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**2016 Trump Presidential Campaign: The Online Influence and Mobilization
of the Alternative Right**

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Dedication

To me, To my one and only. My Gift from Allah.

I would like to express my greatest gratitude and thanks to Allah, the Almighty and most gracious, for granting me the strength, patience, guidance, intellect, and the opportunity to write this dissertation.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my family and to my one and only. For their unconditional and everlasting love, patience, and persistent encouragement. Their belief in me and my abilities and their unwavering support have been my constant source of motivation.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the role of the Alternative Right in the 2016 Presidential elections. The 2016 US presidential election witnessed a remarkable increase in the Alternative Right movement activity, which significantly influenced the political discourse and voter's behavior. The Alternative Right is distinctly characterized as anti-political correctness, anti-immigration, anti-Semitic, and anti-feminist ideologies. Donald Trump candidacy speech resonated with the Alternative Right promotion of white nationalism, anti-immigration, and populism. This dissertation investigates the origins, ideology, factions, online platforms, and the impact of the Alternative Right, analyzing how its tech-savvy followers spread their message and rally support for Donald Trump via online forums and social media. Through qualitative methods, including content analysis and data collection from websites and social media platforms focusing on posts, tweets and other relevant materials associated with the Alternative Right. This study sheds light on the strategies used by the Alt-Right on Twitter to influence and alter voter's behavior as well as the mutually beneficial relationship between the Alt-Right and Trump's campaign, emphasizing how Trump's statements and actions reflected the fundamental ideas of the movement, enhancing and legitimizing its power.

Key words: Alternative Right, Donald Trump, Mobilization, Social media, Presidential campaign.

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Figure 1: Callum Borchers, 'Can you name one white nationalist article at Breitbart?'

Challenge accepted, 2016.

Figure 2: @realDonaldTrump

List of Acronyms

WSP	Washington Summit Publishers
SJW	Social Justice Warriors
ADL	Anti-Defamation League
PC	Political Correctness

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General Introduction

The United States electoral system was affected and influenced by many factors throughout time. Media, newspapers, radio, television, and later the development of social media had a profound impact. Newspapers and pamphlets were the primary means of communication during the early years of the US, and with the development of technology and internet, media and social media plays a key role in shaping the electoral process. Through the publication of articles, essays, and reviews, media outlets promoted political discussions and debates. Through these forums, citizens are given the opportunity to interact with other viewpoints and take part in the current political discourse.

The general elections of 2016 witnessed a big influence of social media in shaping its result. Donald Trump, the 45th president of the United States is known for his utilization of social media platforms. Trump as a candidate utilized platforms like Twitter to directly communicate with the public, share his opinions, and respond to criticism.

The Alternative Right, commonly known as the "alt-right," is a set of far-right ideologies, groups and individuals whose core belief is that "white identity" is under attack by multicultural forces using "political correctness" and "social justice" to undermine white people and "their" civilization. The alt-right is characterized by heavy use of social media and online memes, and Trump candidacy speech resonated with their elements. His Anti-Establishment rhetoric, Nationalism and Immigration appealed to those in the alt-right.

Research Problem

The relationship between the Alternative Right, social media, and Trump's elections was multifaceted. The present research aims at shedding light on the online mobilization strategies employed by Alternative Right and their impact on public discourse.

Research Aims

This research aims at analyzing the strategies used by the alternative right on social media platforms, exploring the online mobilization impact on voter's sentiment, the use of channels to promote narratives, the interaction with the supporters, and rally backing for Donald's Trump campaign for presidency.

Research Questions

This research focuses on the online role of the Alternative Right in influencing the 2016 elections as a major question of the research. This work intends to investigate some specific research questions on this subject:

- To what extent the Alt-right contributed to Donald's Trump win?
- Was the social media mobilization the main cause of his win?
- What kind of strategies that were implemented?

Research Methodology

This research will be conducted with qualitative methods using analytical analysis to identify key themes. Content analysis, and Data collection from websites and social media platforms focusing on posts, tweets and other relevant materials associated with the Alternative Right.

This dissertation aims at analyzing the Alternative Right influence in the presidential elections of 2016 including the strategies used to support Donald Trump in becoming the 45th president of the United States as well as the impact of the online mobilization through websites and social media on public sentiment, examining how it have influenced voter's behavior and contributed to the overall outcome of the elections. Through qualitative methods, including data

and content analysis. The first chapter of this dissertation will investigate the rise of the alternative right. The second chapter uncovers the Alternative Right ideologies and factions. The third chapter will be an analysis of the online websites and the mobilization used to alter the elections course.

Chapter One: The Alt-Right; From Margins to Mainstream

Introduction

Throughout history, societies have witnessed the emergence of diverse political movements that reflect the ever-evolving dynamics of human civilization. Social movements and ideologies have shaped human affairs over time, often in response to social, political, economic, and cultural upheavals. The evolution of the internet and social media came as a response to the human need to communicate and it affected the lives of billions of people. As a result, new political groups and ideas have emerged in the 21st century as a result of globalization and technological breakthroughs, changing the face of modern discourse and challenging established paradigms. One of the movements that has attracted a lot of attention lately is the Alternative Right, or “alt-right”. This chapter focuses on what the Alternative Right is, defining the scope and contents of the movement intellectually and its ascension from fringe to forefront.

1.1 The Emergence of The Alternative Right

1.1.1 The First Wave of the Alt-Right

Undoubtedly, one of the most notable movements of the 21st century is the radical political movement known as Alternative Right (*The Radical Roots of the Alt-Right* | Josh Vandiver). The Alternative in the “alt-right” stands for the departure from mainstream conservatism. The genesis of the term can be traced back to a speech titled “The Decline and The Rise of the Alternative Right” given by Paleoconservative Paul Gottfried in 2008 at a meeting of the white nationalists H.L Mencken club by the organization owner. The term Alternative Right was not included in the speech, even the title itself is an invention by Richard Spencer, the magazine editor (Volle 2023). In an interview with Richard Spencer, Spencer states that he takes credit for coining the term, as well as giving credit to Paul Gottfried for planting the idea in his mind through an article called “*A Paleo Epitaph*”. Spencer reveals that he discussed the state of

the Paleoconservative movement with Paul and why it just doesn't make sense anymore (Hawley 51). Paul Gottfried ideas of providing a new home for conservatives who felt like they are too extreme for the mainstream movements has evolved into The Alternative Right (Chernikoff 2016). The term alt-right is used to describe a political ideology that is associated with the following concepts: white supremacy, white nationalism, racism, neo-Nazism, anti-Semitism, opposition to migration, opposition to political correctness, and opposition to feminism ("Alt-right - Ballotpedia"). The alt-right is a far-right political and social movement of white supremacists and a large association of young white nationalists, extreme libertarians, and neo-Nazis (Volle 2023), and groups of individuals whose core belief is that "white identity" is under attack by multicultural forces using "political correctness" and "social justice" (Southern Poverty Law Center). The movement has been defined by media sources and other organizations, according to the Associated Press:

The 'alt-right' or 'alternative right' is a name currently embraced by some white supremacists and white nationalists to refer to themselves and their ideology, which emphasizes preserving and protecting the white race in the United States in addition to, or over, other traditional conservative positions such as limited government, low taxes and strict law-and-order. The movement has been described as a mix of racism, white nationalism and populism. Although many adherents backed President-elect Donald Trump in the recent election, Trump last week said he disavows and condemns the 'alt-right.' The movement criticizes 'multiculturalism' and more rights for non-whites, women, Jews, Muslims, gays, immigrants and other minorities. Its members reject the American democratic ideal that all should have equality under the law regardless of creed, gender, ethnic origin or race (Daniszewski 2016).

Daniszewski states that we shouldn't allow such organizations to define themselves, but we should keep track of their actions, positions, associations and history in order to uncover their true ideologies and beliefs as well as how others see them.

Based on an article by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), supporters of the Alt-Right identify with several kinds of ideologies that prioritize white identity. Plenty of them identify as "Identitarians." Some members of the alt-right group identify as "radical traditionalists," or those who seek to uphold traditional Christian ideals from a specifically white nationalist viewpoint. The article discusses some members of the Alt-Right who identify as white nationalists and seek to maintain the status quo of white people in the US, saying that any loss of white majority status would be comparable to "white genocide." Propaganda on immigration and "black crime" is used by them as evidence of the purported ethnic cleansing of White people. All members of the alt-right are fixated with white identity. Neo-reactionaries, who oppose liberal democracy and Enlightenment concepts, is a term used by several alt-right factions. The term "Dark Enlightenment" is used by some neo-reactionaries to describe their beliefs. Others who believe that a person's race determines characteristics like behavior and IQ may refer to themselves as "race realists" or, more colloquially, "HBD" advocates.

The Alternative Right is characterized by the use of social media and online memes, it is an online organization that works through cyberspace and is continuously shaped by its ongoing development (Southern Poverty Law Center). In 2010, Richard Spencer, the editor of *Taki's Magazine*, and *The American Conservative* before founded his own web magazine and named it *AlternativeRight.com*. In short order, the nature of Internet discourse at the site shortened the name of the movement it promoted to "alt-right." (Neiwert 2009). Spencer first started as an assistant in *The Conservative Magazine*, However, ten months into the work, he got fired due to

his increasingly extreme opinions. Spencer talked about the Duke Lacrosse Case and gave it credit for changing the course of his career, later he moved to take a new position as the only editor of *Taki's Magazine*, the online vanity magazine owned by Taki Theodoracopulos, a Greek shipping magnate who was notorious for his racist remarks (Harkinson 2016). And while he was there, he came under the mentorship of Paul Gottfried.

Spencer started *AlternativeRight.com* with the backing of Peter Brimelow and the *VDARE Foundation*, where he was free to expound on his increasing radicalism at will. Brimelow describes the *AlternativeRight.com* web magazine by Spencer as a project of the VDARE Foundation (Keller 2010). And with Spencer being formal, serious, professional, and with all American look. He became a very popular speaker in the white nationalist circle. In an interview with a reporter, "We have to look good," Spencer said. After all, nobody wants to join a movement that is "crazed or ugly or vicious or just stupid, those stereotypes of redneck, tattooed, illiterate, no-teeth" people are blocking my progress (Fox 2013). The *AlternativeRight.com* initial articles are what made it the way it is. According to Spencer, they published Kevin MacDonald (Hawley 57), Kevin is the neo-Nazi movement's favorite academic. In 2009, MacDonald started up his very own online magazine "*The Occidental Observer*" to "present original content touching on the themes of white identity, white interests, and the culture of the West." He also published a trilogy that supposedly proves that Jews are genetically driven to destroy Western societies ("Kevin MacDonald"). The blog also published Jared Taylor, the founder of the New Century Foundation and edited its now-discontinued *American Renaissance magazine* ("Jared Taylor"). In 2011, Spencer became the president of the National Policy Institute (NPI), a smallish white-nationalist organization based in Virginia, and promptly made it into one of the leading centers of the budding alt-right movement, and affiliated with *Washington Summit*

Publishers (Kenes 2021). Spencer started to run two associated ventures. *Radix Journal*, a publication featuring essays on white nationalism and other issues, and *Washington Summit Publishers*, which publishes the work of racists (“Richard Spencer: Five Things to Know | ADL”), For about a year, Spencer was heavily occupied. With the acquisitions of NPI and WSP, Spencer found himself in the middle of a plethora of projects. Then it all became too much. He wrote:

Over the past, six months, I’ve reached a point of professional crisis. NPI, Radix, AltRight, Washing Summit Publishers, Vanguard, additional writings ... Unfinished projects pile up. Emails go unanswered. More funds need to be raised. My desire to do all of these projects is preventing me from completing any of them. Something’s got to give. I’ve decided it must be AltRight. And today, I am resigning from being the editor and main blogger *AlternativeRight.com* (Burghart 2014).

He departed and eventually stepped down from *Alternativeright.com*. In his final articles, Spencer said: “Looking back over the past two years, I feel that I have accomplished most of the goals I set for myself in founding AltRight, which was never meant to become an institution.” From that moment forward, Colin Liddell and Andy Nowicki, a former college professor coedited *Alternative Right*. Spencer was still the site's owner even if he no longer had direct editorial control over it (Southern Poverty Law Center). Liddell previously contributed to the white supremacist journal *American Renaissance*. He writes about the notion of racial equality fabricated by the “liberal-leftist media” and the “Jewish propaganda machine.” In his 2012 essay “Is Black Genocide Right?” he writes: “Instead of asking how we can make reparations for slavery, colonialism, and apartheid or how we can equalize academic scores and incomes, we should instead be asking questions like, “Does human civilization actually need the Black race?”.

This article by Liddell caused Spencer to be attacked in mainstream-media venues. Andy Nowicki is the other assistant editor of the *Alternative Right* blog, Nowicki claims he is not a white nationalist yet he shares many of those views. He gives voice to the ideology of white nationalists and figures on the Alt Right (“From Alt Right to Alt Lite: Naming the Hate”).

In December 2013, Spencer shut down *AlternativeRight.com* without his editor’s knowledge. On the far right, Spencer’s decision caused some controversy and Liddell started posting angry complaints about this on other websites. The editors of *Radix Journal* responded in a Facebook post saying: “As recently as this autumn, Spencer informed them, once again, that it is time to shut down the Alternative Right. Therefore, it was not a surprise move by any means, as has been insinuated.” (“Radix Journal”). Spencer also stated in a podcast the reasons for choosing *Radix Journal* over *AlternativeRight* as Hawley writes:

Alternative Right, calling it that did kind of wear on me. It never struck me as satisfying at all. Because, as you say, it really is kind of a negative conception of who we are. You’re alternative to what? And putting even the “right” in there kind of limits us to, you know, the left-right division that was created after the French Revolution. I really thought that there has to be something more. If I were to describe myself, I would say that I still am motivated by the same German idealism that I had been motivated by for a long time. I think race is a very important part of that. I would say I am a white nationalist, but not one who simply wants to defend whites as they are, or defend whites in themselves. You know, as if I would be happy if some white person were elected. Like, “Oh, look, one of our own is in office! That’s great. Yippee!” I want something very different. I want us, our whole civilization, to become itself. So, I would say a traditionalist futurist, archeo-futurist, motivated by German idealism and nationalism,

that's pretty much who I am. I want our civilization to kind of rediscover itself, rediscover a lot of its Faustian qualities, its desire for exploration, for risk taking, for shooting for the stars, to put it banally (Hawley 65).

Spencer restated his desire to "move beyond the alternative-right concept" in that same episode. In more than five years, the idea of the alternative-right has changed from a general description of anyone on the right who rejected the conservative movement to a term that was explicitly associated with white identity politics. The creator of the term rejected it, giving the impression that the alternate right had vanished from existence (65).

After the original AlternativeRight website was shut down, Liddell and Nowicki created a new website also called Alternative Right, but it did not have the same reach as the original one.

Liddell and Nowicki were not well-positioned to play a significant role in the American white supremacist movement. Nowicki, has stated that he does not oppose interracial marriage among other things, whereas Liddell was living in Japan (66).

1.1.2 The Alt-Right Returns

Following the demise of the Alternative Right, an incident at Gamergate led to the rebirth of the modern Alternative Right and began rapidly expanding its reach and popularity online. During 2014 and 2015, a debate occurred within the online video gaming community known as Gamergate. It started by the release of a video game called Depression Quest by Zoë Quinn, the game received a positive feedback for the developer from game critics and mental health professionals (Greengard 2024). After the initial feedback, the game developer's ex-boyfriend uploaded a 10,000-manifesto accusing her of participating in various unpleasant acts and of deceptive and manipulative behavior during their relationship (McIntosh et al.). Thousands of people in the game community began to systematically harass, heckle, threaten, and dox several

outspoken feminist women in their midst, few of whom were journalists. The harassment occurred under the social media hashtag “Gamergate” which is still a place of debate and anti-feminist resentment today (Romano 2020). Although the post has been removed from the site, users copied the content and posted it in the anonymous 4chan. Another one of the prime targets during the height of “Gamergate” was Anita Sarkeesian, known for her YouTube channel on misogynistic tropes within video games. Anita Sarkeesian’s videos applying basic feminist theory to video games had already made her a target (Lees 2016). Although the accusations proved false against the developer, the online harassment campaign lasted for a year. Robert Evans, a journalist who specializes in extremist communities states that “Part of why Gamergate happened in the first place was because you had these people online preaching to these groups of disaffected young men,”. He later concludes that what Gamergate had that those previous movements didn’t was an organized strategy, made public, cloaking itself as a political movement with a flimsy philosophical stance, its goals and targets amplified by the power of Twitter and a hashtag (Romano 2020). The end of the Gamergate campaign resulted in a victory for the angry gamers, supporters of Gamergate were successful in getting sponsors to pull out of several publications. Big companies withdrew their funds, Intel company withdrew funding Gamasutra (Johnston 2014) as well as Mercedes Benz corporation withdrew their advertising from Gawker, which is an American blog founded by Nick Denton and Elizabeth Spiers (Dewey 2021).

Gamergate demonstrated the significant and long-lasting influence that an army of anonymous activists and trolls can have on actual organizations. Gamergate was primarily coordinated through message boards. One of the most famous bloggers who built fame and Twitter followers through supporting and cheerleading Gamergate is Milo Yiannopoulos (Lees 2016). According

to Evans, profiles at Gamergate described Milo as a “descendant of William S. Burroughs.”, Profile-writers and shows such as *Newsnight* expanded his celebrity beyond the internet. Young, handsome, charismatic and eloquent – the writer Laurie Penny called him “a charming Devil and one of the worst people I know”. He was far more alluring to the media than, say, James Delingpole (Lynskey 2017). Gamergate was by no means the beginning of the rise in extremism; the fault lies with a range of factors ranging from centuries of racism, to decades of neoconservative grassroots organizing, to the rise of media and online echo chambers, to internet recruitment by actual white supremacists, and much more.

During the "Gamergate" incident, Yiannopoulos gained notoriety by writing a blog for Breitbart criticizing the "feminist bullies tearing the video game industry apart." (Milo 2014).

Yiannopoulos's opposition was momentous because it powered and pulled in a crowd fed up with feminists and other civil rights organizations, whom he dismissively refers to as "SJWs," or "social justice warriors," (“Milo Yiannopoulos: Five Things to Know”).

Breitbart blog which Milo was writing for is an American far-right syndicated news, opinion and commentary website founded in mid-2007 by American conservative commentator Andrew Breitbart. Andrew Breitbart was a tech worker for the right-wing news aggregator *The Drudge Report* and with Ariana Huffington to help her set up her news website *The Huffington Post* (“Breitbart News”). *Breitbart News* started as a pro-freedom and pro-Israel platform, and everything changed in 2012, when Andrew Breitbart died of heart failure at the age of forty-three. Following his death, Steve Bannon was appointed as chief executive. Bannon identifies as conservative but has been frequently perceived to be a white nationalist, an allegation he denies. Bannon aligned Breitbart News with the alt-right and white supremacists, as well as the racist and misogynist content. a move that would seem counterintuitive to most, especially considering

the first purpose of the website (Kleinman 2018). Bannon hired Milo Yiannopoulos and later he became his senior editor at Breitbart News. Milo has published many negative articles about immigrants, Muslims, feminists, and racial and ethnic minorities. During Bannon's tenure as executive chair of Breitbart News he hosted Yiannopoulos. Bannon hosted Yiannopoulos at least 20 times while anchoring the *Breitbart Daily News* satellite radio show. Bannon frequently lavished Yiannopoulos with praise during those events, drawing comparisons between his boldness and Winston Churchill, and his provocative remarks to that of Breitbart's late founder, Andrew Breitbart as well as applauding him as "one of the leading voices of his generation in this whole fight against cultural Marxism and the defense of Western Civilization."

Breitbart connection to the alt-right was Milo Yiannopoulos who began writing pieces extolling the virtues of the new alt-right movement. Milo strengthened the website's relationship with the mainstream conservatives when he posted in 2016 a co-written piece with his fellow Breitbart Tech reporter Allum Bokhari titled "An establishment conservative's guide to the Alt Right" (Hankes 2017). The banner image at the top of the article depicted a cemetery in the dead of night: in the background of the picture is a tombstone inscribed "GOP 2016" in the foreground of the picture is a GOP elephant cowering at the sight of a "goblin." Only the goblin isn't a goblin. It is a goblin-like portrayal of Pepe the Frog, an internet meme symbolizing the alt-right (Ashford 2017). Milo and Bokhari wrote "For decades, the concerns of those who cherish western culture have been openly ridiculed and dismissed as racist. The alt-right is the inevitable result." The article's main goal was to give the alt-right movement the appearance of academic depth by implying its intellectual figures H. L. Mencken, Richard Spencer, Peter Brimelow, Jared Taylor, a eugenicist named Steve Sailer, and the social psychologist Jonathan Haidt. And they acknowledged in their conclusion that there are still real white supremacists involved in the

alt-right known as the “1488ers,” which they have stated that “For all alt-righters talk of there being no enemies to the right, it’s clear from the many conversations we’ve had with them that many would rather if the 1488ers didn’t exist” (Yiannopoulos and Bokhari). Milo and Bokhari also stated that 1488ers would likely denounce this article as the product of a degenerate homosexual and an ethnic mongrel, which happened by Andrew Anglin. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), Andrew Anglin is the founder of the neo-Nazi *Daily Stormer* website, which takes its name from the gutter Nazi propaganda sheet known as *Der Stürmer*. Styled after popular image-heavy internet forums like 4chan and 8chan, *the Daily Stormer* nurtured a new generation of white supremacists online, spreading anti-Semitism, neo-Nazism and white nationalism with acerbic hyperbole and epithet-laden stories reflecting Anglin’s racist worldview (“Andrew Anglin”). Racist headlines were commonplace, such as “All Intelligent People in History Disliked the Jews” (Hankes, Eye of the Stormer 2017). Within a year of founding *the Daily Stormer*, Anglin embraced the alt-right movement and promoted it at every opportunity. And By the spring of 2016, he was advertising his site as “the world’s most visited alt-right website”.

As a respond to Milo and Bokhari, Anglin published his own written piece titled “A Normie’s Guide to the Alt-Right,” in which he set out to correct the “An establishment conservative’s guide to the Alt Right”. From Anglin's point of view, the document acts as an introduction to the ideology, convictions, and objectives of the Alt-Right. It addresses a wide range of subjects, including far-right ideology, identity politics, anti-immigration feelings, criticism of feminism, and white nationalism. The term "Normie" in the title refers to people who are not very familiar with or actively involved in the alt-right movement, suggesting that the guide's goal is to give a more general audience an understandable explanation of its tenets. Anglin also correctly pointed

out that the alt-right, in reality, was made up of a broad network of websites, Internet media figures, and social-media activists, beyond players named in the Breitbart piece (Raposo 2021). Anglin was especially vicious in attacking both Yiannopoulos and his essay with Bokhari, Anglin condemned Yiannopoulos as “a subversive and a disease, a homosexual Jew that seeks to undermine right-wing movements for Jewish purposes.” (*EXHIBIT D*). The alt-right operated primarily in secrecy, keeping its internal conflicts and arguments from view of anyone who weren't specifically searching for them. However, things are beginning to shift, and they are only becoming more powerful (Gray, “How 2015 Fueled the Rise of the Freewheeling, White Nationalist Alt Right Movement”).

1.2 The Alt-Right and the 2016 Election

Donald Trump campaign energized the Alt-Right. Before, the Alt-Right had almost no interest in electoral politics, the far-right paid little attention to him prior to the launch of his presidential candidacy even with the claims regarding the birth certificate of President Obama (CNN). Trump’s candidacy speech resonated with the elements of the alt-right. And before that, at the white nationalist *VDARE*, Matthew Richer wrote an article to increase the chances of Trump, he wrote “For Better Or Worse, Donald Trump May Be The Only Immigration Patriot Running For President, Trump’s public criticisms of GOP squeamishness on immigration over the last few years, Trump certainly deserves a closer look” (Richer 2015). Trump candidacy speech and especially mentioning immigration, his description of Mexican immigrants, “They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.” (Lee 2015) created a great deal of controversy both within the American community and among Hispanic Americans abroad. Trump later said “I would build a great wall, and I’ll have Mexico pay for that” (Valverde 2020). The Alt-Right believed it had finally found its champion after

listening to Trump. The rise of Donald Trump in the polls and the increase of the #altright hashtag grew in tandem and now Trump is the main focus of the Alt-Right on social media. The speech effect on the extremist right was big, Andrew Anglin wrote that “I urge all readers of this site to do whatever they can to make Donald Trump President,”. Anglin didn’t think Trump would beat Hillary Clinton but the rise of Trump in the poll numbers gave him hope (Mahaskey 2016). Peter Brimelow’s *Vdare* website wrote in July: “We are all Donald Trump Now.” And the website’s editor, Peter Brimelow, wrote on Wednesday: “Trump is the best presidential candidate on immigration that we’ve ever had. That’s not saying a lot, goodness knows — but it’s a YUGE advance.” (Main 2016). Jared Taylor of the white-nationalist *American Renaissance* also published an article titled “Is Trump Our Last Chance?” (Taylor 2015). Another leading white nationalist, Kevin MacDonald praised Trump for “saying what White Americans have been actually thinking for a very long time.” (“Facts Still Matter on US Terror Threat”).

On the campaign trail, Trump was burning his way through his establishment Republican challengers, to the delight of white nationalists. “Cuckservative” began trending on Twitter. Trump refused to back down from his controversial remarks about Hispanics, winning plaudits from white nationalists for his defiance of “political correctness” in the face of criticism from business partners and fellow Republicans. (Berger 2016). Trump didn’t just become the white nationalist candidate because his positions reflected their ideology. He became their candidate because, as Mother Jones notes, “he amplified their message.” As one member of the Ku Klux Klan told the magazine, “the success of the Trump campaign just proves that our views resonate with millions.” (“Facts Still Matter on US Terror Threat”). The Alt-Right was quick to realize the opportunity that the Trump campaign presented, and it made the 2016 presidential election the focus of its online activities. Donald Trump once retweeted a tweet that impressed Richard

Spencer and other white nationalists too, Spencer wrote “Wow. just Wow” (@RichardBSpencer). The most remarkable aspect of Trump’s retweet was not the false claim, but its source #WhiteGenocide which was an alt-right social-media hashtag. The Alt-Right video blogging star RamZPaul rejoiced, retweeting Trump's piece with the comment: "Trump watches and is influenced by the Alt Right". Over coming months, Trump retweeted a second tweet that had "#WhiteGenocide" as a hashtag as well as sharing other tweets issued by white supremacists. The Alt-Right saw this as further evidence that Trump was their champion (“Frozen War”). Trump strengthened his relationship with the Alt-Right. On August 17, 2016, Trump named Steve Bannon, Breitbart News’ executive chairman as his new campaign CEO and pollster Kellyanne Conway has been promoted to campaign manager. Trump stated: “I have known Steve and Kellyanne both for many years. They are extremely capable, highly qualified people who love to win and know how to win,” (McAfee 2016).

Following this appointment, Hillary Clinton gave a speech in August 25, 2016. Hillary declared the Alt-Right to be a major component in the campaign and launched a direct attack on it. Clinton did not just make a passing reference to the Alt-Right; it was the primary theme of the speech all due to Trump’s decision to hire Stephen Bannon (“Washington Post”). She highlighted Bannon's claim that *Breitbart* was "the platform for the alt-right", attacking the alt-right as "racist ideas ... anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, anti-women ideas" and accusing Trump of taking the alt-right "mainstream". In her speech, she said that while half of Trump's supporters were decent individuals "desperate for change", the other half were "what I call the basket of deplorables ... The racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, Islamophobic—you name it. ... He has lifted them up. He has given voice to their websites that used to only have eleven thousand people—now eleven million. He tweets and retweets their offensive hateful mean-spirited

rhetoric." ("Frozen War"). The Alt-Right's reaction to the speech was positive. Due to this speech, the movement was thrilled by this new exposure, instead of being frustrated by Clinton's assertions that the movement is racist and dangerous, leaders within the group — some of whom were live-tweeting the speech — said they appreciated the "free publicity" and that Clinton was, as they put it, "doing our work for us" (Harrington 2016). A user wrote on reddit that members of the Alt-Right could be right that Clinton's speech will drive curious as well as negative attention to their cause. In fact, in the months since Trump announced his candidacy in June of last year, media coverage of the movement has increased and google searches for the term "Alt-Right" have skyrocketed along with searches for "Trump," "Breitbart," and "Reddit." (Ramsey 2016). Jared Taylor, editor of the white nationalist publication *American Renaissance*, live-tweeted Clinton's remarks, questioning her praise of establishment Republicans and eagerly anticipating her discussion of his community. "Come on, Hillary," he wrote. "Talk about Alt Right." (Rappeport 2016), Michelle Goldberg also wrote on slate They seem to be loving the attention:

The white nationalist Richard Spencer was on vacation in Japan when he learned that Hillary Clinton was planning to give a speech about Donald Trump's ties to the so-called alt right, and he was thrilled. 'It's hugely significant,' Spencer told me by Skype from Kyoto. 'When a presidential candidate — and indeed the presidential candidate who is leading in most polls — talks about your movement directly, I think you can safely say that you've made it.' (Goldberg 2016).

Conclusion

To sum up what has been said before, the Alt-Right originated primarily as an online subculture or movement rather than a traditional political or social movement. It emerged in the

late 2000s and early 2010s by Richard Spencer as an online magazine. The first wave of the Alternative Right was not quite successful, though it had been backed up by organizations and intellectuals, it failed and fell out of favor. The second wave witnessed a shift in the Alternative Right, it went in a very different direction as an anonymous army of online trolls and asserted itself. The Alt-Right was rebirthed in 2015 by a new generation of online activists that who uses websites, chat boards, and social media. Its ascension from fringe to forefront happened during the elections as the movement was tied to Donald Trump.

Chapter two: The Alternative Right's ideologies and factions

Introduction

The Alternative Right is characterized by its rejection of mainstream conservatism and embrace of ethno-nationalism, the Alt-right has garnered significant attention for its ideological positions and online activism. Understanding the factions and ideologies of the Alt-right is crucial for comprehending its influence on politics and society. The Alt-right is not a monolithic entity but rather a loose coalition of individuals and groups sharing certain ideological tenets as well as the rejection of political correctness and the embrace of provocative rhetoric and iconography. This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the Alternative Right factions and its ideologies.

1 The Alternative Right Factions

1.1 Identitarianism

The term of “Identitarians” originated in France with the founding of the Bloc Identitaire movement and its youth counterpart, Generation Identitaire. Identitarians espouse racism and intolerance under the guise of preserving the ethnic and cultural origins of their respective countries. Identitarianism is a post-war European far-right political ideology asserting the right of peoples of European descent to culture and territory which are claimed to belong exclusively to people defined as European. Building on ontological ideas of modern German philosophy, its ideology was formulated from the 1960s onward by essayists such as Alain de Benoist, Dominique Venner, Guillaume Faye, and Renaud Camus, considered the movement’s intellectual leaders (“Identitarians - ECPS”). The book *The Identitarians: the Movement against Globalism and Islam in Europe*, published by Notre Dame Press, describes the Identitarians as a “quickly growing ethnocultural transnational movement that, in diverse forms, originated in France and Italy and has spread into southern, central, and northern Europe” at the beginning of

the 2000s. According to *The Guardian*, the group spreads its messages virally through popular video-sharing platforms. Its public spokespeople “tend to be over-groomed millennials like Sellner, and the movement explicitly aims to recruit young people” (The Week Staff 2019). Richard Spencer of the National Policy Institute (NPI) is the most popular figure of this ideology. Spencer refers to himself as an identitarian. In a 2015 interview with *Vice magazine*, Spencer said that: "He prefers the terms alternative right and identitarianist over racist or white supremacist.", identity is the most important question to answer. Who are we racially? Who are we historically? Who are we in terms of our experience? Who are we in terms of our community? (Millard 2015). Richard Spencer featured an essay contest titled “Why I’m An Identitarian.” on *Radix Journal*. *Radix* describes itself as working to preserve the “heritage, identity and future of European people in the United States and around the world.”. In his writings and speeches, Spencer often articulates a belief in the importance of identity and heritage, arguing that individuals have a natural affinity towards their own racial or ethnic groups. He contends that this affinity should be embraced and preserved, suggesting that multiculturalism and diversity initiatives threaten the integrity of distinct cultural identities. Spencer, like other Identitarians, seeks to portray his style of ethnonationalist regionalism as the very soul of diversity. “Identitarianism acknowledges the incommensurable nature of different peoples and cultures,” he writes, “and thus looks forward to a world of true diversity and multiculturalism.” (Hatewatch Stuff 2015). In 2014, Spencer held a conference in Budapest, Hungary, called the “European Identitarian Congress.” But once the event got some advance publicity, the Hungarians decided to shut it down. The Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban announced that the government would use “all legal means” to prevent the gathering and arrested Richard Spencer for 5 days before deporting him (“White Nationalists Gather in Hungary,

Richard Spencer Arrested”). *Breitbart News* and *the Daily Stormer* support the ideology, they claim that it is “defending our nation against mass immigration” (Townsend 2019).

Identity Evropa is the largest identitarian Alt-Right group, claiming its objective is to “create a better world for people of European descent, particularly in America.” (“New Hate and Old: The Changing Face of American White Supremacy”). Identity Evropa members insist they’re not racist, but “identitarians” who are interested in preserving Western culture. The group owes its style and ideology to the European Identitarian movement (“Identity Evropa/American Identity Movement”).

1.2 Neo-reactionism

The Dark Enlightenment or the neo-reactionary movement, sometimes abbreviated NRx, is an anti-democratic, anti-egalitarian, reactionary philosophy founded by Curtis Yarvin, an American software engineer and blogger under the pen name “Mencius Moldbug,” and developed further by English philosopher Nick Land. (“Dark Enlightenment - ECPS”). It is characterized by its critique of modernity, democracy, and egalitarianism, and it advocates for a return to traditional, hierarchical social structures (Holloway 2023). According to *The Atlantic*, Yarvin’s ideology opposes all forms of democracy. Yarvin views democracy as a failure and describes it as “ineffective and destructive.” (Gray 2017). NeoReaction is an ideology of biological determinism, While NeoReactionaries are not completely white nationalists, they hold a racially based understanding of the world (“The Dark Enlightenment, by Nick Land”).

The Dark Enlightenment has been described by journalists and commentators as Alt-Right and neo-fascist. According to *New York magazine*, the NeoReaction has several different strains, but perhaps the most important is a form of post-libertarian futurism that, realizing that libertarians aren’t likely to win any elections, argues against democracy in favor of authoritarian forms of

government (MacDougald 2016). Journalist and pundit James Kirchick says in an article that “although neo-reactionary thinkers disdain the masses and claim to despise populism and people more generally, what ties them to the rest of the alt-right is their unapologetically racist element, their shared misanthropy and their resentment of mismanagement by the ruling elites.” (“Dark Enlightenment - ECPS”).

Nick Land, an Nietzschean British philosopher who blogs at *Outside In* coined the term "Dark Enlightenment". He was the co-founder of the "Cybernetic Culture Research Unit", a genuinely fascinating "rogue unit" at Warwick University whose concerns primarily revolved around pounding techno and shedloads of pills; after a particularly horrible bout of amphetamine psychosis, he took a hard-rightward turn and wrote the essay "The Dark Enlightenment." He later resigned from Warwick University after suspicions arose that he was dealing cannabis to students. He is an apostle of accelerationism, a movement that, in his view, seeks the "indefinite acceleration of capitalism". He was an affiliate of The New Centre for Research and Practice, until he was fired for disparaging comments about Muslims and immigrants. The organization said, "We decided to stop working with him because we believe we should all preserve our energies for fighting right-wing, white nationalist, Alt-Right ideologies and philosophies and their political consequences in actual life. We hope you will join us in this spirit."

Moldbug and Land's hostility to empathy as a factor in political philosophy is a reflection of their shared libertarian roots, with its reverence for property and markets as legalistic constructions and their shared preference for the airy abstraction of computer code over human relationships. A lack of, and direct hostility to, empathy is a defining characteristic of alt-right groups in general (“Neoreactionary Movement”).

1.3 The Proud Boys

McInnes introduced the Proud Boys in an article for Taki's Magazine, a paleo-conservative online journal with a contributor list full of white nationalist leaders including Richard Spencer, Jared Taylor, Peter Brimelow, Paul Ray Ramsey and Kevin DeAnna. ("Do You Want Bigots, Gavin? Because This Is How You Get Bigots"). The Proud Boys are a right-wing extremist group with a violent agenda. They are primarily misogynistic, Islamophobic, transphobic and anti-immigration. Some members espouse white supremacist and anti-Semitic ideologies and/or engage with white supremacist groups ("Proud Boys | ADL").

The group is a strange amalgamation of a men's rights organization, a fight club, and what some may see as a hate group – one that loves Trump and hates Muslims, Jews, and trans people but permits non-white membership. The group took its name from the song "Proud of Your Boy" from the Disney musical Aladdin (Kenes 2021). The Proud Boys describe themselves as "Western chauvinists", by which they mean "men who refuse to apologise for creating the modern world". What really defines the Proud Boys is their activity on the ground, so their proclivity to violence and their consistent presence as a counter-movement to left-wing protests, said Jacob Davey, a senior researcher focusing on the far-right. Joseph Lowndes, a political science professor, described them as an "authoritarian group focused on the glorification of male violence," more an "overblown street gang" than a well-organised militia (McBain 2020).

According to the founder McInnes, the basic tenet of the outfit was "Western chauvinists who refuse to apologize for creating the modern world.", there is a process in getting in the group, the first stage is announcing you are a Proud Boy, this means you make your Western chauvinism public and you don't care who knows it. The second stage is taking a beating from five Proud Boys until you say the name of five breakfast cereal brands. The third stage is that you must get a "Proud Boy" tattoo. The final level requires the you the "Proud Boy" to engage in a major fight

for the cause (McInnes 2016). According to the ADL, after several years of forging alliances with members of the Republican political establishment, the Proud Boys have carved out a niche for themselves as both a right-wing fight club and a volunteer security force for the GOP. Despite their associations with mainstream politicians, Proud Boys' actions and statements repeatedly land them in the company of white supremacists and right-wing extremists ("Proud Boys | ADL"). A new generation of males was radicalized and organized by the Alt-Right movement, which also provided a handy cover for the Proud Boys' deeper ties to extreme far-right organizing. Although other alt-right factions are well-known for their adept use of digital media, the Proud Boys have specifically harnessed the power of these platforms, using Facebook, Instagram, and other sites for recruitment, identity reinforcement, and highlighting the visibility of members worldwide. This sets them apart from other neo-conservative movements. The group uses memes specifically as a means of spreading propaganda. These memes are bite sized nuggets of political ideology and culture that are easily digestible and spread by netizens (DeCook 2018). The group used Pepe (The Frog) which is an Alt-Right symbol. The Proud Boys depict Pepe wearing the Proud Boys' uniform and flashing the "OK" hand symbol used by white supremacists. As with other fascist aesthetics, the Proud Boys use clothing and branding in order to cement their group membership and to make their political and ideological affiliation visible (DeCook 2018). Like the majority of alt-right groups, they heavily backed the election of Donald Trump. The political operative and Trump adviser, Roger Stone – whose 40-month prison sentence for lying to Congress, witness tampering, and obstruction of justice was commuted by the president – was videoed taking the Proud Boys oath. During his trial Stone testified that some Proud Boys had helped him run his social media accounts (McBain 2020).

2 Alternative Right Ideologies

2.1 White nationalism

The term "white nationalism" was coined by white supremacists as a euphemism for their ideology. Eventually, some white supremacists attempted to further define it by referring to a type of white supremacy that prioritizes using white racial identity to define a country or region and that aims to advance the interests of white people only, usually at the expense of those from other backgrounds ("White Nationalism - ECPS"). According to *The Economist*, the phenomenon is hard to define because of its ideological and geographical fractiousness. In general, white nationalists seek to achieve an ethno-state for whites. Some try to avoid overtly claiming that any race is inferior, arguing that each should have its own ethno-state. As for the majority, they are white supremacists, who also believe that races form a normative hierarchy with whiteness at the top (The Economist). An additional definition of white nationalism is a form of pan-nationalism that upholds the idea that white people are a race and seeks to preserve and strengthen white racial and national identity ("White Nationalism - ECPS").

According to Eric Kaufmann, a professor of politics at Birkbeck University in London, White nationalism is the belief that national identity should be built around white ethnicity, and that white people should preserve both a dominance of the nation's culture, public life and a demographic majority. So, white nationalism places the interests of white people over those of other racial groups. White supremacists and white nationalists both believe that racial discrimination should be incorporated into law and policy. He acknowledges that for a long time, white nationalism was less an ideology than the default presumption of American life. Until quite recently, white Americans could easily see the nation as essentially an extension of their own ethnic group (Taub 2016). White nationalists believe that the "white race" is genetically and culturally superior compared to other "races". White people ought to rule their own countries in

which they are the majority, due to growing civil rights for women, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, and religious minorities as well as higher immigration, majority white countries are suffering both culturally and economically. They also believe that Jewish people are plotting to bring down White people by breaking into powerful institutions, as well as in order to increase the number of white people, white women should be ruled by white men and should procreate more (“White Nationalism | Facing History and Ourselves”). The alternative Right had “academic racist” such as Jared Taylor, Peter Brimelow, Steve Bannon, and Kevin MacDonald. Jared Taylor, a well-educated and fluent in several languages, joined the white nationalists circle in the 1990s. Taylor started a self-styled think tank the *New Century Foundation* that promotes pseudo-scientific studies and research that attempt to show the inferiority of the black race to the white race. To portray itself as serious scholarship, it published in a pretentious language that avoids open racial slurs and is best known for its *American Renaissance* magazine and website which sometimes include eugenics proponents and blatant anti-black racists (“American Renaissance”). Jared once published in 2005 “Blacks and whites are different. When blacks are left entirely to their own devices, Western civilization — any kind of civilization — disappears.” (“American Renaissance”).

Peter Brimelow of the *VDARE Foundation*, a leading activist in the white nationalist and anti-immigration movements and the former *Forbes* editor and *National Review* Columnist Joined the white nationalists circle during the 1990s after publishing his 1995 book *Alien Nation* (“Peter Brimelow”). The book is discursive and potent attack on immigration, Brimelow writes, “There is a sense in which current immigration policy is Adolf Hitler’s posthumous revenge on America.” (Brimelow 1995). Brimelow’s arguments in *Alien Nation* mirrored the same themes central to the white nationalist belief in “white genocide” (“Peter Brimelow”).

Steve Bannon *Breitbart News* chief executive officer (CEO), published articles promoting popular white nationalist stereotypes such as black crimes against white people and that the rape culture is inherent in Islam (“White Nationalists Rejoice at Trump’s Appointment of Breitbart’s Stephen Bannon”). Bannon ranked among the administration's most important figures throughout the first six months of the Trump administration, He was mostly viewed as the driving force behind Trump's contentious choices to implement a "travel ban" on immigration from multiple countries with a majority of Muslims and to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Change Agreement (“Steve Bannon | Biography & Facts”).

Kevin MacDonald is a white nationalist who used to be a psychology professor at the University of California. MacDonald dedicated himself to his anti-Semitic intellectual odyssey. He produced a trilogy on the Jews, the trilogy offers a brand-new defense of anti-Semitism which saw Jews as degenerates preying on unsuspecting, wholesome Aryans and condemned them for bringing wicked social vices and other perversions to Nordic society. Although MacDonald's clear anti-Semitism gained him support from white supremacists, it also caused an uproar at Cal State–Long Beach, resulting in student demonstrations and efforts to have him fired from the faculty. The protests were successful in reducing MacDonald’s course rolls, but they were unsuccessful in forcing the psychologist out of his job. Shortly after this, he to devote himself full-time to promoting the white-nationalist movement (“Kevin MacDonald”).

According to Joe Phillips and Joseph Yi, the idea that government programs like affirmative action for non-white groups, sanctuary for illegal migrants, and the cultural cleansing of ‘white history’ had disadvantaged white Americans and made white people victims. The concept of "white privilege," which was popularized by the American Left in the 2010s, was also the target of intense criticism on the Alt-Right's website. Members of the movement cited jobs

insecurity, un/under-employment, and increased mortality from drugs, alcohol, and suicide as proof that they did not enjoy privileged lifestyles (Yi and Joseph 2018).

2.2 White Supremacy

White supremacist views hold that lighter-skinned, or "white," people are inherently superior to other ethnic groups. The term white supremacy has been used to characterize groups that support racist, fascist, or ultranationalist ideologies (Jenkins 2016). White supremacy is referred to as the institutionalization of Whiteness and White privilege, as well as the historical, social, political, and economic systems and structures that support its ongoing dominance and subjugation ("White Supremacy"). Writing about the superiority of the white race, the French writer and diplomat Arthur de Gobineau maintained that Aryans, or Germanic peoples, represented the highest level of human development in the four-volume *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*. British writers of the 19th century, including Rudyard Kipling, Charles Kingsley, Thomas Carlyle, and others, believed that it was the "white man's burden" for Europeans to use beneficent imperialism to spread civilization to non-white peoples. In an effort to provide white supremacy a scientific foundation, numerous organizations and well-known scientists released studies claiming that white people are biologically superior. The emerging science of IQ testing, which claimed to demonstrate significant racial disparities in intelligence, supported those theories in the early 20th century. Northern Europeans consistently outperformed Africans on these tests and from the 19th to the mid-20th century the doctrine of white supremacy was largely taken for granted by political leaders and social scientists in Europe and the United States (Jenkins 2016).

The 1488 is the most outstanding group of the Alternative Right. According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), 1488 is a combination of two popular white supremacist numeric

symbols. The first symbol is 14, which is shorthand for the "14 Words" slogan: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." ("1488 | Hate Symbols Database | ADL") by David Lane, a notorious white supremacist leader and murderer, who at one point issued the 14-word statement. The second is 88, the fact that H is the eighth letter of the alphabet, 88 together is HH which stands for "Heil Hitler", part of the historic Nazi salute ("1488 Meaning | Politics by Dictionary.com"). When taken as a whole, the numbers support white supremacist ideology broadly. Richard Spencer, appears to be making common cause with neo-Nazis according to the ADL, Spencer's ties to neo-Nazis have been more visible. Spencer participated on a podcast hosted by the virulently anti-Semitic website The Right Stuff (TRS) alongside neo-Nazi Andrew Anglin of *The Daily Stormer* and Mike Enoch, the alias of the site's founder. Anglin described the podcast as a "historic" gathering of three alt-right representatives on *The Daily Stormer*. He stated, "We are ready to move forward, as a single unit, as this is what the times have called for. The three of us care not for our own egos or lives. We care only about the agenda, which is: We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." ("Richard Spencer Is Making Common Cause with Neo-Nazis").

2.3 Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism is the term used to describe hatred or prejudice directed toward Jews as a racial or religious group. The German provocateur Wilhelm Marr first used the word "anti-Semitism" in 1879 to describe the anti-Jewish movements that were then taking place in central Europe. Anti-Jewish racism is distinct from previous anti-Jewish prejudices and only began to emerge after the creation of so-called "scientific racism" in the 19th century (Berenbaum 2018). Anti-Semitic groups aim to demonize and dehumanize Jews by portraying them as the cunning masterminds of a political, social, and economic plot designed to weaken the position of White

people. Much of the far right is also rooted in antisemitism, which unites supporters of various extreme ideologies around attempts to distort and misrepresent the suffering endured by Jews during the Holocaust and portray them as cunning opportunists (“Antisemitism”).

Kevin MacDonald, the neo-Nazi movement's favorite academic, contends that anti-Semitism is a reasonable response to Jewish achievement in countries dominated by other racial or ethnic groupings, rather than an unreasonable hatred of Jews (“Kevin MacDonald”). MacDonald published *The Culture of Critique series* which is a trilogy that promote anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. He argues that the motivations driving Jewish group culture and behavior can be found in evolutionary psychology. Throughout the series, MacDonald maintains the claim that Jews have a biological tendency to being extremely ethnocentric and hostile toward the interests of White people. He promotes conspiracy theories regarding Jewish influence and control over politics and government policies, claiming that Jewish behavior and culture are the primary drivers of antisemitism (Wikipedia Contributors).

Andrew Anglin, the founder and editor of *The Daily Stormer*, the most significant American neo-Nazi website in the second half of the 2010s, spreads antisemitism through his website. Anglin once made a comment that says “The goal is to ethnically cleanse White nations of non-Whites and establish an authoritarian government. Many people also believe that the Jews should be exterminated.” (hankes, 2016 “Whose Alt-Right Is It Anyway?”). He accuses Jews with a variety of social evils in *The Daily Stormer's* "Jewish Problem" category. Anglin also encourages Holocaust denial and praises Hitler. His hate extends to other minorities, especially Black people, and he regularly bases his racist outbursts on current events (“Andrew Anglin: Five Things to Know | ADL”).

The white Genocide conspiracy theory asserts that there is a planned conspiracy to eradicate whiteness, white culture, and white civilization, which is being conducted by the Jewish people. Its proponents define whiteness via the lens of cultural identity rather than skin color per se, highlighting Christian and Euro-American ancestry as the primary markers of whiteness. They contend that racial integration, immigration, eugenics, abortion, and a number of other policies are being deliberately used to create a world where whiteness goes extinct and that a profound restructuring of society, where diversity is meant to replace whiteness, is under way (“White Genocide”).

2.4 Opposition to Political Correctness

Political correctness is the term for the language that appears to give the least amount of offense, particularly when referring to groups that are distinguished by external traits like sexual orientation, gender, race, or culture. The phrase is frequently used in an ironic way to make fun of the idea that changing how language is used can affect outcomes and the public's perceptions and opinions (Roper 2016). Theoretically, political correctness is just a neutral term that describes the idea of refraining from saying or doing things that can upset or marginalize particular groups of people. However, political correctness can also be interpreted as something normative because it contains the word "correctness." The term "correctness" emanates authority and implies acceptance. It conveys the idea that doing something a certain way is required in an imperative manner. When used in this context, the word "political correctness" might arouse feelings of inferiority and even subordination (Szilágyi 2017). The people who are most strongly opposed to political correctness see it as censorship and a restriction on the freedom of speech that hinders public discourse. They argue that these kinds of linguistic limitations eventually result in behavior restrictions and self-censorship (Roper 2016).

According to Nicole Hemmer, apart from their allegiance to their "tribe," as they call it, their greatest points of unity lie in what they are against: multiculturalism, immigration, feminism and, above all, political correctness. She states that "They see political correctness really as the greatest threat to their liberty," (NPR Staff).

Concerns over political correctness were present on Donald Trump's path to the presidency of the United States in 2016. During his campaign, Trump generally called Mexicans "rapists," criticized it, and called for a ban on Muslims. Since then, a growing number of Americans have realized that Trump's criticism of political correctness is really a kind of racially coded message meant to stoke the fires of White people's resentment and anxiety. These racist dog whistles have always been loud and clear to white power radicals (Hinton 2016). Political correctness has been criticized by White power radicals for decades for endangering "the White race." They interpret Trump's comments as proof that a racial conflict and White genocide are about to break out (Hinton 2016). Leading White power figures like Richard Spencer contributed to the Alt-Right Manifesto *A Fair Hearing*, which was released a year after Charlottesville rally event. The introduction outlines the three main "guideposts" of the movement, which are all supposedly masked by political correctness: the beginning of White genocide, the validity of "the Jewish Question," which the Nazis used, and the existence of racial difference as opposed to the now-commonly held belief that race is a social construct (Hinton 2016).

2.5 Opposition to Migration

Opposition to immigration, or anti-immigration, is present in every state where there is immigration and has grown to be a major political problem in many nations. The term "immigration" in the modern sense describes the movement of non-citizens from one state or territory to another. Immigration that violates state immigration laws is considered illegal

immigration. The anti-immigration movement encompasses a wide range of positions, from proposals to strictly limit immigration to one's own country to requests for different immigration changes, many of which also include actions to stop current citizens from immigrating (“Anti-Immigrant Populism - ECPS”). In an article by ADL, it shows that certain alt-righters who identify as white nationalists and want to keep things the way they are for white people in the US, claiming that losing the position of being the majority would be the same as "white genocide." They exploit propaganda about immigration and "black crime" to support their claims that White people are being ethnically cleansed (“The Alt Right and White Supremacy”). The long-term objectives of the Alt-Right appear to be more modest, ending mass immigration, getting rid with political correctness, and accepting white identity politics as a standard component of mainstream politics. Alt-Right prominent figures attacked immigration in several occasions, Matthew Richer of the *Vdare* describes trump as “The Only Immigration Patriot” in an article before his elections (Richer 2015). In July, Peter Brimelow’s *Vdare* website wrote, "We are all Donald Trump Now." Additionally, Peter Brimelow, the website's editor, stated on Wednesday that Trump is the most qualified candidate to lead the country in terms of immigration. God knows, that's not saying much, but it's a HUGE step forward (Main 2016). The creator of *The Daily Stormer* website, which claims it as "the world's most visited alt-right website" on its homepage, Andrew Anglin, planned a live-stream. Anglin and his supporters have been deeply in love with Trump for a long time; they frequently call him the "glorious leader." Anglin and similar individuals have previously asserted that a Jewish plot exists to undermine Trump's candidacy. According to Anglin, the alt-right movement is primarily composed of "conspiracy theorists," with the "Jewish problem" at the core of many of their debates (King). The Alt-Right is classified as racist movement, and like all racist movements, it

shares three fundamental ideas which are a strong sense of white identity, a belief in the importance of white solidarity and a sense of victimization among white people (Hawley, 2018, “The Demography of the Alt-Right”). White supremacists in the US worry that, despite the country's 77% white population, demographic shifts will ultimately result in the eradication of the white race and white civilization (Jipson and Becker 2019). Driven by fear over the loss of white primacy and white privilege. Since 2014, the number of hate crimes committed in the US against Muslims, immigrants, and people of color has increased. 892 hate crimes were reported to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) in 2015. The next year, 917 hate crimes were reported. 954 white supremacist crimes occurred in the US in 2017, the year Trump took office and inflamed nationalist emotions with promises to build walls, deport Mexicans, and ban Muslims. At least fifty People were slain by white supremacists in 2018. All of the perpetrators of violent extremism in the United States in 2018 have ties to white nationalist organizations (Jipson and Becker 2019).

2.6 Opposition to Feminism

Anti-feminism is opposition to some or all forms of feminism. While anti-feminists in the US opposed the Equal Rights Amendment in the late 20th century, they fought women's suffrage in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some, especially in the twenty-first century, believe that anti-feminism is a reaction against an ideology that is purportedly based on animosity toward men (“Anti-Feminist Populism - ECPS”). According to Hawley, the alt-right is anti-feminist movement opposed to modern ideas of gender equality and in support of a culture that is more patriarchal (Hawley, 17, Making Sense of the Alt-Right). The views and actions of the alt-right are frequently based on nationalistic and patriotic slogans, have been accepted by a number of right-wing and conservative political parties during federal and local elections, and are connected

to issues with employment and the financial system (KC et al. 4). The alt-right also places a heavy focus on patriarchal ideologies. Its online activism has mostly focused targeting women with threats of rape and death, photos of sexual assault, and misogynistic invective, in addition to jokes about gas chambers and slurs. Even campaigns of harassment directed towards male opponents frequently center on their wives or daughters. In ways that Christian rightists have generally avoided, many alt-rightists take great pleasure in publicly demonizing women. (Lyons 2017).

Conclusion

The chapter outlined the diverse roles and beliefs of the alt-right movement. It becomes clear that the alt-right is a diverse coalition that draws from a range of ideologies that frequently converge on themes of anti-immigration, anti-white nationalism, and hostility to feminism. In essence, the alt-right advocates a return to what its members believe to be historic cultural standards, challenging mainstream liberal and progressive beliefs. In spite of this diversity, there is a persistent hostility toward perceived challenges to a specific racial and cultural identity.

**Chapter Three: The Alternative Right's Online Landscape;
An Analysis of the Online Mobilization and influence**

Introduction

The Alternative Right's online landscape is a complicated, multidimensional digital environment that has drawn a lot of attention lately. The Alt-Right is a reactionary movement that emerged in opposition to traditional political and cultural standards. It uses a variety of online platforms to spread its beliefs and rally adherents. The alternative narratives that are frequently marked by far-right extremism, ethno-nationalism, and anti-establishment attitudes, thrive in this digital space. The online terrain of the Alternative Right is characterized by dynamic and varied mobilization strategies that comprise a variety of tactics intended to radicalize, recruit, and organize those who share its sympathies. The Alt-Right uses a wide range of sophisticated techniques to spread its message and rally support, from the use of social media platforms to the establishment of specialized online forums and groups. This chapter will explore the intricate dynamics of the Alternative Right online landscape, examining its key platforms, mobilization strategies, and how it influenced Donald Trump 2016's elections.

1.1 The Origins of Social Media

Social media has changed dramatically in less than a generation, going from direct electronic information exchange to virtual community, retail platform, and essential 21st-century marketing tool ("The Evolution of Social Media: How Did It Begin and Where Could It Go Next?"). The development of the internet made it possible for online communication services like Prodigy, America Online, and CompuServe to be introduced. Through online chat rooms, bulletin boards, and email, they acquaint consumers with digital communication. As a result, the first social media networks were created, starting in 1997 with the brief existence of the Six Degrees profile uploading service. Friendster took over this service in 2001. Millions of people were drawn to these rudimentary platforms, which allowed for basic online networking and

email address registration. Another early example of digital social communication, weblogs, or blogs, gained popularity in 1999 with the introduction of the LiveJournal publishing site.

Founded in 2002, LinkedIn was intended to be a professional networking platform. Its global user base has increased to around 297 million (Shah 2016).

1.2 The Alternative Right Blogs and Social Media Platforms

The Alternative Right mainly works online, it contains a variety of websites and blogs that function as headquarters for Alternative Right content, providing articles, opinion pieces, and right-wing commentary. These forums frequently address issues including identity politics, immigration, nationalism, traditionalism, political correctness, racism, misogyny and other content. Alt-right figures have taken social media sites such as Parler, Twitter, and Gab to express their opinions and network with other like-minded people. But many have been suspended or banned because of content moderation regulations; as a result, some have moved to other platforms and online forums with less strict moderation such as 4Chan and 8chan, now (8kun). These sites have served as breeding grounds for alt-right discussions, memes, activism and give people a forum to discuss controversial thoughts and have open discussions (Rieger et al. 2021).

1.2.1 Breitbart News Network

Breitbart News, one of the fundamental blogs of the Alt-Right, embraced the extremist ideas and racist tropes such as black-on-white crime and anti-Muslim conspiracy theories (Hatewatch Stuff). Since the death of its original founder, *Breitbart News Network* has grown to become one of the most popular news outlets on the right. The Alt-Right was vigorously defended by *Breitbart*, which disregarded the well-established overtly racist opinions in favor of stating that white nationalists like Richard Spencer and Jared Taylor, who founded the

movement, "have been accused of racism." *Breitbart's* open support of the Alt-Right did not happen overnight, many in the white nationalist community appreciate that the media organization has been openly supporting the fundamental concerns of the Alt-Right and exposing its readership to these racist notions (Piggott 2016). *Breitbart* was transformed by Bannon into the most provocative and widely read conservative website. It was happy to rhythm with overtly racist ideas about black criminality and to accept fringe ideologies like birtherism. Instead of attempting to appear slightly impartial, it created simplistic "narratives" about heroic conservative heroes and their numerous successes over the despised left (Rahn 2016). Although *Breitbart News* denied those allegations and said in a statement to *The Hill* that "Breitbart News Network, a pro-America, conservative website, is preparing a multi-million dollar lawsuit against a major media company for its baseless and defamatory claim that Breitbart News is a 'white nationalist website,'" (Concha 2016). Joel Pollak, *Breitbart News* senior editor-at-large on *CNN* issued a challenge to anchor Don Lemon: "Can you name for me, Don, one white nationalist article at Breitbart? Just one.". Yes, Lemon answered. "An article supporting the alt-right exists." (Borchers 2021). Parts of the radical right have always found a home on *Breitbart*, particularly those affiliated with the coordinated anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant movements. *Breitbart* has also published interviews and writings with movement leaders, as well as hosted conferences with speakers who promote nativist beliefs. However, *Breitbart* started running more openly racist rants about immigration and Muslims in 2015. *Breitbart* published an article that supported Pamela Geller's organizing of a "Draw Mohammed Cartoon Contest" in Garland, Texas, a move that many believed to be an attempt to enrage and agitate American Muslims. As they attempted to attack the venue, two armed individuals with ties to ISIS targeted the event and were murdered by police, and also a brief anti-Muslim video concerning South Carolina's introduction

of a bill against Shariah was made by *Breitbart*. The 51-second clip used footage of stoning executions and severe penalties to warn of the potential undermining of American justice by Shariah law. The claim echoed remarks made by anti-Muslim groups who worry that the Constitution would soon be superseded by "creeping Shariah." (Piggott 2016). According to *The Washington Post*, Lemon cited an article that was published on March 29 called "*An establishment conservative's guide to the alt-right.*" and other few more headlines that have been featured on *Breitbart* which are:

**WHY WHITE PEOPLE SEEK BLACK PRIVILEGE
 READ THE SCARY DESCRIPTIONS OF
 REFUGEES BY IDAHO REFUGEE AGENCY
 FEDERAL RESERVE: ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS
 TAKE TEENAGERS' SUMMER JOBS
 AMERICANS FIRST — NATIONAL THINK-
 TANK BRIEFS MEDIA ON IMMIGRATION'S
 IMPACT ON AMERICA**

Fig. 1 Callum Borchers, 'Can you name one white nationalist article at Breitbart?'

Challenge accepted, 2016.

As can be seen, these titles embody white nationalist themes, and as Bannon identifies *Breitbart* as an Alt-Right news site, the alt-right encompasses white nationalism as a core belief (Borchers 2021), "We're the platform for the alt-right," said Bannon to *Mother Jones* in an interview at the Republican National Convention (RNC) in July. With cheers for white nationalist groups as an

“eclectic mix of renegades,” accusations against President Barack Obama of bringing in “more hating Muslims,” and a never-ending battle against the supporters of “political correctness,” the website has descended into the fever swamps of conservatism (Posner 2016).

1.2.2 InfoWars

Conspiracy theory is the attempt to attribute tragic or damaging events on the actions of a small but influential group. These interpretations contradict the official account of those events, which might be interpreted as additional evidence of a conspiracy (Reid 2019), and the most prolific conspiracy theorist in contemporary America is Alex Jones and his website *InfoWars*. By promoting irrational conspiracy theories about the government, Alex Jones has gained notoriety ever since the far-right conspiracy website InfoWars was founded, both on the internet and on radio (“Alex Jones”). In 1996, the Texas-born Jones made his radio start on a single station. He currently presents a syndicated news-talk radio show for three hours, Monday through Friday, that he claims is heard on over 160 stations. He and his team also upload web videos and articles, and the show streams online (Hanna 2017). With his growing following, Jones developed a vocabulary for toxic doubt, which included the ideas that terrible occurrences are being planned for evil intentions in addition to the belief that authorities and the media are concealing the truth (Bond 2022). Social media platforms banned InfoWars host and alt-right conspiracy theorist Alex Jones. Jones has been accused with intentionally deceiving people in order to profit from InfoWars publication and promotion of fake news and violating social media rules. X (formerly Twitter) did not ban Jones, “We didn’t suspend Alex Jones or InfoWars yesterday. We know that’s hard for many but the reason is simple: he hasn’t violated our rules,” Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey wrote (Hodjat 2018).

1.2.3 The Daily Stormer

The neo-Nazi *Daily Stormer* website was founded by Andrew Anglin, and the name comes from *Der Stürmer*, a gutter Nazi propaganda newspaper. In keeping with that era, Anglin is notorious for his crude speech and ways of thinking, which stand in stark contrast to his sophistication as a frequent online harasser and troll. Due to Anglin's organization and harassment on the *Daily Stormer*, cases were filed against him, and in recent years, victims have been awarded millions of dollars in damages by the courts ("Andrew Anglin"). Anglin's outspoken activism and willingness to confront "the enemy" on social media and other platforms distinguished the *Daily Stormer* from other alt-right websites. Three months prior to the elections, The *Daily Stormer* has made the transition from online to real-world space, organizing a "Troll Army" of activists who imitate Anglin's savage online harassment of his movement's opponents. And in July, four months prior to Trump's election, The *Daily Stormer* overtook Stormfront, the radical right's most well-known English-language website since the early days of the Internet. The Alt-Right gained a great deal of attention, especially after a speech in August where Clinton criticized Trump for not withdrawing his support of the movement. Anglin's embrace of the ideology and Trump's apparent support for the Alt-Right had the effect of drawing even more public attention to The *Daily Stormer*. Anglin attempted to pay back the debt three days prior to the election. Calling for votes for Trump, he announced "Operation No Survivors." The intention was for each of his purported 100,000 American readers to persuade five more individuals to vote in favor of the candidate Anglin refers to as the "Glorious Leader." Approximately 3,000 messages, many of which contained racist and anti-Semitic memes, were made in the comment part of Anglin's Election Day story, which documented followers' efforts to vote (Hankes, "Eye of the Stormer").

1.2.4 The Right Stuff

The Right Stuff was founded by Mike Peinovich in 2012. TRS, Peinovich's main initiative, was registered. "The Right Stuff is a political and cultural blog dedicated to the promotion of a post-Postmodern mindset," according to the "About Us" section at the time. Because you are freeTM, you are miserable. We differ from the majority of the "alt-right" blogging community, as you will discover. The debut episode of TRS's flagship radio show, The Daily Shoah, was released online in 2014. The hosts of the program are referred to as a "death panel" together. The site engages in the open promotion of ethnic cleansing and anti-Semitism ("Michael "Enoch" Peinovich").

2 Alignment of Alt-Right Ideologies with Trump's Rhetoric

Trump over the years has questioned the President Barack Obama birthplace. Although the White House released copies of Obama's original long-form birth certificate in 2011 in an attempt to put the rumors to bed, Trump didn't stop questioning it (S. T. et J. A. CNN 2016). On May 18, 2012, Trump posted this tweet:



Fig. 2 @realDonaldTrump

Trump had become known as the leading proponent of the Birther theory in the country, giving rise to instant credibility in the conspiracy world (Guignion 2022). In the months preceding the 2012 presidential election, Trump raised doubts again and again. In addition, he tweeted about conspiracy theories claiming that Obama's birth certificate was a "computer generated forgery" and that "all others lived" while the state health director who had confirmed the document "died in a plane crash." (Ortiz 2018).

Professor Saif Shahin of the American University School of Communication is an expert in digital discourses, critical data studies, and international media and politics. He researched the digital interactions of alt-right leaders to better ascertain how their influence proliferated. "We tracked the diffusion of the alt-right ideology on Twitter between 2009 and 2016 on a year-by-year basis. And we got some very interesting results," says Shahin. The speech given in person shortly after Barack Obama's election as president in late 2008 serves as the spark for the alt-right movement. Self-described "paleoconservative," Paul Gottfried, delivered a speech titled *"The Decline and Rise of the Alternative Right"* at the H.L. Mencken Club. Gottfried asserted the "neoconservative" leaders who rose to popularity in the George W. Bush presidency had failed. Based on Shahin's interpretation of the speech, Gottfried was wondering why mainstream conservatives were unable to stop the election of the country's first African American president. "The alt-right movement basically started as a reaction to Obama's election in 2008. Not that these tendencies haven't been there for much longer," Shahin says. "But the idea they proposed was that the conservative movement needed to return to its roots. Hence, the need for an alternative right." (Sangillo 2019).

Trump began to gain popularity over other conspiracy theorists on the far right. Michael Savage, the host of the radio talk show invited him on the radio and declared that he had found a president. It was their first interview. Mr. Savage wasn't that famous compared to Sean Hannity, Rush Limbaugh and Alex Jones, However, his early support of Mr. Trump enabled the candidate to forge a connection with the millions of viewers of "Savage Nation" who share the host's nationalist mindset, which he summarizes in his unofficial motto, "Borders, language, culture." (Peters 2019). Trump candidacy speech and his description of the Mexicans as rapists and the promise of building a wall resonated with the white nationalists and their ideology, Andrew Anglin wrote that "I urge all readers of this site to do whatever they can to make Donald Trump President," (Mahaskey 2016). "Stunning," raved Peter Brimelow, editor of the anti-immigrant site *Vdare*. According to Jared Taylor, the creator of the "race realist" website *American Renaissance* and the former founder of a research tank that gained notoriety for saying that black people are "more dangerous" than white people, Trump "may be the last hope for a president who would be good for white people.". Kevin MacDonald, a former California State psychology professor wrote in a widely-discussed July post on his blog, *Occidental Observer*. Trump proved to white nationalists that a politician could touch the "Jewish identity" third rail in their group and yet come out on top (HARKINSON 2017). Trump consistent push for an anti-immigration, one of the central policy pillars of the nationalist right gained him even more support. In a rally in Rochester, New Hampshire, a man said "We have a problem in this country. It's called Muslims," said the man again "You know our current president is one. You know he's not even an American." And Trump answered "We need this question, this is the first question.". In fact, the man who asked the question represents a majority of Trump's supporters who also believe Obama is secretly a Muslim. According to a poll done by *CNN/ORC*, 54% of Trump's supporters

think Obama is a Muslim, 43% of Republicans think Obama is Muslim, as do 29% of Americans as a whole (Moody and Holmes 2015).

3 Analysis of the Online Strategies

The Alt-Right disinformation, propaganda, and conspiracy theories played a significant role in the elections. Twitter was an important platform. Andrew Marantz conducted an interview with Mike Cernovich for *The New Yorker*. Cernovich is a prominent figure on the alt-right with a vast number of Twitter followers. He is an excellent example of how the alt-right has taken over Twitter. According to Marantz, Mike Cernovich is a lawyer and a misogynist and a married guy with kids who lives in Southern California, he also is a mastermind behind a lot of memes that travel through the Internet in very dubious ways. So, he is a lot of things. And of course, he presents himself as a very serious investigative journalist. Just a few months prior to the election, he made headlines by bringing Hillary Clinton's health into doubt in the mainstream media, he came up with the meme that Hillary is sick, that she has Parkinson's disease (Gross 2019). Cernovich stated that:

I want people to trust Hillary less. And I don't want to use sort of, you know, brow-furrowing concern to do that. I want to use really visceral emotions, like fear and disgust, to do that. So I'm just going to insinuate that she is really, really sick. Even though, of course, I don't have evidence that she has Parkinson's or anything, I'm just going to suggest that. (Gross 2019)

Cernovich mobilizes thousands of his hardcore fans into the Periscope. Marantz stated that he would say, "OK, guys, this is what we're doing today; we're going to make everyone think Hillary's sick. We need a hashtag. And they would all kind of workshop a hashtag". After deciding which hashtag would work best, they would all sort of swarm Twitter at the same time

to try and get that hashtag to trend. They would add images, indications, and wordings that they felt would be particularly catchy to the hashtag in an effort to make it stick. And every journalist on the planet would see it after they got it to trend. The Drudge Report would have it. Fox News would replace the Drudge Report. Fox News would air it on CNN, and it goes on.

Hillary Clinton had pneumonia, and she didn't reveal it to the press. On September 11th, Clinton fainted. Her campaign staff were attempting to cover it up from the cameras. Thus, everything was like a perfect storm of secrecy (Gross 2019). The *Washington Post* wrote an article in which they question the health of Hillary Clinton, and whether it will be a campaign issue (Cillizza 2016). Sitting in his home, Mike Cernovich moved the needle of the public discourse in such discreet ways and altered the public opinion about Hillary as a candidate (Gross 2019). Hillary Clinton said that half of Donald Trump's followers fit into a "basket of deplorables" who hold "racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, and Islamophobic" beliefs while speaking at a fundraiser in New York City, "You know, to just be grossly generalistic, you could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call the basket of deplorables. Right?" Clinton said. Trump's campaign criticized her comments. Jason Miller, senior communications adviser for Trump's campaign, said in a statement that "Just when Hillary Clinton said she was going to start running a positive campaign, she ripped off her mask and revealed her true contempt for everyday Americans," (Reilly 2016). Mike Cernovich and his supporters flipped the term on Hillary Clinton, they embraced it instead of taking it as an insult. As for that, it did not just lose its power, but it became a counter-weapon (Gross 2019). Supporters of Donald Trump have appropriated the phrase "basket of deplorables" to even plan an inauguration party called the "Deploraball." (Kearney 2016).

Conspiracy theories also had their share. Pizzagate theory is the most famous theory that emerged shortly before the 2016 election. It was alleged that Hillary and Bill Clinton ran a pedophile sex ring out of the Comet Ping Pong pizza parlor in Washington, D.C.; the rear room was supposedly utilized for kidnapping and child trafficking. Pizzagate started after WikiLeaks published emails from Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta that pointed out James Alefantis, the proprietor of Comet Ping Pong and a well-known Democratic fundraiser. Alefantis, who was in a relationship with Clinton ally David Brock, was considering organizing a campaign fund-raiser for Clinton's campaign (Samuelson 2016). Following that, users of the anonymous 4Chan message board, which is known for fostering extreme beliefs, attacked Mr. Alefantis' social media accounts, linking to images of kids and the restaurant's basement construction as proof of wrongdoing. Additionally, it was alleged that terms like "cheese" and "pizza" that were used in emails written by Mr. Alefantis were codes indicating illegal activity. Some connected "cheese pizza" to the initials "c.p," which are allegedly used to signify "child pornography" in dark web forums. It is also said that other dishes, including "hotdog" and "pasta," were codewords used to minor children. There were rumors of cannibalism and demonic rituals inside the restaurant when its signage was connected to satanic symbols (Bedigan 2023). Pizzagate immediately extended to other social media platforms, such as Reddit and Twitter, where hundreds of people subscribed to a thread named Pizzagate. After then, the narrative began spreading on nationalist and fake news websites as well as Facebook (Samuelson 2016). InfoWars was also a big spreader of the Pizzagate conspiracy theory, A man claimed to have listened to Jones's radio show, said to the *New York Times* he entered the restaurant and shot a rifle, days after Jones asked his listeners to look into the matter (Bond 2022). The 28-year-old man was arrested after firing a gun inside a pizza restaurant in Washington as he investigated

false claims in online articles (Goldman 2016). Mike Cernovich has repeatedly boosted absurd conspiracy theories and also played a big role in promoting the Pizzagate conspiracy. He accused members of the liberal establishment of being pedophiles or running child sex rings in short Twitter blasts. Everyone has been the focus of Cernovich's pedophilia claims, including the Clintons, Tim Kaine, Hillary Clinton's presidential running partner, and video producer Vic Berger, IV. He also made an allege that the BBC or Salon might be hiding pedophilia. These Cernovich-created or -pushed social media efforts, succeed in making concepts that are conjured out of thin air topics of conversation ("Mike Cernovich").

Another aspect of Twitter is the use of bots. Social media bots are automated programs employed to interact in social media. These automated systems exhibit either fully or partially autonomous behavior, frequently imitating the actions of human users. Even while there are good social media bots, many of them are employed in shady and nefarious ways by some estimates, a sizable percentage of all social media accounts are comprised of these bots (Cloudflare). Numerous studies show how low credibility information is easily spread, shaping online discussions in a very subtle way. Social bots fabricate content on a large scale, and through actions like sharing and retweeting their content, they played with the algorithms that determine what trends are on social media (Trajcheva 2023). According to the *TIME*, bots may have altered the outcome of two of the world's most consequential elections in recent years, based on an economic study. According to authors Yuriy Gorodnichenko from the University of California and Tho Pham and Oleksandr Talavera from Swansea University, "Our results suggest that, given narrow margins of victories in each vote, bots' effect was likely marginal but possibly large enough to affect the outcomes,". The study found that when a bot's message confirmed a person's previous opinion, it had the greatest effect on them. Supporters of Trump, for example

tended to react to messages spread by pro-Trump bots (Smialek 2018). The study's authors examined the distribution of pro-Trump tweets by region to determine the degree to which voting was associated with Twitter activity. They then figured out how much the accounts they defined as bots added to the number of tweets supporting Trump and boosted Donald Trump's Votes by 3.23% (Smialek 2018). An analysis done by *CBC* on bots on Twitter, Philip Howard, a professor of internet studies at Oxford University's Internet Institute states that an automated account is responsible for producing a full third of the millions of tweets that support Donald Trump and that some accounts can pump out as many as 10,000 pro-Trump posts a day. Meanwhile, it seems that only 25% of pro-Clinton tweets come from automated accounts. And there are a lot less of those in terms of raw numbers. According to Howard, automated messages supporting Trump typically outnumber those supporting Clinton at a ratio of four to one (Arsenault 2016).

Harassment, threats and terrorization on Twitter to the opponents of Donald Trump was also part of the Alt-Right strategy. David French, an army veteran and conservative columnist for *National Review*, suffered a torrent of insults from alt-right extremists and supporters of Trump directed towards his family for condemning Trump, Ann Coulter and the alt-right. French noticed that Ann Coulter whom is a very prominent supporter of Donald Trump is spreading white-nationalist rhetoric via Twitter and appealing to Trump. Later he was bombarded with hateful tweets and slurs and death threats to his family. "I began to see images, for example, of my youngest daughter, who we adopted from Ethiopia many years ago, who at the time was 7 years old – images of her in a gas chamber with a – Donald Trump in an SS uniform about to push the button to kill her. I saw images of her Photoshopped or, you know, artist's rendering of her face in slave fields." Says French. By not being intimidated by this, and the desire to expose to people what's been happening when you criticize Trump and his supporter. French wrote a

follow-up piece and things went worse for him. The number of tweets multiplied exponentially, the same images kept coming again and again, including inappropriate pictures. French says that anytime you criticize that part of Trumpism that intersects with the alt-right, they come at you viciously, especially if you're a journalist, especially if you're a writer. It's actually a campaign of fear and intimidation directed at journalists from all political spectrum who criticize Donald Trump, focusing on his ties to the alt-right (Gross, "Harassed on Twitter: "People Need to Know the Reality of What It's like out There""). French also mentions other people who have been terrorized by Trump supporters. According to French, Erick Erickson went through his own trauma almost a month ahead of him. Angry Trump fans came up at Erickson's house after he refused to invite him to his Red State event. At a supermarket, an adult guy angrily yelled at his kids, criticizing their father for being against Trump. According to Erickson's article in the New York Times, his son continues to worry that Trump supporters would visit their house. Author Bethany Mandel shared a personal story in March. Following a post criticizing Trump's anti-Semitic supporter, she received harassment, referred to as "slimy Jewess," and told she "deserves the oven." (French 2016).

Conclusion

The Alt-Right undoubtedly had an impact on the 2016 presidential election through its use of propaganda, internet activism, and resonance with certain of Donald Trump's rhetoric. Trump's stance on immigration was the closest to the beliefs of the Alt-Right of any previous Republican candidate in recent history. This chapter demonstrated the Alt-Right online landscape and its influence on Trump's campaign as well as some of the strategies used. The political debate surrounding Trump's candidacy was influenced by the alt-right's visibility and rhetoric, highlighting the role of online networks in forming modern political movements.

General Conclusion

This dissertation has analyzed the Alt-Right which is a powerful and disruptive movement in modern politics, characterized by its extreme beliefs and creative use of digital media. This movement has successfully used the powers of the web to spread its message and affect the general public. It combines aspects of populist nationalism, anti-immigration resentment, and white nationalism. The alt-right has mobilized those who feel left out by established political structures by reaching a large audience through social media, forums, and other online communities. The term was first coined by Richard Spencer after speech by paleoconservative Paul Gottfried in 2008 at a meeting of the white nationalist H.L. Mencken Club. The word "alt-right" refers to a variety of groups of people, some of whom use internet trolling for spreading hate speech, inside jokes, and cause rage. A number of well-known figures in the media and influential figures have racist, sexist, and/or anti-multicultural beliefs. The one thing that the alt-right believes in common is the desire to go back to a time when white culture and authority were unquestionably accepted and diversity was not. The loosely associated movement has evolved into what it is now due to these sources and individuals. Richard Spencer, Started AlternativeRight.com and coined the term "alt-right." Head of the National Policy Institute, the white nationalist is the most recognizable representative of the alt-right. Former Breitbart reporter Milo Yiannopoulos gained fame for covering various alt-right factions. His overview of the movement contributed to the alt-right's acceptance in popular culture, and his college campus tour sparked protests and violent outbursts on free speech. Andrew Anglin, the creator of The Daily Stormer and a former 4chan troll who has led numerous harassment and misinformation operations. The Daily Stormer is a neo-Nazi website, which is also a hate group recognized by the Southern Poverty Law Center. It is named after the Nazi propaganda magazine

Der Stürmer and features a community of "Stormer Troll Army" members who are responsible for multiple harassment operations. The website combines racist and anti-Semitic memes. The Right Stuff: Well-known alt-right blog that organizes regionally at "Pool Parties," and is noted for the youth of its members. The blog's podcast, Daily Shoah, is titled after the Holocaust and is a prime example of the youthful, trollist comedy of the alt-right. The influence of the alt-right was particularly apparent in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The movement significantly influenced the narrative of the election by endorsing and promoting Donald Trump's candidacy. The alt-right found great resonance with Trump's agenda, which frequently echoed their contempt for traditional politics and political correctness. Memes and well-planned campaigns, among other online tactics, were skillfully used by the alt-right to mobilize certain percentages of the electorate that felt neglected by mainstream politicians.

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الملخص

تدرس هذه الأطروحة دور اليمين البديل في الانتخابات الرئاسية لعام 2016. شهدت الانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية لعام 2016 زيادة ملحوظة في نشاط حركة اليمين البديل، والتي أثرت بشكل كبير على الخطاب السياسي وسلوك الناخبين. يتميز اليمين البديل بشكل واضح بمعاداته الصواب السياسي، ومعاداته للهجرة، ومعاداته للسامية، ومعاداته للفكر النسوي. لقد لاقى خطاب ترشح دونالد ترامب صدئاً واسعاً مع ترويج اليمين البديل للقومية البيضاء، ومعاداة الهجرة، والشعبوية. تبحث هذه الأطروحة في أصول اليمين البديل، وأيديولوجيته، وفصائله، ومنصاته الإلكترونية، وتأثيره، مع تحليل كيفية نشر أتباعه المهتمين بالتكنولوجيا لرسالتهم وحشد الدعم لدونالد ترامب عبر المنتديات الإلكترونية ووسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. من خلال الأساليب النوعية، بما في ذلك تحليل البيانات والمحتوى، تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على الاستراتيجيات التي استخدمها اليمين البديل على تويتر للتأثير على سلوك الناخبين وتغييره، وكذلك العلاقة المتبادلة المنفعة بين اليمين البديل وحملة ترامب، مشددة على كيفية انعكاس تصريحات ترامب وأفعاله على الأفكار الأساسية للحركة، مما عزز وأضفى الشرعية على قوتها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اليمين البديل، دونالد ترامب، التعبئة، وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، الحملة الرئاسية.