alt right is regulated somewhat by corporations, as its websites have been banned, its users doxed and harassed, but is mostly controlled by its own users. Its strength is in its diversity, in how easily it spreads itself insidiously through other ideologies and brushes with the mainstream conservative thought. Its previous success was achieved by “reaching audiences beyond the darkest corners of 4chan and reddit” and “distancing itself from the overt white supremacist rhetoric and iconography of so-called 1488ers. This moniker blends two white supremacist symbols – the 14 words and the 8th letter of the alphabet rendered twice, signifying HH or Heil Hitler (ADL, n.d.). White power groups that identify as 1488ers affiliate with Nazism and traffic in explicitly racist tropes (ADL). As alt right luminary Richard Spencer has admitted: ‘If I wanted to create a movement that was 1488 white nationalist, I would have done that. But I didn’t because I recognized that is a total nonstarter. No one outside a hardcore coterie would identify with it.’” (O’Brien, 2016).

Similar to American Renaissance, the alt right can disguise its white nationalism in Trumpism and race “realist” talk. However, American Renaissance has been around for a long time. Why is it suddenly relevant now? Because it is a part of the alt right, a greater movement, encompassing various classes of white nationalist thought. American Renaissance rests comfortably to the left of the Daily Stormer, hiding its hateful ideology behind well-mannered discussions and academic verbiage.

How does the Daily Stormer “hide” its white nationalism? Simply put: it does not. The Daily Stormer is full of Nazi imagery, the rampant use of every slur imaginable, contempt for women, and a hatred for just about everyone. Yet it is unique in that while its messages are political, its tone is almost apolitical. It cares deeply about “killing all Jews,” yet at the same time is really “just joking.” It proclaims that the white race is dying out and must be saved, yet also endlessly obsesses over memes and creating funny content. By pretending it is trying to spread its message while also “not caring” about its message at all, the Daily Stormer’s opinions triumph above all others. You cannot argue with someone who is not seriously attempting to debate with you, but simply trying to get a rise out of you. Similarly, those who attempt to seriously argue with the Daily Stormer are barking up the wrong tree by believing they are the type to be reasoned with, when at the end of the day they are trolls and agitators more than they are white supremacists.

Some would see the Daily Stormer, a neo Nazi website run by writer and founder, Andrew Anglin, as an example of how the internet is where degenerates go to say the things they would never say in person. And indeed, Andrew Anglin’s website was banned by GoDaddy, the company that hosted its server and then Google shortly after

disparaging Heather Heyer, insisting that most people are glad that she is dead (Mettler and Selk, 2017). As her death was not only recent, but directly involved with his hateful alt right rhetoric, Anglin's statement did not go over well. The Daily Stormer users perhaps found his statements amusing or at the very least, not outrageous enough to leave the site, but others found them grounds for dismissal and refusal of services. However, as the Daily Stormer was attempting to find domain registrars, technology and online service providers grappled with the questions: What is acceptable censorship? Some argued that though Anglin's message was hateful and distasteful, he still had the right to speak freely. Others argued that he had incited violence and his site would only continue to incite violence, so both should be silenced.

In either case, Andrew Anglin's content was the issue because companies could not decide if he was a real threat or not. In the past when Andrew Anglin's troll army was summoned, people had a difficult time figuring out how serious of a threat Andrew Anglin was. In 2016, Richard Spencer gained notoriety in America after giving a speech in Washington, D.C., declaring "Hail Trump" and doing the Nazi salute. His mother, Sherry Spencer, based in Whitefish, Montana consulted Tanya Gersh, a local real estate agent, worried about Whitefish residents considering protesting a commercial building Sherry owned after his stunt. Gersh responded that she should "sell the property, make a donation to charity, and denounce her son's white-nationalist views" (O'Brien, 2017). Sherry then reportedly accused Gersh of making "threats" and attempting a business "shakedown." Andrew Anglin, who had only recently become friends with Richard Spencer, then "doxed" Gersh, her husband, and other Jewish people in town, posting their

contact information and personal details on his website, urging his Stormer Troll Army to “hit ‘em up.” Along with this incitement to harassment, he created memes that involved putting yellow stars with the word “Jude” on them over the Gershes’ photographs, plastering an image of the Gershes’ twelve-year-old son over a photo of the gates of Auschwitz. His readers and followers then proceeded to harass the Gershes, Whitefish businesses, human rights groups, and city council members, attempting to frighten and intimidate anyone who would try to “attack” one of their own (O’Brien, 2017). This went on for six days before Andrew Anglin, eager to take the harassment and the trolling to another level, decided to up the stakes by declaring that he and his followers were going to march through the center of town with high powered rifles on January 16th of 2017, predicting that the “James Earl Ray Day Extravaganza” was going to have about 200 people participating in the event. Whitefish residents, terrified and angered by Anglin and his cronies’ harassment and threats of violence, tightened down on security and increased police patrols. Montana’s governor Steve Bullock and the ADL came to town to monitor the march. But on the day of the event, Andrew Anglin who had taunted and tormented a family and their community for a month, was nowhere to be found. He skulked back to the Daily Stormer to create more memes for his energetic followers, leaving a trail of psychological devastation in his wake (O’Brien, 2017).

Why did he choose to focus on Tanya Gersh? Was it because he cared a great deal for Richard Spencer and his dear mother? Was it because she was Jewish and successful, representing the evil Jew Anglin swore to fight? Or was it simply because he was bored, had nothing else to report on, and in this particular case, he wanted to goad his followers

into action, just for kicks? Perhaps he wanted a tangible victim, one within reach, a real estate agent with a home, family, and community for him and his fanboys to concentrate their aggression on. Whatever the case is, Andrew Anglin did not care about the outcome. He was and is a troll, an agitator, someone who enjoys getting reactions out of people and tormenting them for his own amusement.

Andrew Anglin grew up in Columbus, Ohio in an upper-middle class neighborhood. According to Luke O'Brien, who spoke to friends of Anglin's and those who had known him growing up, he was quiet, insecure, desiring attention. He was also an atheist, a vegan, a believer in animal rights, and wore a hoodie proclaiming "fuck racism" (O'Brien, 2017). On his website, "Andy Sucks! Records," Anglin encouraged people to send death threats to the Westboro Baptist Church. He sometimes tried to kiss other boys, including one black student he liked. His youth thus was spent doing the exact kind of activities he would later denigrate and despise (O'Brien, 2017).

His classmates described him as the type to get quickly involved in causes. He also was heavily into drugs and enjoyed a website called Rotten.com, which collected images of "mangled corpses, deformities, and sexual perversions" (O'Brien, 2017). He was prone to self-harm and was also a sadist. In his high school years, his ex-girlfriend Alison was date raped at a party. She called him, upset and needing his support, but he merely laughed and called her a slut. He then convinced several female students he knew to call her throughout the night to call her a slut who "deserved it" (O'Brien, 2017). This incident and his hobby of asking others to send threats to the Westboro Baptist Church are rather eerie precursors to what his adult life would consist of: convincing others to

harass and torment people at his whim. He had all of the building blocks of the Andrew Anglin that is known today: he latched onto causes quickly, was insecure and wanted attention, always had the habit of taking things to the extreme, lacked human empathy, displayed sadistic tendencies, and enjoyed pushing others to do his dirty work for him. These traits, while important to a dedicated master of “trolling,” would not be as notable or influential in any way if he did not have the internet. With the internet, he was and is able to gain access to people he would not have had access to without it. He is able to retrieve personal information, post it on his website, and encourage his dedicated fans to harass people, from all parts of the country and even the world. His offensive content finds a voice in the sea of the dull and mundane progressive voices that tell him what he can and cannot say.

Andrew Anglin founded the Daily Stormer in July of 2013, replacing his previous website, Total Fascism. Before he founded the site, he was deeply invested in wild conspiracy theories he read on the notoriously offensive, anti-PC, and anonymous photo and story-sharing website, 4chan. He also learned the art of “trolling” through 4chan, as well as a disdain for PC culture. The Daily Stormer, its name a reference to “*Der Stürmer*, a virulently anti-Semitic Nazi-era weekly newspaper that Hitler had read devoutly” was “unlike anything else in white nationalism: The design was clean, the posts were infused with Anglin’s wry humor” (O’Brien, 2017). On this site, he would learn several important tactics: keeping the argument simple (good guys vs. the evil, us vs. them), attack individuals rather than institutions (to keep things simple and evoke a particular reaction) and most importantly, keep it ridiculous.

Ridicule is Andrew Anglin's, and the alt right's, most powerful weapon. Enemies cannot argue with or combat humor. Anglin's sense of humor, dark and twisted, serves him well on the Daily Stormer because it helps him create outrageous jokes that are both serious and not-serious Nazi propaganda. He is both trying to send a political message and not trying to at all. He revels in provoking people, in convincing them to harass others and create havoc, yet given his troubled mental history, previously liberal roots, and love for trolling, one must always wonder how serious he is. Is he just trying to provoke people? Is he trying to make others laugh? Is he actually trying to cause a violent incident? It is difficult to tell. Internet humor, not just alt right humor, often relies on making statements both ironically and unironically. Internet users obsessed with memes often like using them to provoke particular reactions out of people with an established format. In these memes, one can make a serious point or a joke interchangeably. One risks inviting ire with their opinion, yet at the same time negates some of that risk by being self-aware. Meme creators thus use comedy to make points, but do their best not to come across as too desperate, too much of a "tryhard." A tryhard is someone making too much of a (failed) effort to get attention. Meme creators want attention, but do not want to seem as though they want it.

The Daily Stormer is a perfect representative of the "fun side" of the greater alt right movement because it embodies calculated chaos, trolling culture, and satire as a political statement. It relies on outrageous claims and outlandish conspiracy theories that are both serious and not-serious. They are trying to be funny, yet are not trying too hard. If what they are saying at any point seems too serious, they offset this with ridiculous

statements, and if at any point they seem to be trying too hard to be funny, they offset this with political convictions and the insistence that white genocide is happening right now.

A Walk In the Neo Nazi Park: Rantings of Angry White Men

When I first entered the Daily Stormer, I thought to myself, what would compel a person of color to read the theories of demented conspiracy-theory-addled white supremacist internet trolls for any period of time? The answer is academic masochism and a morbid attraction to the ideological profanity of neo Nazi trolling culture. Yet even going in with this strange mindset, I was still not prepared for the level of profanity Andrew Anglin would greet me with.

The Daily Stormer, like American Renaissance, has the appearance of a blog, but one much less refined. The background is white, but the font is not as elegant as American Renaissance's. Instead, the font is similar to a tabloid's font. Many words are in all caps with an excessive number of exclamation points. Additionally, slurs draw the eye immediately, letting the casual visitor know immediately what kind of website they are on. Those who leave immediately most likely understand that this site is an extremist website, full of slurs, hateful rhetoric, and violent narratives. Those who choose to stay know what they are staying for: neo Nazism, white nationalism, and an online community obsessed with vulgarity and pushing boundaries just for the sake of it.

The site contains articles with grotesque, eye-catching images and slur-filled titles that invoke anti-Semitism, racism, and misogyny. Although it is similar to American Renaissance in that it "reports" on, writes commentary for, and compiles news sources,

the writers of the Daily Stormer are not afraid to make much wilder conspiracy theories and accusations about prominent political and cultural figures. They thrive on making outlandish claims about secret pedophile rings and liberal plans to overthrow the government and conspiracy theories about the Jewish “overlords” in power. They relish in using taboo language, throwing around bastardized versions of every racial and ethnic slur imaginable. Their crude commentary is often filled with expletives, sexual references, and violent rhetoric. Their images are often exaggerated caricatures of big-nosed greedy goblin-like Jews, which sometimes double as Muslims, only edited to have turbans. They also enjoy using other exaggerated cartoon images, some from Japanese anime, others clearly hand drawn by amateurs or edited versions of them.

The Daily Stormer has a particular method of organizing its news articles. They have “World” news, “US” news, “Jewish Problem,” “Race War,” “Society,” and “Insight.” Topics under “Insight” and “Society” vary greatly, covering news from transgender rights activists being harassed on Twitter to reports on how pornography affects the brain to popular culture such as the new Captain Marvel movie (which the Daily Stormer despises and sees as feminist propaganda). Although they are two different topics, their content is roughly similar, since both cover “societal” news and “insight” into what is wrong with society. “Race War” usually covers interracial crime, which does not have to be just from the United States. “Jewish Problem” usually has news articles on Jewish politicians, performers, banks, globalization, and any “issue” they feel is secretly being influenced and controlled by the aforementioned “evil Jewish overlords.”

Featured stories will typically be every article posted in each one of these categories, although a few are not included under this tab. Common words referring to non-white people are: negroid, n*gger, moslem, nogs, “hominids,” and baboons. “Moslem” can be used to refer to any person of color, but usually refers to a dark-skinned person perceived to be from the Middle East. Feminists are referred to as “whales” while “uppity” or sexually active females are called whores, sluts, and sexual deviants.

Comments on the Daily Stormer are shown on the articles they are related to, but there is another Daily Stormer chat website where one must log in to post a comment. This website is poorly designed, consisting of a plain theme with limited functionality. Users have the option to make comments, with time stamps, like comments, and share links. There is also an instant scroll button that allows users to go back to the article being discussed. Users need to provide their emails in order to participate. On this same website, there are two other categories known as “announcements” and “classifieds,” which only registered users can see.

Like American Renaissance, the Daily Stormer despises PC culture and seeks to be as offensive as possible to show their disdain. They regularly sneer at social activists, particularly feminists, seeing them as disgusting sub-humans without any semblance of logic who are trying to destroy the sensible white man’s values. Although American Renaissance users were prone to accusing progressives of trying to corrupt true American values with their inclusiveness and multiculturalism, they were less likely to use racial slurs and violent, vitriolic language. Their anger was still expressed, but in more political terms. The Daily Stormer users, however, delight in using “foul” language peppered with

swear words. They also enjoy emphasizing black on white crime and the crimes of illegal immigrants, like AmRen, but with more colorful insults and blatantly dehumanizing commentary.

Daily Stormer writers and users express dark apocalyptic predictions about “where the world is going” but at the same time, their sense of humor thrives off the outrageous and the absurd. They are disgusted with both liberal and conservative politicians and celebrities, yet they are not serious as they bash and insult these people, preferring instead to gleefully dehumanize them with over-the-top accusations, name calling, and race or gender baiting. Daily Stormer writers, and Andrew Anglin in particular, struggle to find a balance between not caring about how bad the world gets, and caring too much. They speak pessimistically about whether or not Jews will ever be punished, lament the sure end of the white race, and complain that society is hopeless. Yet at the same time they triumphantly announce whenever they feel the white race fights back. They insist that they are losing, while simultaneously insisting that they are winning.

They, like American Renaissance and the Donald Trump, are riddled with contradictions that they can easily reconcile with their own special brand of logic. They are not fundamentally any more contradictory than AmRen or the Donald, however. If anything, their view of women is less contradictory, simply because it is not nuanced enough. Women are sexual deviants and can only be considered people if they are obedient. The simplicity of the idea does not often contradict itself because Andrew

Anglin, and other Daily Stormer writers, usually have nothing good to say about women, white or not.

Slurs and Caricatures: The Resistance to PC Culture

Unlike American Renaissance, the Daily Stormer does not try to pass itself off as intellectually based. However, like American Renaissance, the Daily Stormer takes clips and news articles from mainstream media sources. Daily Stormer writers offer their own “analysis” of the news offered, which is usually filled with conspiracy theories and crude, wildly inaccurate ramblings that typically demonize non-white people and Jews. They pride themselves on using memes they created and offensive images to punctuate their written rants, which are usually exaggerated and photo shopped American politicians with large heads, big teeth, and big noses. These politicians, and other celebrity figures, will also be photo shopped crying, screaming, or throwing tantrums to indicate how “insane” they truly are.

There are multiple Daily Stormer authors, each with their own distinctive styles. Pomidor Quixote uses a mix of slurs and pseudo intellectual language. Their language is crude and appeals to racial antipathy, but at the same time, they do not use crude visual humor as often as Andrew Anglin does. Andrew Anglin prides himself on his creation of fresh memes and seems to enjoy foul language, creative ethnic slurs, and wild speculative theories more than any other writer for the Daily Stormer. Lee Rogers is a Daily Stormer writer that seems the closest to AmRen’s style, sticking to more formal, factual language and reporting on more scientific topics such as climate change or economic concerns, such as housing. Roy Batty’s style is something of a mix between Pomidor Quixote and

Lee Rogers, having formal topics, but more visual meme-based humor and crude language.

All writers at the Daily Stormer share several themes in common. All use race baiting language, usually slurs against black people, Jews, and dark-skinned immigrants. They also sneer at feminists, progressives, and liberals. Feminists and female activists are referred to as “ugly whales” and screeching harpies who are too unattractive and loud to be tolerated. Feminist and liberal men, and even conservative men, are referred to as “soy boys” or “cucks.” They view the world as being entirely against them, seeing society as corrupted by an evil force (Jews) who control the media and manipulate good people like themselves by using code words. All of them, even the more reserved writers such as Roy Batty, will employ visual humor, such as depicting Jews as short, angry trolls with large noses and narrow eyes, to encompass their scathing review of mainstream news. Memes are a key component of the culture of the Daily Stormer, one which sets them apart from American Renaissance.

Across different writers, there are also common trending words. For example, “Jewish rhetoric” is common. It is described as “schizophrenic and contradictory.” Similar to r/The_Donald, the term “globalist” is taken to be synonymous with the word “Jewish” and is perceived as evil. All writers of the Daily Stormer also either allude to evil Jewish influence or directly “call it” where they see it. They each have different words and phrases that they seem to favor, such as Andrew Anglin using the word “goy” and “shills” when he sarcastically pretends to be his caricature of an evil Jewish overlord and Pomidor Quixote referring to Jews as peddlers of the “economy,” which they seem to

view as an evil monolithic force that is catered to over the working people who are only the “cogs” of the machine.

Like American Renaissance, they typically pump out articles about black on white crime. They also are obsessed with immigration, although they, and their users, are less eloquent and “calm” than AmRen users as they discuss the invasion of brown people. They sneer at environmentalism, although occasionally they will discuss how non-white people are poisoning the planet more than white people and need to be stopped before the whole human race is wiped out.

Although one could draw important white nationalist parallels between American Renaissance and the Daily Stormer, their differences are perhaps more important to note. American Renaissance’s lack of humor and light-heartedness makes it much less appealing to younger and more energetic internet users. Additionally, the Daily Stormer users pride themselves on having fun, similar to r/ the_Donald users, who insist that “leftists” are boring and no fun due to their obsession with PC culture, and thus, “out of touch” with young people. The Daily Stormer, in a similar vein, uses stills from anime, Lord of the Rings, SpongeBob, and other popular culture to make their bizarre and outlandish anti-Semitic claims, despite these forms of media being a part of the “Jewish media empire” they claim to hate so much. They create memes with a sense of both fun and seriousness, combining a fear of outsiders tainting white culture with the joy of angering an enemy perceived as subhuman. I will now discuss how they exercise their own anti-PC culture rhetoric, and how it connects to traditional anti-Semitism, homophobia, misogyny, and racism.

Aspects of Anti PC Culture: Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and Good Old-Fashioned Racism

“PC Culture” is assumed to be a Jewish trick to disguise blatant anti-white racism. PC culture, according to Andrew Anglin, is how people of color and Jews silence white men. Andrew Anglin and his fellow Daily Stormer writers insist that there is a Jewish conspiracy to oppress white men using “virtue signaling” as their primary weapon. This virtue signaling, i.e. expressing a viewpoint that supports multiculturalism, feminism, and other such heinous anti-white practices, is all linked back to the conniving Jewish overlords.

For example, on February 11th of 2019, a Daily Stormer article mocks a triple amputee veteran who was groped by a TSA agent. Andrew Anglin claims that veterans “deserve” to have their limbs blown off for fighting for Jews in “Jewish wars.” Virtue signaling in this case relates to the “outrage” expressed by those who are offended on behalf of the veteran. Anglin argues against this virtue signaling, first because he despises people who show their moral outrage at anything, and second because he argues that veterans are just mindless drones sent into foreign countries to fight on behalf of Jewish interests.

On the same day, he also expresses a hostile admiration for Minnesotan Senator Ilhan Omar, whom he dislikes for being Muslim, Somalian, and female, but whom he also views as “anti-Semitic” and thus “the enemy of his enemy” worthy of some respect. He changes his opinion about her a few times, having initially supported her for being “anti-Semitic,” but then mocking and denigrating her for making a public apology to the

“Jew race.” However, he then switched back to supporting her after seeing her criticism of AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, in a tweet on February 11th. This he saw as an act of anti-Semitism.

Although she is a Somalian Muslim Congresswoman, a representative of three identities he despises, he still respects her for “caring about her people,” which he insists Donald Trump cannot do. He actually defends her against the popular alt right opinion that Ilhan Omar is married to her brother, claiming that it wasn’t true, and that even if it were, it was fine, since incest is “common” in Muslim culture. He also attacks Jack Posobiec for claiming Omar married her brother, insisting that he “makes up shit” all the time and that even if it were true, no one “cares” as long as she gives people the opportunity to criticize Jewish control over American politics. He disparages Posobiec, saying that he refuses to talk about AIPAC, so should shut up.

This instance of strange solidarity with someone who represents the very people Andrew Anglin mocks and demonizes on his site reveals how politics and “virtue signaling” are discussed on the Daily Stormer and amongst the alt right. It is possible that Andrew Anglin’s hatred for Jews is more powerful than it is for Muslims. He still makes Ilhan Omar the “Other” by constantly referring to her gender, religion, and race, but in his eyes, she may be a less dangerous enemy than the “Jewish race.” It is also possible that he has a genuine respect for people who “stand up” for their people, regardless of their identities or political affiliation, although perhaps he only partially respects Ilhan Omar due to her alleged anti-Semitism. The third possible option is that he hates Ilhan Omar and Muslims just as much as he hates Jews, he is simply joking. This possibility

must always be kept in mind when studying the alt right, because they love ridiculous jokes, “trolling” people, and being as offensive as possible. To associate Ilhan Omar with anti-Semitism and then claim that Jews had better watch out, since she’s “coming” for them is to glorify her and invalidate her by making her a figure head for their anti-Semitic jokes.

Anti-Semitism is at the core of conspiracy theories about how Jews are enacting white genocide policies. It also allows for the alt right to discuss economic exploitation and the plight of the “poor working whites” who are subject to the Jewish “globalist” agenda. Andrew Anglin often reports on the Yellow Vest Movement in France, seeing it as an “uprising” against the “Jewish” overlords by the French working-class whites. He insists that those protesting are suspicious of a global Zionist conspiracy that seeks to subjugate them.

Although all Daily Stormer writers express hatred for Jewish “manipulators,” Andrew Anglin seems to be in charge of, or have a particular passion for, anti-Semitic content. On February 13th, he scornfully comments on the tweets of Israel lobbyist Jacob Wohl, who expressed admiration for Donald Trump on Twitter and commented on how Ilhan Omar “married her brother.” Similar to when he defended Omar from Jack Posobiec, Andrew Anglin insists that pro-Israel lobbyists are the true evil that must be fought. Again, he seems to view Omar, the black female Muslim who dared to be a part of the American political system, as the lesser of two evils.

In the comments of Andrew Anglin’s article, a Daily Stormer user named RenaissanceMan called alt right website Breitbart “kikebart.” This is presumably in

reference to Breitbart's less outspoken anti-Semitic style and more mainstream political conservatism. This may indicate some friction between alt right communities that despise Jews and alt right communities that tolerate Jews as "white enough." Under this article, multiple Daily Stormer users express hatred for both Jacob Wohl and Ilhan Omar for being Jewish and a black Muslim woman respectively. So, although Andrew Anglin speaks highly of her, in an ironic and malicious sense of course, they still despise both Jacob Wohl and Ilhan Omar. They either assume Anglin is being sarcastic or take his backwards compliments as symbolic of Andrew Anglin's preference for the lesser of evils, not an acceptance of it.

On February 14th, Andrew Anglin once again mocks Donald Trump and supports Ilhan Omar again by using the "Virgin" vs "Chad" meme. He calls Trump a "Chad," mocking him for "listening to the demands of Jews," "starting wars for Jewish people, for no reason," and "refusing to defend his own supporters." Omar, in his mind, is a Chad because she has "graceful Nubian blackness," "wears a respectful head scarf," "owns Jews with facts and logic," and "marries her own brother and laughs when asked why she did it." These are strange attributes that he finds "admirable" and they are certainly framed in a mocking manner, but Andrew Anglin's opinion that she "hates Jews" seems to make her more respectable, if not respected, in his eyes.



Figure 11. The Virgin vs. Chad meme in Trump vs. Senator Omar form.

Anglin, Andrew. "Memetic Thursday: I Made This Meme." *Daily Stormer*, February 14, 2019. <https://dailystormer.name/memetic-thursday-i-made-this-meme/>.

He uses a meme known as the Virgin vs. Chad meme, which originated on 4chan and was originally a depiction of the “signs” of a virgin vs. the signs of a “chad” or a sexually active and attractive male stud. Anglin argued that the Virgin vs. Chad meme was dead, but it was necessary to describe how Trump had betrayed his followers by not defending them from being “sued, attacked, arrested, and imprisoned for supporting him.” In contrast, he calls Omar a “Moslem bitch,” but he also applauds her for “defending her people and agenda” even against the “ultimate power” (Jews) because she is “devoted.” In contrast, Trump is untrustworthy and “doesn’t know his own agenda.”

First, he comments on how the meme is “dead.” Like r/The_Donald, he wants to appear lively, full of energy and attitude. To use a “dead” meme is to appear desperate or out of touch, so he needed to preface his use of the meme with a note of self-awareness. Older people who struggle to understand or relate to internet culture often appear as though they are “trying too hard” to appeal to younger audiences familiar with digital

cultural nuances. Andrew Anglin wants the Daily Stormer to appear young, full of life, and internet-savvy. Second, he disparages Trump as being a “Virgin” who is too cowardly to be an open white supremacist such as himself. He accuses Trump of being descended from wealthy land owners, thus bringing classicism into the discussion of Trump’s negative traits, using beautiful women to boost his poor self-esteem, only pretending to not be a cuck when he actually is one, and starting wars with foreign countries for “Jewish reasons” that even he doesn’t understand. Although Anglin is usually flippant, this description of Donald Trump seems more hostile than usual. Anglin is disappointed with Trump, seeing him as not as powerful or as daring as he should be. On the other hand, Ilhan Omar is an “ally” he never foresaw as one, and she is in his good graces, in a warped way, for being an open anti-Semite who “calls out” pro-Israel lobbyists.

It is difficult to tell if Andrew Anglin truly means what he says or if he is simply making a joke. When it comes to Donald Trump, his opinion seems clearer and less likely to be a joke, but Andrew Anglin can always go back on what he said should Donald Trump please him later on. Additionally, he prides himself, like other members of the alt right, on keeping it “real.” This includes criticizing figures such as Donald Trump, although the alt right seems to be more fragmented on how they view Trump. Obviously, The Donald is very pro-Trump and will take no criticisms of him, but Andrew Anglin and some users of AmRen clearly disagree.

On February 15th, Andrew Anglin argues that Donald Trump is supporting Jewish interests by trying to drag America into wars. He also covers Donald Trump’s declaration

of a national emergency, commenting with disappointment that Trump had “caved” to Democratic demands for a superficial victory rather than a substantive one. Once again, he seems disappointed in Trump and supports some of his policies, but dislikes how Trump has been “thwarted” and allowed himself to be thwarted. He also views Trump as a cohort of the evil Jewish presence he fears. Like some of the users of American Renaissance, Andrew Anglin takes the pessimistic view on many topics, claiming that Jews “will get away with anything.” He very rarely has a positive outlook on the future, but seems to think of himself as a revolutionary who picks and chooses his battles. These battles are fought with “memes,” a weapon he seems to think subverts and undermines Jewish authority.

Andrew Anglin and the Daily Stormer writers use a big-nosed hairy greedy gremlin caricature meme to portray both immigrants and Jews as subhuman leeches off white society. They also compare Jews to “goblins” who covet their gold and describe immigrants as dark-skinned invaders who will work for Jews and disenfranchise white men while also simultaneously leeching off their taxes and doing nothing for white civilization. Muslims they view as backwards dark-skinned people who practice barbaric religious rituals and are used to living like primitives. Both possess cultures considered “incompatible” with white American society. They are dehumanized by these hateful caricatures and made to look completely repulsive and as non-human as possible.

The other authors of the Daily Stormer despise Muslims as much as they hate Jews, since dark-skin and a fundamentally “opposing” culture come into play when Muslims are concerned. Articles related to “Jewish induced” violence and foreign wars

are frequent, but just as frequent are Islamophobic opinions when discussing topics such as the celebration of the 40th anniversary of Iran's Islamic Revolution during which there were reports of citizens yelling "Death to America." On this article, posted February 12th, the Daily Stormer insisted that Muslims are America's enemy, but Jews are also America's enemy. Pomidor Quixote, the writer of this particular article, also claims that the Middle East should deal with its own problems and America should put itself first and not defend Israel. Intriguingly, like Andrew Anglin, they seem to be torn between hating Muslims and hating Jews, since they view Islam as a Satanic and evil religion, but at the same time, assume all Muslims hate all Jews. This makes Islam both an enemy and something of a friend, depending on the situation.

Daily Stormer writers emphasize Muslim crimes whenever they occur, such as one instance when a 6-year-old Saudi Arabian boy was brutally murdered in public by a taxi driver. The article mocked the child who was murdered, calling him a "sandape" and the Saudi Arabian police, claiming that "monkeypeople" don't make good police. This incident was used as an example of why "multiculturalism" is evil, wrong, and will only produce similar violence in America. Black Americans and Latino Americans also receive a large amount of hostility from Daily Stormer writers and users. There are a great number of "black on white crimes" reports that, like American Renaissance, emphasize how blacks cannot live with whites. Any reports of "immigrant violence" or violence committed by Latino Americans are also highlighted and treated as a "universal" truth about how immigrants behave and treat white people.

Andrew Anglin and the other Daily Stormer writers enjoy creating and utilizing highly visual content, using reaction photos from popular culture and grotesque stereotypical caricatures of different ethnicities and cultures accompanied by melodramatic language and slurs to illicit emotional responses. Their brand of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and racism is unique in that it would be radically different if it had not grown and been developed by a highly visual digital culture. Their images can also be rapidly distributed, edited, and re-created. For example, on February 16th, Andrew Anglin tries to start a new meme called the anti-Semitic “canard.” He takes the anti-Semitic canard, a term commonly used to refer to defamatory rumors about Jews, and creates a meme involving a mallard duck, or a “canard:”

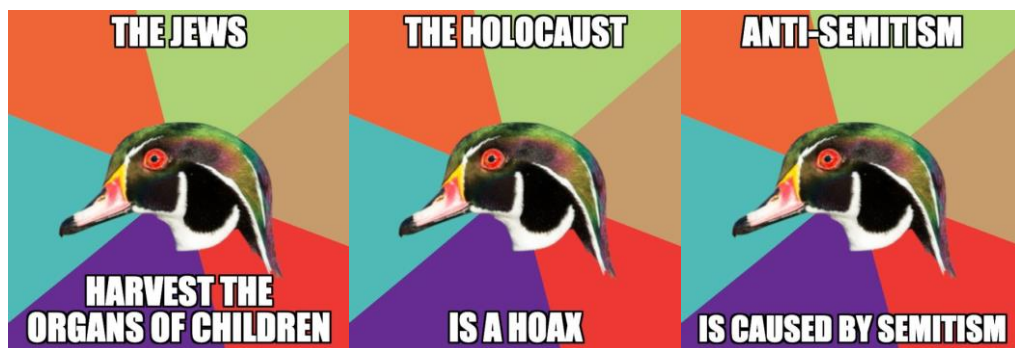


Figure 12. Anti-Semitic “canards” created by Andrew Anglin

Anglin, Andrew. “Hottest New Stormer Forced Meme: The Anti-Semitic Canard!” *Daily Stormer*, February 16, 2019. <https://dailystormer.name/hottest-new-stormer-forced-meme-the-anti-semitic-canard/>.

There are multiple versions of the “Anti-Semitic Canard” that he has created. He also uses the term canard multiple times in his articles, trying to give his new meme some

traction amongst his community. This could potentially be how he starts and cultivates memes that attempt to be “random” and strange while also containing bigoted messages. This type of surreal humor, brightly colored and containing both a pun and anti-Semitic, “taboo” language is eye-popping and attention-seeking. This is how the alt right presents itself as “fun-loving” and relaxed, as opposed to the uptight liberals trying to “police” language and behavior. By using and creating memes, the alt right presents itself as a “democratic” space in which one’s freedom of speech and creativity are never impeded. Its community thus appears more humorous, free-spirited, and just, as it does not restrict human nature.

PC culture can be warped and twisted to mean “no fun allowed” when it is applied to digital communities. The internet is almost by nature “anti-PC culture,” since it is made up of so many diverse communities that agreeing on a universal politically correct language would be impossible. The alt right takes advantage of this confused digital landscape to push the rhetoric that any attempt to control language online, or in real life, is not only impossible, but morally wrong.

Aspects of Anti PC Culture: Misogyny, Homophobia, and Hatred of Sexuality

Misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and fears of female sexuality are rampant on the Daily Stormer. Andrew Anglin views any sexuality besides heterosexual as abnormal and vile. He also believes that female sexuality, heterosexual or otherwise, must be controlled. He believes that the entire world has “slipped” into degeneracy because female sexuality is no longer controlled. One story that drew his ire was posted

on February 11th: the story of Kate Scottow, a mother of two, who was arrested in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, England for “calling a transgender woman a man on Twitter.” The actual report suggested that Kate Scottow had been in a furious online debate with a trans rights activist named Stephanie Hayden, using her previous name and pronouns and engaging in a “campaign of targeted harassment” against her, using two different accounts to do so. He views the situation as “crazy” and proof that the social justice warriors are militants trying to take away people’s freedom of speech “1984 style.” He views this incident as proof that crazy people who do not know what gender they are can use their mental illness as an excuse to attack others and silence them for questioning their insane opinions. Andrew Anglin often makes references to *1984*, darkly suggesting that Jews will one day create a strictly controlled world where whites are subjugated and unable to express their opinions.



Figure 13. A reference to George Orwell's "Big Brother is Watching You" theme of his novel, 1984. Anglin argues that the new "thought police" are leftists attempting to silence anyone who disagrees with their views on race, gender, sexuality, etc.

Anglin, Andrew, and Pomidor Quixote. "UK: 53-Year-Old Woman Convicted of Anti-Semitism Wears Celtic Cross Pin to Court, Media Outraged." Daily Stormer, February 14, 2019. <https://dailystormer.name/uk-53-year-old-woman-convicted-of-anti-semitism-wears-celtic-cross-pin-to-court-media-outraged/>.

This aspect of the alt right, hatred of LGBT people, is relatively agreed upon across the movement. However, blatant misogyny and the demonization of female sexuality is not. For example, The Donald often refers to "Hotties for Trump," a subreddit full of photos of beautiful women that support Donald Trump. They also post sexual content and sneer at liberals for being overly sensitive to everything, including sexual relations between men and women. However, female sexuality can be undesirable if it is liberal, feminist, and/or ugly women who express it. Liberal women are sluts, whores, and shrieking harpies that cry rape whenever it suits their political agenda. Thus,

there are certain types of female sexuality, ones that are acceptable, and ones that are repulsive and representative of a particular political ideology, in the alt right sphere.

The alt right disdain for the female gender is based in traditional views of gender roles, seeing female sexuality as something which must be controlled. However, Andrew Anglin's avid hatred for women is extreme, even for a member of the alt right. His insistence that women only want to hurt white men with their feminist movements and obedience to Jews is not unique, but his assertion that women have no souls and that none of them can be trusted to take care of themselves or others anymore is.

The Daily Stormer argues that there are only three different types of "women" in the world (which can overlap). First: the sexual degenerate that has lesbian sex, tries to have sex with animals and children, and is generally using female empowerment as an excuse to fulfill her baser human instincts. Second: the ugly, loud-mouthed, bra-burning overweight feminist that seeks only to hurt men with her angry screeching and language policing. And finally: the lying, manipulative woman who would ruin men's lives by pretending to be sexually assaulted by them. Daily Stormer writers, Andrew Anglin in particular, as he displays misogyny more so than the others, see all three types of women as the only form of women that exist. Even the proper white women who believe in white superiority are still seen as needing white men to keep them on the path of virtue.

Andrew Anglin argues that women are less intelligent than men, unable to control themselves, need constant moral guidance, and are easily swayed by Jews and blacks to procreate with them rather than white men. Being a bra-burning feminist, a sex fiend, and a lying manipulative woman are all personality traits Anglin believes Jews encourage. He

believes they use white and non-white women as a method of humiliating and eradicating white men.

Andrew Anglin is also obsessed with masculinity and the belief that feminists are secretly asking for men to be more assertive and control them. On February 14th, Andrew Anglin wrote an article about Ryan Adams, a singer-songwriter and record producer, whose ex-girlfriends and ex-wife all accused him of being predatory. The slighted women suggested that he used the promise of jumpstarting their music careers to lure them into sexual relationships with him and would retaliate if they declined. This article is longer and more thought out than any of Andrew Anglin's other pieces. It also uses less slurs and openly hateful language, instead opting for a more well-reasoned argument. It could arguably be presented as a more-foul-mouthed, but still less openly hostile argument towards why #MeToo is simply "anti-men." With less crude language, it would fit in easily on Breitbart, crafting a narrative of lying women and always innocent, if flawed, men. Andrew Anglin sympathizes with Ryan Adams' drug problems and issues with mental illness, which both, he feels, explain why his relationship with women were simply bad. He describes the New York Times article on Ryan Adams' relationships as tabloid voyeurism and insists that although Ryan Adams is a beta, he still doesn't deserve to have his personal information exposed like this.

Andrew Anglin theorizes that all the women who came out to accuse Ryan Adams of abusive behavior contacted one another and conspired together to make him look bad. He argues that beta males like Ryan Adams are more likely to be weak, clingy, and deceptive in their relationships with women. He insists that men like him are

allowing women to be more controlling and thus, insecure, since women are subconsciously trying to find men who will control them. In the end, he concludes that women are going to “destroy” themselves by not knowing what they truly want and it is Jews who “confuse” and “manipulate” them to think this way. This could be another form of the elusive woman he’s attempting to pin down, but the manipulated woman falls under all three Anglin categories, as she is allowing herself to act as a sexual deviant, a feminist, and a liar by succumbing to Jewish pressure.

The Daily Stormer also despises feminists with money, power, and influence, white or non-white, male or female. Andrew Anglin despises Brie Larson, the star of Marvel’s *Captain Marvel*, who attempted to publicly endorse intersectional feminism and drew ire from the alt right community for it. He scornfully comments on how flat her butt is, insists that she has a foot fungus, and is obsessed with making both a meme. Andrew Anglin also sneers at her “mannish” face and claims that her movie looks boring and she herself is unlikable. In articles related to her, he argues that women simply do not want to take care of themselves. He insists that feminist actors are “intentionally” disgusting in order to humiliate men who have to watch their films. In an article related to women hiding their smoking and drinking while pregnant, he claims that women are becoming “less” fit to be mothers and are fundamentally amoral, which is why they need to be controlled by men. Another example of Anglin’s proclamation of female degeneracy is an article on February 16th reporting that a woman forced herself on a minor. This one incident is supposedly symbolic of how feminism is turning women into perverts.

Andrew Anglin often speaks disparagingly of contraceptives and the #MeToo movement, seeing both as weapons used to weaken and demean white masculinity and the white race. One topic that caught the Daily Stormer's interest was a topic also covered by American Renaissance: Hungary's program to cut income tax for women with four children or more and £7,000 towards the cost of a new car. Pomidor Quixote expresses admiration for these policies and asks why Americans do not do the same thing to "protect" America from the swell of immigrant populations. Like American Renaissance, the Daily Stormer encourages the "breeding" of white American citizens and views the potential rise of brown immigrants as a dangerous threat. In this instance, brown women are the threat the Daily Stormer fears, as they act as conduits for more unwanted people.

This rhetoric of misogyny goes hand in hand with Anglin's anti-Semitic rants, since he claims that Jews are "warping" women's moral codes, making them more sexually active and resistant to white male control, thus forcing them to "die out" or only "breed" with members of other races. Andrew Anglin's hatred for women is not shared on American Renaissance or the Donald. Although only one AmRen user expressed distaste for Anglin's misogyny, feeling that it would only divide white men and white women, American Renaissance has less articles and forums about "outrageous" female behavior. The academic tone, while still condescending towards women in certain cases, is not likely to call women immoral and sexual degenerates. As for the Donald, they typically only call feminists pigs and whales. They express the sentiment that women who support Trump are sexy, desirable goddesses who can do no wrong. Melania Trump

receives their respect while Michelle Obama is called a transgender man, an ugly fattie, and the worst First Lady Ever. Thus, sexism towards women, whether aggressive like Anglin's, calmer and lightly condescending like the AmRen's, or a healthy mix of both like The Donald, is rampant throughout the alt right. Some women draw more ire than others; some are hated universally as a Jewish-controlled resource.

On the same day Andrew Anglin wrote an article about Ryan Adams, Pomidor Quixote posted an article about a woman who found \$4000 in a used book, tracked down its owner, and returned it. Quixote claims that only a white person would do such a thing, and that is why white people are the superior race. At the same time, they then claim that white women needed to be "forced" to be moral and that it is up to men to "teach" them to behave. White men are thus the paragons of rationality and morality, necessary to teach white women how to behave. However, they are not just white men; they are straight white cisgender men.

Misogyny, transphobia, and homophobia often mix together on the Daily Stormer. On February 13th, articles on trans gender "antics," which include social activism and legal proceedings related either to their children or their new names, are full of scornful rhetoric that accuses trans gender people of being "mentally unstable." Trans gender people's lifestyles and decisions are ridiculed and sensationalized. Anglin enjoys using photos of men dressed as women, usually in a degrading or perverted manner, to emphasize how disgusting all trans gender people are. In the same vein, the Daily Stormer does not approve of homosexual individuals.

On February 14th, the Daily Mail reported the findings of French sociologist Frederic Martel, who argues that 80% of Vatican priests are gay. Pomidor Quixote claims that it isn't a surprise since everyone knows priests are perverts. The comments below this article are divided on this matter. User ProductiveWhiteGuy proclaims that all religions, regardless of faith or denomination, are full of perverts and that no religion should be followed because they are all controlling. User Otako claims that they hate the Catholic Church, but "smell propaganda." Others argue that this is just Jews and "fags" trying to poison public opinion against the Catholic Church. There are also conspiracy theories that pagan religions and Jewish depravity are the cause of the Catholic Church's downfall. Although some relish in disdaining organized religion, particularly Catholicism, others profess their commitment to true Christianity which denounces homosexuality and Jewish dominance. They do not argue with those who despise Catholicism, but blame its perversion on outside force. On February 16th, Andrew Anglin also weighs in on sexual depravity, commenting on the Vatican de-frocking a Cardinal for sexual abuse of minors and arguing that there is "no difference" between a homosexual and a pedophile. He is also convinced that "no one really believes in Christianity anymore." His obsession with sexual perversion contributes to his narrative that society is full of degenerates who pollute the white race with their amoral Jewish sexual fetishes, homosexuality, and female sexual degeneracy.

Sexuality thus is an easy target for the alt right, a subject of derision and hateful mockery when it comes to gay, transgender, and sexually active female individuals. Gender is also an easy target, as women are not allowed to speak or be regarded with

respect if they disagree with alt right men. Critics of the alt right are all treated with lurid disdain and ridicule, but women in particular are vilified using their gender, their sexualities, and their appearances along with everything they say or do.

Aspects of Anti PC Culture: Anti-White Rhetoric and a “Police State”

The Daily Stormer calls itself the “Most Censored Publication in History.” This is most likely in reference to their site being kicked off many servers and publicly condemned by Google and other providers. It also sees people condemning racism as “censorship.” On February 11th of 2019, Andrew Anglin argues that Kamala Harris calling racism, sexism, and homophobia matters of national security is the same as advocating for a “police state,” arguing that slurs are a protected form of free speech and are a civil right. Similar to the Kate Scottow incident, Anglin sees this statement as proof the world has gone “mad” and will only continue to censor people trying to “defend” their culture. He also continues to see the censorship of racist, sexist, and homophobic language as “Orwellian” and the beginning of a dictatorial police state.

Andrew Anglin also sees censorship in the form of anti-Trumpism. Opinions of Donald Trump, however, are varied on the Daily Stormer. Andrew Anglin himself seems ambivalent towards him, approving of the wall and anti-immigration policies, but at the same time viewing him as untrustworthy. For example, on February 13th, Andrew Anglin posts an article about how Trump was cleared of Russian collusion charges, but sounds far from happy about it. He is instead angry that Trump would not defend himself by going after the people who investigated him. Although he agrees with Trump’s rhetoric and political goals, he seems to fundamentally distrust him and see him as weak for not

being more of an open racist and supporting open racists. He agrees that Donald Trump's policies are pro white but feels he isn't doing enough to combat the anti-white policies and rhetoric that occur in American society.

Anglin also wrote a reactionary article to the news of Beto O'Rourke running for President for the Democrats, arguing that Trump is relying on Kamala Harris to run, and that he would easily beat her, but that O'Rourke could beat him. Andrew Anglin thinks that the wall will never be built and that Trump is only claiming to build it to try and hold onto his position. He also feels that Trump will certainly go to prison if he loses the election and that if he does lose, it will be because he is not defending his supporters well enough. But while he is critical of Trump, feeling that he will be the biggest failure, he is also suspicious that anti Trump forces will begin "rounding up" Trump supporters "1984" style. Thus, he is critical of Trump supporters, and is only somewhat one himself, but he also advocates for their right to free speech.

Pomidor Quixote, going along with this opinion, argues that Facebook considering banning anti-vaccine content is a method of suppressing free speech. Interestingly, however, they believe that vaccines are necessary, but also that they should be viewed with suspicion since Jews are so intent on giving them to people. In this case, Quixote sees anti-vaxxers as silly and irrational, believing in the science of vaccines and believing the white race should be immune to diseases, but also being suspicious of the Jewish agenda trying to push vaccines on people. Clearly, in Quixote's mind, if the Jewish media empire wishes for white children to be vaccinated against life-threatening diseases, then vaccines must be insidious and somehow life-threatening.

Everything that the Daily Stormer fears and hates can be related back to the Jewish controlled government and Jewish controlled corporations. They believe anti-white culture comes from the Jewish overlords, as does most liberal rhetoric. For example, on February 11th of 2019, Roy Batty analyzes a Breitbart article also discussed by r/The_Donald and American Renaissance. The article denounces a Dickinson college journalist who wrote about why white males should be “silenced.” The original context of the piece was that white boys’ opinions are often shouted over other opinions, silencing the LGBT community, black men, black women, etc. The Dickinson student, Leda Fisher, argues that white boys’ opinions on feminism, ableism, gay rights, all are valued more than the people affected by the social inequality that they discuss. She also criticizes white male college students for their tendency to stick to common dominant white male narratives and not truly attempting to understand minority issues from the perspectives of minorities. However, the alt right community took this published article as a racist attack against them.

Across all three alt right focus communities, the author was mocked and denigrated. The three sites claimed that “this is what the left is” and saw such ideas as a joke, something no one would take seriously. At the same time, they see challenging white masculinity as “incredibly dangerous” and indicative of a lack of morality and “sanity.” On the Daily Stormer, when white males express progressive ideals, the community will commonly use the terms “chad,” “beta,” and “cuck” to refer to them. When white women express progressive ideals, the community uses the terms whales, pigs, sluts, whores, and degenerates. Adjectives that describe these names are usually,

“ugly,” “harping,” “screeching,” and “insane.” The male name calling terms are all used to signify a male who is “deferring” to other men or women by listening to their opinions or in some way sacrificing their masculinity by behaving a certain way or believing in certain things. Thus, in the alt right’s view, men who are progressive and liberal are weak, sniveling, pathetic, and are not real men. Women who are progressive are slutty, brainwashed, amoral, and completely beyond help without the aid of a real alpha male.

The fact that this article was discussed by all three sites is significant in that it demonstrates how both dangerous and not dangerous such rhetoric is to the alt right audience. On the one hand, this anti-white, anti-straight cisgender male speech is laughable to the alt right, worthy of spite and ridicule, and typical overly sensitive liberal speech that will never appeal to anyone. On the other hand, it is extremely dangerous to the alt right, indicative of the left’s plans for anti-white genocide. The alt right fears that the left is attempting to ridicule and silence white men, calling their manhood into question by criticizing toxic masculinity and villainizing every little thing they do. The alt right sees their enemies as both Jewish and non-Jewish, seeking to punish white men for existing and subjugate them under tyrannical censorship laws. White men, the alt right worries, are being stripped of all protections, are underprivileged, and are underappreciated despite being the best possible form of human being.

The Daily Stormer enjoys creating and spreading content dedicated to “exposing” how straight white men are being “cucked” and treated as the enemy in their own homeland. One of the articles posted on February 16th relates to Ben Affleck quitting his role as Batman in the DC Cinematic Universe. Andrew Anglin sarcastically asks that

Daily Stormer users “demand” for a black trans man to play Batman, displaying his usual disdain for diversity in media. He also posts an article about a Durex condom commercial with a couple consisting of a black male and a white female, bemoaning how Jews are pushing this agenda to destroy the white race. He insists that Jews are peddling porn to men in order to make them docile and “ok” with not having sex with women. Women, he also argues, do not complain about porn anymore not because they are sexually empowered, but because they are too stupid to “resist” Jewish control. Andrew Anglin then concludes by stating that the liberal narrative of female empowerment and gay rights are simply designed for the “explicit purpose of harming straight white men” and that there cannot be any other explanation.

The Daily Stormer and the Donald openly state that they feel straight white males are unfairly criticized and demonized. They feel that white identity is now something to be ashamed of. American Renaissance agrees with these two other sites, however they do not blame Jews for the censorship of white men. They are also less hostile towards Jews overall. Likewise, r/The_Donald does not explicitly blame Jews for white male oppression, although it does criticize and despise “media-controlling globalists,” who often sound suspiciously close to the alt right’s “Jewish overlords.” Thus, these three alt right communities are varied in terms of how anti-Semitic they are. They have slightly different views on how women should be treated and massively different views on whether Jews are the enemy or not. But across all three sites, immigrants, Muslims, and miscellaneous brown-skinned terrorists are universally hated and described in subhuman

terms. Members of the Alt right unanimously agree that they have no place in American society.

Chapter Four

Reddit, the_Donald, and a System of Social Cohesion: The “Circlejerk” of the Internet

An Introduction to Reddit and Subreddits

The third and final fracture of study in this thesis is the fracture represented by the political, meme-obsessed alt right: the Donald Trump subreddit. Reddit is a popular information sharing website. Unlike Facebook or Twitter, Reddit’s format does not primarily revolve around one “sharing” posts put on other users’ profiles. One can share a Reddit link, but the user’s profile only shows one’s comment history, post history, and what they have upvoted and downvoted. Posts can be “upvoted” or “downvoted” which are generally buttons below a post or a comment. An upvote signifies one’s approval and a downvote signals one’s disapproval. If a post is upvoted enough, it can show up on the “front page” of Reddit, which shows the most upvoted posts of the day to anyone who pulls up reddit, logged in or not. On posts, comments can also be upvoted or downvoted. Upvoted comments rise to the top of subreddits, letting others see upvoted comments first. Downvoted comments are hidden, or sorted under “controversial,” where they can only be seen if one is looking for controversial comments.

Reddit posts are not shared in the sense that one will primarily be looking at content from particular Reddit users that one “follows.” You do not usually follow users on Reddit, and will most often be seeing strangers’ posts on popular subreddits. A “subreddit” is a particular community in which anyone may post text posts, photos, videos, link to videos, or links to websites that relate to the theme of the subreddit. Subreddits can be dedicated to anything from pictures of landscapes to knock-knock jokes. Every subreddit is “moderated” by users who either created the subreddit or became moderators with the approval of the person who did. The official Reddit administrators enforce certain rules across all of Reddit but allow for subreddit communities to determine the code of conduct for their spaces.

Jan Fernback argues cyberspace is both “real” and “not real” and can be a “battleground” or a “nirvana.” She contends that cyberspace is designed to fight the “tyranny” of geography by allowing people from anywhere in the world to talk to one another, creating a community space without being in the same physical place (Fernback, 1997, 43). Her perspective on cyberspace is that there is a “collectivist” virtual ideology that allows users to interact with one another “safely” outside the zone of “corporate executives” or political forces or mainstream media (Fernback, 1997, 51). The “collectivist” ideology thus assumes that even if individuals of a community disagree, they still operate under the philosophy that the virtual world allows for everyone to speak their mind, and that that is how the internet “should” work. Any restriction of the internet would be anti-democratic, based on this collectivist ideology that discourses can be changed and re-formed through anonymous and honest individual contributions.

The Donald subreddit works as one of these collectivist spaces. Before I began searching the Donald Trump subreddit, I already knew what its layout would look like and had some idea of its community cohesion. As a casual Reddit user, I knew that the Donald would not vary structurally much from other subreddits and that its hivemind-like qualities were not necessarily exclusive to just the Donald. The Donald's organization and general rules are the same as most subreddits, i.e. they allow for a particular mob mentality type attitude, and are a "circle jerk." A circle jerk is a particular collectivist space or "cultural repository" in which community members only ever circulate one particular opinion and everyone else "circles" that opinion over and over again, downvoting those who disagree. The "jerk" aspect of the term refers to the almost masturbatory fashion in which certain ideas are circled. However, the Donald is different in that there are no dissenting opinions, even in controversial comments. In regular subreddits, there are often downvoted comments in which someone expresses a (usually) more conservative or close-minded view. On the Donald Trump subreddit, downvoted comments typically do not express a liberal perspective, or a more conservative view. Instead, they offer the same exalting opinion of Donald Trump. The reasons they were downvoted are not clear, unless other users assumed they were being sarcastic.

When searching for r/The_Donald, Google offers "related sites" such as Breitbart, the Daily Stormer, Vdare, TheGatewayPundit, and 4chan. These are all sites popular amongst alt-right communities. Not all are exclusively alt-right websites, such as imageboard website 4chan, but all are known for allowing and encouraging extreme right opinions that might be banned in other communities.

On all subreddits, one can view how many followers the subreddit has. Subreddits themselves can customize what the number of followers are called. For example, on r/The_Donald, users consider themselves true “patriots” as that is what they have customized their follower count to say. The “members online” feature, which obviously refers to how many members are currently browsing the subreddit, calls those online “winners.” On their subreddit’s rules and regulations page they also have a list of “common words/memes.” Terms include “low energy,” which is a term Donald Trump used to describe Jeb Bush during the Republican primaries that generally means boring or outdated; “cuck” which in their words is “in the political sense... someone who sits idly or encourages policies which fuck their country, national identity, and cultural heritage;” and “Centipede,” a name they call themselves that refers to Knife Party’s song “Centipede,” which was used in a video series called “Can’t Stump the Trump.” Other popular terms include “GEOTUS,” their name for Trump, which stands for “God Emperor of the United States;” “kek,” another term for “lol” originating from 4chan that they ironically refer to as a “deity” of shitposting; “cuckservative,” someone who identifies as conservative but “gets off” watching liberals fuck America; and “Shill,” which refers to “any number of paid and/or unpaid individuals who infiltrate The_Donald DOMreddit in order to undermine our support of President Trump.”

Their rules explicitly state that there is to be no spamming, no trolling, no racism or anti-Semitism (but that Muslims and immigrants are not races), no revealing of personal information (doxing or otherwise), no brigading (attempting to upvote a post with multiple accounts), and other rules that would be applicable to other subreddits.

In order to handle the vast amount of posts made on the Donald subreddit, I decided on the first day to catalogue the top posts in the last 24 hours at exactly 10 p.m. Hot posts can be repetitive over a week, since particular posts can gain traction at various speeds depending on how topical they are. In order to gather unique data from day to day, I chose to examine the top posts per day. I also stopped examining posts after they dropped lower than 1000 upvotes simply because the Donald is a popular subreddit with a great deal of posts that are below 1000 upvotes. Many of the posts were repetitive or were summarily dropped due to lack of relevance and overabundance of similar content.

The Donald often discusses political, social, and cultural events, but rather than seriously engage with issues, they prefer instead to mock and demonize liberals and leftists, calling them “insane” and “amoral.” Like the Daily Stormer, they believe memes and humor are the “key” to defeating political opponents, but unlike the Stormer, they try not to use slurs or be quite so openly racist. Their dislike for diversity, “PC politics,” and general lack of respect for people of color indicate that they are still white nationalists, simply less obviously outspoken about it. Their memes are disrespectful and dehumanizing of their opponents.

They enjoy visual humor, employing edited photos with rage face comics and exaggerated tears, snot, noses, and heads. Their exaggerated comics are reminiscent of the Daily Stormer’s humor, but are more restrained and easier to disguise as political discourse rather than hate speech. They claim that liberals do not understand economics, are “irrational” and unreasonable when it comes to social issues, and are “snooty” rich people who look down on the working man. They despise “censorship” and think that the

left is becoming more insane and power hungry due to their purported love for policing language. They, like the Daily Stormer users, argue that the left is full of “traitors” and must be bringing in immigrants to keep a grasp on power. They believe liberals are deliberately keeping minorities on welfare in order to “control” them and their votes. They believe liberals want to keep an “agitated” working class of voting slaves who they can make “empty promises” to. They have multiple conspiracy theories related to how Democrats are attempting to overthrow the rightful government and install their anti-white regime. They are also obsessed with “fake news” and liberal propaganda. They think that Trump supporters are the only true Americans. Anyone else is a traitor who is “based” and small-minded, at best, and an insidious evil, at worst. Like many members of the alt right, they see leftists as being “enemies of the state.”

What is important to note on the Donald, more so than on the Daily Stormer and American Renaissance is that it is more of a tighter-knit and casual space. It embodies white nationalism as a connecting force, one tied together by its sense of community. Adam Klein argues that the internet is a democratic space in which citizens can engage with one another in traditional and subversive ways. On the internet, the “dominant structures of society” can be challenged through social networks, in an ideal counterculture environment of anonymity (2015, 4). He stresses that this space, while it can be progressive and offer an anonymous voice to oppressed groups, has been appropriated by racist radical movements.

On the Donald, these racist themes are prevalent, but in a different form than they have traditionally been expressed. Unlike on American Renaissance, white nationalism

becomes a game, a centerpiece of a greater internet culture based on who is having more “fun” and being more relaxed. It is somewhat serious because they bemoan progressive “callout” culture and the politically correct agenda, seeing both as poisonous evils of democratic society, yet at the same time, the manner in which they do so is casual and mocking. The more serious posts will still be formatted in such a way to make users laugh or shake their heads in both amusement and horror. Their opinions as well as their irreverent and anti-PC humor are often lambasted or outright banned on other subreddits. The Donald gives them a safe haven, a space where they can express their right-wing extremist opinions without being attacked.

Adam Klein is troubled by the “ambiguity” of the internet’s factual content, arguing that white supremacy benefits from the internet because false information and conspiracy theories thrive when internet users do not bother to, or do not want to, fact check the information they consume (Klein, 2015, 25). Virtual hate spaces become something of an online nation, where discourses are dominated by a dedication to an imagined nation where the information they spread, factual or not, is the “truth” and anyone who denies it is an “enemy” of their “state.” Additionally, within these spaces, only particular people with specific attitudes, beliefs, and a presumed “culture” are true members. Their identities may be anonymous, but as they exist within their virtual nation, they are citizens within an “imagined” community.

Like arguably all alt right communities, the Donald’s community is obsessed with conspiracy theories. They are as preoccupied with race as AmRen, but not quite so openly pro-white, except when they accuse minorities of oppressing whites and insulting

white identity. They are less crude, less anti-Semitic, and less misogynistic than the Daily Stormer, but really fall somewhere in between AmRen and the Daily Stormer in terms of memeing, gravity of content and message, and visual humor. Along with being fractured along individual lines and on overall website atmospheres, alt right communities are also fractured along ideological and methodical lines. They can agree on the existence of white genocide in the face of increasing multiculturalism, but cannot agree on gender roles, acceptable sexuality, what makes a good politician, or how to best access and sway new audience to the alt right movement. The alt right as a movement is more powerful by being larger, less niche, and more accessible to the mainstream, but it is also weaker by being more diverse and prone to disagreements in methodology and ideology.

Obsession with a Subhuman Enemy: Feminists, Real Women, and Real Men

On February 10th, one of the top posts of the day was a quote from popular Youtuber Pewdiepie stating that if women were paid less, then companies would hire more women because it costs less. Underneath are comments from self-declared men who state that women simply aren't interested in higher paying careers and are instead attracted to lower paying, nurturing careers like being teachers. One user, freemale101, expresses confusion at the idea of women not desiring careers involving math like accounting, since they have only two needs, children (love) and sex, and once those are fulfilled, they have a life outside of work and can handle the "boring" careers. This user then suggests that men would not naturally like these careers because their testosterone makes it harder for them to sit down and be still for a long time, daydreaming about sex and sports/ war. This, they conclude, is proof that women simply are incapable of doing

jobs like accounting, do not want to do these jobs, and are already fulfilled by their “utility of existence,” which is presumably childbirth.

This view of the woman’s sphere and the man’s sphere indicate an obsession with traditional gender roles. The users of the Donald believe women are naturally more nurturing and wish to be teachers and social workers. These “easy” careers are for women whose biological purpose of childbirth and heterosexual love are already being taken care of. These women they applaud and claim to support. Feminists and social activists, however, are a different story.

They firmly believe that feminists are always ugly bra burning “pigs” with blue hair. In their eyes, feminists are ugly, overweight, completely irrational, and always over reacting to everything. “Leftie” women are always “shrieking” and “insane” and leftist men who date them must be “insane” to like them. Thus, women who disagree with their political ideology are subhuman pigs, slobbering at a trough of irrational hatred for their God Emperor. However, women who support Trump, along with women who follow traditional gender roles, are glorified. “Hotties for Trump” is a subreddit they often refer to when making their point about how feminist liberal women are practically subhuman in how ugly they are. Hotties for Trump is populated by images of skinny and voluptuous young women in bikinis or their underwear in MAGA hats or with MAGA signs or something to indicate that they are Trump supporters. Thus, skinny, conventionally attractive women who support Trump and appeal to the male gaze are their ideal women. Here is an example of one of their discussions of women:

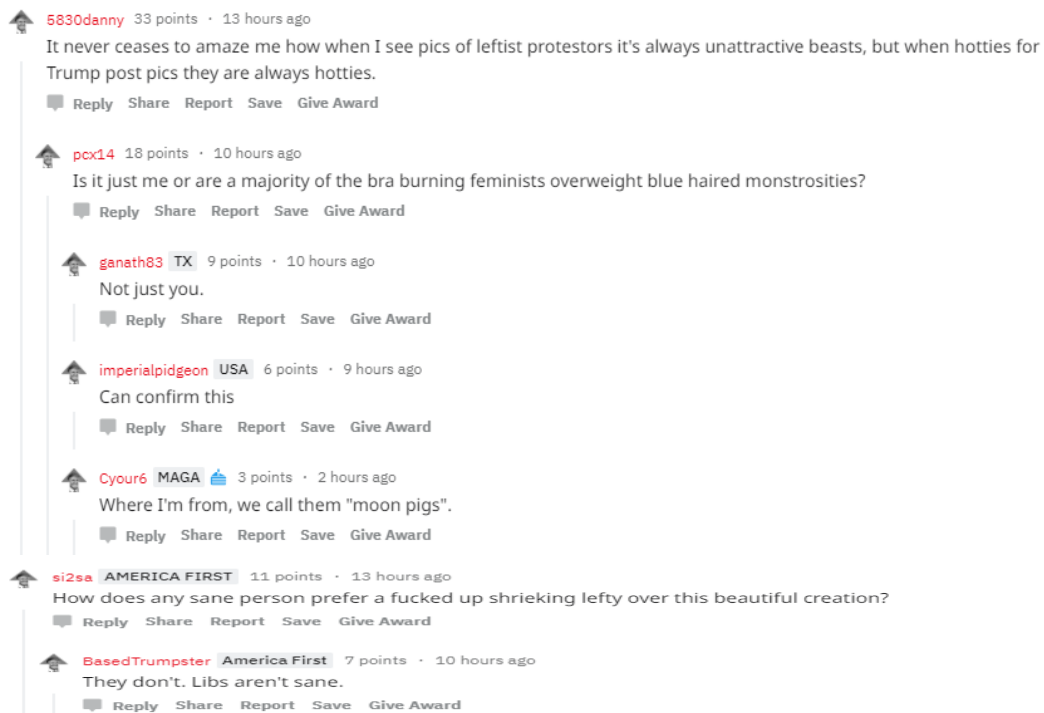


Figure 14. Donald Trump users mock liberal women/leftists.

"The_Donald." reddit. Accessed February 10th, 2019. https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

The Donald users sneer at female empowerment, but when it suits them, they accuse the left of being anti-women by supporting multiculturalism, specifically “brown” cultures that oppress women. One post relates to an app that allows Saudi Arabian men to track their wives, which is supported by Google. This same app was mentioned on the Daily Stormer. The Donald users (as well as the Daily Stormer users) accused the left of being “hypocritical” about accepting other cultures, but not accepting values which conflict with their liberal values. They also accused the left of “accepting” these values which conflict with what the left truly wants (female empowerment). The conclusion to

this conversation was that the left is simply hypocritical. They are dedicated to pointing out the hypocrisies of the left, which can either be manipulative or simply based in foolishness.

The Donald users are dedicated to denouncing feminists, both real and imagined. They disdain and mock liberal and Democratic women, but also paint a picture of “leftist” women that is one dimensional, dehumanizing, and in most ways unrealistic and untrue. Women in power upset them more than even imagined feminists. For example, Michelle Obama is a subject of enormous ire, just like on American Renaissance and the Daily Stormer. On February 10th, one popular post includes a photo of Melania Trump which proclaims that she is beautiful and graceful and has “no bulge.” They then claim that Michelle Obama has an “apple” in her pants and was a “fattie” trying to solve child obesity.



Figure 15. The discussion of Michelle and Barack Obama that criticizes their perceived lack of conformity to gender roles as a form of dehumanization and ridicule.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 10, 2019. https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

Like American Renaissance, they accuse Michelle Obama of being ugly, masculine, and domineering. They joke that Michelle Obama is secretly a man to mock

Barack Obama and accuse him of being feminine, gay, and weak due to the aforementioned traits. Yet at the same time, they also proclaimed that Barack Obama “dripped” of liberal elitism:

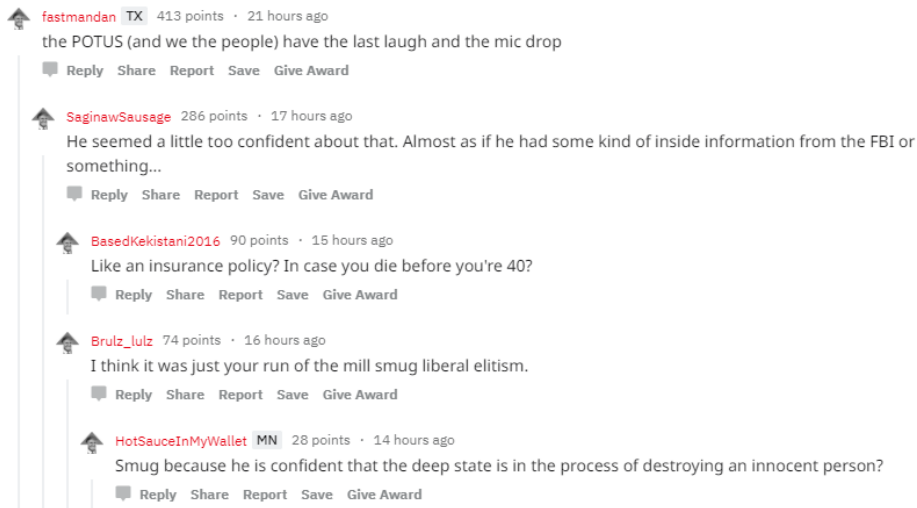


Figure 16. Comments on a post related to a video in which Barack Obama appeared on Jimmy Kimmel live to read mean tweets about himself. One of the mean tweets was written by Donald Trump and it claimed Obama was the worst president in history. Obama then said at least I will go down as a president.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 10, 2019. https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

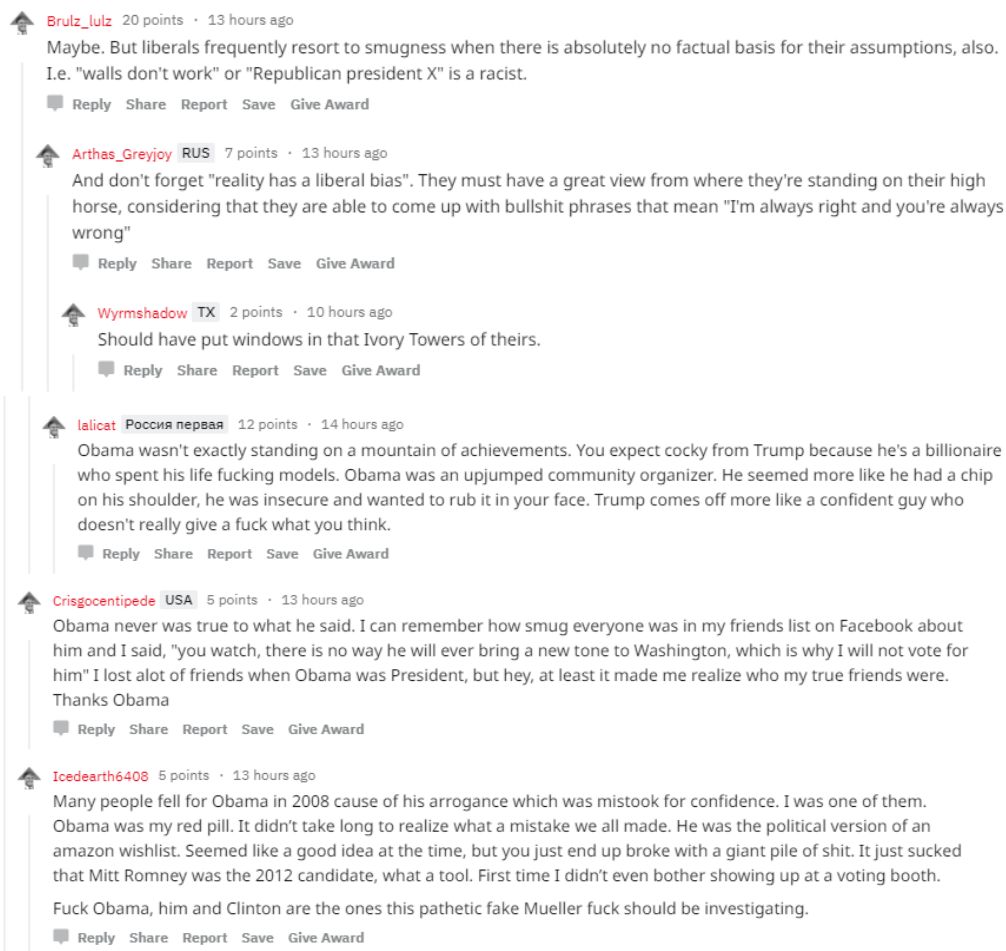


Figure 17. Continuation of figure 16.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 10, 2019. https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

Barack Obama is thus a man of many colors. He is feminine and weak when it relates to mocking his wife and “getting things done,” but at the same time, he is overconfident and a “smug” liberal elite whose insidious evil plans are powerful and constantly in motion. He reeks of fake confidence, but also real confidence, as liberals rig elections and thus he must’ve “known” that Donald Trump was going to lose the presidential election.

He is not the only subject of their ire. Hillary Clinton is always a popular target on the Donald, a symbol of the corrupt establishment Democrat machine they despise so much:



Figure 18. Crazy Hillary Clinton caricature.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 12, 2018.
https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

On February 12th, the Donald depicts Hillary Clinton in a straitjacket in “tears” with a contorted “triggered” face in a padded cell covered with words like “impeached any day now.” Outside are two Pepe the Frogs, one which looks like Batman and the other which looks like the Joker. In between them is a Donald Trump looking smug. This follows the logic that the left is worthy of ridicule and scorn. Their twisted image evokes primal emotions. It is a meme designed to make fun of, and anger, liberals by portraying Hillary Clinton and her supporters as being literally and figuratively “insane,” driven mad by the logic and reason of the right, who always have the upper hand. It also portrays Hillary Clinton as weak, needing seizure medication and alcohol to cope with Donald Trump’s presidency. Obama is weak because he is controlled by his domineering and masculine wife; Hillary Clinton is weak because she’s the typical hysterical woman, unable to

handle stress or cope with reality. Their mockery of liberal figures often relates to traditional gender roles, just like the Daily Stormer but without the quite so obvious disgust for women.

Besides believing in traditional gender roles, the Donald also strongly believes in mocking those who defy gender roles. Like the Daily Stormer, they discuss the 38-year old mother who was arrested for “calling out a transgender activist” on Twitter. Redditors of the Donald lamented the end of “free speech.” They also attack the transgender activist as being clearly “mentally disturbed” since they can’t figure out what gender they are.

Like writers and users of the Daily Stormer, they also lambast diversity in entertainment. On February 15th, on a post related to a new Vikings show with a diverse cast, they insist that white people are always made to look bad, incompetent, and mean-spirited. They say that women and black people are always made to look more competent and interesting in media. They disparage “beta, Jewish Hollywood guys with mommy issues” who they insist are the ones obsessed with diversity in media. This is most blatantly similar to Andrew Anglin’s rants on why those in entertainment only seek to “hurt white men:”



Figure 19. The comment trail discussing how diversity in media always portrays the white male in a bad light.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 15th, 2019. https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

The Donald clearly views gender as biological and stable. Anyone who rejects this notion is insane, but when it comes to villainizing different minorities, the Donald

Trump redditors sometimes have a difficult time choosing between which one is more undesirable. For example, one of February 16th's most popular posts relates to Muslims threatening to leave the UK over LGBT content being taught at Parkfield Community School in Birmingham. The comments are torn between claiming Muslims will never understand democratic values and despising LGBT "loonies." They settle for hoping the two will "fight to the death." They also insist that LGBT individuals are a lesser evil, since they are more Western than Muslims, but they are still undesirables.

In these scenarios, one can view how the Donald is an obvious white nationalist website despite their insistence that they are not racist or sexist or anti-Semitic. Their rhetoric is identical to other alt right sites and Google's algorithm shows their subreddit as related to other alt right spaces. Their language is less openly hateful towards ethnic minorities and religious minorities, but is more openly hateful to their political enemies, who represent the ethnic minorities they despise: the left.

Obsession with a Subhuman Enemy: The Radical, Hysterical Screaming Leftist

The left is an enemy with many subhuman faces. First and foremost, the "left" represents a reprehensible enemy weakened by its fanatical dedication to keeping minorities happy. To be a leftist is to be weak, sniveling, a coward, a "cuck" who allows other men to claim their wives, whether that means subscribing to liberal theories or advocating for minority rights and thus allowing them to weaken one's self. To be a leftist is to be a "white knight," someone trying to appear righteous in order to make themselves look appealing to women rather than be "tough," "practical," and "honest." In other words, a real man.

To be a leftist is to be everything the members of r/The_Donald despise. It means you are un-American, feminine, low-energy, “insane,” and amoral. I will now cover every aspect of their hatred for what they view as the “radical” left (to lean even slightly left on the political spectrum is to be a radical leftist). On February 10th, one of the top voted posts on the Donald claims that there was no collusion between Russia and Trump. Comments sneer at the “radical screaming leftist” stereotype that they believe is determined to destroy Donald Trump in any way they can. The Donald argues that the left is always insisting that Donald Trump only won the 2016 election due to Russian collusion and wasted valuable “tax dollars” trying to implicate him for a crime he did not commit. The leftists’ dedication to this theory makes them not only insane, but dangerous.

The left is also perceived as being rampantly PC and classist. The Donald users claim that those investigating Trump are themselves corrupt and inefficient, wasting money and resources to try and “pin” a crime on Trump. In response to accusations of Russian collusion, they claim that Hillary Clinton is the true criminal, who was barely investigated, and who was protected by “libcucks” who wanted to cover her crimes. They are convinced that the Democratic party is going to be “taken down” and “locked up.” They suggest that those who investigate Trump be viewed as “unlawful enemy combatants” or terrorists and be given military tribunals that result in “GITMO” (a nickname for Guantanamo Bay detention camp) or public execution.

Related to the radical screaming leftist stereotype is how often they post memes associated with the New Green Deal. They typically denounce climate change and insist

that Democrats are attempting to destroy the economy with their fake global disaster theories. In these discussions, Democrats are “hippies” with wild, insane, and impractical ideas about the economy and the environment. The Donald Trump redditors also enjoy mocking CNN and “fake news.” They use a photo of an old man tying a young black man’s tie as an example of this, claiming that CNN’s title for this photo would be “white supremacist ties noose around a black kid’s neck.” They insist that this race hysteria is the “racist” projections of the hysterical left, which is always claiming “muh white savior complex” when they are the ones who are more likely to be “white saviors” pretending to care about minorities. The Donald users also claim that leftists are “upper class” coastal elites who do not respect the POC working class.

This repeated rhetoric that the left is made up of snotty wealthy upper class “coastal elites” also includes the idea that the left is “hysterical” due its over sensitivity and desire to appear morally superior. Upper class elites do not want to be seen as “racist” and thus bend over backwards to go the opposite way, trying to “appease” non-whites. Additionally, they are actually “more racist” than Trump supporters and are only “projecting” their racism onto Trump supporters in order to appear less racist. The Donald users are also convinced that some people just hate Trump and will never acknowledge any of the good things he has done. They constantly say, “Orange Man Good?” as a mocking example of how they think liberals talk and think. They also constantly refer to “Trump Derangement Syndrome,” which refers to someone’s refusal to see any value in Trump’s decisions and actions.

Anti-Trump liberals and Democrats are called traitors, conspiracists, and habitual liars. They are mocked and criticized with memes. There are multiple memes on February 15th related to how much Democrats overreact. One example of these memes is the logic raptor meme, a classic, but outdated class of memes that can be easily used by the left or the right:

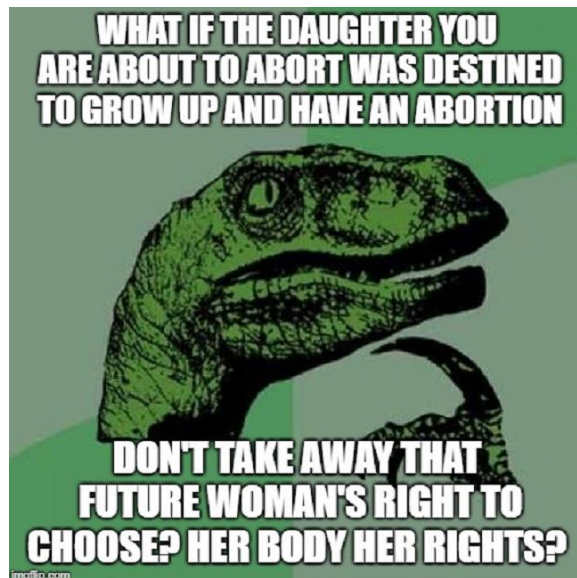


Figure 20. Classic logic raptor meme, an older meme but still apparently in use. The logic raptor asks “deep” questions about why certain established social rituals are in place. Here, the logic raptor criticizes abortion by asking leftists if aborted babies that will one day abort their babies have their own rights to their bodies.

*“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 15th, 2019.
https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.*

Non-Trump supporters are “NPCs” without critical thinking abilities who harass and threaten Trump supporters with their treasonous thoughts. The terminology “NPC”

refers to a gaming term meaning a “non-playable character.” NPCs often talk stiffly, only having one or two lines, and a low impact on the story of a video game. They are “bots,” people who only look and act human on a superficial level. They are dull, brainless, and programmed by a powerful invisible force. They are not “based.”

“Based” is also a popular term on the Donald. “Based” means someone who is “enlightened” to Trumpism. Those who are against Trump are not based at all. On February 16th, The Donald users comment on a “based” post in r/DankMemes which uses a classic Squidward sleeping meme to criticize those who are upset by Chris Pratt going to “church” (one which was purportedly anti-LGBT) but “ok” with sex predators in Hollywood:

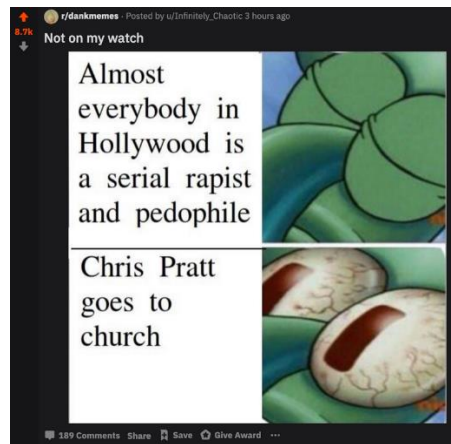


Figure 21. The Donald uses a meme posted on another subreddit to claim that their ideology has spread to other subreddits.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 16th, 2019.
https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

They comment that r/DankMemes can be based sometimes. The comment trail then argues that Gen Z is pretty “based” and redpilled. However, some argue that on r/Teenagers, many of the teenage users are anti-Trump. They express the hope that Gen Z is ultimately conservative as they grow up. A self-proclaimed high school teacher claims that Gen Z is “based” because they do not care what others think of them and this is why social justice is not popular with them. However, a “college professor” claims that Gen Z is just as progressive as the millennial age group and that they hope they get to teach these “high schoolers” (who are Donald Trump supporters) when they arrive. Another user then mockingly suggests that these progressive young people will not “breed” or if they do, then they will abort it.

This interaction suggests several opinions about the anti-Donald crowd, as the Donald sees it. It suggests that the pro-Donald Trump users hope young people populate their movement or at the very least sympathize with it. They hope that the next generation of young Americans are supportive of them. Those who are not supportive of them will hopefully abort their children or otherwise not reproduce. This interaction also suggests that the Donald views other subreddits as being corrupted by the “leftist” political force. They do not believe these sites understand them or the Donald’s values; in fact, their values are un-American precisely because they are anti-Trump.

Ultimately what can be drawn from these top voted posts and associated comment trails is that the Donald has a narrow world view. There are enemies everywhere in the form of leftists, progressives, liberals, even conservatives that do not support Donald Trump. The only people they can trust are Donald Trump supporters. Donald Trump is

truly their God Emperor, the only trustworthy politician by nature of not being a politician at all. They see the ills of society in the shape of brown and black and yellow people, colored enemies, who shriek and hiss and have inhuman tantrums about Trump. They also see enemies in the form of traitorous fellow white people, male and female, who subscribe to treasonous liberal thinking. The users of the Donald can understand what their enemies are saying, they simply refuse to hear it by classifying such people as subhuman.

An Obsession with a Subhuman Enemy: The “Conspiratorial” and Classist Left

A popular post on February 10th includes a video of former President Barack Obama reading mean tweets for a Jimmy Kimmel sketch. In it, he reads one of Donald Trump’s tweets about how he’s one of the worst American presidents in history and he jokingly says, “At least I will go down as a president.” The video was posted to mock President Obama, but several comments wonder if he “rigged” the election and thought he knew Trump would not win. Others claim there was no conspiracy, just that Obama drips of “smug liberal elitism.” This “elitism” is associated with terms they enjoy using such as “pearl clutching,” a status of posh “elites” who are acting overly outraged at something, “ivory tower,” from which they claim liberals sit and judge others, and “high horse,” which functionally is synonymous to the ivory tower. They then begin to criticize Obama for being “arrogant.” Trump, they claim, is arrogant for a good reason, while Obama was arrogant with no “backing.” User icedearth6408 claimed that he “fell” for Obama’s confidence in 2008, but the president would become his “red pill.”

User oda_nicullah also posted a photo of a man jumping across a short canyon with the title, “My jump from Bernie Sanders to Donald Trump.” Users comment that the main reason Bernie supporters switched from Bernie to Trump was because they were fooled into thinking Bernie was anti-establishment. User send_physics_memes says “regardless of how you feel about Bernie” what the DNC did to him was wrong and made people hate the Democratic party. Another user then responded saying that all of Bernie’s policies required a “big” government and that they believe the government should be as small as possible. These two comments, while not speaking glowingly of Bernie Sanders, are less unkind than others in the comment thread.

In both of these posts, users believe that liberals do not care about them, and in fact actively wish to harm them instead. They believe that politicians, conservatives included, do not care for them and that corporations are their enemies. Intriguingly however, while they do criticize, dislike, and mock Bernie Sanders, there are a few users who expressed that they once liked Bernie Sanders, or at the very least, felt that he was “wronged” by the Democratic party. Although his policies are considered communist and evil on the r/The_Donald, Bernie Sanders’ staunch and candid political reputation clearly attracted some of these frustrated users. It might seem bizarre to jump from a presidential candidate like Bernie Sanders to Donald Trump, but both at least shared one trait: they came across as anti-establishment. They did not present themselves as politicians, but outsiders from Washington.

Another popular post involves the “change my mind” meme, which is a photo of a man sitting behind a sign that has a controversial or hardline opinion followed by

“change my mind.” This post uses the meme to say: “Every Reddit account created should subscribe to r/The_Donald as a default subreddit. Change my Mind.” Users then commented that they kept getting recommended subs like communism and anarchy subreddits, and that they suspect it is because China bought Reddit shares. User Hilarity Contest then claimed that Reddit has been building more censorship into its site in order to make itself more attractive to buyers in China, “change his mind.”

Other users claim they have been auto subbed to subs like Two X Chromosomes, a subreddit dedicated to female users and female issues, and are always being recommended r/LateStageCapitalism, an anti-capitalism sub, and r/atheism. User Glennis2 expresses the desire to troll Two X Chromosomes by pretending to be a woman who “ran away from home” to get an abortion, get a “trending” or hot post on the subreddit, and then edit it to tell them what “awful pieces of shit” they are. This comment thread indicates several things: 1) that progressive subreddits dedicated to women, socialism, and atheism are unfairly favored over their own subreddit, and 2) these subreddits are pathetic, gullible, and full of fake sob stories, in contrast to their own.

On the Donald Trump subreddit, users clearly feel that other Reddit users are their enemies. The Donald also dislikes Reddit in general, seeing it as too liberal and controlled by corporate Democrat interests. It does not like how the Donald has been “censored,” by being removed from the front page, banned from linking to r/politics, and being the object of “unfair scrutiny” (Ronald, 2017). In 2017, Aja Romano reported that, “The_Donald has become notorious for its incitements to violence, its blatant white supremacist rhetoric, and its use as a lure for the alt-right into more explicit forms of

right-wing extremism... Prior to the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, The_Donald hosted a stickied post encouraging members to attend the rally and march alongside neo-Nazi and 'ethnostate' groups, because, 'In this case, the pursuit of preserving without shame white culture, our goals happen to align,'" (Roman, 2017). It was not, however banned, because user spez, more formally known as Steve Huffman, co-founder of Reddit stated: "Generally the mods of the _donald have been cooperative when we approach them with systematic abuses. Typically, we ban entire communities only when the mods are uncooperative or the entire premise of the community is in violation of our policies. In the past we have removed mods of the _donald that refuse to work with us" (Romano, 2017). However, Romano points out that "past mods have been accused of using hundreds of sockpuppet accounts to upvote posts and boost moderating decisions in violation of Reddit's rules. The moderators were also well-known for gaming the site's ranking system by pinning posts in order to prevent them from getting downvoted, thus ensuring that The_Donald posts wound up being constantly promoted to the top of Reddit's front page — again in violation of Reddit's rules. To stop them, Reddit had to completely overhaul its ranking system earlier this year in order to keep posts from The_Donald from spamming the site's front page" (Ronald, 2017).

So clearly the Donald has been given many chances. It complains of censorship, yet still exists on Reddit, is still allowed to make posts, and acts as a place for its users to connect. It just is not allowed to harass other subreddits or openly call for the killing of social justice warriors or Muslims or transgender people. This they consider unreasonable censorship.

The users and moderators of the Donald see conspiracies such as this “Reddit censorship” everywhere, arguing that the “left,” which is pretty much everyone who disagrees with them, is attempting to silence them and prevent their community from growing. They also feel that other left leaning media does not focus on antifa attacks or violence committed against Trump supporters, choosing instead to focus on “fake news” involving Trump supporters attacking minorities.

Another conspiracy theory that they enjoy discussing relates to meddling liberals who want to steal the people’s guns. The Donald is often riddled with photos of users’ guns. “Sunday Gunday” is the popular name for the collection of gun photos posted on Sunday, but photos of guns appear frequently throughout the week. On February 15th of 2019, there was a shooting in Aurora, Illinois, and Donald Trump tweeted his condolences. His tweet was posted on the subreddit, and in the comments, the Reddit users argue that Illinois has the strictest gun laws. They claim that the left will claim Japan has the strictest gun control, and no violent gun deaths, but ignore that it has few black people. They then say that America shares a border with a country full of cartels and that those suggesting an open border are insane for both wanting to open the borders and to ban weapons. They suggest that shooters are only emphasized in media when they are white, and that only black and brown people are referred to as “lone wolf shooters.” They feel that the left is not only insane but traitorous, wanting both open borders and to restrict white people’s ability to defend themselves. Like American Renaissance, they believe the left is anti-white, anti-male, and thus anti-true Americans.

The Donald users also believe that they have a duty to never spread real fake news, or at the very least, challenge people who seem as though they are trying to spread fake news on the subreddit. On February 11th of 2019, there is a post that claims Beto O'Rourke's rally only had 65 people lined up for it on the same day Trump's rally had 22,000 people lined up. Accompanying this statement were two photos comparing the two rallies' turn outs. User Juicy_Brucesky challenges this post in the comments, telling them not to spread "fake news," and that they should never do what their opponents do. He pointed out that thousands of people did show up for Beto's rally, and that he got on to speak at night, while the photo of his rally's line was clearly taken earlier in the day. Another user then insists that *this* is fake news, as only hundreds showed up. This is clearly a moment of dissonance between the two of them, however they did not further argue with one another.

The Donald users often employ words he has popularized, such as his mispronunciation of the word huge as "yuge." They enjoy using the terms "high energy" and "low energy" in the "flags" of posts (or the words appearing just below the title that denote what category a post falls under). They have so many terms and memes that they clarify in their FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions/ Answers page) what each means. For example, one word they enjoy, and which Andrew Anglin also enjoys, is shill. Similar to American Renaissance, and the Daily Stormer to some extent, the Donald users suspect that Democrats do not want to send back "criminal aliens" and the only possible reason must be that Democrats want illegal immigration in order to maintain their power. They must bring in illegal immigrants because a good, true American patriot does not vote

Democrat. Only dark-skinned intruders who are too lazy to work, and steal everyone's jobs, would vote Democrat so that they can continue to receive benefits and infiltrate/corrupt white culture. Both the Donald and American Renaissance users both suggest that Democrats actually actively keep minorities in poverty so that they will vote Democrat.

Like the Daily Stormer, The Donald users also believe pollution is the fault of people of color, but unlike the Stormer, they do not believe in climate change, choosing instead to see it as a conspiracy theory fomented by the Democrats, who wish to use a global disaster as an attempt to seize more power. Additionally, they see Democrats, who they view as living in the "polluted" cities, as hypocrites who pollute the environment more than honest, farming Republicans. They also see Democrats as being the corporate evil that own the companies most responsible for polluting the environment. So global warming is a "class" issue, one which Democrats are "tone deaf" to. Like Andrew Anglin, they refer to *1984* a great deal, darkly suspecting that liberals are going to remove their ability to use slurs.

Fears of Democrat insurgency are rampant. For example:

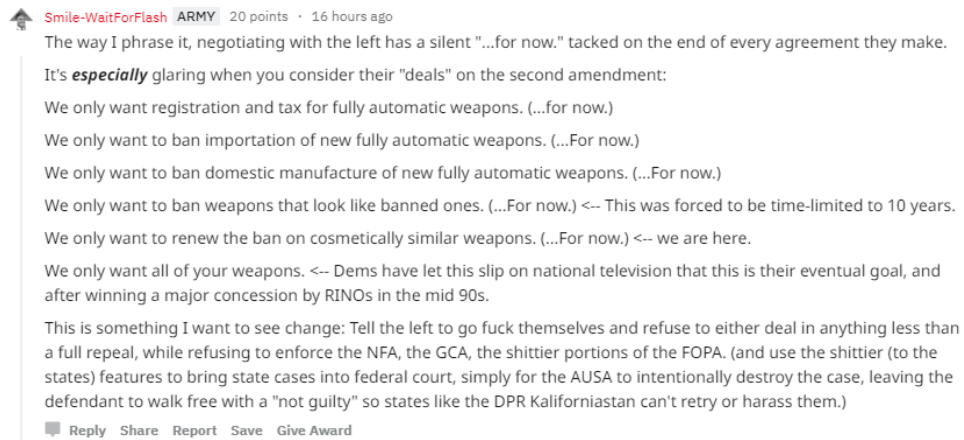


Figure 22. User Smile-WaitForFlash suggests a leftist conspiracy.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 12th, 2019. https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

In this comment, user Smile-WaitForFlash darkly speculates that the leftists are slowly chipping away at democracy with their insidious short-term plans. These short-term plans will slowly but surely morph into evil long-term plans. On the same day, there are also posts related to Trump’s 52 percent approval rating, manipulating a Pepe the Frog meme to look like a rage face comic that is laughing maniacally at liberal attempts to make Trump look bad. They crow over Trump’s achievements whenever they can and clearly believe that Donald Trump is universally loved by everyone with “sense,” i.e. true patriots. If confronted by the idea that Donald Trump may not be popular with the majority of people, then they insist that anti-Trump people are not “based” and are NPCs. They seem unable to see their opponents as rational human beings with conflicting moral values to their own.

Thus, the Donald believes 1) that Trump supporters are the only true Americans and non-Trump supporters are both non-Americans and subhuman in terms of rationality and morality, 2) that Democrats and minorities are holding true Americans and American society back, and 3) Democrats are wasteful, destructive, manipulative, and ultimately ruining America with their spending policies and anti-white rhetoric. Their favorite memes involve mocking the left and trying to make leftists look both foolish and extremely dangerous.

For example, on February 13th, they mock leftists by using the nonpartisan “button meme,” which is a meme involving a hand that is about to press a button. The title of the post says, “When you’re a leftist and someone disagrees with you about literally anything.” On the button is the caption “Nazi,” which suggests that leftists accuse everyone of being Nazis for no good reason:



Figure 23. The Donald argues that the left is too sensitive and quick to jump to conclusions.
"The_Donald." reddit. Accessed February 13th, 2019. https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

On the same day, there is another post claiming that Black Lives Matter and the Ku Klux Klan both define white supremacy the same way. The wording of the post implies that BLM activists are regressive and working against themselves:

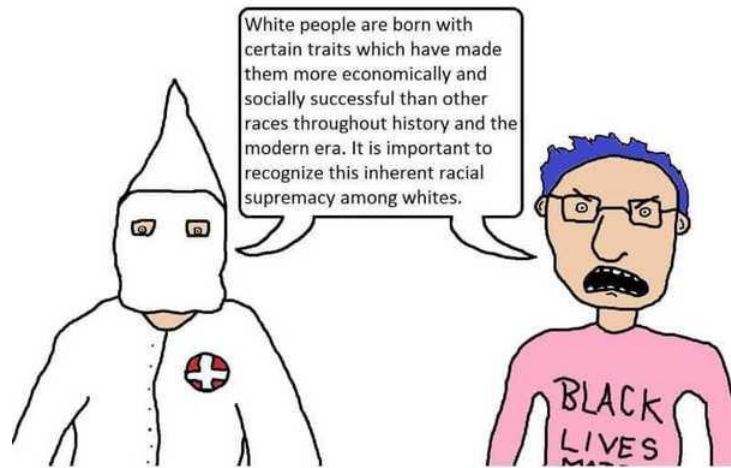


Figure 24. The Donald users suggest that the KKK and Black Lives Matter are founded on the same principles.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 13th, 2019.
https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

Along with thinking poorly of liberals and liberal media, which are anti-white and anti-male, they also think very little of actors, who tend to be wealthy and liberal, acting in progressive movies and working for a diverse Hollywood. They see them as “mentally disturbed,” drugged up, and sexually promiscuous. They claim that these people, and the liberal media, “hate” white people and will do anything to hurt them with bad policies and bad personal practices.

The Hollywood caricature is an example of how the alt right dehumanizes their enemies. Another example is how they scoff at Republicans who criticize Trump, seeing them as the enemy despite purportedly being the politicians whose side they are “on.” They claim they have been betrayed by the “GOP” multiple times. On the Donald, anyone who opposes Donald Trump is an enemy and deserving of dehumanizing and spiteful rhetoric.

Some civil rights groups are also the object of their ire. For example, they criticize the ACLU, claiming it used to “stand for something,” it used to protect the Ku Klux Klan even, but now it “whores itself out” to Marxists/ globalists who will fund them. They seem to believe progressive money goes entirely to funding the communist agenda. Their conspiracy theories are as wild and reaching as anything from the Daily Stormer, simply said with more faux intellectualism similar to American Renaissance. They are afraid of corruption in the government and believe there is a secret order of high-profile Democrats who are running the show behind the scenes. Although they do not refer to Jewish people as being the insidious and evil force that is manipulating people and stripping white men of their rightful power, they use many alternative code words like globalist.

The Daily Stormer theorizes that Jews are behind all of the white man’s woes and American Renaissance theorizes that white liberals and nonwhite people are united against the white man, but the Donald is more focused on people’s political leanings and class standing. All of the alt right believes in conspiracy theories, in their own version of being “woke,” being based, but the Donald is unique in that its conspiracy theories are similar, but not quite so openly racist all the time.

The Power of Memes, “High Energy,” and Having “Fun”

The power of fun is not to be underestimated in the alt right movement. Liberals are not “fun.” They are restrictive, boring, low-energy, suggesting boring and tired ideas that will never work, or have been tried before and ended in miserable failure. Along with the colorful creativity of the Donald, and the alt right, there is the notion of being “high

energy.” On February 11th of 2019, there is a stickied post that informs users of places one can watch Donald Trump’s rally in El Paso, Texas. There are multiple posts about Trump’s rally, which are all titled “high energy.” Low energy is a term typically reserved for “cuckservatives” and “libcucks.” It denotes old, stale ideas and a commitment to the “establishment.”

The “establishment” is not tech savvy, and is especially not meme savvy. On the Donald, liberals are a source of ridicule, a subject of degrading and insulting memes. In the Donald users’ eyes, that removes some of their power, tears them down a peg or two. The Donald thus becomes a creative space for perceived shifts in power. This power is rooted in “trolling” culture, in being the bigger man by rolling with the punches and laughing at one’s self, and others. For example, on February 10th, there is a popular post that refers to a joke actor Rob Lowe made about how Elizabeth Warren, who had come under fire for identifying as Native American, would bring a whole new meaning to the Commander in “Chief.” Donald Trump’s reddit supporters discussed the backlash over the joke, claiming that “it was funny” and “no humor is allowed” with PC culture. The Donald claimed that those who make unapproved humor are sentenced to death. This outlandish claim is one of the many ways they invalidate the concerns of the left. They also accuse the Democrats of being humorless and boring which is why they don’t win. They claim that if they were as rich as Rob Lowe, they would “redpill” cucks every day on Twitter. They believe he has so much money that he could say whatever he wants, and not be economically punished for it. They express frustration and confusion, wondering why Rob Lowe does not do what “they would do” in his position.

Like the Daily Stormer, they demonstrate their “high energy” memeing by creating a virgin vs. chad meme, this time referring to the difference between Trump’s welcoming balloon in Britain, which portrayed him as a fat, ugly, crying baby and in Italy, where his balloon was portrayed as powerful in Roman armor:



Figure 25. An example of the Virgin vs. Chad meme using real life images.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 10th, 2019.

This goes along with their referral to him as GEOTUS or God Emperor of the United States. Users commented that Trump should buy the God Emperor balloon and put it on the White House lawn to enrage protesters. They then joke that the liberals would take it seriously and see it as Trump not only claiming emperor status but divinity as well. Thus, they see the left as utterly insufferable and humorless, but themselves as flexible, playful, spiteful, and always winning by never being offended. They do not see their constant rage at conniving liberals or endless obsession with social activists as being offended.

Susan Zickmund discusses the concept of the virtual community through the concept of the radical right (1997). She argues that their community is rife with conflicting ideologies and life views, yet they share a hatred of “outside groups,” and are disdainful to the federal government and to the general public, and this makes their “subversive” ideology the center of their ties to their communities (Zickmund, 1997, 166). She argues that one of the most unifying factors is “language,” which is one of the key unifying factors Benedict Anderson also describes as being a key shared cultural “attribute” of the dominant national culture. Language creates a sense of a shared culture, not only due to how it determines individuals’ modes of thinking and how they strengthen bonds with one another through familiar buzz words, but through its clarification of what their shared culture truly “is” (Zickmund, 169). It also solidifies important cultural symbols, like Pepe the Frog or more specific “foundational” cultural images that are passed around and immortalized in virtual communities. These cultural images include SpongeBob, the Matrix, Scooby Doo, Pikachu, and other popular meme formats. Their cultural symbols can be transmitted across enemy lines by virtue of being formattable and non-partisan. In this way, memes are a source of social and political power when used correctly. The Donald’s emphasis on their own memes and the lack of quality memes that come from the left shows their own dedication to this assertion.

One particularly notable incident where the Donald users insisted that memes are a source of power involves a Family Guy meme photo set which depicts Meg Griffin, a misunderstood and despised character in the show’s universe, saying, “You guys always act like you’re better than me.” The scene then cuts to her family, all dressed in fine

clothing, acting “better” than her. User levi_c1 edited “Meg” to have “Politicians” over her face, and Meg’s family to have “Meme Creators” over it. This implies that politicians are in some way “brought down” by meme creators. The meme itself could refer to either Democrats or Republicans. Only the original poster’s comment, that God Emperor Trump is the meme god, indicates that it is pro-conservative in nature. This meme indicates that Donald Trump subredditers believe that they have found some modicum of power by bringing down politicians with their nonsensical humor.



Figure 26. A popular post indicating that political power can be challenged by memes and their creators.

“The_Donald.” reddit. Accessed February 11th, 2019.
https://www.reddit.com/r/The_Donald/.

On February 12th, the Donald insists that the left cannot meme, and this is a point of pride for them. Pop culture images such as SpongeBob and rage comics are popular meme images for them. Rage comics in general often include artwork with contorted faces that they feel either represent the left’s outrage or will work as perfect trolling

material. Trolling is a creative outlet for them, as they can get a sense of glee out of “triggering” sensitive leftists and people on the internet by deliberately trying to force them into a state of incoherent rage.

Such trolling includes the term “God Emperor of the United States.” They claim that they want Donald Trump to be a God Emperor, yet do not actually believe in such a thing, or want people to assume that they are joking about it. This way they can “trigger” liberals by promoting a non-democratic America, but at the same time be part of an inside joke. They jokingly state that all of Trump’s children should be president next to get a “dynasty” going. They both ironically and unironically enjoy the idea of Trump being the “God Emperor.” Obviously, they do not actually promote a Trumpian dictatorship, but liberals do not know that. They proclaim that liberals will report that Trump recently called himself a god, and not understand their God Emperor’s wise and endlessly clever sense of humor. In their minds, liberals are no fun, cannot “troll,” and are thus always foiled by the cleverer and more fun alt right. If they truly want a Trump dynasty, then they simply disguise it with satire, using it as a clever bait and switch, should it reflect poorly on their community.

The Donald, like American Renaissance, the Daily Stormer, other alt right sites, and even non-alt right sites is riddled with contradictions. The internal logic of the community seems rational, seems to follow a particular viewpoint, but in the case of the Donald, there are no dissenting opinions the way there are on the Daily Stormer or American Renaissance. Users may offer slightly varying opinions, but they do not aggressively challenge one another, choosing instead to focus on their external enemies.

The Donald, as a human social space, suffers from no internal fractures (and it bans those who say anything negative about Trump). But as a faction of the alt right, it does operate as an example of visual humor and political satire as a form of protest amongst the community.

How to Understand the Alt Right: A Conclusion

What do we make of the alt right? Is it a new kind of political movement that is here to stay? Does the alt right strengthen white nationalism or does it weaken it? These are all questions we should ask about the alt right when attempting to understand its ideology and movements, both online and in real life. The alt right is a serious problem, as it provides a space for people to become radicalized within. It spews hateful rhetoric and exclusionary beliefs that are inherently violent. It masquerades as a legitimate movement, while hiding behind a mask of humor, irreverence, and flippant disregard for politics. The alt right is seeping into mainstream discourse, by pretending to be anti-PC culture, by seizing onto white fears of minority advancement at their own expense, and fears of left-wing socialist policies. The alt right's physical presence might not be as powerful as they claim, but its online presence is powerful, affecting mainstream spaces like Reddit and Facebook. Its memes are insidious and carefully constructed, mocking "leftists" and people who are "too PC," and threading their alt right messages into easily shareable content. The only way to fight such tactics is to be made aware of them and to fight such messages when they appear in one's own personal sphere. Challenging the alt right directly and forcing their hateful messages into the light can be difficult, using conventional methods such as well-reasoned debate. However, fighting the alt right using

its own methods, counter-memeing and making a mockery of them, could be just as effective. Maybe even fun.

American Renaissance's pseudo-intellectual white nationalism is high-effort racism. It is less appealing to young people, aimed more towards the older and more established internet citizens that desire a return to an old racial order with themselves on top. The Daily Stormer's wild and irreverent humor is aimed towards younger, angrier white men, pretending to want a revolution, yet really only perversely craving the attention, both negative and positive, like a forgotten child misbehaving so that their parents will dedicate some time for them. The Donald's political humor and satirical criticisms of the left are aimed towards politically savvy right-wing Americans and the casual right-wing audience. They also aim to infiltrate centrist and leftist spaces with their pro-Trump memes and anti-leftist logic. The Daily Stormer, American Renaissance, and the Donald represent the diverse and creative alt right spaces that make up the entire movement. These three sites also represent greater ideologies of online culture: the irreverence for established social norms, the desire for absolute freedom of speech, and a dedication to highly-visual, easily formattable humor. As long as they exist, they will continue to spout their hateful ideologies of white supremacy and non-white inferiority. The real goal should not be just to silence or destroy such sites, as others will take their place or they will find other ways to return, but to make them irrelevant and boring. Their opinions should be challenged by outside forces, by the mainstream. They are not to be promoted, but revealed as the frauds that they are, through the same ridicule they believe empowers them, or through less direct means, such as explaining why their logic is

incorrect to those who might be attracted to their movement without truly understanding it. By being integrated into the mainstream, but not on their own terms, there is hope that these sites can be made utterly irrelevant in the already troubled times to come. There is also a chance that the alt right, full of fractures along personal and ideological lines, will continue to break apart until it has become too diluted and mainstream to continue posing a threat to people who disagree with them.

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Biography

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