Alt-right

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- *The alt-right is a white nationalist, biologically racist movement.*
- *Individuals aligned with many of the alt-right's ideas but not its white nationalism have been termed "alt-lite".*

The alt-right, an abbreviation of alternative right, is a loosely connected far-right, white nationalist movement based in the United States. A largely online phenomenon, the alt-right originated in the U.S. during the 2010s although has since established a presence in various other countries. The term is ill-defined, having been used in different ways by various self-described "alt-rightists", media commentators, and academics.

In 2010, the American white nationalist Richard B. Spencer launched The Alternative Right webzine to disseminate his ideas. Spencer's "alternative right" was influenced by earlier forms of American white nationalism, as well as paleoconservatism, the Dark Enlightenment, and the Nouvelle Droite. His term was shortened to "alt-right" and popularised by far-right participants of /pol/, the politics board of web forum 4chan. It came to be associated with other white nationalist websites and groups, including Andrew Anglin's Daily Stormer, Brad Griffin's Occidental Dissent, and Matthew Heimbach's Traditionalist Worker Party. Following the 2013 Gamergate controversy, the alt-right made increasing use of trolling and online harassment as a tactic to raise its profile. In 2015 it attracted broader public attention—particularly through coverage on Steve Bannon's Breitbart News—due to alt-right support for Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. On being elected, Trump disavowed the movement. Attempting to move from an online-based to a street-based movement, Spencer and other alt-rightists organised the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, which faced significant anti-fascist opposition. After this, the movement began to decline.

The alt-right is a white nationalist, biologically racist movement. Part of its membership supports anti-immigrationist policies to ensure a continued white majority in the United States. Others call for the breakup of the country to form a white separatist ethno-state in North America. Some alt-rightists seek to make white nationalism socially respectable in the U.S., while others—known as the "1488" scene—adopt openly white supremacist and neo-Nazi stances. Some alt-rightists are anti-semitic, promoting a conspiracy theory that there is a Jewish plot to bring about white genocide; other alt-rightists view most Jews as members of the white race. The alt-right is anti-feminist, advocates for a more patriarchal society, and intersects with the men's rights movement and other sectors of the online manosphere. Alt-rightists generally support anti-interventionist and isolationist foreign policies alongside economic protectionism and thus criticise mainstream U.S. conservatism. Attitudes to social issues like homosexuality and abortion vary within the movement. Individuals aligned with many of the alt-right's ideas but not its white nationalism have been termed "alt-lite".

The alt-right distinguished itself from earlier forms of white nationalism through its largely online presence and its heavy use of irony and humor, particularly through the promotion of Internet memes like Pepe the Frog. Membership was overwhelmingly white and male, with academic and anti-fascist observers linking its growth to deteriorating living standards and prospects, anxieties about the place of white masculinity, and anger at increasingly visible left-wing forms of identity politics like the Black Lives Matter movement. Constituent groups using the "alt-right" label have been characterised as hate groups, while alt-right material has been a contributing factor in the radicalization of young white men responsible for a range of far-right murders and terrorist attacks in the U.S. since 2014. Opposition to the alt-right has come from many areas of the political spectrum including socialists, liberals and conservatives.

Etymology and scope

- *A white supremacist, Spencer coined the term in 2010 in reference to a movement centered on white nationalism and has been accused by some media publications of doing so to excuse overt racism, white supremacism and neo-Nazism.*
- *The term "alt-right" is a neologism first used in November 2008 by self-described paleoconservative philosopher Paul Gottfried, addressing the H. L. Mencken Club about what he called "the alternative right".*

The term "alt-right" is a neologism first used in November 2008 by self-described paleoconservative philosopher Paul Gottfried, addressing the H. L. Mencken Club about what he called "the alternative right". This talk was published in December under the title "The Decline and Rise of the Alternative Right" in the conservative Taki's Magazine, becoming the earliest published usage of the phrase in its current context according to Slate. In 2009, two more posts at Taki's Magazine (one by Patrick J. Ford and the other by Jack Hunter) further discussed the alternative right. Since 2016, the term has been commonly attributed to Richard B. Spencer, president of the National Policy Institute and founder of Alternative Right. A white supremacist, Spencer coined the term in 2010 in reference to a

movement centered on white nationalism and has been accused by some media publications of doing so to excuse overt racism, white supremacism and neo-Nazism.

Definitions

- *George Hawley, a political scientist specialising in the U.S. far-right, disagreed with this approach, noting that using terms like "white supremacist" in place of "alt-right" conceals "the ways the Alt-Right differs from other manifestations of the racial right."*
- *The term "alt-right" is sometimes ill-defined.*

The term "alt-right" is sometimes ill-defined. This has been complicated by the various contradictory ways in which self-described "alt-rightists" have defined the movement and by the tendency among some of its political opponents to apply the term "alt-right" liberally to a broad range of right-wing groups and viewpoints. For instance, the conservative writer Ben Shapiro claims that the American Left has attempted "to lump in the Right with the alt-right by accepting a broader, false definition of the alt-right that could include traditional conservatism".

The anti-fascist researcher Matthew N. Lyons defined the alt-right as "a loosely organized far-right movement that shares a contempt for both liberal multiculturalism and mainstream conservatism; a belief that some people are inherently superior to others; a strong Internet presence and embrace of specific elements of online culture; and a self-presentation as being new, hip, and irreverent." The academic Tom Pollard referred to the alt-right as a "socio/political movement" comprising "a loose amalgam of rightist groups and causes" who "shun egalitarianism, socialism, feminism, miscegenation, multiculturalism, free trade, globalization, and all forms of gun control". The journalist Mike Wendling termed it "an incredibly loose set of ideologies held together by what they oppose: feminism, Islam, the Black Lives Matter movement, political correctness, a fuzzy idea they call 'globalism,' and establishment politics of both the left and the right."

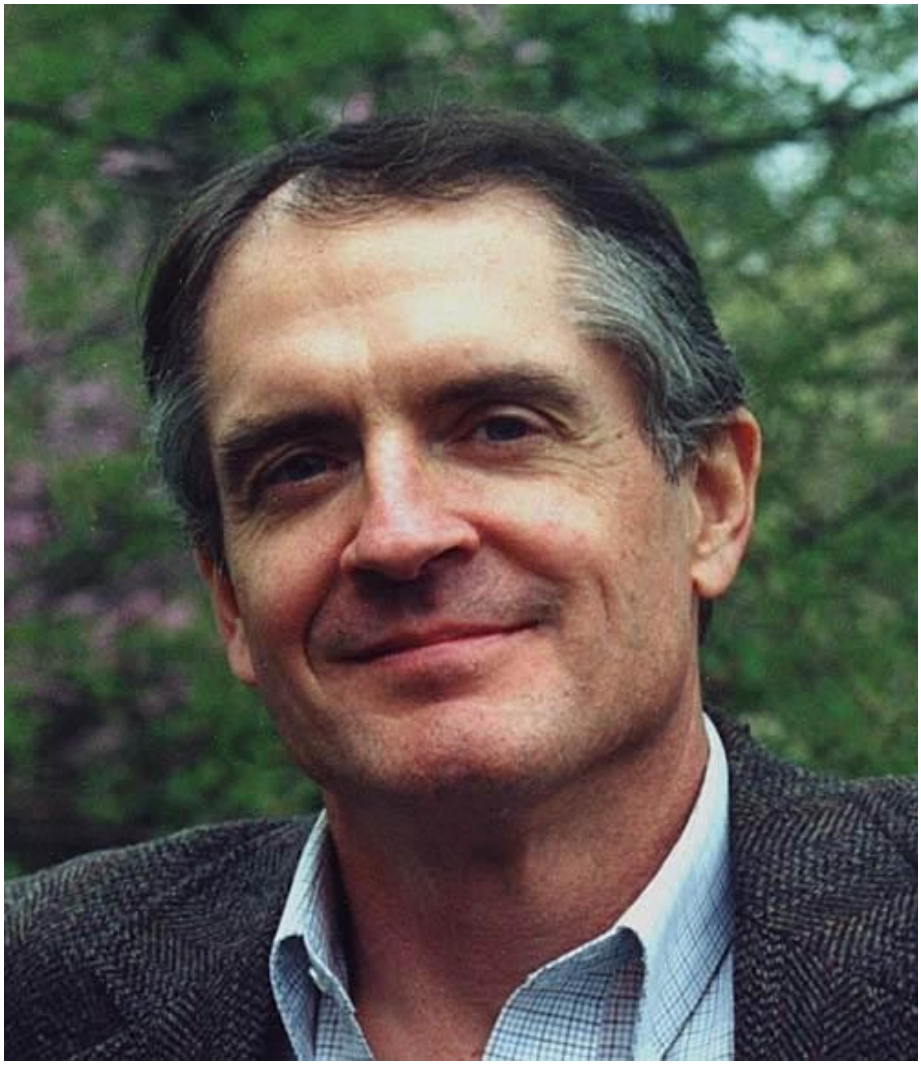
The Southern Poverty Law Center defined the alt-right as "a set of far-right ideologies, groups and individuals whose core belief is that 'white identity' is under attack by multicultural forces using 'political correctness' and 'social justice' to undermine white people and 'their' civilization." The Anti-Defamation League states that "alt-right" is a "vague term actually encompass[ing] a range of people on the extreme right who reject mainstream conservatism in favor of forms of conservatism that embrace implicit or explicit racism or white supremacy".

In 2016, the Associated Press described the "alt-right" label as "currently embraced by some white supremacists and white nationalists" that "may exist primarily as a public-relations device to make its supporters' actual beliefs less clear and more acceptable to a broader audience". The Associated Press said that it has previously called such beliefs "racist, neo-Nazi or white supremacist". Because the term was coined and used by white nationalists themselves rather than being applied to them by academic observers or by their opponents, the journalist Shaya Tayefe Mohajer urged their colleagues not to use the

term "alt-right". George Hawley, a political scientist specialising in the U.S. far-right, disagreed with this approach, noting that using terms like "white supremacist" in place of "alt-right" conceals "the ways the Alt-Right differs from other manifestations of the racial right."

According to a 2016 description in the Columbia Journalism Review, the alt-right is not formally organized and may not be an actual movement: "Because of the nebulous nature of anonymous online communities, nobody's entirely sure who the alt-righters are and what motivates them. It's also unclear which among them are true believers and which are smart-ass troublemakers trying to ruffle feathers". Many of its own proponents often claim they are joking or seeking to provoke an outraged response. Andrew Marantz of The New Yorker describes it as "a label, like 'snob' or 'hipster,' that is often disavowed by people who exemplify it".

History



The American white nationalist ideologue Jared Taylor became a revered figure among the

alt-right, and the events organized by his American Renaissance group were attended by many alt-right members.

Influences

- *The alt-right had various ideological forebears.*
- *Hawley later termed their ideology "highbrow white nationalism", and noted its particular influence on the alt-right.*
- *Although white nationalists often officially distanced themselves from white supremacism, white supremacist sentiment remained prevalent in white nationalist writings.*
- *This movement intersected with the alt-right; many individuals identified with both movements.*

The alt-right had various ideological forebears. The idea of white supremacy had been dominant across U.S. political discourse throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. After World War II, it was increasingly repudiated and relegated to the far-right of the country's political spectrum. Far-right groups retaining such ideas—such as George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party and William Luther Pierce's National Alliance—remained marginal. By the 1990s, white supremacism was largely confined to neo-Nazi and Ku Klux Klan (KKK) groups, although its ideologues wanted to return it to the mainstream. That decade, several white supremacists reformulated their ideas as white nationalism, through which they presented themselves not as seeking to dominate non-white racial groups but rather as lobbying for the interests of European Americans in a similar way to how civil rights groups lobbied for the rights of African Americans and Hispanic Americans. Although white nationalists often officially distanced themselves from white supremacism, white supremacist sentiment remained prevalent in white nationalist writings.

U.S. white nationalists believed that the United States had been created as a nation explicitly for white people of European descent and that it should remain that way. Many called for the formation of an explicitly white ethno-state. Various neo-Nazi and KKK groups adopted the term "white nationalism" and its associated rhetoric. Seeking to distance themselves from such groups' violent, skinhead image, various white nationalist ideologues—namely Jared Taylor, Peter Brimelow, and Kevin B. MacDonald—sought to cultivate an image of respectability and intellectualism through which to promote their views. Hawley later termed their ideology "highbrow white nationalism", and noted its particular influence on the alt-right. Taylor in particular became a revered figure in alt-right circles.

Under the Republican presidency of George W. Bush in the 2000s, the white nationalist movement focused largely on criticising mainstream conservatives rather than liberals, accusing them of betraying white Americans. In that period they drew increasingly on the conspiracy theories that had been generated by the Patriot movement since the 1990s; online, the white nationalist and Patriot movements increasingly conversed and merged. Following the election of Democratic Party candidate Barack Obama to the presidency in 2008—making him the first black president of the country—the world-views of a range of

right-wing movements, including white supremacists, Patriots, conspiracy theorists, and Tea Partiers, increasingly began to coalesce, in part due to a shared racial animus against Obama.

The alt-right drew upon several older currents of right-wing thought. One was the Nouvelle Droite, a far-right movement originating in 1960s France. Many alt-rightists adopted the Nouvelle Droite's views on pursuing change through "metapolitical" strategies; it thereby shares similarities with European identitarianism, which also draws upon the Nouvelle Droite. The alt-right also exhibited similarities with the paleoconservative movement which emerged in the U.S. during the 1980s. Both opposed neoconservatism and expressed similar positions on restricting immigration and supporting an openly nationalistic foreign policy, although unlike the alt-right, the paleoconservatives were typically closely aligned to traditional Christianity and wanted to reform the conservative movement rather than destroy it. Certain paleoconservatives, such as Samuel T. Francis, moved far closer to the white nationalist position of the alt-right.

There were also links between the American libertarian movement and the alt-right, despite libertarianism's general repudiation of identity politics. Many senior alt-rightists previously considered themselves libertarians, and the libertarian theorist Murray Rothbard has been cited as a particular link between the two movements due to his staunch anti-egalitarianism and support for ideas about differing IQ levels among racial groups. Also cited in connection with the alt-right was the Dark Enlightenment, or neo-reactionary movement, which emerged online in the 2000s, pursuing an anti-egalitarian message. This movement intersected with the alt-right; many individuals identified with both movements. The Dark Enlightenment however remained distinct in not embracing white nationalism, deeming it too democratic.

Origins: 2008–13

- *According to Hawley, the alt-right began in 2008.*
- *In 2009, Spencer used the term "alternative right" in the title of an article by white nationalist Kevin DeAnna; by 2010, Spencer had moved fully from paleoconservatism to white nationalism.*
- *Spencer noted that "if you look at the initial articles for AlternativeRight.com, that was the first stage of the Alt-Right really coming into its own".*

According to Hawley, the alt-right began in 2008. In November that year, the paleoconservative ideologue and academic Paul Gottfried gave a talk at his H. L. Mencken Club in Baltimore. Although the talk was titled "The Decline and Rise of the Alternative Right", it did not contain the phrase "alternative right" itself. Gottfried observed that, as the paleoconservative movement declined, a new cohort of young right-wingers were rising to take its place in challenging the neoconservative ideology then dominant in the Republican Party and broader U.S. conservative movement. One of those endorsing this idea was Richard B. Spencer, a fellow paleoconservative. Born in 1978 to a wealthy family and raised

in Dallas, Texas, in 2007 Spencer had dropped out of his PhD programme at Duke University to take up a position at The American Conservative magazine. Spencer claimed he coined the term "alternative right" for the lecture's title, although Gottfried maintained that they were its joint creators. As "alternative right" became associated increasingly with white nationalism in subsequent years, Gottfried distanced himself from it.

After Spencer was fired from The American Conservative, in 2008 he became managing director of Taki Theodoracopulos's right-wing website Taki's Magazine. The website initially contained contributions largely from paleoconservatives and libertarians, but under Spencer also gave space to white nationalists like Taylor. In 2009, Spencer used the term "alternative right" in the title of an article by white nationalist Kevin DeAnna; by 2010, Spencer had moved fully from paleoconservatism to white nationalism. Spencer left Taki's Magazine and in March 2010 launched The Alternative Right webzine. Early issues featured articles by "highbrow" white nationalists like Taylor and MacDonald as well as the Heathen Stephen McNallen. Spencer noted that "if you look at the initial articles for AlternativeRight.com, that was the first stage of the Alt-Right really coming into its own".

AlternativeRight.com consisted primarily of short essays, covering a range of political and cultural issues. Many of these reflected the influence of the French Nouvelle Droite, although this declined as the alt-right grew. Spencer later stated that he wanted to create a movement distinct from the explicit white power image of neo-Nazi and KKK groups, noting that their approach to white nationalism was "a total nonstarter. No one outside a hardcore coterie would identify with it". In 2011 Spencer became the head of the white nationalist National Policy Institute and launched the Radix Journal to promote his views; in 2012, he stepped down from the AlternativeRight website and took it offline in December 2013. By that year, Spencer was expressing ambivalence about the "alternative right" label; he preferred to be called an "identitarian".

Emergence: 2014–16

- *By 2015, the alt-right had gained significant momentum as an online movement.*
- *Earlier white nationalist thinkers were also characterised as alt-right thinkers, among them Taylor, and MacDonald.*
- *By 2016, Anglin called the Daily Stormer "the world's most visited alt-right website".*
- *Spencer thought that by this point, the "Alt-Right" had become "the banner of white identity politics".*

It was on the Internet that Spencer's term "alternative right" was adopted and abbreviated to "alt-right"; according to Slate magazine, the abbreviation "retains the former phrase's associations—the mix of alienation and optimism embedded in the act of proudly affirming an 'alternative' direction—but compacts them into a snappier package." The "alt-right" tag was created with public relations in mind, allowing white nationalists to soften their image and helping to draw in recruits from mainstream conservatism. Many white nationalists gravitated to the term to escape the negative connotations of the term "white nationalism".

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It was on websites like 4chan and Reddit that the term gained wider usage, and in 2015 began to grow in popularity. Although there had previously been a strong left-libertarian contingent to these online spaces, there was a gradual rightward turn in chan culture centred on 4chan's politics board, /pol/. According to Hawley, the alt-right was "an outgrowth of Internet troll culture", and its emergence was marked by the online Gamergate controversy of 2013. According to the journalist David Niewert, Gamergate "heralded the rise of the alt-right and provided an early sketch of its primary features: an Internet presence beset by digital trolls, unbridled conspiracism, angry-white-male-identity victimization culture, and, ultimately, open racism, anti-Semitism, ethnic hatred, misogyny, and sexual and gender paranoia." Gamergate politicized many young people, especially males, in opposition to the perceived culture war being waged by the cultural left. Through their shared opposition to political correctness, feminism, and multiculturalism, chan culture built a link to the alt-right. By 2015, the alt-right had gained significant momentum as an online movement.

Notable promoters of the alt-right included Spencer, Vox Day, Steve Sailer, and Brittany Pettibone. Earlier white nationalist thinkers were also characterised as alt-right thinkers, among them Taylor, and MacDonald. Other prominent alt-rightists included Brad Griffin, a member of the Neo-Confederate League of the South who founded the Occidental Dissent blog, Matthew Heimbach, who established the Traditionalist Youth Network in 2013, and Andrew Anglin, who launched the Daily Stormer website—named after the Der Stürmer newspaper active in Nazi Germany—in 2013. By 2016, Anglin called the Daily Stormer "the world's most visited alt-right website". While some of the websites associated with the alt-right—like The Daily Stormer and the Traditionalist Youth Network—adopted neo-Nazi approaches, others, such as Occidental Dissent, The Unz Review, Vox Popoli, and Chateau Heartiste, adopted a less extreme form of white nationalism.

Breitbart News

- *The term "alt-lite" appeared in the alt-right's language in mid-2016, at which point it was used pejoratively for rightists who expressed some sympathetic views of the alt-right but did not share its white nationalism.*
- *Various press sources termed Yiannopoulos "alt-right"; although Hawley noted that Yiannopoulos was "not really part of the Alt-Right" himself.*

Many press sources described Breitbart News as an alt-right website. The journalist Mike Wendling termed it "the chief popular media amplifier of alt-right ideas"; Spencer described Breitbart as "a 'gateway' to Alt Right ideas and writers". Breitbart had been launched by the conservative Andrew Breitbart in 2005, but after his death in 2012 came under the control of Steve Bannon, who took its coverage in a more aggressively right-wing direction. Bannon was a right-wing nationalist and populist; he was hostile to mainstream conservatism and

referred to two prominent conservative publications, the National Review and The Weekly Standard, as "left-wing magazines" which he wanted to destroy. Although much of its coverage fed into racially charged white narratives, Breitbart did not promote white nationalism; its differences from the mainstream conservative press were more in tone than in content. In July 2016, Bannon told a journalist from Mother Jones that Breitbart had become "the platform for the alt-right"; he may have been referring not to the website's official content but to its comments section—which is lightly moderated and contains more extreme views than those put forward by Breitbart itself. Hawley noted that whatever Bannon's motives for making this statement, it was untrue because Breitbart did not embrace the alt-right's underlying white nationalism.

In March 2016, Breitbart writers Allum Bokhari and Milo Yiannopoulos published "An Establishment Conservative's Guide to the Alt-Right". In that article, they described the alt-right as being derived from the U.S. Old Right and paleoconservatism, as well as the Nouvelle Droite and older right-wingers like Oswald Spengler, Henry Louis Mencken, and Julius Evola. Bokhari and Yiannopoulos' piece became "perhaps the most widely cited article about the movement" in the mainstream press; CNN described it as being similar to a manifesto. Wendling characterized the article as a work of apologetics for the alt-right, noting that it downplayed the movement's more extreme elements and championed its counter-cultural value. Hawley described the article as "the most sympathetic portrayal of the movement to appear in a major media venue to date". The commentator Angela Nagle suggested that Yiannopoulos did "more than anyone else to give the alt-right a presentable face".

Many alt-rightists responded negatively to Bokhari and Yiannopoulos' article. The Daily Stormer referred to it as "the Product of a Degenerate Homosexual and an Ethnic Mongrel", with Anglin producing a response article titled "A Normie's Guide to the Alt-Right" in which he placed the 1488 scene at the centre of the movement. On Occidental Dissent, Griffin asked: "What the hell does Milo Yiannopoulos—a Jewish homosexual who boasts about carrying on interracial relationships with black men—have to do with us?" Various press sources termed Yiannopoulos "alt-right"; although Hawley noted that Yiannopoulos was "not really part of the Alt-Right" himself. Observers have instead labelled Yiannopoulos "alt-light" or "alt-lite". The term "alt-lite" appeared in the alt-right's language in mid-2016, at which point it was used pejoratively for rightists who expressed some sympathetic views of the alt-right but did not share its white nationalism. As well as Yiannopoulos, other prominent figures associated with the alt-lite included Mike Cernovich and Gavin McInnes.

On September 9, 2016, several figures of the alt-right community held a press conference, described by one reporter as the "coming-out party" of the little-known movement, to explain their goals. They proclaimed racialist beliefs by stating: "Race is real, race matters, and race is the foundation of identity". Speakers called for a "white homeland" and expounded on racial differences in intelligence. They also confirmed their support of Trump by saying, "This is what a leader looks like."

Donald Trump presidential campaign: 2016

- *As noted by Hawley, "the Alt-Right is most definitely far to Trump's right".*
- *The alt-right saw this as further evidence that Trump was their champion.*
- *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 June 2015, the multimillionaire New York businessman Donald Trump announced plans to campaign to become the Republican nominee for the 2016 presidential election, something that attracted the interest of alt-rightists as well as from white nationalists more broadly, neo-Nazis, KKK groups, and the Patriot movement.

The alt-right was exceedingly vocal in support for Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. The alt-right approved of Trump's hard attitude to immigration, his calls for a ban on Muslims entering the U.S., and for a wall to be built along the border with Mexico to curtail illegal immigration. Niewert observed that "Trump was the gateway drug for the alt-right", with many individuals learning of the movement through their interest in Trump.

As noted by Hawley, "the Alt-Right is most definitely far to Trump's right". Many alt-rightists recognized that Trump did not share their white nationalist world-view and would not bring about all the changes they desired. They were nevertheless grateful that he had shifted the national conversation rightward, and that he had shown that it was possible to successfully challenge the conservative movement from the right. Griffin called on alt-rightists to "join the Trump campaign... to take down the hated cuckservative establishment". A small minority of alt-rightists were against supporting Trump; The Right Stuff contributor "Auschwitz Soccer Ref" complained that two of Trump's children had married Jews, suggesting that Trump was therefore loyal to Israel.

Trump was a keen user of Twitter, and in November 2015 he retweeted a graphic about African-American crime statistics which included the alt-right, white nationalist hashtag "#WhiteGenocide". The alt-righter 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.

Breitbart's Bannon had been one of Trump's most enthusiastic backers, and in August Trump appointed him to lead his election campaign. That month, the Democratic Party's nominee for the presidency, Hillary Clinton, criticised Bannon's appointment in a speech given in Reno, Nevada. 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." Clinton referred to the alt-right as "an emerging racist ideology" and warned that "a fringe element has effectively taken over the Republican Party". After Clinton's speech, web traffic to alt-right websites rose and the mainstream media gave it increasing coverage; Spencer and other alt-rightists were pleased, believing Clinton's speech gave them greater publicity and helped legitimize them in the public eye. Many of Trump's supporters adopted the moniker of "deplorables" for themselves, and the term was widely used on memes that the alt-right promoted online.

As the election loomed, Trump claimed that Obama's government would rig it to ensure a Democratic win; far-right websites widely promoted this notion and claimed they would resort to violence or civil war in the event of Clinton's victory. When Trump won the election in November, the alt-right's response was generally triumphalist and self-congratulatory. Many alt-rightists claimed responsibility for the result. Anglin stated: "Make no mistake about it: we did this. If it were not for us, it wouldn't have been possible"; Spencer tweeted that "The Alt-Right has been declared the winner... We're the establishment now." Following his election, Trump announced that Bannon would be his chief strategist, a decision popular with the alt-right. Alt-rightists were generally supportive of Trump's other appointments, such as his decision to make Jeff Sessions his attorney general. While aware that Trump would not pursue a white nationalist agenda, the alt-right hoped to pull him further to the right, taking hardline positions that made him look more moderate, and thus shifting the U.S. Overton window in their direction.

After Trump was elected president, the alt-right faced a crisis

After Trump's election: 2016–present

- *Wendling suggested that Trump's election signalled "the beginning of the end" for the alt-right.*
- *Later that month, Trump was asked about the alt-right in an interview with The New York Times.*
- *In 2016, Twitter began closing alt-right accounts it regarded as engaging in abuse or harassment; among those closed were the accounts of Spencer and his NPI.*

Wendling suggested that Trump's election signalled "the beginning of the end" for the alt-right. Celebrating Trump's victory, Spencer held a November meeting in Washington D.C. in which he stated that he thought that he had "a psychic connection, a deeper connection with Donald Trump, in a way we simply do not have with most Republicans." He ended the conference by declaring "Hail Trump! Hail our people! Hail victory!", to which various attendees responded with Nazi salutes and chanting. This attracted significant press attention. When questioned on the incident, Spencer stated that the salutes were given "in a spirit of irony and exuberance".

Later that month, Trump was asked about the alt-right in an interview with The New York Times. He responded: "I don't want to energize the group, and I disavow the group." This rejection angered many alt-rightists. In April 2017, many alt-rightists criticized Trump's order to launch the Shayrat missile strike against Syrian military targets; like many of those who had supported him, they believed he was going back on his promise of a more non-interventionist foreign policy in the Middle East.

The Trump administration has included several figures who are associated with the alt-right, such as Senior Advisor to the President Stephen Miller, Special Assistant to the President Julia Hahn, former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, former Deputy Assistant to the President Sebastian Gorka and former White House Chief Strategist Steve Bannon. After Trump's election, other Republican candidates for office, such as Roy Moore, Corey Stewart, Josh Mandel, Joe Arpaio and Paul Nehlen, ran with the support of the movement.

In 2016, Twitter began closing alt-right accounts it regarded as engaging in abuse or harassment; among those closed were the accounts of Spencer and his NPI. In February 2017, Reddit then closed down the "r/altright" sub-reddit after its participants were found to have breached its policy prohibiting doxing. Facebook followed by shutting down Spencer's pages on its platform in April 2018. In January 2017, Spencer launched a new website, AltRight.com, which combined the efforts of the Arktos publishing company and the Red Ice video and radio network.

The Unite the Right Rally and its aftermath

- *In August 2017, the Unite the Right rally took place in Charlottesville, Virginia, bringing together alt-right activists with members of other white supremacist and far-right movements.*
- *In 2017, terrorist attacks and violence affiliated with the alt-right and white supremacy were the leading cause of extremist violence in the United States.*

In August 2017, the Unite the Right rally took place in Charlottesville, Virginia, bringing together alt-right activists with members of other white supremacist and far-right movements. Many alt-rightists thought that the rally would mark a turning point in the transformation of their movement from an online phenomenon into a street-based one. At altright.com, editor Vincent Law for instance predicted before the event took place that "People will talk about Charlottesville as a turning point". However, the event and its aftermath proved demoralizing for many in the movement. A right-wing protester rammed his car into counter-protesters, killing one and injuring 19 others; this incident brought much negative publicity to the event and its participants. Although Spencer condemned the killing, other alt-rightists celebrated it. Trump claimed that there were "some very fine people on both sides" of the Charlottesville protests, stating that what he called the "alt-left" bore some responsibility for the violence. Spencer stated that he was "really proud" of the president for those comments.

Alt-rightists who attended the rally often found themselves facing personal and legal repercussions for their involvement, while Internet service providers and mainstream social media websites subsequently terminated many alt-right accounts and sites. Prominent figures like Spencer became reticent about organizing public protests of this kind in future. He experimented with the use of flash demonstrations, returning to Charlottesville with a much smaller group for an unannounced protest in October. Unite the Right exacerbated tensions between the alt-lite and more extreme elements of the movement. Breitbart distanced itself from the alt-right and criticized other media outlets that described them in such a manner, as did Yiannopoulos, who insisted he had "nothing in common" with Spencer.

Although the movement saw significant gains in 2015 and 2016, it began significantly declining in power and membership in 2017 and 2018. This has been due to multiple reasons, including the backlash of the Unite the Right rally, the fracturing of the movement, more effective banishment of hate speech and harassment from major social media sites and widespread opposition by the American population. In 2018, Heidi Beirich of the Southern Poverty Law Center described it as "imploding" while Marilyn Mayo of the Anti-Defamation League stated that the alt-right was in "a downward spiral, but it doesn't mean they're going to disappear". That year, Heimbach was arrested for the battery of his wife and father-in-law, resulting in the dissolution of his Traditionalist Workers Party, while Anglin went into hiding to avoid a harassment lawsuit, and Spencer cancelled his speaking tour.

There has been widespread concern that as the chance of a large-scale political movement dies out, that lone-wolf terrorist attacks from members will become common. In 2017, terrorist attacks and violence affiliated with the alt-right and white supremacy were the leading cause of extremist violence in the United States. Several alt-right candidates ran as Republican candidates in the 2018 elections. The neo-Nazi and Holocaust denier Arthur Jones ran for an Illinois congressional seat, the white supremacist Paul Nehlen for the Wisconsin seat of Paul Ryan, the Republican Speaker of the House, and the neo-Nazi Patrick Little for the United States Senate election in California, 2018.

Beliefs

- *The alt-right has been characterized as belonging on the far-right of the political spectrum.*
- *These neo-Nazi elements represent a minority within the alt-right.*
- *The key division within the alt-right is between those who embrace explicitly neo-Nazi and white supremacist stances, and those white nationalists who present a more moderate image.*

The alt-right has been characterized as belonging on the far-right of the political spectrum. There is no unifying manifesto behind the alt-right and different people who describe themselves as "alt-rightists" express different beliefs about what it wants to achieve. There are nevertheless recurring attitudes that exist within the movement. The alt-right's views are profoundly anti-egalitarian, and it rejects many of the basic premises of the Age of Enlightenment and classical liberalism. For this reason, Hawley thought that "the Alt-Right seems like a poor fit for the United States, where both the left and right have roots in classical liberalism and the Enlightenment."

The key division within the alt-right is between those who embrace explicitly neo-Nazi and white supremacist stances, and those white nationalists who present a more moderate image. Wendling suggested that this was "a distinction lacking a hugely significant difference".
The white supremacist and neo-Nazi alt-rightists are sometimes termed "1488s", a combination of the white supremacist fourteen words slogan with 88, a coded reference to "HH", or "Heil Hitler". These neo-Nazi elements represent a minority within the alt-right. Many on the less extreme end of the movement are critical of them, believing that they "go too far" or generate bad publicity for it. Some of the latter mock the neo-Nazi and explicitly white supremacist elements as "Stormfags", a reference to the white supremacist website Stormfront.

The concept has further been associated with several groups such as American nationalists, national-anarchists, and neo-monarchists.

White nationalism

- *Not all members of the alt-right, however, actively embrace the term "white nationalist" in reference to themselves.*
- *Hawley commented that the alt-right is, "at its core, a racist movement"; similarly, the historian David Atkinson stated that the alt-right was "a racist movement steeped in white supremacist ideas".*
- *The alt-right is a white nationalist movement and is fundamentally concerned with white identity.*

The alt-right is a white nationalist movement and is fundamentally concerned with white identity. Spencer described the alt-right as "identity politics for white Americans and for Europeans around the world"; he and some other alt-rightists identify as "identitarians". Not all members of the alt-right, however, actively embrace the term "white nationalist" in reference to themselves. Hawley commented that the alt-right is, "at its core, a racist movement"; similarly, the historian David Atkinson stated that the alt-right was "a racist movement steeped in white supremacist ideas". Attitudes to non-white people vary within the alt-right, from those who desire tighter restrictions on non-white immigration into the U.S. to those who call for a violent ethnic cleansing of the country.

In contrast to the majority of scholars, who regard race as a socio-cultural construct, the alt-right promotes scientific racism, making the claim that racial differences represent distinct biological differences. For the alt-right, this view is referred to as "race realism". There is a recurring tendency among alt-rightists to rank these racial groups on a hierarchy according to perceived IQ levels: this hierarchy has Asians and Ashkenazi Jews at the top, followed by non-Jewish whites, then Arabs, and finally black Africans. Unlike earlier forms of racist thought, such as those of the interwar fascists, the alt-right emphasizes the idea of racial difference above that of racial superiority, leaving the latter either implicit or secondary in its discourse. Most alt-rightists reject the label of "white supremacist".

Having analysed alt-right posts online, the political scientists Joe Phillips and Joseph Yi noted that a pervasive underlying theme was the belief that white people were victims and that white Americans had been disadvantaged by government policies such as affirmative action for non-white groups, assistance to illegal immigrants, and the perceived denigration of "white history" like Christopher Columbus and the Confederate States of America. Alt-right online discourse also expressed much anger at the idea of white privilege, often promoted by the American Left, with members citing job insecurity, under employment or unemployment, and growing mortality rates among whites as evidence that they do not lead privileged lives. Alt-rightists wish to see an end to measures they believe disadvantage white Americans, including affirmative action, toleration of illegal immigration, and the public removal of symbols of "white history", such as statues of Columbus. Spencer stated that "anti-white animus in society at large is palpable."

Many alt-right figures have expressed the desire to push white nationalist ideas into the Overton window: the range of ideas tolerated in public discourse. The alt-right has served

as a bridge between white nationalism and traditional conservatism and as a tool used by white nationalists to push their rhetoric into the mainstream. For instance, prominent alt-right figures on Twitter have used hashtag activism focused on the white genocide conspiracy theory, combined with more mainstream-oriented alt-right hashtags, to bring more radical white nationalist beliefs into the mainstream.

Many leaders of the alt-right movement, including include Spencer, Anglin, Mike Cernovich, John Derbyshire and Kyle Chapman are married to, or have been romantically involved with, women of Asian descent. Writing in The New York Times, the journalist Audrea Lim quoted an alt-right commenter who stated that "exclusively" dating Asian women was akin to a "white-nationalist rite of passage". Lim speculated that the trend may arise from "the intersection of two popular racial myths", that Asian-Americans are a hard-working, high-achieving, and well-behaved "model minority", and that Asian women are subservient and hypersexualized.

White separatism and ethno-states

- *The alt-right is typically white separatist, with its members desiring autonomy and self-determination in their own white communities.*

The alt-right is typically white separatist, with its members desiring autonomy and self-determination in their own white communities. Some envision breaking up the United States into multiple states, each inhabited by a different ethnic or racial group.
Spencer has stated that he is not clear how the white ethno-state in North America would be formed. He stated that "I don't know how we're going to get there, because the thing is, history will decide that for us... You have to wait for a revolutionary opportunity to present itself, and history will present that opportunity." He suggested that it could be achieved through "peaceful ethnic cleansing", with non-whites given financial incentives to leave. He compared his white nationalist movement for an ethno-state with the early days of Zionism, which began in the 19th century with calls for the formation of a Jewish ethno-state and resulted in the formation of Israel in the mid-20th century.

Many alt-rightists are similarly unclear as to how a white ethno-state would actually be formed, but are content instead to promote the idea, particularly to people who had not previously considered it. The prominent alt-rightist Greg Johnson suggested that it would come about after white nationalists became the dominant force in U.S. politics. At that point, he argued, the government would deport all undocumented migrants from the country and then introduce measures to encourage all other non-whites to emigrate from the country. Other alt-rightists are critical of the idea of breaking up the United States into ethno-states, arguing that this would mean breaking up the country that their Euro-American ancestors fought to build. They instead argue for restrictive immigration policies to ensure that the U.S. continues to be a white-majority state.

Rather than seeking independent white ethno-states, some alt-rightists promote a pan-white empire spanning Europe and North America. Spencer noted that he did not want his

proposed white ethno-state to be small, and that he wanted it to eventually form part of "a global empire... something on a very large scale. And that is a homeland for all white people, whether you're German or Celtic or Slavic or English." He described this as "one big Roman Empire" and suggested that it should engage in imperial expansion into the Near East, focusing on conquering Istanbul; in Spencer's words, Istanbul was "such a profoundly symbolic city. Retaking it, that would be a statement to the world." He added that its present Turkish inhabitants would be made to leave, for they could go to "the Middle East or something. Who cares?"

Anti-Semitism

- *Many in the alt-right believe that there is a Jewish conspiracy within the United States to achieve "white genocide", the elimination of white people as a racial group and their replacement with non-whites.*
- *Some elements of the alt-right are anti-Semitic but others are tolerant of Jews.*
- *Andrew Anglin, one of the most prominent alt-right ideologues and a member of its neo-Nazi wing, stated "the core concept of the movement, upon which all else is based, is that Whites are undergoing an extermination, via mass immigration into White countries which was enabled by a corrosive liberal ideology of White self-hatred, and that the Jews are at the center of this agenda."*

Some elements of the alt-right are anti-Semitic but others are tolerant of Jews. Many in the alt-right believe that there is a Jewish conspiracy within the United States to achieve "white genocide", the elimination of white people as a racial group and their replacement with non-whites. They believe that a Jewish cabal controls the U.S. government, media, and universities, and is pursuing its aim of white genocide by spreading anti-white tropes and encouraging African-American civil rights groups. As evidence for this supposed white genocide, these far-right figures point to the depiction of inter-racial couples or mixed-race children on television and the publication of articles discouraging women from having children early in life. They also cite apparent instances of white self-hatred, including Rachel Dolezal, an American woman of European descent who identifies as black.

This anti-Semitic conspiracy theory is not new to the alt-right, but has recurred among far-right groups in Western countries since the 19th century; it was the reason for the Holocaust and various anti-Semitic pogroms in European history. Andrew Anglin, one of the most prominent alt-right ideologues and a member of its neo-Nazi wing, stated "the core concept of the movement, upon which all else is based, is that Whites are undergoing an extermination, via mass immigration into White countries which was enabled by a corrosive liberal ideology of White self-hatred, and that the Jews are at the center of this agenda." In response to a Washington Post article portraying the movement as "offensiveness for the sake of offensiveness", Anglin said "No it isn't. 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". Other alt-rightists, like Spencer, welcome the involvement of Jews within their movement.

Opposition to neoconservatism and political correctness

- *The anarcho-capitalist advocate Jeffrey Tucker has said that the alt-right is opposed to libertarianism because the alt-right focuses on group identity and tribalism instead of individual liberty.*
- *The alt-right sought to hasten the downfall of U.S. conservatism, and conservatives were often the main target of alt-right wrath.*
- *The alt-right places little emphasis on economic issues.*

The alt-right sought to hasten the downfall of U.S. conservatism, and conservatives were often the main target of alt-right wrath.
The prominent alt-right ideologue Brad Griffin stated "Alt Right is presenting itself as a sleek new challenger to mainstream conservatism and libertarianism... Alt Right was designed to appeal to a younger audience who reject the Left, but who don't fit in on the stuffy or banal Right either." The anarcho-capitalist advocate Jeffrey Tucker has said that the alt-right is opposed to libertarianism because the alt-right focuses on group identity and tribalism instead of individual liberty. The alt-right places little emphasis on economic issues. Unlike mainstream U.S. conservatives, alt-rightists do not tend to favour laissez-faire economics, and most appear to support President Trump's protectionist economic measures.

Phillips and Yi noted that alongside "white identity politics", the alt-right promotes "a message of expressive transgression against left-wing orthodoxy ('political correctness')". Nicole Hemmer stated on NPR that political correctness is seen by the alt-right as "the greatest threat to their liberty".
Alt-rightists often employ the term "Cultural Marxism"—originally coined in reference to a specific form of Marxist thought but popularised among the U.S. right-wing in the 1990s—in reference to a perceived leftist conspiracy to alter society. They apply the term "Cultural Marxism" to a broad range of left movements.

Isolationism and anti-interventionism

- *The alt-right has no interest in spreading democracy abroad and opposes the U.S.' close relationship with Israel.*
- *The far-right Russian political theorist Aleksandr Dugin is also viewed positively by the alt-right.*
- *Alt-rightists typically opposed President Bush's War on Terror policies, and spoke against the 2017 Shayrat missile strike.*

The alt-right has no specific platform on U.S. foreign policy, although has been characterised as being non-interventionist, as well as isolationist. Generally, it opposes established Republican Party views on foreign policy issues. Alt-rightists typically opposed President Bush's War on Terror policies, and spoke against the 2017 Shayrat missile strike. The alt-right has no interest in spreading democracy abroad and opposes the U.S.' close relationship with Israel.

The alt-right often looks favorably on Russia's President Vladimir Putin, viewing him as a strong, nationalistic white leader who defends his country from both radical Islam and Western liberalism. Spencer praised Putin's Russia as the "most powerful white power in the world", while prominent alt-rightist Matthew Heimbach called Putin "the leader of the free world." Although during the Cold War, the U.S. right-wing often presented the Soviet Union as the main threat to the U.S., links between the U.S. far-right and Russia grew during the 2000s, when prominent far-right activists like David Duke visited the country; the latter described Russia as being "key to White survival". The far-right Russian political theorist Aleksandr Dugin is also viewed positively by the alt-right. Dugin has written for Spencer's websites, and Spencer's estranged wife, the ethnically Georgian Nina Kouprianova, has translated some of Dugin's work into English. Many alt-rightists also regard Syria's President Bashar al-Assad as a heroic figure for standing up to rebel groups in the Syrian Civil War. Heimbach has endorsed a Shi'ite axis between al-Assad's Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah in Lebanon, seeing them as allies in the global struggle against Zionism.

Anti-feminism and sex-related issues

- *The alt-right is anti-feminist and favors a more patriarchal society.*
- *Hawley suggested that the alt-right was more broadly pro-choice than the conservative movement.*
- *Some on the alt-right consider homosexuality to be immoral and a threat to the survival of the white race, with alt-right trolls having employed homophobic terminology like "faggot".*

The alt-right is anti-feminist and favors a more patriarchal society. This is a stance shared by its female supporters, who represent a minority within the movement. Unlike many U.S. conservatives, the alt-right does not argue its anti-feminist position from traditional Christian perspectives, but claims that it is rooted in what it calls "sex realism", arguing that as a result of their biological differences, men and women are suited to different tasks in society. Lyons commented that the alt-right was misogynistic and presented women as irrational and vindictive. Prominent female alt-rightists have experienced harassment and abuse from within the movement. The Daily Stormer, for instance, banned female contributors and called for reduced female involvement in the white nationalist movement, producing an angry response from various white nationalist women.

The alt-right intersects with the manosphere, an online anti-feminist subculture. There is overlap between the alt-right and the Men's Rights Activist movement, a part of the manosphere which believes that men, rather than women, face more oppression in Western society. It also adopts the Men's Rights movement view that feminism has undermined and emasculated men, and believes that men should aggressively reassert their masculinity so as not to become "beta males" or "cucks". There has been some clear influence between the two movements; prominent manosphere ideologue RooshV for instance attended an NPI conference and quoted anti-Semitic material from white nationalist sources in his articles. Some alt-right figures have distanced themselves from the manosphere and its proponents;

Greg Johnson of Counter-Currents Publishing was of the view that "the manosphere morally corrupts men" because it does not promote "the resurgence of traditional and biologically based sexual norms" but rather encourages rape culture.

On social issues like attitudes to homosexuality and abortion, the alt-right is divided; in contrast to the great attention U.S. conservatives have given these issues, they have been of little interest to the alt-right. Hawley suggested that the alt-right was more broadly pro-choice than the conservative movement. Many on the alt-right favored legal abortion for its eugenic purposes, highlighting that it was disproportionately used by African-American and Hispanic-American women. Some on the alt-right consider homosexuality to be immoral and a threat to the survival of the white race, with alt-right trolls having employed homophobic terminology like "faggot". Others adopt a more tolerant stance and have praised gay white nationalists. This reflects a broader trend among white nationalists to denigrate gay culture while being more tolerant of gay writers and musicians like James O'Meara and Douglas Pearce whose views they sympathize with.

Religion

- *Hawley expressed the view that "ironically, people on the Alt-Right are less Islamophobic than many mainstream conservatives".*
- *The alt-right is broadly secular.*
- *Despite this, alt-right hostility to Christianity has waned over time, with many alt-right commentators identifying as Christian while rejecting mainstream Christian politics and most mainstream Christian religious leaders, especially Pope Francis.*
- *Some alt-rightists identify as Christians: The Right Stuff, for instance, hosted an alt-right Christian podcast called "The Godcast".*

The alt-right is broadly secular. Many of its members are atheists, or highly sceptical of organized religion. Some alt-rightists identify as Christians: The Right Stuff, for instance, hosted an alt-right Christian podcast called "The Godcast". There are also individuals in the movement who do not believe in Christian teachings but identify as cultural Christians, admiring the Christian heritage of Western society. Others on the alt-right oppose Christianity entirely, criticizing it for its Jewish roots, for being a universal religion that seeks to cross racial boundaries, and for encouraging what they see as a "slave morality" that they contrast with perceived ancient aristocratic values. Some elements pursue modern Paganism. Although it agrees with the Christian Right's conservative stance on issues like abortion and same-sex marriage, white evangelical leaders of the Southern Baptist Church have angered the alt-right by expressing support for refugees entering the U.S., calling for measures to help undocumented migrants gain legal status, and urging members not to display the Confederate Battle Flag. Despite this, alt-right hostility to Christianity has waned over time, with many alt-right commentators identifying as Christian while rejecting mainstream Christian politics and most mainstream Christian religious leaders, especially Pope Francis.

Several press sources have linked the alt-right to Islamophobia, and Wendling stated that alt-rightists view Islam as a fundamental threat to Western society. Hawley expressed the view that "ironically, people on the Alt-Right are less Islamophobic than many mainstream conservatives". He observed that many U.S. conservatives criticized Muslim migration to the United States because they regarded Islam as a threat to liberty; the alt-right has made little use of this argument. For them, migration from Islamic-majority countries is undesirable not because the migrants are Muslims, but because most of them are non-white; it is equally opposed to non-white migrants who are Christian or non-religious.

Structure

- *According to Hawley, it was the alt-right's use of trolling which put it "into the national conversation".*
- *The alt-right is not an organized movement, and has no formal institutions or leading elite.*
- *According to Hawley, the alt-right was "a disorganized mob that broadly shares a number of goals and beliefs".*

According to Hawley, the alt-right was "a disorganized mob that broadly shares a number of goals and beliefs".
The alt-right is not an organized movement, and has no formal institutions or leading elite. It is a predominantly online phenomenon, lacking print newspapers and little radio or television presence. It had no think tanks that influenced government policy and could not command the open allegiance of any major politicians or mainstream pundits. Unlike many counter-cultural movements, it lacked soft power in the form of original bands, songs, films, and other cultural artifacts, of which it produced very few. According to Hawley, it was the movement's success in using the Internet that allowed it "to punch above its weight in the political arena".

The alt-right made use of a large number of blogs, podcasts, forums, and webzines in which it discussed far-right political and cultural ideas.
The use of the Internet by the far-right was not pioneered by the alt-right; the white supremacist web forum Stormfront had for instance been active since 1996. Where the alt-right differed was in its members willingness to leave far-right websites and engage in trolling on other parts of the Internet, such as the comments sections of major news websites, YouTube, and Twitter.
According to Hawley, it was the alt-right's use of trolling which put it "into the national conversation".

The movement's online structure had strengths in that it allowed members to say things anonymously online that they would not be willing to say on the street or in another public place. The lack of any formal organisation also meant that nobody could be kicked out of the alt-right.

As the alt-right developed, a number of formal, real world events were held, particularly through the National Policy Institute. Members of the alt-right have also attended events organised by an older far-right white nationalist group, American Renaissance.
These events have gained a more limited audience than the alt-right's online activities. This may be because operating online allows members of the alt-right to operate anonymously, while to attend events they must often expose themselves to journalists and protesters, thus making it more likely that their views will become publicly known.
U.S. alt-rightists have also sought to build links with other far-right and white nationalist groups elsewhere in the world. Heimbach for instance has addressed meetings of the Golden Dawn in Greece and the National Democratic Party of Germany. Various U.S.-based alt-rightists used social media to encourage support for the Alternative for Germany party in that country's 2017 federal election.

Tactics

- *On alt-right blogs and message boards, members often discuss how they were "red-pilled" originally.*
- *The alt-right also make heavy use of imagery drawn from popular culture for its own purposes.*

Alt-rightists often make reference to freedom of speech when calling for their views to be heard in public discourse. A recurrent tactic of alt-rightists is to present themselves—as white men—as victims of oppression and prejudice; this subverts many leftist arguments about other social groupings being victims and is designed to infuriate leftist opponents.

The alt-right also make heavy use of imagery drawn from popular culture for its own purposes. For instance, the American singer Taylor Swift is often held up as an idealised example of "Aryan" beauty. When describing their own conversion to the movement, alt-rightists refer to themselves as having been "getting red pilled", a reference to a scene in the 1999 film The Matrix in which Neo, the protagonist, chooses to discover the truth behind reality by consuming a red pill. On alt-right blogs and message boards, members often discuss how they were "red-pilled" originally. Alt-rightists have also adopted milk as a symbol of their views; various members have used the words "Heil Milk" in their online posts while Spencer included an emoji of a glass of milk on his Twitter profile along with the statement that he was "very tolerant... lactose tolerant!" The animal studies scholar Vasile Stănescu suggested that this notion drew upon the 19th century pseudoscientific idea that Northern Europeans had become biologically superior to many other human populations because they consumed high quantities of milk and meat products.

Use of humor and irony

- *The alt-right makes strong use of humor and irony in its rhetoric.*
- *Members of the alt-right sometimes made fun of the earnestness and seriousness of earlier white nationalists such as William Pierce.*

- *Such incidents reflected the alt-right's willingness to lie to advance their interests.*
- *The alt-right presented an image which was much less threatening than that of earlier white nationalist groups, and thus was able to attract people who would be willing to visit alt-right websites who would not have considered attending neo-Nazi or KKK events.*

The alt-right makes strong use of humor and irony in its rhetoric. As noted by Nagle, the alt-right's use of humor renders it difficult to tell "what political views were genuinely held and what were merely, as they used to say, for the lulz." The alt-right presented an image which was much less threatening than that of earlier white nationalist groups, and thus was able to attract people who would be willing to visit alt-right websites who would not have considered attending neo-Nazi or KKK events. As noted by Hawley, "whereas older white nationalists came across as bitter, reactionary, and antisocial, much of the Alt-Right comes across as youthful, light-hearted, and jovial—even as it says the most abhorrent things about racial and religious minorities." Members of the alt-right sometimes made fun of the earnestness and seriousness of earlier white nationalists such as William Pierce.

Another of the tactics employed online by alt-rightists is to parody their leftist opponents. One teenaged American alt-rightist for instance created a Twitter account for a fictional individual whom they described as an "LGBTQ+ pansexual nonbinary POC transwoman" who was a "Journalist for BLM. Always stayin woke [sic]". Alt-rightists also orchestrated pranks, again to cause alarm among opponents. For instance, during the 2016 presidential campaign alt-rightists presented claims that they were plotting to send representatives posing as officials to voting booths where they would suppress ethnic minority turnout. There was no such plot, but press sources like Politico picked up on the claims and presented them as fact. Such incidents reflected the alt-right's willingness to lie to advance their interests. This tendency toward trolling renders it difficult for journalists to learn more about the alt-right because those members they talked to were willing to deceive them for their amusement.

Nagle suggested that the alt-right's use of such tactics made it strongly transgressive and thus part of a tradition that she traced back to the work of the Marquis de Sade in the 18th century. She argued that it was with the alt-right that "the transgressive anti-moral style" reached "its final detachment from any egalitarian philosophy of the left or Christian morality of the right".

Use of memes

- *The alt-right also makes heavy use of memes.*
- *White people who were not part of the movement were called "normies".*
- *One of the most commonly used memes within the alt-right is Pepe the Frog.*
- *The alt-right employed various memes for individuals outside the movement.*
- *According to writer Gary Lachman, Pepe became "the unofficial mascot of the alt-right movement".*

The alt-right also makes heavy use of memes. The alt-right adopted much of its "image- and humor-based culture", including its heavy use of memes, from the online subcultures active at 4chan and later 8chan. These memes are then used to try and influence public opinion. The prevalence of such memes in alt-right circles has led some commentators to question whether the alt-right is a serious movement rather than just an alternative way to express traditionally conservative beliefs, with Chava Gourarie of the Columbia Journalism Review stating that provoking a media reaction to these memes is for some creators an end in itself. The political scientist Marc Hetherington sees these memes as an effort to legitimize racist views.

One of the most commonly used memes within the alt-right is Pepe the Frog. The Pepe meme was created by artist Matt Furie in 2005 and over following years spread through the Internet, being shared by pop stars like Nicki Minaj and Katy Perry. By 2014, Pepe was one of the most popular online memes, used among far-right trolls on 4chan and from there adopted by the alt-right. After Trump tweeted a meme of Pepe as himself, and his son Donald Trump Jr posted a Pepe meme shortly after, alt-righters and 4channers began spreading the meme with political intent. According to writer Gary Lachman, Pepe became "the unofficial mascot of the alt-right movement". The use of Pepe spawned the satirical worship of the Ancient Egyptian frog-headed deity Kek, as well as satirical nationalism of the nonexistent nation of "Kekistan".

Another alt-right mascot was Moon Man, an unofficial parody of McDonald's 1980s Mac Tonight character. Alt-rightists posted videos to YouTube in which Moon Man rapped to songs they had composed like "Black Lives Don't Matter" by a text-to-speech synthesizer.

The alt-right employed various memes for individuals outside the movement. White people who were not part of the movement were called "normies". An alt-right acronym was "WEIRD", for "Western, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic people". Mainstream conservatives were often denigrated as "cuckservatives", a portmanteau of "cuckold" and "conservative". The term "cuckold" pertains to a man with an unfaithful wife or a man who is (consciously or not) raising another man's child; the alt-right saw this as analogous to the role of the U.S. conservative movement in assisting non-whites in the U.S. The term "cuck" had also been popularized in reference to a genre of pornography in which men watch their wives or girlfriends have sex with another man, usually one who is black. Various terms were also used for leftists. Those who expressed progressive views, particularly online, were characterised as "social justice warriors" (SJWs). Individuals who expressed leftist opinions on Tumblr—and who alt-rightists often stereotyped as fat, ugly feminists—were called "Tumblrinas". The term "snowflake", short for "special snowflake", was used as a pejorative for such individuals, and in reference to leftist uses of "trigger warnings", alt-rightists expressed a desire to "trigger" leftists by upsetting them. Leftists who professed victim status while harassing or bullying others were labelled "crybullies", while leftists who were perceived to be stupid were labelled "libtards", a neologism of "liberal" and "retard".

When referring to African-Americans, alt-rightists regularly employed the meme "dindu nuffin"—a bastardization of "didn't do nothing"—in reference to claims of innocence by arrested African-Americans. On this basis, alt-rightists referred to black people as "dindus". Events involving black people were called "chimpouts", rhetorically linking them with chimpanzees. Alt-rightists also used memes to ironically support the Black Egyptian hypothesis, often using stereotypical African-American vernacular such as "We wuz kangz n shieet" ("We was kings and shit"). Refugees were often referred to as "rapefugees", a reference to incidents like the 2015–16 New Year's Eve sexual assaults in Germany in which non-white refugees were reported to have sexually assaulted white women.
Another meme the alt-right employed was to place triple parentheses around Jewish names; this started at The Right Stuff as part of an attempt to raise awareness of the presence of Jewish Americans in the media and academia. One alt-rightist created a Google Chrome plug in that would highlight Jewish names online. Homosexuals and whites who socialised with people of colour were often labelled "degenerates".

Alt-rightists often utilised older white nationalist slogans, such as the Fourteen Words: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children", that "Anti-racist is a code for anti-white", and that "Diversity is a code word for white genocide". From the latter, alt-rightists produced the hashtag reduction "#WhiteGenocide" for use on Twitter, highway billboards, and flyers. Also used was the slogan "It's OK to be white" as a way of expressing a supposed reverse racism towards white people by minorities. The use of "Deus Vult!" and various other crusader iconography was employed to express Islamophobic sentiment. Also apparent were "helicopter ride" memes, which endorse documented cases of leftists being dropped from helicopters by Chilean and Argentine juntas. Similarly the term "Right-Wing Death Squad" (usually abbreviated as RWDS) also callbacks to the "helicopter ride" meme and to refer to far-right, fascist death squads.
Additional online features of the alt-right included references to Fashwave, a neo-fascist subgenre of electronic music microgenre vaporwave.

Harassment

- *A wave of threats against Jewish Community Centers starting in 2017 were blamed on the alt-right in a January 2017 article by Slate's Elissa Strauss, who said members of the alt-right viewed them as "a practical joke".*
- *Wendling noted that campaigns of abuse for political ends were "a classic alt-right tactic", while Hawley called the alt-right "a subset of the larger Internet troll culture".*

Wendling noted that campaigns of abuse for political ends were "a classic alt-right tactic", while Hawley called the alt-right "a subset of the larger Internet troll culture". Those most regularly targeted were Jewish journalists, mainstream conservative journalists, and celebrities who publicly criticized Trump. Such harassment was usually spontaneous rather than pre-planned, but in various cases many alt-right piled on once the harassment had begun. The conservative journalist David A. French—who is white—received much abuse referencing his white wife and adopted black daughter after criticizing Trump and the alt-

right. Alt-right trolls sent him images of his daughter in a gas chamber, "with a smiling Trump in a Nazi uniform preparing to press a button and kill her", and repeatedly claimed that he liked to watch his wife have sex with "black bucks".

The Daily Stormer for instance targeted the British Member of Parliament (MP) Luciana Berger, who is Jewish, by encouraging its followers to send her photoshopped images in which a yellow star appeared on her head; the hashtag "Hitlerwasright" also featured on the images. Anglin termed this program of harassment "Operation: Filthy Jew Bitch". One UK-based alt-rightist was arrested and convicted for his involvement in the campaign. In another instance, Anglin commented on the June 2016 murder of the British MP Jo Cox by a far-right activist by saying that "Jo Cox was evil and she deserved to die. Her death was not a tragedy, it was justice." While celebrating violence, The Daily Stormer is cautious to remain on the legal side of U.S. incitement laws.

In December 2016, the artist Arrington de Dionyso, whose murals are frequently displayed at the Comet Ping Pong pizzeria, described the alt-right's on-line campaign of harassment against him. He averred of the attacks in general: "I think it's a very deliberate assault, which will eventually be a coordinated assault on all forms of free expression". The Pizzagate conspiracy theory which inspired said harassment has drawn comparisons with the Gamergate controversy. A wave of threats against Jewish Community Centers starting in 2017 were blamed on the alt-right in a January 2017 article by Slate's Elissa Strauss, who said members of the alt-right viewed them as "a practical joke".

Demographics

- *The alt-right ideologue Greg Johnson suggested that the alt-right was drawing in better educated people than previous white nationalist movements because the career prospects for college-educated European Americans had declined by the late 2000s.*
- *The beliefs that make the alt-right perceptible as a movement "are in their essence not matters of substance but of style" and the alt-right's tone may just be concealing "a more familiar politics".*

The anonymized and decentralized nature of the alt-right makes it difficult to determine how many individuals are involved in it or the demographic attributes of this membership. The movement's members are concentrated in the United States, but with participants present in other Anglophone countries like Canada, Britain, and Australia, as well as in parts of continental Europe. The movement is majority male, although Hawley suggested that about 20% of its support might be female.

From the nature of the online discourse as well as the attendees of events organized by NPI and American Renaissance, Hawley believed that the majority of alt-right participants are younger on average than the participants of most previous American far-right groups. Spencer suggested that "if we were to make a composite image of the Alt-Right, I would probably say someone who is thirty years old, who is a tech professional, who is an atheist, and who lives on one of the coasts." Wendling however suggested that "the alt-right's self-

image of themselves as a force made up of ranks of hipsterish, erudite well-educated men is misleading". In contrast to the movement's self-presentation as "a cool posse of young intelligent kids", through his research he found that many of those active on alt-right forums were middle-aged men from working-class backgrounds.

On interviewing young members of the alt-right, Hawley noted that many articulated the common theme, stating that they embraced far-right politics in response to the growing racial polarisation of the Obama era, in particular the public debates around the shootings of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement. Hawley suggested that many of these young people were willing to embrace the idea of dismantling the United States in favour of a new, white ethno-state because they had grown up in the U.S. during the post-civil rights era. In contrast, he thought, older white nationalists were keener to retain links to patriotic American imagery because they nostalgically recalled a period of U.S. history when segregation and overt white dominance were a part of life and believed that this system could be reinstated.

Wendling believed that a large portion of the alt-right were university students or recent graduates, many bearing a particular grudge against political correctness. The alt-right ideologue Greg Johnson suggested that the alt-right was drawing in better educated people than previous white nationalist movements because the career prospects for college-educated European Americans had declined by the late 2000s. Whereas a college degree was previously perceived as a guaranteed ticket to a middle-class lifestyle, he noted that this was no longer the case and that many college and university educated people felt resentful and, due to unemployment or underemployment, had growing amounts of time on their hands which they could spend on the Internet.

Yiannopoulos claimed that some "young rebels" are drawn to the alt-right not for deeply political reasons, but "because it promises fun, transgression, and a challenge to social norms". According to The New Yorker, "testing the strength of the speech taboos that revolve around conventional politics-of what can be said, and how directly" is a major component of alt-right identity. The beliefs that make the alt-right perceptible as a movement "are in their essence not matters of substance but of style" and the alt-right's tone may just be concealing "a more familiar politics".

A research study of 447 self-identified alt-right members found higher levels of dark triad traits compared to the general population; and that members of the alt-right were more likely to express prejudice against black people and admit to engaging in aggressive behavior. Alt-right members also had significantly high levels of dehumanization, with the mean alt-right scores comparable to how the general public views the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. Alt-right members viewed Hillary Clinton, Muslims, feminists, Nigerians and journalists as the least well rated groups on the dehumanization scale while white people, men and Americans were rated the best.

Causal factors

- *Hawley concurred that American conservatism was "at least somewhat responsible for the rise of the Alt-Right" because some individuals within the conservative movement, such as Ann Coulter, had "effectively delegitimized complaints about hate speech and racism" as part of their attacks on political correctness in the years before the alt-right's appearance.*
- *Nagle articulated the view that should the alt-right grow to generate great violence, those on the right who helped to make the alt-right look attractive, such as Yiannopoulos, "will have to take responsibility for having played their role" in enabling its growth.*

The political scientist Philip W. Gray proposed several reasons as to why the alt-right emerged in the period in which it did. Some of these were linked to technological changes: an increasing focus on research into genetics, as reflected by the popularization of the Human Genome Project and the growth of private genetic testing services, helped to foreground the idea that genetics has a determining effect on human behaviour, a notion that the alt-right could politicize. Rapid changes in telecommunications and the emergence of new media since the 1990s meant that the conservative movement was unable to self-police its ideological borders as successfully as it had during the Cold War, allowing far-right voices to gain an increasing audience. The growing distance of the Second World War may also have been a factor, with pride in the U.S. victory over Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy providing less of a barrier to the American far-right than it had when there were still large numbers of people who remembered the conflict.

The growing racial and social agitation within U.S. society was also a likely contributing factor, in particular the more militant activities of those whom alt-rightists labelled "social justice warriors". The Black Lives Matter movement, race riots in Baltimore and Ferguson, the shooting of police officers in Dallas and Baton Rouge, the harassment of Trump supporters, and the shouting down of speakers at universities were all, Gray argued, contributing factors. He thought that the popularization of concepts from the "intersectional Left" such as white privilege, male privilege, and mansplaining, as well as the increasing use of the terms "masculinity" and "whiteness" in explicitly negative ways, also contributed to the alt-right's growth. Gray argued that it was the American left's increasing use of identity politics as the basis of its mobilization that "helped open space for increased popularity of an identity-based politics from the Right", and that the "intersectional Left's" vilification of whiteness as a source of oppression created the atmosphere for a far-right response exulting whiteness as something positive.

Nagle suggested that "the hysterical liberal call-out" culture of the 2010s, in which "everyone from saccharine pop stars to Justin Trudeau [was called] a 'white supremacist' and everyone who wasn't With Her a sexist" made it more difficult for people to recognize when a far-right movement really emerged online; she compared the situation with the tale of The Boy Who Cried Wolf. Disagreeing with Nagle's view that the alt-right was primarily a "response to the stupidity of marginal Internet liberalism", the anti-fascist reporter Jay Firestone—who had spent three months undercover in New York's alt-right community—

instead argued that it was a "response to decades of decline in standards of living for working people, amid the proliferation of unemployment and meaningless, dead-end jobs."

The scholar of American studies Annie Kelly argued that the alt-right was "both inspired and defined by a discourse of anxiety about traditional white masculinity", a discourse which was "dominant in much of the political and cultural mainstream". In her view, much of the "groundwork" for this discourse was set forth by the conservative movement in the years following the September 11 attacks in 2001. Hawley concurred that American conservatism was "at least somewhat responsible for the rise of the Alt-Right" because some individuals within the conservative movement, such as Ann Coulter, had "effectively delegitimized complaints about hate speech and racism" as part of their attacks on political correctness in the years before the alt-right's appearance. This is something acknowledged by some conservatives, like columnist Matt K. Lewis. Nagle articulated the view that should the alt-right grow to generate great violence, those on the right who helped to make the alt-right look attractive, such as Yiannopoulos, "will have to take responsibility for having played their role" in enabling its growth.

Links to violence and terrorism

- *In 2017, Hawley noted that the alt-right was not a violent movement, but that this could potentially change.*
- *The alt-right movement has been considered by some political researchers a terrorist movement and the process of alt-right radicalization has been compared to Islamic terrorism by political scientists and leaders.*

In 2017, Hawley noted that the alt-right was not a violent movement, but that this could potentially change. From their analysis of online discourse, Phillips and Yi concluded that "rather than violence, most Alt-Right members focus on discussing and peacefully advocating their values". They added that presenting the alt-right as a violent, revolutionary movement, or equating all alt-rightists with the 1488 scene, was "an intellectual failure akin to treating all Muslims or black nationalists as radicals and terrorists", also noting that it served as a "rhetorical tactic" for progressives.

Conversely, Wending noted that there were individuals on the extreme end of the alt-right willing to use violence. He stated that "the culture of the alt-right is breeding its own brand of terrorists: socially isolated young men who are willing to kill." The alt-right movement has been considered by some political researchers a terrorist movement and the process of alt-right radicalization has been compared to Islamic terrorism by political scientists and leaders. A paper on the subject stated that it clearly fell under an extremist movement, saying that "alt-right adherents also expressed hostility that could be considered extremist: they were quite willing to blatantly dehumanize both religious/national outgroups and political opposition groups".

In February 2018, the Southern Poverty Law Center assembled a list of 13 violent incidents between 2014 and 2018 perpetrated by alt-right influenced people, in which 43 people died

and 67 people were injured. The perpetrators of these events were all white men between the ages of 17 and 37, with an average age of just over 25 years old (only three of them were over 30). All but one was American, the other was Canadian.
Dylann Roof spent much time reading alt-right websites before carrying out the 2015 Charleston church shooting, however he took greater interest in older white nationalist writers and groups, like the Council of Conservative Citizens and the Northwest Front.
In December 2017, the 21-year old William Edward Atchison shot dead two students at Aztec High School in Aztec, New Mexico before killing himself. Atchison's online activity had included posting pro-Hitler and pro-Trump thoughts on alt-right websites like The Daily Stormer under such usernames as "Future Mass Shooter" and "Adam Lanza" and joking about school shootings, in particular the Columbine High School massacre. An alt-righter named Taylor Wilson who had attended the Unite the Right Rally was charged with attempting a terror attack on an Amtrak train in October 2017. It was reported that he held a business card from the American-based neo-Nazi political party National Socialist Movement.
In October 2018, Robert Bowers opened fire on a synagogue in Pittsburgh, killing 11 and injuring 6. He was a member of a fringe social network called Gab, where he posted a message indicating an immediate intent to harm just prior to the shooting; Bowers had a history of extreme antisemitic postings on Gab. The website is a favorite of alt-right users who are banned or suspended from other social networks.

Notable incidents

Antipodean Resistance

- *Antipodean Resistance is a neo-Nazi, fascist and alt-right group in Australia.*
- *Counter-terrorism experts have suggested that Australian authorities should focus more on alt-right extremists such as Antipodean Resistance.*

Antipodean Resistance is a neo-Nazi, fascist and alt-right group in Australia. The group, which makes use of Nazi symbols such as the swastika and the Nazi salute, has explicitly called for the legalisation of the murder of Jews. Counter-terrorism experts have suggested that Australian authorities should focus more on alt-right extremists such as Antipodean Resistance. Anne Aly, the Labor MP, has suggested that the group may turn to terrorism, stating: "For a terrorist attack to succeed, it really only takes one person". Aly also called for the group to be banned: "I would like to see some of these groups proscribed ... as terrorist and violent organisations". It has been reported that ASIO, the Australian national security organisation, is monitoring the group whom they suggest are "willing to use violence to further their own interests".

Atomwaffen Division

- *In May 2017, Arthurs allegedly killed two of his roommates and fellow Atomwaffen Division members in retaliation for ridiculing his conversion.*
- *The group is part of the alt-right, but is considered extreme even within that movement.*
- *Since 2017, the organization has been linked to five killings.*

The Atomwaffen Division (Atomwaffen meaning "atomic weapons" in German) is a neo-Nazi terrorist organization based in the United States. Founded in 2013 on the now defunct neo-fascist forum Iron March, the group's main base of operations is in Florida, but has members in other states such as Texas and Montana. The group is part of the alt-right, but is considered extreme even within that movement. It encourages members to burn the United States flag and the Constitution, and to attack the U.S. government and minorities (especially Jews). The group, whose members are mostly young white males, has been active on university campuses recruitment postering. The San Antonio, Texas, chapter is listed as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Atomwaffen has engaged in plans to cripple public water systems and destroy parts of the American electric grid. Atomwaffen has also been accused of plans to blow up nuclear plants to cause meltdowns of American nuclear energy sites. The organization aims for a violent overthrow of the United States government by use of terrorism and guerrilla warfare tactics. Since 2017, the organization has been linked to five killings.

The leader of Atomwaffen Division, Brandon Russell, is alleged to have described Omar Mateen, who pledged allegiance to ISIS and perpetrated the 2016 Orlando nightclub shooting, as "a hero". A member of Atomwaffen Division, Stephen Billingsley, was photographed at a vigil in San Antonio, Texas for the victims of the Orlando shooting with a skull mask and a sign saying "God Hates Fags".

One 18-year-old member, Devon Arthurs, converted to Islam and described himself as a "Salafist National Socialist". In May 2017, Arthurs allegedly killed two of his roommates and fellow Atomwaffen Division members in retaliation for ridiculing his conversion. Arthurs was arrested following a hostage situation during which he told police he shot 22-year-old Jeremy Himmelman and 18-year-old Andrew Oneschuk earlier that day.

After Arthurs' arrest, his third roommate and fellow Atomwaffen Division member, a 21-year-old, Brandon Russell, was arrested by the FBI and Tampa Police Department, who found in Russell's garage an explosive compound known as hexamethylene triperoxide diamine which has been used by other groups in improvised explosive devices such as the 2016 New York and New Jersey bombings. The police bomb experts were drawn to Russell's bedroom due to the presence of thorium and americium, radioactive substances. Russell, a former student of the University of South Florida and a Florida National Guardsman, had a framed photograph in his bedroom of Timothy McVeigh, the perpetrator of the Oklahoma City bombing.

Samuel Woodward

- *In January 2018, Samuel Woodward was charged in Orange County, California with killing Blaze Bernstein, an openly gay Jewish college student who went missing earlier in the month while visiting his family.*
- *The new logs suggest there are around 20 Atomwaffen cells across the U.S., that some members have taken part in weapons training, and show members praising Timothy McVeigh, responsible for the Oklahoma City bombing, Charleston church shooter Dylann Roof, and Norwegian mass-murderer and white supremacist Anders Breivik.*

In January 2018, Samuel Woodward was charged in Orange County, California with killing Blaze Bernstein, an openly gay Jewish college student who went missing earlier in the month while visiting his family. Woodward is an avowed neo-Nazi and a member of the group who had attended Atomwaffen Division events and training camps, according to ProPublica. According to chat logs subsequently published by ProPublica, one member wrote of the killing "I love this" and another praised Woodward as a "one man gay Jew wrecking crew". The new logs suggest there are around 20 Atomwaffen cells across the U.S., that some members have taken part in weapons training, and show members praising Timothy McVeigh, responsible for the Oklahoma City bombing, Charleston church shooter Dylann Roof, and Norwegian mass-murderer and white supremacist Anders Breivik. Bernstein's was the fifth killing tied to the Atomwaffen group.

Rise Above Movement

- *There have been several documented episodes of violence by the Rise Above Movement, including beatings dispensed by member Ben Daley at the Unite the Right rally.*
- *The group, which portrays itself as a defense force for Western civilization, has been described as an alt-right street-fighting club and many of its members have criminal records.*

The group, based in Southern California, claims more than 50 members and a singular purpose, namely the "physically attacking its ideological foes". The group, which portrays itself as a defense force for Western civilization, has been described as an alt-right street-fighting club and many of its members have criminal records. There have been several documented episodes of violence by the Rise Above Movement, including beatings dispensed by member Ben Daley at the Unite the Right rally.

Unite the Right rally

- *Additionally, other acts of domestic violence committed at the Unite the Right rally were an African-American man named DeAndre Harris assaulted by white supremacist members and a Klansman named Richard W. Preston (an Imperial Wizard for the Maryland-based Confederate White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan) shooting a gun towards counterprotestors including Corey A.*

- *In January 2018, a court hearing was held in which November 26, 2018, was set as the date for Fields' trial to begin.*

After the aborted rally at around 1:45 p.m., a man drove his car into a crowd of counter protesters, hitting several and slamming into a stopped sedan, which hit a stopped minivan that was in front of it. The impact of the crash pushed the sedan and the minivan further into the crowd. One person was killed and 19 others were injured in what police have called a deliberate attack. The man then reversed the car through the crowd and fled the scene.

The ramming occurred at a pedestrian mall at Water and Fourth streets, about four blocks away from Emancipation Park (38°01′46.17″N 78°28′46.29″W / 38.0294917°N 78.4795250°W / 38.0294917; -78.4795250). Heather D. Heyer, a 32-year-old paralegal from Charlottesville, was fatally injured in the attack and pronounced dead at the University of Virginia's University Hospital. Video footage recorded at the scene showed a gray 2010 Dodge Challenger accelerating towards crowds on a pedestrian mall, hitting people and sending them airborne, then reversing at high speed, hitting more people. The moment when the car was driven into the crowd was captured on video by bystanders and in aerial video footage taken by a drone. A photographer present at the scene said the car "plowed into a sedan and then into a minivan. Bodies flew. People were terrified and screaming". According to The Guardian, Bystanders said it was "definitely a violent attack". Of the 19 injured survivors, the University of Virginia Medical Center reported that five were initially in critical condition. By the afternoon of August 14, ten patients had been discharged from the hospital and the nine remaining patients were in good condition.

Shortly after the collision, James Alex Fields Jr., a 20-year-old from Ohio who reportedly had expressed sympathy for Nazi Germany during his time as a student at Cooper High School in Union, Kentucky, was arrested.

Fields had been photographed taking part in the rally, holding a shield emblazoned with the logo of Vanguard America, a neo-Nazi, antisemitic, white supremacist organization. Vanguard America's leaders later stated he was not a member and that "[t]he shields seen do not denote membership" as they were "freely handed out to anyone in attendance". On August 14, Fields was again denied bail. He is being held at the Albemarle-Charlottesville County Regional Jail.

National Security Adviser H. R. McMaster and several Senators described the alleged ramming attack as an act of domestic terrorism as did various commentators. Late on the night of August 12, Attorney General Jeff Sessions said the Department of Justice would open a civil rights investigation into the incident, with federal investigators investigating whether the suspect "crossed state lines with the intent to commit violence". Later, Sessions said the ramming meets the definition of "domestic terrorism" and that it was "an unacceptable, evil attack".

Fields was charged with second-degree murder, three counts of malicious wounding and failure to stop following an accident resulting in death and held without bail. On August 18,

Fields was charged with three additional counts of aggravated malicious wounding and two additional counts of malicious wounding. The murder charge was changed to first-degree murder on December 14.

Additionally, other acts of domestic violence committed at the Unite the Right rally were an African-American man named DeAndre Harris assaulted by white supremacist members and a Klansman named Richard W. Preston (an Imperial Wizard for the Maryland-based Confederate White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan) shooting a gun towards counterprotestors including Corey A. Long (who was black). In January 2018, a court hearing was held in which November 26, 2018, was set as the date for Fields' trial to begin. Trial is anticipated to take three weeks.

During the rally, Vasillios Pistolis, a U.S. Marine and a member of the terrorist group Atomwaffen Division, was recorded chanting "White Lives Matter" and "You will not replace us!" with his fellow torch-bearing protestors on the first day. On the second day he beat up a transgender woman named Emily Gorcenski with a modified version of the Confederate flag which incorporated the neo-Nazi Schwarze Sonne (Black Sun) symbol in the center, even bragging about the beating in private chats in which he said "So to sum it up what I did Friday, dropped kicked that tranny that made video crying", "Today cracked 3 skulls open with virtually no damage to myself", and "I drop kicked Emily gorcenski". Pistolis had promoted the Unite the Right rally on Twitter under the account of @Gopnik_Gestapo, and posted an image of a car running over a left-winger with the caption "Good Night, Left Side". He also mocked the death of Heather Heyer calling her "a fat cunt who died of a heart attack. She wasn't even in the way of the car". Although Pistolis denied that he attended the rally or committed an act of violence, he was investigated by the Marine Corps and was court-martialed in June 2018 for disobeying orders and for making false statements.

Reactions

- *Lyons stated that the alt-right "helped revitalize White nationalist and male supremacist politics in the United States", while according to Niewert, the alt-right gave white nationalism "a fresh new life, rewired for the twenty-first century".*
- *In 2018, the documentary film Alt-Right: Age of Rage was released.*

The alt-right presented "a unique set of challenges" to journalists, progressives, and conservatives.
The political scientist George Hawley suggested that the alt-right may pose a greater threat to progressivism than the mainstream conservative movement. Hawley was of the view that, because of its use of novel tactics not previously used by the far-right, "the Alt-Right represents something genuinely new on the American political scene". Lyons stated that the alt-right "helped revitalize White nationalist and male supremacist politics in the United States", while according to Niewert, the alt-right gave white nationalism "a fresh new life, rewired for the twenty-first century". Kelly noted that it was "important not to overstate the numbers of the alt-right, nor their power as a voting bloc", but that their success could be

measured "in terms of their ever-increasing dissemination of extreme right-wing ideals and their ability to project an updated rhetoric of anti-left antagonism into the Overton window of acceptable political discourse."

A poll by ABC News and The Washington Post found that 10% of respondents supported the alt-right, to 50% who opposed it. An Ipsos and Reuters poll found 6% of respondents supported the movement. Such polls indicate that while millions of Americans are supportive of the alt-right's message, they remain a clear minority. Gray suggested that the alt-right may have benefited from the manner in which—in the years building up to its appearance—progressives often attacked the Tea Party movement and other right-wingers by accusing them of racism. He suggested that this left many right-wingers with the impression that they would be accused of racism "regardless of how near or far they are from the centre" and that this made them more willing to listen to the alt-right's message.

In 2018, the documentary film Alt-Right: Age of Rage was released. Directed by Adam Bhala Lough, it included interviews with Spencer and Taylor as well as with anti-fascist activists devoted to combatting the alt-right.

Opposition to the alt-right

- *It has however been suggested that such censorship could backfire, as it would play into the alt-right narrative that those campaigning for white interests were being marginalized by the establishment, thus aiding the movement's recruitment.*
- *From 2016 onward, some anti-fascist opponents of the alt-right also resorted to physical confrontation and violence against the movement.*
- *The extension changes the term "alt-right" on webpages to "white supremacy".*
- *Opponents of the alt-right have not reached a consensus on how to deal with it.*

Opponents of the alt-right have not reached a consensus on how to deal with it. Some opponents emphasized "calling out" tactics, labelling the alt-right with terms like "racist", "sexist", "homophobic", and "white supremacist" in the belief that doing so would scare people away from it. Many commentators urged journalists not to refer to the alt-right by its chosen name, but rather with terms like "neo-Nazi". There was much discussion within U.S. public discourse as to how to avoid the "normalization" of the alt-right. The activist group Stop Normalizing, which opposes the normalization of terms like alt-right, developed the "Stop Normalizing Alt Right" Chrome extension. The extension went viral shortly after the release of Stop Normalizing's website. The extension changes the term "alt-right" on webpages to "white supremacy". The extension and group were founded by a New York-based advertising and media professional under the pseudonym George Zola.

Some on the political right, including Yiannopoulos, suggest that the alt-right's appeal would be diffused if society gave in to many of its less extreme demands, including curbing political correctness and ending mass immigration. Yiannopoulos added that, as part of such an approach, the left should cease holding different social groups to different standards of behavior. He noted that if the left wanted to continue using identity politics as the basis of

much of its mobilization, it would have to accept white identity politics as a permanent fixture of the political landscape. Similarly, in highlighting the commonalities between alt-right and "left-identitarian" forms of identity politics, Gray suggested the alt-right's presence might encourage "the intersectional Left and its allies" to increasingly critique the theoretical basis on which their own identity politics is built. Other commentators, like the conservative David Frum, have suggested that if issues like immigration policy were discussed more openly in public discourse, then the alt-right would no longer be able to monopolize them.

Some opponents sought to undermine the alt-right's stereotype of leftists as being devoid of humor and joy by using its own tactics of humor and irony against it. For instance, when alt-rightists became angry or upset, some of their opponents described them as "snowflakes" who were being "triggered". Anti-fascist activists also adopted the alt-right's use of pranks; on several occasions they publicized events in which they were purportedly meeting to destroy Confederate monuments or gravestones. Alt-rightists mobilized to publicly defend these sites, only to find that no such anti-fascist event was happening at all. Within feminist circles, the alt-right's desired future was repeatedly compared to the Republic of Gilead, the fictional dystopia in Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale (1985) and its 2017 television adaptation.

Various opponents have also employed doxing, publicly revealing the identities and addresses of alt-rightists, many of whom had previously acted anonymously. This tactic discourages individuals from involving themselves in alt-right activities to begin with, as they fear that should they be outed as alt-rightists they might face repercussions such as job loss, social ostracization, or violence. From 2016 onward, some anti-fascist opponents of the alt-right also resorted to physical confrontation and violence against the movement. On Trump's inauguration day for example, a masked anti-fascist punched Spencer in the face when he was talking to reporters; the footage was widely shared online. Hawley noted that this tactic could be counter-productive to the anti-alt-right case, as it reinforces the narrative that alt-rightists peacefully engaging in their constitutionally-protected right to free speech were being victimized.

Other commentators have called for more vigorous policing of the web by governments and companies to deal with the alt-right. If denied access to mainstream social media outlets, the alt-right would be restricted to far-right online venues like Stormfront, where it would be isolated and ignored from those not already committed to its cause. Many in the alt-right concur that denying it access to social media would have a devastating effect on its ability to proselytize. It has however been suggested that such censorship could backfire, as it would play into the alt-right narrative that those campaigning for white interests were being marginalized by the establishment, thus aiding the movement's recruitment. Suppressing the alt-right in this manner would also set a precedent which could be repeated for other groups in future, including leftist ones. Phillips and Yi argued that such leftist attempts to prevent alt-right speech reflected an "authoritarian shift" which was becoming "increasingly hegemonic" within the American Left and that endorsed the view that

"limiting or preventing the public speech of historically privileged groups (typically, whites, males) is acceptable until power relations are equalized."

"Alt-left"

- *Main commented on the alt-right by saying: "They don't think blacks and Jews should have equal rights.*
- *According to Mark Pitcavage, an analyst at the Anti-Defamation League, the term was invented to suggest a false equivalence between the alt-right and their opponents.*

After the murder of a counter-protester at the Unite the Right Rally, in a press conference Trump stated that there was "blame on both sides" for the violence, stating that some of the counter-protesters were part of the "very, very violent ... alt-left". Various experts pointed out that the neologism "alt-left" was neither created by nor been adopted by any members of the progressive left. The term "alt-left" has been criticized as a label that was not coined by the group it purports to describe, rather by its political opponents as a smear. The historian Timothy D. Snyder stated that "'alt-right' is a term ... meant to provide a fresh label that would sound more attractive than 'Nazi,' 'neo-Nazi,' 'white supremacist,' or 'white nationalist.' With 'alt-left' it's a different story. There is no group that labels itself that way". The scholar of public affairs Thomas J. Main commented on the alt-right by saying: "They don't think blacks and Jews should have equal rights. On the left, there is nothing analogous". According to Mark Pitcavage, an analyst at the Anti-Defamation League, the term was invented to suggest a false equivalence between the alt-right and their opponents. Since 2016, the term "alt-left" has also been used derisively to describe political views that lie within the far-left spectrum, as well as individuals perceived as adhering to those views, particularly within political discussions.

See also

- *New Right*
- *Angry white male*

Anarcho-capitalism

Angry white male

Blood and Soil

Neo-nationalism

Laissez-faire racism

New Right

Nipster, a subculture of German neo-Nazis who use a hipster image

Racism in the United States

Right-wing authoritarianism

Right-wing terrorism

Far-left politics, political views that lie at the opposite end of the political spectrum

Vigilantism

References

Informational notes

Citations

Sources

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