“I’m tired of being sh-t on for being white”

Collective identity construction in the Alt-Right movement

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines collective identity construction within the extreme right movement Alt-Right that gained public recognition during the 2016 US presidential campaign. Despite it being an increasingly stigmatized practice to openly articulate racist ideas in contemporary society, the Alt-Right movement managed to gain a following by doing just that. As collective identity funds collective action, a discourse analysis in line with Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s strand of discourse theory was conducted to understand what encourages and facilitates participation in the movement’s activities. The material consisted of articles connected to three different factions of the Alt-Right published online and the subsequent comments generated by these. The findings indicate that the collective identity constructed in the Alt-Right is white, masculine and heterosexual. This identity is constructed and reified through contrasting themselves against racialized and gendered Others. It is also reinforced by signs of intelligence, enlightenment, bravery and a sense of rebelliousness and fun linked to the collective identity. The Others are primarily constructed as the Jewish community, non-white groups, women and the LGBTQ community. The use of new information and communications technology facilitated the construction, in allowing participants to create virtual communities online where the collective identity was constructed and reified.

Key words: Extreme right, social movements, gender, discourse analysis, collective identity

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1 Introduction

During the US presidential campaign of 2016, Donald Trump was not the only one to emerge onto the scene. The Alternative Right movement (commonly known as the Alt-Right) was also introduced to a wider public. The sprawling movement that primarily operates online created headlines throughout the year and left many perplexed. They appropriated a meme of ‘Pepe the frog’ and ‘trolled’ political opponents, often in support of then-candidate Donald Trump. The Alt-Right is not only a movement supporting a presidential candidate though. It is an extreme right movement growing in intensity and exploiting the new platforms and means provided by the Internet to spread their messages of differences between people. I believe that the Alt-Right as a movement captures some of the changes in the political landscape currently occurring in different parts of the world, where the extreme right is gaining traction in both political and social life. This, along with their apparent ability to gather a wide array of supporters, caught my interest.

The Alt-Right is described as a loose movement, gathering various ideas connected to the extreme right (ADL, SPLC). The term Alt-Right is believed to have been coined by Richard Spencer (a self-proclaimed Alt-Righter by many considered a public face for the movement, who also launched the site AltRight.com in early 2017) as far back as 2008 (Lyons 2017: 4, SPLC). It was used to mark the perceived need for an alternative direction for the right in the US, in opposition to the one the conservative establishment was fostering (Lyons 2017: 4). There is no clear consensus on who the movement consists of. People often associated with the movement (besides Richard Spencer) are Andrew Anglin, creator of the neo-Nazi Daily Stormer website and Jared Taylor, editor of racist journal American Renaissance (SPLC), all promoting at times differing views of what the movement is. During the 2016 presidential campaign, the right-wing news site Breitbart

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1 There is no one consensual definition of what the extreme right encompasses (Ebata 1997: 12-13). Some argues it is everything to the right of the right, whilst some state that this view uses the concept too broadly (Berlet 2004: 20). As it is not decisively clear what type of movement the Alt-Right constitutes, the term ‘extreme right’ will be applied throughout as it is a wide encompassing concept allowing for different strands on research into similar groups and movements operating outside the political spectrum to be incorporated (Berlet 2004: 23).
and its contributors were often associated with the movement. Former editor Steve Bannon at one point even labeled Breitbart the platform for the Alt-Right (Amend & Morgan 2017). Breitbart have been accused of mainstreaming the movement’s ideas, whilst diminishing the racist sentiment often propagated (Lyons 2017: 16).

The movement have been described as believing that white identity is threatened by societal changes and promotes preserving a European-American identity and/or Western Civilisation at large (SPLC, ADL, Jackson 2016). Mainstream and established conservatism is rejected (ADL, SPLC, Cook 2016), as well as feminism and ideas deemed to stem from ‘political correctness’ (Ehrenfreud 2016). They are against the establishment and the media, especially established such, is perceived as untrustworthy. They believe in free speech and ‘the right to offend’, operates online and uses highly provocative language in their communication (Wendling 2016). The interaction of the movement primarily occurs on forums such as Reddit, 4chan and 8chan as well as through websites and social media (O’Brien 2016). The use of the Internet has facilitated mass communication, i.e. the ability to easily spread alternative news and views on issues, allowing movements to reach and interact with a greater audience (Brunsting & Postmes 2002: 293-294). It also facilitates the construction of a collective identity, as a virtual community can be built and maintained with few resources (Caini & Parenti 2013: 23), subsequently opening for new forms of collective action, such as organized campaigns conducted online (Brunsting & Postmes 2002: 300).

The Alt-Right incorporates a lot of contemporary Internet culture. Memes, defined as “(a) a group of digital items sharing common characteristics of content, form and/or stance; (b) that were created with awareness of each other; and (c) were circulated, imitated, and transformed via the internet by many users” (Phillips 2015: 22), are an important part of this. By creating and spreading memes throughout online communities a sense of unity is created. This as they allow participants within the collective to communicate through the memes, creating a language within the collective which outsiders do not understand (Phillips 2015: 22). As so, memes “compose a holistic system of meaning” (ibid). The Alt-Right are also known for their trolling (Grey Ellis 2017). Trolling refers to an online behaviour where individuals or collectives ‘troll’ different online spheres to generate ‘lulz’ (Phillips 2015: 24). Lulz refer to, simply put, the “amusement at other people’s distress” (Phillips 2015: 27) which can take various expressions. They are supposed to be received as humorous by the others in the community, creating a collective language similar to the effects of memes. The ‘jokes’ are often offensive and directed
towards groups or individuals (Phillips 2015: 25). Subsequently, even though it is often claimed by trolls that they are only ‘doing it for the lulz’ (i.e. engaging in highly provocative, abusive and offensive practice) and they do not mean any actual harm, the consequences for the victims are real (Phillips 2015: 29).

The presence and impact of the Alt-Right has been primarily noted online, not only in organized actions, e.g. around specific hashtags such as #BoycottStarWarsVII which started as a response to a black actor being cast in one of the lead roles of the Star Wars film released in 2015 (SPLC), but also in the spread of material associated with them. The movement started gaining public recognition during the 2016 presidential campaigns, when it was many times linked to President (then-candidate) Donald Trump (Wendling 2016). The media started paying even closer attention to the movement after Trump in July 2016 tweeted a meme of Hillary Clinton with what appeared to be the Star of David and the words “Most Corrupt Candidate Ever!” with a pile of money as the background. When commentators and critics pointed out that the meme could be perceived as anti-Semitic, the tweet was deleted and replaced with a similar image where the star was replaced with a red circle (Diamond 2016). It is believed that the meme originated from the forum /pol/ on 4chan which has been linked to Alt-Right supporters (O’Brien 2016).

The following month, Democratic Party presidential candidate Hillary Clinton publicly associated Trump with the Alt-Right during a speech made on her campaign trail. In it she described the Alt-Right as demonstrating: “[…] racist ideas, race-baiting ideas, anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant ideas, anti-woman – all key tenets making up the emerging racist ideology known as the ‘Alt-Right’” (Rappeport 2016²). Donald Trump’s re-tweet is one example of Alt-Right’s messages spreading into mainstream politics, Hillary Clinton’s denunciation of the meme ‘Pepe the frog’ is another (Chan 2016). ‘Pepe the frog’ is a cartoon character appropriated by the movement, who turned it increasingly racist and anti-Semitic. The meme has also been added to the Anti-Defamation League’s online database of hate symbols (ADL 2). The Alt-Right have also launched campaigns targeting specific people, resulting in organized harassment directed towards journalists and public figures (ADL 3, Lyons 2017).

² Quote from between 1.17-1.30 in embedded video
1.1 Aim and research question

Openly articulating racist ideas is an increasingly stigmatized practice in contemporary society (Blee & Yates 2015: 129). Despite this, the Alt-Right movement and its often explicitly racist ideas have been able to exercise influence and attract a following rarely connected to movements of the same character. As so, the research problem revolves around understanding how the Alt-Right as a movement encourages and facilitates participation among supporters and sympathizers. Previous research into social movements have highlighted the importance of collective identity in movements functioning as a way of generating commitment and a sense of cohesion, producing a foundation for collective action (Flesher Fominaya 2010: 395). Thus, the aim of this thesis is to advance the understanding of extreme right movements, such as the Alt-Right, and what motivates them by examining the collective identity within the movement. The question to be answered is thus:

- What collective identity is constructed within the Alt-Right movement?

As the Alt-Right is a new movement and systematic research is so yet to be conducted, this is considered a suitable research question to emanate from. It allows for an analysis into the collective identity as well as an examination of the conflict and grievances motivating it, as these are closely connected to issues of identity (ibid). This thesis adopts a social constructivist approach. With this foundation, certain assumptions follow. The social world (including knowledge, identity and social relations) is constructed in and through interaction. Within these constructions social patterns are preserved, and certain actions become permissible whilst other do not. As so, social constructions have social consequences (Jörgensen & Phillips 2000: 11-12). Adopting a stance in which the world is understood as socially constructed does not require a rejection of an existing reality. There is an independent existing reality ‘out there’, but it is given meaning and is rendered intelligible through discursive constructions (Torfing 2005: 18). The collective identity is so viewed as a social construct emerging through interaction between members, and it is believed that the identity will be constructed around racialised and gendered notions of the Other.
1.2 Relevance and contribution

Understanding movements such as the Alt-Right holds relevance on both an academic and a societal level. Extreme right movements often promote messages of intolerance and accentuates perceived differences between people. Reports show that white nationalist sentiments in the US appear to be growing, and the use of social media and social media activism is a contributing part in this (Berger 2016: 3). Social media allows for an alternative view of the world to be presented, which has been utilized by movements promoting these messages (Berger 2016: 20, 23). These activities online can have consequences in the real world, resulting in practices harmful to societal security. As so, it is of importance to understand what foundations movements rest on.

As collective identity is a key part of creating collective action, the research question presented above will be a contribution to understanding how foundation for action is constructed in extreme right movements. By working cumulative this thesis will contribute to research on social movements in general, as this strand of research has traditionally researched progressive movements rather than conservative such (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 761). It will also contribute to research on the extreme right particularly, by examining a new movement that has managed to exert influence in a short period of time (Esaisson et al., 2012: 31). Often, studies of the extreme right focus solely on racialised constructions and expressions. Feminist theorising has pointed out that these constructions contains a gendered aspect as well (Ferber et al. 2004). This thesis will therefore adopt a gender perspective, as to provide a more comprehensive analysis. Thus, the research problem holds potential to providing insights with prospects of contributing to advancing the understanding of these movements in both social and public life at large, as well as in academia, justifying the need for additional research (George & Bennet 2010: 109).

1.3 Research design

To conduct the research, a single case study with the Alt-Right movement serving as unit of analysis will be carried out (George & Bennet 2010: 71). A comparative analysis will be conducted, as there are different factions operating within the movement. In line with the
thesis’ foundation, it will not seek to find causal connections between collective identity and action. Rather, it will seek to understand what collective identity is discursively constructed within the movement and what actions are perceived as acceptable following this (Bergström & Boréus 2012: 398).
2 Theory and analytical framework

This section will present the theoretical foundation of the thesis and present the analytical framework. The analytical framework is built on previous research and will ground the subsequent analysis into collective identity construction.

2.1 Social movement theory

Social movements have been an area of academic interest throughout the last decade, but there is no one consensual definition of what a social movement is. Four main trends are regularly identified within social movement theorising. Mario Diani (1992), an often-quoted scholar within the field, attempted to identify commonalities between the trends and subsequently presented a conceptual definition which will be applied in this thesis. The trends establishing the conceptualisation are resource mobilisation theory, the political process approach, collective behaviour theory and new social movement theory.

Resource mobilisation theory was developed during the 1960-70s, and provided a perspective where movements were viewed as consisting of formal organisations which needed resources to function. The availability of resources thus explains why movements emerge and how they are sustained (Goodwin & Jasper 2009: 11). The focus is primarily on the organisational factors present in movements, but social movements themselves are defined as “a set of opinions and beliefs which represent preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society” (McCarthy & Zald 1977: 1217-18).

The political process approach understands movement’s emergence as a result of political and economic shifts which opens up a space for the movement to develop (Goodwin & Jasper 2009: 12). Movements are so often understood as a response of excluded interests attempting to gain access to established politics (Diani 1992: 5), and are thus defined as a “sustained series of interactions between power holders and persons...
successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, in the course of which those persons make publicly visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those demands with public demonstrations of support” (ibid).

Within the strand of collective behaviour theory, the emergent norm theory has had a substantial influence. This theory states that activists participating in movements often do so due to beliefs that current conditions are unjust. Subsequently, participants develop new perspectives fuelled by aroused indignation. Through this process of conflict a revised sense of justice is developed i.e. an emergent norm is established (Martin 2015: 20). Social movements are viewed as collective behaviour representing a looser organisational principle (Diani 1992: 4) and are defined as “a collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist change in the society or organisation of which it is part. As a collectivity a movement is a group with indefinite and shifting membership and with leadership whose position is determined more by informal response of adherents than by formal procedures for legitimising authority” (ibid).

New social movement theory differs from previous perspectives by adopting a post-structuralist approach in highlighting emotions, perception, identity, rhetoric and symbols as important aspects in understanding social movements (Goodwin & Jasper 2009: 12-13). Developed in Europe during the 1980s, it stemmed from observing that contemporary social movements marked a shift in emphasised issues. As so, new social movement theorists stated that these movements were engaging with post-material values related to lifestyle and identity politics, in contrast to previous movements primarily focusing on socioeconomic issues (Martin 2015: 5, della Porta & Diani 2006: 6-7). Alberto Melucci is an Italian scholar whose been influential within this strand3 (Buechler 1995: 443). He views social movements as containing three dimensions making them a particular type of collective occurrence, as quoted by Diani (1992): “[…] [it] is a form of collective action which includes solidarity… [it] is engaged in conflict, and thus in opposition to an adversary who lays claims on the same goods or values… [it] breaks the limits of compatibility of the system that it can tolerate without altering its structure” (Diani 1992: 6).

3 Other scholars often quoted as influential are Alain Touraine, Jürgen Habermas and Manuel Castells. See Buechler (1995) for further discussion.
Mario Diani proposes a synthesized conceptualisation of social movements as “networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political and/or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity” (Diani 1992: 3). As this conceptualization is broader, permitting the inclusion of newer social movements operating online whilst still containing the prominent themes underlining social movement research, it is deemed suitable and will so be used in this thesis.

2.1.1 Collective identity

There is no consensual definition of collective identity across the field. It has been regularly used by scholars analysing movements from perspectives emphasizing socio-psychological, emotional and cultural factors (as opposed to structural, rationalistic and goal-driven such), to understand and explain how commitment and cohesion between actors is generated and sustained over time (Flesher Fominaya 2010: 393-394, Jasper & McGarry 2015: 1-2, 6). Alberto Melucci have developed one of the most comprehensive and influential theories of collective identity. He proposed a perspective where collective identity was seen as a fluid process, i.e. as something constructed in and through interaction between participants (Saunders 2015: 89) rather than treating it as given from the onset (Flesher Fominaya 2010: 394). As this thesis adopts a social constructivist epistemological and ontological standpoint, this perspective of collective identity as a discursive process is deemed suitable and will subsequently be used.

Constructing a collective identity of ‘what we are’ as opposed to ‘what we are not’ is a key part of a social movement process, as the foundation for action stems from the collective identity shared between members. By sharing a common purpose and a shared commitment, actors are intimately connected to each other in a broader collective (Flesher Fominaya 2010: 395, Saunders 2015: 93, della Porta & Diani 2006: 21-22).
2.2 Analytical framework

Racial, religious and cultural supremacy are prominent defining components of right-wing extremist discourse. In constructing an identity these are often intertwined with each other, as well as encompassing a gendered aspect (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 771, Schmitz 2016: 201-202, Ferber 1998: 50). The discourse of collective identity is so understood to be constructive of subjects incorporating racial and gendered dimensions (Ferber 1998: 49, Ferber 2004: 17). Feminist theorising has highlighted the gendered structures of day-to-day life and builds upon the notion of gender as a social construction (Butler 1999, Ferber 2004: 10). Structures of gender operate in all spheres of society, between men and women as well as between men and men. The concept hegemonic masculinity, coined by R.W. Connell, refers to the current world order where certain men’s dominant position over women and other men is legitimised. As so, there are hierarchies operating where masculinity is provided meaning by being differentiated from other, ‘lesser’ masculinities and feminities. An idealized image of masculinity is subsequently provided by the differentiations. The attributes deemed ‘masculine’ are not fixed, but are rather dependent on context (Hutchings 2008: 392).

Intersectionality as a concept is used when referencing the interacting dimension of people’s social backgrounds, rather than treating them as “mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis” (Crenshaw 1989: 193), and it functions as an analytical foundation allowing a multifaceted analysis to be conducted, beneficial to use when researching the extreme right. As so, identities are treated as interconnected and by incorporating multiple dimensions of social differences and similarities, a more comprehensive analysis can be accomplished (Schmitz 2016: 201, Ferber 2004: 16). Regarding extreme right movements, an intersectional perspective is useful as research has showed how race and gender cannot simply be divided into two different categories separate from each other (Ferber 2004: 17).

Within extreme right organizations promoting white supremacy two themes have been prominently occurring: the revocation of white rights and the divinely approved supremacy and essential superiority of the white race compared to other races (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 761, Perry 2004: 77). Religion (particularly Christianity) has so played an important part in justifying and explaining a racist ideology and in constructing a collective identity (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 762). Religion has also been used in
establishing an impression of “historical continuity between a glorious Aryan past and the present” (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 772). The other theme of white victimization and the revocation of white rights have likewise been important in identity construction as well as in mobilizing support. By suggesting that whites are victims of oppression, unfairly vilified and becoming a persecuted and denigrated minority, by e.g. the advances made by minority groups, the LGBTQ community and women’s rights organisations, movements have presented whites as e.g. unable to explore and celebrate their own identity and culture (Meddugh & Kay 2009: 131, Wong et al. 2015: 45). The theme of victimization also includes a gendered character, as notions of oppression against men and the revocation of white rights often overlap (Ferber 2004: 6).

Grievances and their cause are so presented and used in the construction and maintenance of identity. The construction of identity relies heavily on being able to identify the Other and the negative impacts this Other presents to the white race and society (Wong et al. 2015: 45, Ebata 1997: 14). The in-group tend to be seen as subjected to unfair treatment, and the out-group as benefiting from this (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 31). The ability to identify a common enemy is so a key component in the extreme right’s identity construction (Ferber 2004: 8). Contemporary research has also highlighted the promise given by extreme right movements to empower the powerless as to cure modern problems as a key component of identity construction (ibid). Thus, extreme right movements are commonly opposed the changes of the last century. The changes are perceived as threatening the racial and gendered certainties that were ‘given’ before. The extreme right’s reaction is thus viewed as an attempt to rearticulate an identity of whiteness and masculinity to restore order and reclaim the privileges perceived as taken from them (Perry 2004: 76).

Identity within groups characterized as extreme right often revolves around ideas of nationalism, national identity, patriotism (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 765-766), separatism, racism, homophobia, misogyny, religious intolerance (Ebata 1997: 14), cultural definitions of race (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 261), anti-establishment critique, ‘traditional’ gender roles, heterosexuality (Berlet 2014: 25, 40) ethno-nationalism and socio-cultural authoritarianism (Caiani & Parenti 2013:31). These are reinforced by issues emphasised, which frequently consists of structural conspiracy against whites in existing practices, multi-culturalism and liberalism (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 768, 772), cultural and social degradation due to contemporary practices and a loss of tradition in
reference to e.g. progress for feminist movements (Ebata 1997: 14, Ferber & Kimmel 2004: 155).

Justifying stances taken are commonly done through invoking pseudo-academic and scientific claims regarding e.g. racial determinants of intelligence (Ferber 1998: 55). These movements also tend to reject ideas of democracy and the notion of the liberal democratic state (Ebata 1997: 31). The Others are often non-whites, and anti-Semitism is one key component of the extreme right’s identity construction. Not every right-wing extremist is anti-Semitic, but it is often a central component of a right-wing extremist discourse as it provides a common enemy stretching over nation borders (Ebata 1997: 16) in presenting Jews as “the unidentified enemy behind the state, behind the politicians, behind any position of power” (ibid).
3 Previous research

This section will outline previous research on the impact of online measures on collective identity in social movements and research on extreme right movements operating online.

3.1 Collective identity online

Previous research has highlighted the opportunities ICTs (information and communications technology) have brought about regarding mobilising structures, opportunity structures and framing processes (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 23). Right-wing groups in America (and elsewhere) have utilised the new means of ICTs to distribute their messages, reach a larger audience, communicate between groups and recruit new members (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 25-27). It has also enabled the processes of mobilisation, as the Internet provides a tool which is easily accessible with low-cost (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 28, Wong et al. 2015: 42).

The construction of collective identity is likewise enabled with the Internet, through the facilitation of exchanging resources and information (della Porta & Mosca 2005: 185), the creation of solidarity and shared objectives and through socialising actors as well as altering actors’ views on what behaviour is considered desirable and appropriate (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 27). As so, the virtual communities act as arenas for discussions about goals and motivations for participation. These communities can constitute the basis for real world action. The role of the Internet in facilitating collective identity is not agreed on throughout the research community. Some state that it fosters the process of identification, but that it can’t be considered a substitute for the impact of face to face interactions (Diani 2000: 397), but previous research into right-wing extremist groups online has emphasised online forums and the use of these to create virtual communities acting as replacements for offline communities (Wong et al. 2015: 42, Caiani & Parenti 2013: 106).
3.2 The extreme right online

Previous research into extreme right identity building online have focused on various movements in different areas of the world. Emily Turner-Graham conducted an analysis of microblogs following Anders Behring Breivik’s attack in Norway 2011. Her research found that creators of these pro-Breivik counter-jihadist sites were often young people knowledgeable in using new media. Subsequently, they were often able to independently produce a view of the world appealing to them and the likes of them (Turner-Graham 2014: 416). The use of the Internet and new media (e.g. social media sites, increasingly sophisticated websites) often encourage action from the users in the forms of likes and shares. As so, opinions and information is absorbed by users, but the newer media also allows for self-validation in terms of interaction with the material presented (Turner-Graham 2014: 419-420). The material often offers an alternative take on reality, providing stances opposing the global community (ibid).

Through interaction with other users, in e.g. forums, a sense of groupness and identification can take place (Turner-Graham 2014: 421). Open racism, e.g. promoting racialized stereotypes, is becoming increasingly more stigmatised in larger society (Blee & Yates 2015: 129). Online communities so allow for an acceptance of opinions that might be considered politically incorrect or bizarre which, combined with the factor of anonymity, can establish more radical positions particularly in settings both adolescent and political (Turner-Graham 2014: 421). Extreme right material available on the Internet, often offensive such, can hold a natural attraction to teenagers online as it provides a sense of rebellion where it is viewed as anarchic humour (ibid). Using visual means, such as images, Turner-Graham found that the sites reinforces ideas of white superiority and the perceived threats posed to the white community whilst promoting ‘traditional’ gender roles, providing a clear link between gender and ideas of nationalism (Turner-Graham 2014: 424-427).

Priscilla Marie Meddaugh and Jack Kay (2009) conducted a study on the Stormfront forum, an international white nationalist community, in which they analysed how the

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4 Microblogs are "cutting-edge web presences made up of provocative short sentences, single images or video links" (Turner-Graham 2014: 416).
Other was constructed as to understand how the discourse in the forum promoted hate rhetorically (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 251). Building upon the notion that the use of the Internet has allowed white supremacists to create a vision which resonates with people who feel marginalized by contemporary society, regarding political, social and economic forces, their findings indicate that the white supremacist discourse has transformed and differs from traditional hate texts in that it is less pronounced and more appealing to inexperienced readers (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 252, 254). The discourse of Stormfront presents a tempered discourse of “reasonable racism”, which accentuates pseudo-rational discussions of race (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 254). The Other is presented as tyrannical, as a manipulator, as genocidal, as inferior and as a false martyr – themes prominent in traditional discourses of the extreme right. The appropriation of a “reasonable racism” approach by Stormfront authors allows the messages to benefit from intertextuality (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 253). The forum and messages appeared to be well-researched, valid sources of information through the import of legitimate publications, although these were often misquoted and taken out of context. Speaking of polarizing issues of mainstream policy and the softening of racist language allows for the possibility of messages resonating with a larger audience. Constructing the Other is also consequential in the construction of a self, and in the presenting of the Other, racist behaviour towards other cultures is endorsed (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 264).

Willem De Koster and Dick Houtman (2008) also conducted a study into an online right-wing extremist forum (the Dutch brand of the international white nationalist community Stormfront), but rather than focusing on rhetoric, they focused on the interactions that provided a sense of an online community between the participants, as well as their experiences offline. By sampling messages in which members addressed their extreme right identity, their motives for participating in the forum, the way they experience the forum and their offline experiences and actions (relating to the extreme right identity) and conducting semi-structured interviews with members, they found that members express great disapproval of contemporary society (De Koster & Houtman 2008: 1161). The identity was strongly connected to the ideology promoted: nationalism or national-socialism (ibid).

In their offline experiences, the interviewed users stated that their extreme-right identity was often met by strong condemnation from their social surroundings. Subsequently, they did not feel free to express their opinions in contemporary society, and neither did they promote taking political action regarding their beliefs (De Koster &
Houtman 2008: 1163-1165). The stigmatization and the perceived inability to disclose their opinions they experienced offline was given as motivations for partaking in the forum. As so, Stormfront provided a space where they could freely express their opinions in interaction with like-minded people. Participating in discussion on the forum provided users with a sense of solidarity and comradeship, strengthened through practices of inclusion in the forum and the exclusion experienced offline (De Koster & Houtman 2008: 1166-1168).

Rachel M. Schmitz (2016) conducted an intersectional analysis on contemporary writings of the Ku Klux Klan published online. She echoes other feminist theorizing in stating that prejudices interact, and as so aims to answer the question of how the websites of the KKK attempts to “strategically reinforce and reproduce their teaching of superiority across the axes of race, religion, gender, and the family” (Schmitz 2016: 201). Her findings, analysing both texts and imagery, showed four major themes within the websites’ content; White Solidarity, Aryan Klan Masculinity, Cult of Aryan Christianity and Heteronormative Nuclear Family Values (Schmitz 2016: 205). In their ideological teachings and practices, race was the issue at the forefront. The issue of “white rights” (or the perceived lack thereof) was viewed as a growing problem. The KKK also rejected cultural diversity whilst reinforcing white supremacy, by encouraging the promotion of the white cultural heritage and stating that distinction between races was designed rather than accidental (ibid). Racism through the White Solidarity theme was found to be the core code of the KKK ideology, but it intersected with the other themes. The masculine identity presented was a marginalized one, where white males (even though they enjoy a privileged social status) were unable to attain the benefits following from this social status due to issues of e.g. racial and cultural pluralism (Schmitz 2016: 211). It also intersected with the idea of family and how a family should be (a Heteronormative Nuclear Family) as well as with Christian ideals used to reinforce social hierarchy and justify teachings (ibid).

5 From here on referred to as the KKK
4 Material

In this section, the material used for conducting the analysis will be presented and discussed. A discussion on potential difficulties collecting material online will also be presented.

4.1 Selection

The unit of analysis, the Alt-Right movement, primarily operates online. As so, the material used to conduct the analysis will be gathered from first-hand sources available online (Kapisewkski et al. 2015: 154-155). The sources will be websites currently or previously associated with the Alt-Right. They have been selected through purposive sampling, i.e. the selections are based upon the researcher’s previous knowledge of the movement (Mosca 2014: 403), which is built upon the coverage given to the movement throughout the last year as well as the movement’s own announcements.

Social movement scholars have highlighted the difficulties with studying identity on a macro level, and have emphasised analysing identity on a group level instead (Saunders 2015: 92). It is also not rare in social movements that different factions occur, and that these at times have different views on identity (Jasper & McGarr 2015: 6). So is the case with the Alt-Right. There are at present time different factions within the movement, whose interpretations of what they are at times differ. As so, the focus will be on three identified prominent factions, chosen based on media coverage and site popularity. It is of analytical interest to examine the different factions to understand what collective identity is constructed and what similarities and differences, if any, there are to be found between these as to provide a comprehensive understanding of the movement.

Previous research has focused on analysing material presented on websites (Schmitz 2016) and following interaction in forums (De Koster & Houtman 2008, Meddaugh & Kay 2008, Turner-Graham 2014). This thesis takes a similar approach, but the focus will
turn to comment sections, as have been done in previous studies analysing constructions of identity (Hagren Idevall 2014). The chosen comment sections are attached to three articles attempting to explain what the Alt-Right is. The ability to interact with material online have transformed the relationship from being a sender-receiver one, to users being contributors as well (Turner-Graham 2014: 419-420). Comment sections allows for interaction between a commentator and the text as well as between the commentators (Mosca 2014: 398). Thus, collecting material from these sources is deemed suitable to analyse the collective identity constructed in and between factions of the movement.

A big part of constructing collective identity is defining ‘what we are’ as opposed to ‘what we are not’ and as mentioned above, the three articles have been chosen on basis of trying to explain what the Alt-Right is, as it is believed that these will have generated discussions in the comment section appropriate for the analysis. The comments selected for analysis were chosen on basis of articulating an identity belonging to the collective. I.e., the chosen comments were selected by searching for words such as “we”, “us”, “the alt-right/alt right/altright”, “them” as these are viewed as expressions of a collective identity (Saunders 2015: 93). It is the interaction between actors that contributes to constructing identity, thus the chosen comments will contain an element of discussion (i.e. comments on the comment). As there are numerous comments, this will also help limit the material collected as to allow the analysis to be conducted within the limited research period. There are numerous comments on various sites posted all the time, thus it is also noted that the comments used for analysis do not provide an exact copy of the sphere in which the Alt-Right operates. By choosing material from different sites and different time periods, an overview is provided though, generating material to conduct the study in line with the proposed aim. The chosen material has been published during 2016 or in early 2017, as to capture the period the movement started gaining public recognition.

Had there been more time to conduct the study, focus groups with self-identified members of the movement would have been a suitable way of collecting material. By gathering participants and posing questions of identity and grievances it is believed that discussions generated could present valuable insights into how they view themselves (Kapisezewksi et al. 2015: 200-201). It would also have been interesting to see how and if discussions in real life differs from discussions online, as previous research have highlighted the aspect of anonymity online as contributing to more freely being able to
express one’s opinions (De Koster & Houtman 2008: 1166). Due to the limited time frame of the study, this will be left for future research.

4.1.1 Breitbart

In March 2016, the article “An Establishment Conservative’s Guide to the Alt-Right” was published on the right-wing news outlet Breitbart, gaining plenty of attention (Breitbart). The authors of the article do no self-identify as Alt-Right, but they, alongside the site, are believed to have been previously sympathetic towards the movement and are deemed influential in facilitating their entry to mainstream attention and in promoting their ideas (O’Brien 2016). The article and the comments generated are chosen on basis of the criteria outlined in the previous section. Due to the limited time frame in which the study was conducted, and the large amount of comments generated by the article, it was deemed not possible to include them all. To capture the responses to the article that had produced engagement (in the form of likes and discussion), they were subsequently sorted on ‘Best’ (other choices were from last or first). The comments posted when the article was published were then included, if they fulfilled the set criteria. It is believed that this captures the discussions ongoing at the time the article was published.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>All comments</th>
<th>Selected comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5284 words</td>
<td>4497</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.2 AltRight.com

Richard Spencer, a self-proclaimed white nationalist (SPLC 2), has been tightly linked to the Alt-Right. He is the head of the National Policy Institute, a white nationalist think-thank, and previously ran the Alternative Right blog (SPLC). In early 2017, he was leading in creating the website ‘AltRight.com’, launched to cement the movement’s emergence. The website AltRight.com is attempting to “bring together the best writers and analysts from the Alt-Right, in North America, Europe, and around the world” (AltRight). The site is frequently updated with articles, podcasts and videos. The selected article was published in February 2017 and outlines what the movement is, its influences
and what they stand for (AltRight 2). The comments were selected on basis of the outlined criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>All comments</th>
<th>Selected comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1611 words</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.3 The Daily Stormer

The Daily Stormer, a neo-Nazi website run by Andrew Anglin, self-identifies as Alt-Right. In July 2016, it became the most popular extreme right English-language website, surpassing Stormfront. The Daily Stormer posts daily updates of news and articles in a similar manner to other modern sites online, with flashy and eye-catching headlines and graphics. Andrew Anglin have also founded the “Stormer Troll Army”, consisting of users encouraged to participate in trolling campaigns against perceived opponents (Hankes 2017). The Daily Stormer also operates offline. They encourage site visitors to meet up in real life in so-called “Stormer Book Clubs” (ibid). In response to the article “An Establishment Conservative’s Guide to the Alt-Right” and Hillary Clinton’s denouncement of the movement, Anglin penned his own version: “A Normie’s Guide to the Alt-Right” published in August 2016 in which he set out to explain what the Alt-Right is about (The Daily Stormer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>All comments</th>
<th>Selected comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8231 words</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Archiving online material

There are difficulties with collecting material online. As online interaction is a quickly evolving process, content can be removed and it can also be difficult to access material published a while back. These issues are noted, but by archiving the material used to
conduct the analysis, the risks of material disappearing is reduced. The material has so been collected through manual archiving i.e. the material on chosen websites have been saved as they appeared by transforming them into images (screenshots), saving them in HTML format or by copying them into Word documents subsequently saved (Mosca 2014: 398-399). As the material used was saved and is so available to other researchers, the validity, reliability and transparency of the study is increasingly guaranteed (Mosca 2014: 412).
5 Method

This section will outline the method chosen for analysis, the analytical tool and provide an example of the analytical procedure.

5.1 Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis and frame analysis are two methods often used within social movement studies when the aim is to understand the collective identity centring around particular collective goals. Both methods take an interpretative approach towards the study of social movements and are used when interested in the interpretation, meaning-making and communication of movements (Lindekilde 2014: 196-196). The methods share similar ontological and epistemological standpoints, but when conducting a frame analysis, the collective identity is taken as given as opposed to it being constructed. When using frame analysis, the researcher often attempts to understand how actors frame their identity and ideas in a strategic and deliberate way to achieve certain goals (Lindekilde 2014: 200-201). It is believed that the Alt-Right movement at times operate as a strategic actor and frames ideas in certain ways, but as this thesis seeks to analyse what collective identity is constructed within the movement, discourse analysis is deemed the suitable approach.

As it is believed that discursive practices construct the collective identity in and through interaction, discourse analysis in line with Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s strand of discourse theory and analysis is a suitable choice in line with the study’s epistemological and ontological foundation (Jörgensen & Phillips 2000: 31). The tool used to conduct the analysis is logics of equivalence, further explained below.
5.1.1 Analytical tool

Meaning is provided relationally within chains of meaning, by connecting signs to floating signifiers. Floating signifiers are elements which the discourse is attempting to provide meaning to (Johansson 2008: 17). Within the movement’s discourse, Alt-Right is the floating signifier. As so, the focus will be on how signs relate to Alt-Right. By deconstructing these chains, i.e. by analysing the logics of equivalence to see what signs are connected to Alt-Right, it is possible to discern what meaning is articulated (in the form of a collective identity) and what the Alt-Right is defined as, as well as what it is not (Jörgensen & Phillips 2000: 50, 167, 176, Svensson 2006: 20-21). As so, logics of equivalence as an analytical tool will allow for an analysis on what collective identity is constructed within the movement. It also allows for social actions deemed legitimate within the discourse to be analysed (Bergström & Boréus 2012: 398), as the discursive identity provides indicators of expected and accepted behaviour (Jörgensen & Phillips 2000: 50).

It is believed that the Alt-Right is the master signifier, the nodal point of the collective identity i.e. Alt-Right is the privileged sign that the other signs are connected to within the discourse of identity. The Alt-Right as a floating signifier can so be given different meaning within discourses, but it is the sign founding the discourse e.g. ‘man’ is a master significant that can be given different meaning in different discourse, since ‘man’ as a floating signifier can be linked to a variety of qualities (Jörgensen & Phillips 2000: 50). As so, I will compare if and how the discourses differ between factions as to see if, and if so, what identity is crystallised with Alt-Right as a master signifier.

The tool has been used in previous research focusing on discursive constructions of identity. Swedish political scientists Ulf Mörkenstam and Peter Johansson both used this tool⁶ in their respective dissertations analysing how the Sami population was constructed within Swedish political discourse (Johansson 2008: 20-21, Bergström & Boréus 2012: 387). Discourse analysis rarely provides a template for the practical conduct of analysis, but as the tool is anchored in previous theoretical and empirical research, it is believed that it will contribute to a higher degree of validity when conducting the analysis (Teorell & Svensson 2007: 57).

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⁶ Ulf Mörkenstam labels the tool 'logics of analogies' (analogikedjor)
5.1.2 Analytical procedure

The analysis will focus on what signs attributing identity to the Alt-Right that are manifested within the discourse, as well as how these signs are connected to the Others in terms of contrasting qualities (Jörgensen & Phillips 2000: 166, 176-177). The analysis will be based on the characteristics identified in previous research on extremist right-wing groups\(^7\).

Example:

I agree, we want women to be with us because they admire our leadership. Not because we integrate our ranks with them to inflate their misconceptions about equality [...] The thing is, women are going to follow power. When we have power, we'll have the women, and we'll have gotten them the right way (InfantryVet).

The comment above is from the Daily Stormer. By analysing what signs are provided to the ‘we’ as well as to the women Others, it is possible to discern a collective identity based on a hierarchal understanding of the genders (Hutchings 2009: 392). The ‘we’ is constructed as a manly, heterosexual, leader. This is contrasted and reinforced by linking women to signs of ‘followers’, who merely goes where the power goes. As so, the excerpt above articulates a collective identity around heterosexual masculinity, which is also linked to contemporary society. Women are understood to be suffering from misconceptions in regard to equality, articulating that the dominant position should belong to men. Thus, the collective identity is linked to the articulated objective of the movement, to reclaim power and restore the traditional notions where men are viewed as legitimate leaders as opposed to current ideas of equality (Perry 2004: 76).

\(^7\) Presented in section 2.2 'Analytical framework'
6 Analysis

Within this section, the analysis of the material gathered from respective websites will be presented independently and subsequently end with a comparative discussion.

6.1 Breitbart

The article is not written by authors self-identifying with the movement. The text will be analysed in line with the tool and framework previously outlined, but it will not be treated as representative of the constructed collective identity but rather as an understanding of the movement where non-members attempt to articulate the collective identity within (Ferber 2004: 15). The comments generated by the article will be analysed in the same manner, but treated as constructions of collective identity.

6.1.1 Article

The authors divide the Alt-Right into four different categories; The Intellectuals, the Natural Conservatives, the Meme Team and the ‘1488rs’. They are all, apart from the ‘1488rs’\(^8\), described as reactions to contemporary society. A commonly recurring theme throughout the article is the linking of the Alt-Right to signs with positive connotations. They are understood to be young and rebellious as opposed to the Establishment, identified as the main opponent of the movement.

\(^8\) 14 is referencing the 14 words central to white supremacy ideas: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children”. 88 refers to HH, numerical for “Heil Hitler” (Kimmel 2017: 228)
[...] the alt-right has a youthful energy and jarring, taboo-defying rhetoric that have boosted its membership and made it impossible to ignore (Breitbart).

[...] The alt-right is a movement born out of the youthful, subversive, underground edges of the internet (ibid).

This youthful and rebellious identity is subsequently linked to a white identity, as the biggest group of the movement (the natural conservatives) are described as “mostly white, mostly male middle-American radicals, who are unapologetically embracing a new identity politics that prioritizes the interests of their own demographic” (Breitbart). The stance of unapologetically embracing identity politics, and prioritizing the own (white) group, is articulated as a rational and just reaction to the politics of oppression being directed towards the group (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 762). This theme of white victimization is a common occurrence in extreme right movements, and the Others are often blamed for these oppressive practices, so also in this account. The Other is not, as often in movements of similar character, presented in a racialized construct. Rather, the opponents developing from the text are the Left and the Establishment, reinforcing the identity of the Alt-Right as rebels. The Alt-Right’s emergence is thus understood through the over-arching theme of lost privileges (Ferber 2004: 9), and by anchoring claims put forwards in science, legitimacy is bestowed upon the movement (Ebata 1997: 31).

[...] In response to concerns from white voters that they’re going to go extinct, the response of the Establishment — the conservative Establishment — has been to openly welcome that extinction. [...] For decades, the concerns of those who cherish western culture have been openly ridiculed and dismissed as racist. The alt-right is the inevitable result (Breitbart)

The politics of identity, when it comes from women, LGBT people, blacks and other non-white, non-straight, non-male demographics is seen as acceptable — even when it descends into outright hatred (ibid).

The alt-right do not hold a utopian view of the human condition: just as they are inclined to prioritise the interests of their tribe, they recognise that other groups – Mexicans, African-Americans or Muslims – are likely to do the same (ibid).
In their politics, these new conservatives are only following their natural instincts — the same instincts that motivate conservatives across the globe (ibid).

By differentiating the ‘1488rs’ from the rest of the movement (Breitbart), attributing them signs such as humourless, kooky no-lifers and portraying them as an unwanted faction, the authors present the stances taken by the rest of the movement as rational. As so, the idea of building “own communities, populated by their own people, and governed by their own values” (Breitbart) does not stem from any racist sentiment, but is rather about preserving the own group (Ferber 2004: 16). The racism permeating the movement is also diminished by explaining that racist and anti-Semitic content spread online by the Alt-Right is merely done for the lulz (Breitbart). As so, content spread online is not representative of any real hatred, but rather shared to receive a reaction (Phillips 2015: 24-25).

In sum, several themes aligning with other right-wing extremist movements appears. White, male identity is understood to be threatened due to the progress made by other social groups. Thus, the identity and grievances put forward are similar to other movements advocating white supremacy and white identity (Adams & Roscigno 2005, Schmitz 2016, Turner-Graham 2014) whilst being presented in a manner diminishing the racism underlining the ideas (Meddaugh & Kay 2009).

6.1.2 Comments

Don't believe a lot of conspiracy theories about Jews or that involve Jews. Believe they have an inordinate amount of power and control in places like academia and the media and entertainment industry that they have used to undermine the culture of the white majority of the country (NightTrain)

"Jews run everything" is a gross over-simplification of their insidious ways (Andrew Jackson).

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9 The decision to include user names was taken on basis of the users’ choosing the pseudonym they engage under (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 1162). As so, in this thesis they will be represented as they represent themselves.
We largely reject individualism. We view groups as groups. Finding good Jews is kind of irrelevant to our overall point that Jews have been a negative influence on our culture and foreign policy (Ideas Man).

Is an infectious parasite superior to its host? Perhaps (Guest).

In the comment section, several notions of racialized others are occurring. One commonly occurring opponent is the Jewish community, as illustrated above. They are linked to signs of deceitfulness and are held responsible for the problems of contemporary society (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 258). They are understood to be controlling establishment institutions, through which they exert influence to deliberately weaken white culture and identity, subsequently constructing a common enemy facilitating collective identity (Ebeta 1997: 16). Jewish people are also constructed as their own race within the discourse.

Are Jews not white? I have some Jewish friends, they're paler than me (Pizza Rolls).

No. They are a distinct race made up of Ashkenazi, Sephardic, and Mizrahi ethnic groups. Ethnic "Jewishness" can even be tested for in Israel, and is (I believe) mandatory in some instances (Abdullahi).

Jews are a Turkic-mongoloid-negroid mishmash with varying degrees of Euro admixture. They are not White, they are mongrels. An ethnic Jew, no matter how pale skinned, has semitic roots (markers). Converts are not Jews, they're just buttholes practicing voodoo (nkde78).

White means European ancestry it's not skin tone (Concentric).

As shown by the exchange above, the white identity shared by the movements’ participants is constructed against the racialized Other (Ferber 1998: 54-55). Attributing signs as “mongrel” and “mishmash” to Jews thus construct the Alt-Right as pure, understood to be white (Schmitz 2016: 207). Being white is not merely being Caucasian though, rather it is about having an ancestry of European descent (Ferber 1998: 55). This ancestry is subsequently linked to signs of intelligence and inventiveness, asserting the
superiority of the white race over others. The claims are then legitimized by drawing on scientifically findings and historical events, proving that the white race is superior (Ebata 1997: 31). In the discussion on biological differences determining intelligence, another opponent is identified – the black community. Black people are constructed as violent and less intelligent, understood as an inherent feature of their character (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 768).

Would you say that that difference in intelligence is an inherent biological thing, or is based more on things like systemic poverty, poor access to education, other societal and cultural factors? (Pizza Rolls).

The science is very clear that there is at least a large genetic component to intelligence. In addition, there is quite literally no evidence that Blacks are, on average, equal to Whites in general intelligence. Relatedly, there is no evidence that Blacks are, on average, as law-abiding and non-violent as Whites. Believing that the races of Man are indeed "equal", in general, in every category and characteristic, is just faith-based religion that we are told to believe without any evidence (Guest).

Then how do you explain human history? I mean, just anecdotally, how do you take the sum total of human history, where every significant advancement in technology was made and by whom, and square it with the idea that everyone is the same, save culture and food (RJMA3).

As so, the Alt-Right are linked to signs of a white collective identity, and the movement’s ideas and actions are justified through the theme of white victimization as illustrated below:

Great article. I became alt-right thanks to the constant haranguing of the SJW press, feminists, and the general cultural attitudes of the Obama years. I'm a white guy who's tired of being sh-t on for being white and just want to be left alone and see my country survive, rather than be destroyed to "not seem racist." Thanks to memes, I've never had so much fun during an election cycle. Fun seeing libtards and cuckservatives feel threatened by memes, probably since getting memed on means you're not being taken seriously. 2016 is the #YearOfTheShitlord (Aj Retro)
Oppression for merely being white is viewed as a product of contemporary society (Meddugh & Kay 2009: 131), where the shifts have been beneficial to other groups while neglecting white interest (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 31). This oppression and the inability to openly protect ‘your’ group’s interests reinforces the legitimacy and rightfulness of the movement. Different races are understood to have competing interest, leading to anti-white hatred being promoted through increased immigration and political decisions favouring non-white groups. “Race-mixing” is considered a problem due to the diversification of the gene pool brought about by this and homosexuality is “disgusting”, “harmful” and practiced by “degenerates” (Halm Ben Zwi, Joshua Graham).

The inability of the participants to articulate these thoughts in public is commonly articulated, relating to the theme of white victimization. What is particularly interesting is how this notion contributes to the identity constructed, as the view of being enlightened and having discovered the truth contributes to a sense of shared collectivity (Berlet 2004: 24).

Interesting. I don't know what to tell you. I've seen it all in my day, and I was never turned off when I was still a "normie". I was simply seeking the truth and I found it. I didn't make decisions while researching based on emotional responses; if men can't handle a few jokes on their way to the truth, then that just shows how deep the Cultural Marxism is rooted in our society, and how emasculated men have become (Abdullahi).

Uh yeah, obviously man, that's the premise I am operating under. A solid majority of white western females are highly effeminate and the victims of extreme cultural marxism. We are operating at a handicap (Rhaegar Targaryen).

Not only do they understand the world more correctly than the general population who is duped by the ways of contemporary society, they are also capable of reclaiming what has been lost. This refers not only to the restoration of white rights, but the masculinity diminished by contemporary society.

The including character of the movement is also shown in the approach taken to people deciding to identify as Alt-Right. This is met with likes and comments of approval and greetings of “Welcome brother” (Mailinated), “My kinda guy” (Jack Ketch) furthering the sense of community and collective identity grounding a movement (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 106).
By contrasting the Alt-Right with the Others and perceived problems, a chain of presenting the Alt-Right and its participants as intelligent, enlightened and brave is constructed. By the divides articulated in the comment section, a specific type of masculinity is valued showing how identity is constructed through race tightly linked to gendered notions. By putting white, masculine qualities against the Other as Jewish, non-white, gay and female a hierarchal structure is constructed (Hutchings 2008: 392) where the white man’s identity is premiered over the other, lesser versions of masculinity or feminity (ibid).

As so, the collective identity constructed is not only one of whiteness, but of white, idealized masculinity. They are natural men; strong, heterosexual and protective of traditional values as opposed to the racialized and gendered “degenerates” who are to blame for what is wrong with modern life (Ferber 2004: 17). The identity differs significantly from the one put forward in the article, which is also articulated in the comments:

You guys are liars. The alt-right is all about race realism, is against homosexuality based on disgust, statistics and the harm it does to society and most certainly against diversity. We're pro-white and understand that other races have competing interests that don't mesh with ours. DIVERSITY + PROXIMITY = WAR (Joshua Graham).

6.2 AltRight.com

The site self-identifies as Alt-Right. Their take on the movement presented in the article will so be viewed as an attempt to present the collective identity within, as articulated by members (Ferber 2004: 15).

6.2.1 Article

In the article explaining what the Alt-Right is, an identity of intellectualism is clearly salient. Outlining the ideological foundation of the movement by presenting the intellectual influences and emphasizing the scientific connection of its ideas provides a legitimacy to the messages (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 252-254). Portraying American
whites at risk for becoming a minority creates a sense of urgency and echoes previous movements of the same character (Schmitz 2016: 209). It emphasizes the need for something to be done and for organizational measures to be taken, ensuring the interest of white America. Highlighting the oppressional methods taken against them as political dissidents standing up against the Liberal establishment links the movement to ideas of bravery. By engaging in “intellectual labor and activism” (AltRight 2) they stand up for the values and ideas they believe are right, even though this comes with significant risks (Berlet 2004: 24). As so, the identity is linked to traditionally masculine qualities of bravery and fearlessness (Schmitz 2016: 209).

Religion has traditionally played an important within white supremacist organisations, but so not in this account of the Alt-Right. They deem Christianity to be of importance, not for religious reasons but for the “civilizational importance” (AltRight 2) of Christian tradition. This tradition is put in contrast with “certain brands of Protestantism” which has included “Postmodern aberrations” (AltRight 2). Emphasising the civilizational character of the Christian traditions contributes to deeming other religions, such as Judaism and Islam, less civilised even though this is not clearly stated (van Dijk 1992: 97).

Rather than discussing issues of race, issues of identity are highlighted. Race is still implicitly indicated, as to be a white American you must be of European descent as opposed to African, Asian or Hispanic which are viewed as separate groups with their own identities (AltRight 2). In larger society, open racism is becoming increasingly stigmatized. By focusing the ideas on identity and culture and presenting the reaction as a reasonable response, the Alt-Right can promote messages which has the possibility of resonating with a larger audience (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 263, Blee & Yates 2015: 129, 131). This corresponds with the stated goal of the movement to grow and to consolidate its presence and impact.

The intellectuality reinforces the validity of their ideas, as well as contributing to a masculine identity. They are the ones who have been critical enough to question modern day practices (Coston & Kimmel 2012: 98), such as “the absurdity of mainstream Western feminism” (AltRight 2) which in turn reinforces the rational reaction of theirs. Thus, the collective identity is constructed and reinforced by interconnecting ideas of intellectualism and bravery, which is put in contrast to the “absurdities” of contemporary society which besides feminism includes “stifling political correctness, suicidal tolerance,
human rights, secular relativism, mass migration, trash entertainment” deemed to be “ideological expressions of Liberalism” (AltRight 2).

These contemporary practices combined with the perceived threat of white Americans becoming a minority creates for a sense of urgency in the “uphill battle” (ibid) fought by the Alt-Right. Participants in the Alt-Right are so given an identity of being soldiers, and are through this encouraged to participate in the battle (Schmitz 2016: 208-210). Their way provides a solution to the supposed feelings of dispossession and loss of identity assumed within white America (Meddugh & Kay 2009: 131), offering the powerless a possibility to reclaim what has been lost (Ferber 2004: 8).

6.2.2 Comments

When analysing the comment section, a similar identity as the one put forward in the article is distinguishable. The discussions are to begin with primarily of an ‘intellectual’ character, i.e. they discuss and debate the ideological foundations of the movement or put forward arguments supported by scientific research.

The concept of political liberty, and minimalist government, is undoubtedly a core value of the English / British (and, to lesser extent, Germanic) people. It must be understand as a characteristic that has expressed itself as part of a particular ethnicity. That is not to say that other peoples do not, and cannot, understand liberty or incorporate it to their value system. But as an integral and organic political value, it is very much an Anglo-Saxon virtue. From that perspective, National libertarianism is the only libertarianism that makes sense: libertarianism plus open borders is a form of slow national suicide, because the people one allows in do not value liberty, or engender the same degree of trust that allows it to flourish, and so the system eats itself. […] That is exactly what we are seeing in Britain today. That is why intellectually honest libertarians, such as Hans Herman-Hoppe and Stephan Molyneaux and Vox Day, have had to abandon their belief in open borders, and are generally race realist as well. […] The problems of today's world can only be solved by the Alt Right (not the Alt Lite) because hierarchy, order and tribe are what are needed to win the battle before us. Once we have our own societies back, then we can establish a classical liberal order (so long as the question of borders is not up for discussion) (Samuel_Nock)
The excerpt above links the movement to signs such as superiority, bravery and soldiery. Distinguishing inherent qualities relating to ethnicity and race is common within movements advocating white supremacy. By showing how certain, ‘lesser’ traits (such as an inability to value liberty or generating trust) are significant in the Others, racial and cultural superiority in the own group is asserted (Schmitz 2016: 208). These Others are also responsible for contemporary problems, asserting the need for these to be removed before order can be restored. The reference to “battles” or “war” is a recurring theme (Resistance Breeds Hope), reinforcing the view of the movement as soldiers fighting for a greater good. Positioning themselves as the only ones able to restore it asserts the hegemonic masculinity of the movement, where qualities such as ability to bring about hierarchy, order and tribe are attributed to them and as so awards them roles of leaders (Schmitz 2016: 208, Coston & Kimmel 2012: 98).

As the mind-war continues, here is the best site I’ve found that proves not only vast differences between races, but the inferiority of blacks and Hispanics. All the IQ testing for the last 125 years has clearly shown blacks and Hispanics have IQs in the 70s compared to whites and Asians with IQ 103 and 105 average, respectively (Resistance Breeds Hope).

Reasserting the superiority of whites over non-whites is also justified by pointing to scientific evidence of IQ differences, which is understood to be causally linked to biological differences (McAdams & Roscigno 2005: 768). As the views presented by the movement often are perceived as politically incorrect, a sense of solidarity is articulated through sharing information with other members as a way of supporting discussions they partake in (Turner-Graham 2014: 421). The collective identity constructed is so white, masculine and revolve around ideas of intelligence and bravery linked to a white identity deemed superior, resonating with the identity put forward in the article.

6.3 The Daily Stormer

The Daily Stormer identifies as Alt-Right, thus their take on the movement presented in the article will be taken to present the collective identity within, as articulated by members (Ferber 2004: 15).
6.3.1 Article

The Alt-Right is described as a collective of dissidents. They are intellectual, anonymous, young, white millennials experiencing a sense of marginalization. It consists of different factions which merged when they all reached “the same objective truth on Jews, race and feminism through different avenues” (The Daily Stormer\textsuperscript{10}). What characterises the Alt-Right is a spirit of fun, use of irony and nihilism. The main problem presented is what the Daily Stormer refers to as “the Jewish problem” (DS). Jews are portrayed as a separate race, and the “Jewish conspiracy” as being the source of everything that is wrong with contemporary society (feminism, global communism, the homosexual political agenda, the wars in the Middle East). The article clearly states that the main goal is to “[…] establish pure White racial states in all formerly White countries”, which will be attained by “defeating and physically removing the Jews” and “mass deportation of all non-White immigrants, regardless of whether or not they were born here”. A regression back to “traditional values” of gender and family is also promoted (DS).

The article differs from previous extreme right and Nazi groups and movements, as it clearly states why certain measures are implemented. I.e. movements with an anti-Semitic foundation often portray Jews as the common enemy by constructing the Jewish community as an all-encompassing evil at the root of all that is wrong (Ebta 1997: 16), and so is also the case with the DS. The clear articulation of their reasoning is not often shared with outsiders though (Blee & Yates 2015: 131), as done by the Daily Stormer:

\begin{quote}
Le Happy Merchant is a Jewish caricature used to represent all Jews. It is used for the purpose of dehumanizing Jew as a type of evil monster, rather than a human being, while also being very funny in its offensiveness. It has proven to be extremely effective in portraying Jews as an alien other, in the way the much more serious NSDAP anti-Semitic propaganda did in the 1930's (DS).
\end{quote}

The other themes prominent in the article are in line with previous extreme right movements; white victimisation, promotion of traditional gender roles, heteronormative family values, pseudo-academic/scientific claims of biological differences between races.

\textsuperscript{10} From here on referenced as ‘DS’

As so, the Alt-Right movement as it is presented in the Daily Stormer article resembles similar movements. The way it is presented differs though, which works to reinforce the positive identity of the movement as “fun” and “rebellious” (Turner-Graham 2014: 420).

The memes above are two of several, similar examples included in the article, which functions as a way of constructing and reinforcing a collective identity within the movement (Wong et al., 2015: 51). They understand why it is funny, thus constructing their own cultural and political language, and promoting a sense of community (Phillips 2015: 22).

As so, a collective identity of rebellious, white, heterosexual males is constructed. They have seen the truth about contemporary society, and they are the ones that can do something about it (Berlet 2004: 24). The problem is clearly defined, and though the site condones the use of violence (DS 2) and the article promotes “organisational measures” (DS) as one of the primary goals, the discourse of identity constructed within this faction of the movement opens up the arena for a whole other field of action (Jørgensen & Phillips 2000: 50).

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11 “The Cult of Kek, also known as the Church of Kek, is a satirical religion based around the worship of the ancient Egyptian deity Kek (also spelled Kuk or Keku)” (Know Your Meme)
12 /pol/ is a 4chan forum often associated with the Alt-Right (O’Brien 2016)
6.3.2 Comments

[…] I’ve been waiting for our people to awaken for decades, while watching our country get darker and darker by the day (brskr76).

[…] These psychos were proudly saying that the rule of the white man anywhere was finally over and we would perish and that was good (Leon29).

Keep up the good work comrades […] We are all making a difference. […] Trump has given us an opportunity to get our message to the interested masses. The truth is on our side, and for millions of our people, it has already proven to matter (Allin)

[…] This movement sums up everything I’ve always known and believed but now I don’t feel worried about letting it be known (rankin45).

The Alt-Right is the awoken movement. They have found the truth, and are now eagerly awaiting the rest of society’s transition. The ones who disagrees are labeled “psychos”, and are made out to be happy about the white man’s fall from grace. The Alt-Right offers the possibility to fight back, to make a difference and to reclaim what is perceived as slipping away (Ferber 2004: 15).

The notion that they have found ‘the’ truth is a powerful one, as it bestows legitimacy onto their ideas and makes it easy to dismiss counter-arguments (Van Dijk 1992: 93). Subsequently, the collective identity is strengthened and built around their enlightenment. It also allows for the distinction between them and those not yet ‘in the know’ to be made, creating a boundary between the in-group and the out-group based on a sense of knowing (Flesher Fominaya 2010: 395). The out-group is also blamed for the perceived decline of society (Ebata 1997: 14), and it is the Alt-Right, being the enlightened in-group, that are capable to enact change. As so, the Other is presented as less knowledgeable, blind to the truth, but still a possible candidate for the in-group if the qualification of being one of them (i.e. white) is met.

When internet management changes hands here soon, it will almost certainly bring European style hate speech regulation. Which means everything from Anglin and TRS to InfoWars, will be bankrupted, imprisoned, or at the very least, silenced (SoulInvictus).
The jokes will get even better if that happens. Like using ridiculous examples to describe what people already know. Kinda like we do now. And the more ridiculous (((they))) make us have to go, the more powerful it is. Ridicule is one of the toughest things to stop. Righteous ridicule is impossible to stop. The religion of peace People without color Basketball Americans etc. if they outlaw those then it's People who play a certain sports American. It's ridiculous. But the people who knew the former will understand the latter. And they will see the the government as the oppressor. Not us (Toothpuller).

Thank you, an important point. Preparations must be made... (Iconoclast)

The only possibility is victory. Either that and the story ends. God wants a good show. We have hit rock bottom and can only go up. [...] And this is just the beginning. Our lives are going to be incredible. We have guns and the numbers to win for sure, we're still 60% of population currently. [...] I'm not sure how close we are to a race war or a civil war, but nonWhites, jews, and lefties are going to have violent protests (I would think) when Trump wins. We are obviously very relevant now, as Hillary Clinton has mentioned the Alt-Right by name. As Andrew says, change will be inevitable when enough people know what we know (Leon29).

A theme of enlightenment is occurring throughout the comments, and so is the notion of being oppressed for simply stating the truth. The Other is understood to be the Jews, which is made clear through the in-group reference of putting parentheses around words (DS). As so, the common enemy is identified, allowing the movement to collectively fight back. The identity of them being warriors with an impending battle ahead is articulated, reinforcing a masculine identity circled around violence (Blee & Yates 2015: 131, Berlet 2004: 24). Simultaneously constructing themselves as victims and enlightened warriors fighting an inferior enemy is contradictory, but serves in creating a discursive space where certain actions are justified (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 256) as well as reifying notions of entitlement (Kimmel 2017: 233). There is no other choice but to fight, and when the righteous battle is won their lives will be greatly improved. Thus, the collective identity reinforces an idea of reclaiming what has been lost (Ferber 2004: 8-9), which can be done in various ways.

A user stating “I'm not sure how close we are to a race war or a civil war, but nonWhites, jews, and lefties are going to have violent protests (I would think) when
Trump wins” (WhiteGenocideTM) and the subsequent reply stating that the “fatal weakness […] is their welfare dependency” (StopThoughtCrime) addresses the violent style of masculinity promoted within the movement whilst also highlighting the contradictory claims for white victimization (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 256).

When RaHoWa\textsuperscript{13} comes, we will have to take in alot of Feral humans, and alot of feral white women, We will have to train them and housebreak them all over again, and it will be an ugly process but it must be done. […] These females need to be controlled and whatever form that control takes, so be it. Think about it if another guy came up, spat at us and told us to F-K Off we would hit him right? Then why should a girlfriend be allowed to get away with it? All is fair in love and war (BillyRayJenkins)

Women want a strong man, that means conviction, ambition, intelligence…..keep them guessing will win the battle (99999).

The difference is that Andrew makes a distinction between Feminism and Jews and at the same time makes non between Feminism and women.

I don't think he does, I think Andrew and other people here are of the opinion that any movement that works has to be an all-boys-club, where men are free to be men and don't have to deal with the manipulations, stubborness, power-politics, nagging and attention-whoring of the average female sex (Hartkern).

I agree, we want women to be with us because they admire our leadership. Not because we integrate our ranks with them to inflate their misconceptions about equality […] The thing is, women are going to follow power […] When we have power, we'll have the women, and we'll have gotten them the right way. We need to stay focused on the objective and not jew propaganda calling us a sausage fest!

Lol (InfantryVet)

The women Others discussed in the comment section constructs a superior, male identity. Contemporary society have allowed women to become “feral” and it is upon the movement to “train them and housebreak them all over again”. This is used referencing

\textsuperscript{13} An acronym for “Racial Holy War” (ADL 4)
both “humans” and “white women”, distinguishing the group women from the group humans (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 261). Discussing women as if they were animals, that “need to be controlled” is put in context by emphasizing the mistreatment of men. Their female qualities of “manipulations”, “stubbornness” and “attention-whoring” also hinder the men from being men. As so, the movement offers an opportunity to restore the current imbalance stemming from the “misconceptions of equality”. Women are followers, reifying the collective identity of themselves as leaders by constructing a hierarchy in which the man is situated at the top (Hutchings 2009: 392). The reference to “jew propaganda calling us a sausage fest” emphasises the heterosexual character of the movement (ibid). These notions are also reproduced through images. The reply to the comment deeming women in need of control is met with images of different productions of Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew, reifying the argument put forward with pop cultural references whilst also reinforcing the fun qualities of the movement. The supportive nature of the movement is also distinguishable in the comments.

This is my definition of who my brother is in the ALT RIGHT. If you stand foursquare with Der Fuhrer and Il Duce Corneliu Codreanu and support Francisco Franco's Spain, you are my brother. If you believe that the Jew is a plague on Planet Earth that our world must find a way to solve you are my brother. If you want to see every traitor ground into the dust never to rise again no matter if they are your own family you are my brother. This is my definition what say you Brother Anglin? 14/88 (BillyRayJenkns).

Welcome aboard BillyRay. You are the most important aspect of the whole movement (lucky).

It was definitely the wave of Muslim attacks that got me started into looking for different sources of information. The Bataclan and then not even a month later San Bernardino. It was the general feeling of nonchalance and inevitability that people had about them. I couldn't stand that. Just lying down and accepting that this is the way things had to be. It felt so wrong and sickly (goebbels_of_fun).

Well welcome aboard, Brother. We all have our stories about how we got involved, but all that really matters is that we're here (MarcusCicero).
Welcome brother (lucky).

Creating a sense of inclusion and a welcoming sense of support facilitates the construction of a collective identity (Cainai & Parenti 2013). By referring to new participants as brothers and including them into the group, the collective nature of the movement is emphasised. As so, the interaction through comments allows for the boundaries to be set as to who are considered part of the in-group. By reinforcing the conflict they are partaking in, the battle against contemporary society, these bonds are strengthened (della Porta & Diani 2006: 21-22).

The use of images to reinforce the collective identity of strength, bravery and battle is also notable in the comment section, as illustrated by the picture below. The avatars and usernames are linked to the same ideas, with wolfs, soldiers and anti-Semitic caricatures being employed as a way of showing identity. Names such as “Varg”, “soulinvictus”, “stopthoughtcrime” and” InfantryVet” all links the identity of the movement to the ideas presented as well as creating a sense of camaraderie among the participants (De Koster & Houtman 2008: 1162).

![Image](image_url)

*Picture 3: Posted by user Abadgoy*

As so, the collective identity constructed in the Daily Stormer faction of the Alt-Right movement is one of white, heterosexual masculinity where the grievances are connected to themes of white victimization, contemporary society’s flaws and anti-Semitic conspiracies (Berlet 2004: 24-25). The movement offers a possibility for the participants to fight against these grievances, and as so offers a reclaiming of an identity deemed lost.
due to the modern-day life (Ferber 2004: 8). They share a sense of glorification of the past, where men were allowed to be men and they were the privileged group. Thus, it constructs a collective identity where the unfair treatment of them as white and male can be fought and order can be restored (ibid). Portraying themselves as soldiers with a just cause expands the space for collective action, and the battle is understood as closely impending.

6.4 Comparative discussion

The collective identity constructed within the Alt-Right is not completely apparent. As struggles within emerging movements are a common feature (Jasper & McGarr 2015: 10), this is to be expected. There are common themes overlapping between the factions, allowing for an overarching collective identity to be identified with Alt-Right as master signifier.

The first theme is white victimization. By articulating white identity, culture and race to be at risk for extermination the problem is clearly identified, and this subsequently facilitates the construction of a collective identity (Ebata 1997: 14). By emphasising the unfairness in current treatments of the white community, and the threat this poses, by presenting the Others as inferior, corrupt and abnormal, a hierarchy is established. This hierarchy and the signs assigned to opponents constructs the collective identity in contrast to these, building an image of the participants in the movement as superior, true and normal (Hutchings 2008: 392). These qualities subsequently justify proposed actions, as it is posited as a normal reaction to unfair treatment as well as a restoration to a normal order of affairs (Ferber 2004: 8). Drawing on historical references of white identity’s superiority reifies the notion of contemporary society being seriously flawed. As the white population are credited with most of the societal advancements whilst also being biologically superior to others, these developments are presented as incomprehensible as so reasserting the natural pre-eminence (Ferber 1998: 55). In previous movements of a similar character this was often linked to and justified by referencing Christianity (Adams & Roseigno 2005: 772). In the Alt-Right movement, religion is not giving a significant role but is rather decreed with importance due to its previous links to white civilization and culture. As so, the Alt-Right offers the opportunity for like-minded spirit to resist the
development. By outlining the problems encountering white people in contemporary society and subsequently asserting the superiority of the same, a solution for reclaiming power and privilege is provided (Ferber 2004: 8-9). Thus, a collective identity of righteousness and superiority linked to whiteness is constructed.

The second theme is of enlightenment and intelligence. The Alt-Right constructs their identity around the notion of possessing knowledge available to everyone, but only the open-minded can fully grasp it. The intellectual identity provides a legitimacy to the ideas presented, which is reified with referencing scientific claims and highlighting the ‘natural’ order of things (Adams & Roscigno 2005: 761). It also reinforces the collectivity of the movement, as they share the ability to critically examine what is understood as false propaganda and absurd ideas being fed to the population (Flesher Fominaya 2010: 395). As so, the collective identity is constructed around notions of rational and intelligent enlightenment. The oppressive nature of ‘the Establishment’ is also prominent within this theme, an oppression they are resisting.

The third theme founding the collective identity of the movement is closely linked to this idea of resistance. By referencing proposed or taken action in terms of “battles” or “wars” the construction of a brave and fearless soldier is facilitated. Linking the movement to these ideas constructs a masculine identity, which intersects and saturates the collective. They are the brave men fighting an uphill battle for the greater good, invoking a militarized sense of masculinity enforcing the necessity of what is being done as well as facilitating a sense of belonging among the participants (Kimmel 2017: 256). They are in this together. By contrasting themselves opposite other, ‘lesser’ men (non-whites, gay men, and men who have bought into the ideas of the Establishment), a hegemonic masculinity of white heterosexuality is constructed (Hutchings 2008: 392).

The biggest difference emerging between the factions is in the articulation of the Others. Whilst the Daily Stormer faction clearly states that Jews are the biggest problem, the two other more diffusely refer to the ‘Establishment’ or the evils brought about by progress in contemporary society (even though they also contain anti-Semitic connotations). The solutions are not clearly outlined, but in the themes references to battle or war are commonly recurring, constructing a discursive space for actions such as those to be conveyed as permissible (Bergström & Borèus 2012: 398).

Regardless of differences, the discursive constructions of collective identity linked to perceived grievances all argue for the same thing; differentiation between people based on ideas of race, cultural identity, gender and sexual orientation.
7 Conclusion

The answer to the question “What collective identity is constructed in the Alt-Right movement” is, based on the findings, indicative of a white, masculine, heterosexual identity construction, which is reinforced by notions of intelligence, enlightenment, bravery and a sense of rebelliousness and fun. Put in the context of the perceived grievances, the Alt-Right collectively constructs an identity allowing people experiencing perceived marginalization to join in and oppose it (Ferber 2004: 8). By incorporating contemporary Internet culture the movement associates itself with a sense of ‘fun’ (Phillips 2015: 25). Through this, a natural attraction for the younger part of the population can follow (Turner Graham 214: 421). This notion is supported by the participants of the movement primarily consisting of younger, white and often educated men. The aura of intellectualism promoted within the movement, whilst also being communicated to the outsiders, provides a sense of legitimacy to the ideas of the movement as well as to the participants. Through this, previous perceptions of similar movements where participants are presented as “crazy, down-and-out, marginal men”, are contradicted (Ferber 2004: 6). It also allows for the messages to resonate with larger audiences (Meddaugh & Kay 2009: 263), providing a fruitful foundation for recruitment (Caiani & Parenti 2013: 24-25) as can be seen in the movement’s growth and their ideas increasingly spreading online (Berger 2016: 3).

The movement’s emergence must be viewed in a bigger, political context. All factions were favourable towards Donald Trump, as he was credited with facilitating their ideas into mainstream politics (AltRight 2, DS, Breitbart). The increased polarization, as promoted by Trump and his often-inflamatory rhetoric (Allin 2016: 226), has manifested itself through a rise of hate groups in the US as well as a rise of violence directed towards minority groups (SPLC 3). These trends are not confined to the US, but visible in several areas of the world. The impact of new ICTs allows extreme right movements and organization to connect with other as well as circulate messages on a global scale (Schmitz 2016: 202). Future research into how movements are connected nationally and transnationally is encouraged, as to understand how ideas are disseminated.
on a larger scale. The road towards participation is also an area proposed for further research. This thesis has examined what collective identity is constructed within the movement, and as so future research on how participants are exposed to the movement and sympathies are awakened is recommended.

In sum, the Alt-Right’s collective identity is, much like Donald Trump’s politics, constructed around perceived differences between humans. Even though the movement itself condones violence, it supplies a room where radical opinions are allowed to grow (Jackson 2016: 29). Thus, the Alt-Right, in spreading ideas of intolerance and providing an arena facilitative of radical positions being adopted and nurtured (Turner-Graham 2014: 421), is a movement that could result in harmful practices affecting societal security.
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Electronic


Comments

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