

THE INTERNATIONAL ALTERNATIVE RIGHT

AN EXPLAINER

HATE
HOPE



WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE RIGHT

In the press and broadcast media, the term “alt-right” has been used to describe everything from hardcore nazis and Holocaust deniers through to mainstream Republicans in the US and European right-wing populists.

It has been fetishised as a radically new phenomenon and simultaneously derided as nothing more than a rebranding of fascism.

Within the movement itself there is a fierce battle over who is and who isn't deserving of the name. Some vociferously reject the title yet comfortably fit within most definitions of it while others desperately claim it yet do not.

All of this begs the question: What is the alt-right?

WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE RIGHT?

Given the aforementioned complexities and confusions over the term “alt-right”, HOPE not hate chooses instead to refer to this movement as the “Alternative Right”.

Broadly speaking the international “Alternative Right” is an international set of groups and individuals, operating primarily online though with offline outlets whose core belief is that “white identity” is under attack from pro-multicultural and liberal elites and so-called “social justice warriors” (SJW) who allegedly use “political correctness” to undermine Western civilisation and the rights of white males.

Put simply, the “Alternative Right” is a far right, anti-globalist grouping that offers a radical “alternative” to traditional/establishment conservatism.

The eclectic and disparate nature of its constituent parts make for large areas of disagreement yet, together, they are united around a core belief.

All reject what they believe to be left-wing, liberal democratic, cultural hegemony in Western society and the rights derived from it.

They reject what leading alt-right figure Jared Taylor has called the “dangerous myth” of equality which, in practice, means opposition to, *inter alia*, the rights of women, LGBT+ and ethnic minorities or, if not these rights, at the very least the movements themselves that seek to advance those rights such as feminism.

Tracing the birth of the International Alternative Right is no easy task. With no founding ideologue, text or even organisation from which the movement sprang, it has no single traceable start point.

It is an amorphous and mainly online political movement composed of a vast array of blogs, vlogs, websites and podcasts with only a few offline organisations of note. As such the movement has no single leader or even a dominant organisation but, instead, resembles a many-headed hydra made up of a collection of figures and groups, none of which fully control the movement's direction.

Being a relatively new movement means that no consensual definition has yet emerged. However, this endeavour is not aided by mistakes being made in existing attempts to understand the phenomenon.

In particular, most analysis is overly Americacentric and ignores the crucial role of European ideas and movements in its development. Likewise, many in Europe have sought to find their own country's version of the movement, again misunderstanding that it is genuinely transnational.

For these reasons we have decided to call this phenomenon the International Alternative Right.

Another widespread error, sometimes made by the press, is a failure to distinguish between the different strands within this movement. Broadly speaking the movement can be split into two distinct branches: the alt-right and the alt-light.

While both reject left/liberal democratic hegemony and the rights, freedoms and/or affiliated movements associated with it – including LGBT+, women's and minority rights – and both are concerned with the same set of issues – the left, globalisation, gender, the west, equality, and so on – they view these issues through fundamentally different lenses.

The key dividing line is one of race versus culture, with the former the core concern of the alt-right and the latter that of the alt-light. All too often, people talk of the influence of the alt-right on the mainstream when they actually mean the alt-light.

Using a more international approach, this report reconfigures what the so-called alt-right is, how it works and its internal variations.



MAIN CONSTITUENT PARTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ALTERNATIVE RIGHT

The International Alternative Right is best understood as a conglomeration of a number of pre-existing social and political movements.

It is, at its core, a convergence of three broad groups: the European New Right and Identitarian movement, the American Alternative Right and Online Antagonistic Communities.

Each of these movements has its own history, structures, groups and ideas and can, and in some cases, does, continue to operate quite independently of the Alternative Right but when the three overlap and interact they produce what has come to be known as the Alternative Right.



● THE EUROPEAN NEW RIGHT

is, broadly speaking, a current of thought derived from the ideas of people like the French far right philosopher Alain de Benoist and his GRECE movement (*Groupement de recherche et d'études pour la civilisation européenne*) [Research and Study Group for European Civilization] that was founded in France in 1968, along with subsequent strains of thought/activism such as Guillaume Faye's Archeofuturism, Aleksandr Dugin's Eurasianism and the European Identitarian movement.

The European New Right movement sits comfortably within the far right and its ideas are best understood as a quest for the recovery of a mythical "European Identity".

They fundamentally reject the ideals of the Enlightenment and of Christianity and fight back against "materialist" and modern ideologies from liberalism to socialism and, instead, posit a pan-European nationalism and a world of ethnically homogeneous communities.

● **THE AMERICAN ALTERNATIVE RIGHT** is a broad term that includes a multitude of radical or non-conservative right wing and far right traditions. What they share is an offer of a right wing "alternative" to mainstream contemporary conservative Republicanism. Included here are elements of the American far right, Nazi and white supremacist movements.

● **ONLINE ANTAGONISTIC COMMUNITIES** are reactionary online communities built around various interests but who all engage in exclusionary, antagonistic behaviour (be it through trolling, creating

offensive symbolism or just espousing and voicing hatred and contempt).

These are found on all sides of the political spectrum or can be non-political but where they converge with the Alternative Right is when their antagonism is directed at what they perceive as the left/liberal political and social hegemony. This includes the "Manosphere", the right-wing alternative media and the "Neoreactionary" movement, as well as the more disparate racist and misogynist trolling subculture found within the broader culture of trolling (the act of being deliberately offensive or provocative online with the aim of provoking a hostile, negative, outraged reaction).

Trolling dates as far back as the late 1980s though it has increasingly been instrumentalised by political movements in the last decade and this right-wing strain has been especially prevalent within communities on websites like 4chan, 8chan, Reddit, Voat, and Gab that share the various political leanings found within the alt-right.

AFFILIATED MOVEMENTS WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL ALTERNATIVE RIGHT

As explained earlier the International Alternative Right is best understood as a convergence of the European New Right, the American Alternative Right and Online Antagonistic Communities.

However, in addition to these three main constituents is a plethora of smaller movements, cultures and communities, elements of which have contributed to in varying degrees or have been subsumed into the Alternative Right.

Though many of them exist beyond and separately to the Alternative Right as broader ideological movements, they maintain large areas of crossover in terms of ideas and cooperation. For this reason, these elements have also, for some, acted as gateways into the Alternative Right.

● IDENTITARIAN MOVEMENT

This movement started in Europe in 2003 when a youth movement associated with the anti-immigrant Bloc Identitaire, calling itself Génération Identitaire, was launched in France.

The movement has since expanded with similar groups springing up across Europe and beyond. They advocate a return to traditional values and for the preservation of distinct national identities.

The term “Identitarians” is, as explained by the French New Rightist Guillaume Faye, drawn from their belief that characteristic of humanity is “the diversity and singularity of its many people and cultures. Every form of its homogenisation is synonymous with death, as well as sclerosis and entropy.”

While the movement started out independently of the alt-right, there has long been a transatlantic symbiotic relationship with ideas and activists flowing both ways. Many of America’s leading alt-right figures class themselves as Identitarians while some European identitarian groups have begun to adopt the “alt-right” title.

● WHITE SUPREMACISM AND NAZISM

There is significant crossover between the traditional far right and the international alternative-right. Elements of the nazi and white supremacist scene on both sides of the Atlantic have begun to adopt, not just the tag of “alt-right” but also the online tactics and iconography of the movement.

Undoubtedly some within these traditional far right circles see the name alt-right as a useful rebranding and an opportunity to detoxify their ideas and image.

● MANOSPHERE

The manosphere is a loose collection of websites, forums, blogs and vlogs concerned with men’s issues and masculinity and, while sometimes claiming to be a male equivalent to feminism, generally stands in opposition to it. Within the manosphere are numerous sub-divisions, many of which interact with the alt-right due to their similar anti-feminist and anti-progressive views.

This movement includes:

Men’s rights activists: Activists who dispute that men are privileged relative to women. Some feel all genders experience sexism equally while others feel women are comparatively privileged.

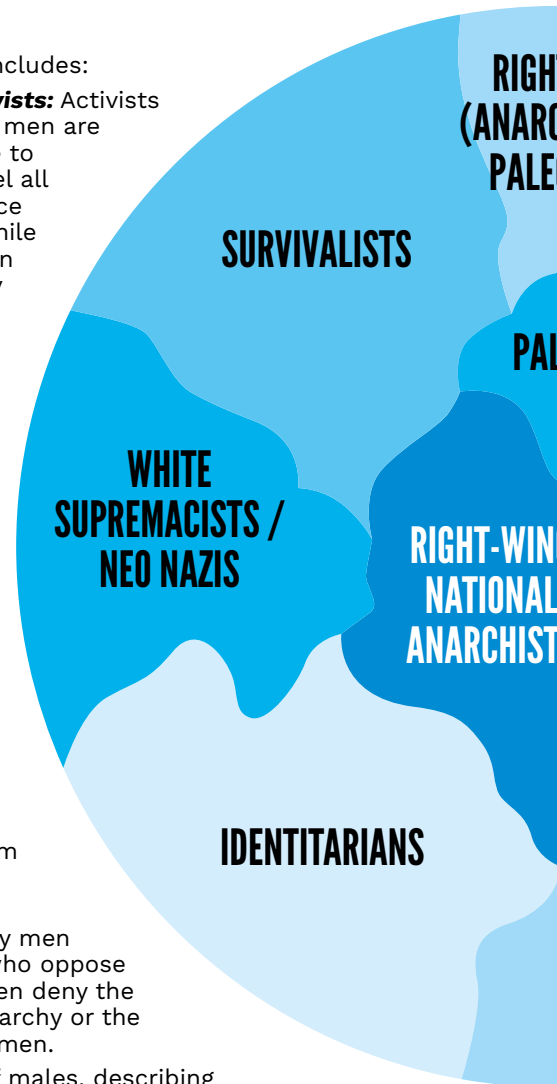
Seduction Community (Pick-up artists): A primarily online community of men who seek to seduce women by using psychology and a supposed understanding of female/male dynamics. The movement has rightly been criticised for widespread sexism and misogyny.

Anti-feminists: Activists, primarily men but not always, who oppose feminism and often deny the existence of patriarchy or the oppression of women.

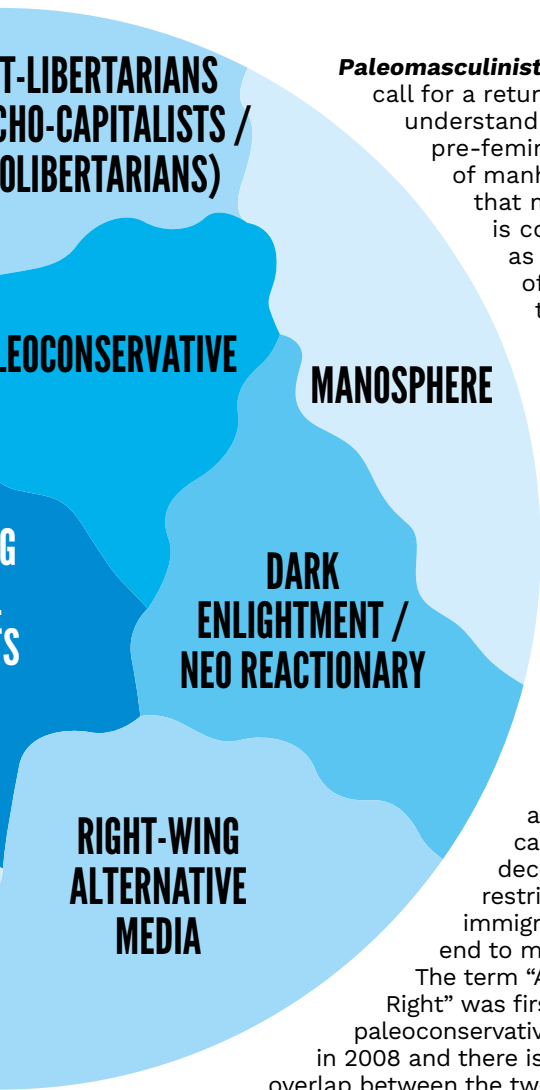
Incels: A group of males, describing themselves as “involuntarily celibates”, that converses together on online forums on this theme. They usually blame their own failure to develop sexual relationships on the women who refuse them and on forces like feminism and “liberal” values that, they feel, stand in their way.

Androphiles: In the context of the manosphere, this is a term used by Jack Donovan of the male tribalist group Wolves of Vinland to describe men who are sexually attracted to other men but who reject the supposed feminist and effeminate influence of LGBT+ movements. It is important to note, however, that this term is also used in other contexts that have nothing to do with the alt-right or the manosphere.

Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOWs): This is a section of the men’s rights movement that have decided to reject female interaction completely. Unlike “incels”, their celibacy is supposedly voluntary.



TRADITIONAL ALTERNATIVE RIGHT



Paleomasculinists: This group call for a return to what they understand as a historical, pre-feminist conception of manhood, and argue that male domination is completely natural as is the submission of women due to differences between the sexes.

● **PALEOCONSERVATISM**

This American movement claims to represent a more authentic conservatism as opposed to that of neo-conservatism. The term paleo derives from the Greek root meaning “ancient” and the movement calls for tradition, decentralisation, restrictions on immigration and an end to multiculturalism.

The term “Alternative Right” was first coined by the paleoconservative Paul Gottfried in 2008 and there is significant overlap between the two movements’ traditionalist views.

● **RIGHT-LIBERTARIANISM (PALEOLIBERTARIANS, ‘CULTURAL LIBERTARIANS’)**

Though many right-wing libertarians do not overlap with the alt-right, the convergence arises for those whose social beliefs are largely motivated by their rejection of what they see as a dangerous left-wing political and cultural hegemony in Western society. For paleolibertarians, this comes from a commitment to conservative values that they see as under threat from this supposed hegemony.

As one of its founders, chairman of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, Llewellyn Rockwell, argued in a 1990 article entitled “The Case for Paleo-Libertarianism” in *Liberty* magazine, the left has a “Hatred of Western Culture” and considers it “worthy more of extinction than defense”.

A more recent strain of libertarian thought, dubbed “Cultural Libertarianism” by Breitbart’s Allum Bokhari and ex-Breitbart writer Milo Yiannopoulos, shifts the focus away from traditional conservative values to a more general belief that right-wing perspectives are under threat from an “authoritarian left” from whom culture must be “liberate[d]”.

● **RIGHT-WING ALTERNATIVE MEDIA**

This is a collection of websites, blogs, radio shows, podcasts and video producers who create politicised right-wing content that offers an alternative to supposedly biased and liberal mainstream media. Though some elements merely provide news from a particular political persuasion, others jettison all objectivity and instead create biased or even completely fake news, often based on conspiracies, in the interest of advancing their political agenda.

● **NEOREACTIONARY/DARK ENLIGHTENMENT/TECHNOLIBERTARIANISM**

This is an esoteric community, primarily based online, that rejects the core principles of the Enlightenment, namely egalitarianism and democracy. Adherents generally hold socially conservative views on issues such as sexuality, gender roles and race relations. The community has close ties to Silicon Valley, advocating anti-Enlightenment politics in combination with pro-individualism and anti-collectivism. Central also is a belief in the emancipatory power of technological advances. While no longer a prominent constituent part of the Alternative Right, it was a school of thought from which the Alternative Right developed.

● **RIGHT-WING/NATIONAL ANARCHISM**

These ideas, derived from the British long-time far right activist Troy Southgate, calls for a decentralised post-capitalist system of separate tribal communities based on racial groups. It draws on European New Right ideas about the need for racial separatism as a means to preserve biocultural diversity. It is around these ideas that the movement overlaps with the alt-right and several National Anarchists have become involved with the alt-right movement.

● **SURVIVALISTS**

This is a primarily American movement that prepares for emergencies, nuclear war and crises brought about by a breakdown of the social order. Their preparations generally include the stockpiling of medical equipment, food and resources as well the building of shelters and armed compounds. The movement usually involves elements of paramilitary activity involving firearms. Survivalism has gone through waves of wider interest and elements of the movement have become active in the alt-right, in particular, due to shared beliefs about coming crises resulting from globalisation.



MY YEAR INSIDE THE INTERNATIONAL ALT-RIGHT

PATRIK HERMANSSON

FOR THE PAST YEAR, PATRIK HERMANSSON, A YOUNG, GAY, ANTI-RACIST ACTIVIST FROM SWEDEN HAS BEEN UNDERCOVER INSIDE THE ALT-RIGHT FOR HOPE NOT HATE. HE RISKED ALL TO GO UNDERCOVER IN SOME OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS FAR-RIGHT NETWORKS IN THE US AND THE UK, CULMINATING IN THE VIOLENT CLASHES IN CHARLOTTESVILLE. THIS IS HIS STORY.

MY YEAR INSIDE THE INTERNATIONAL ALT-RIGHT

... As soon as I left the park a counter-protestor jumped in front of me and sprayed me full in the face with mace. Thankfully I was wearing sunglasses so my eyes were spared, but the rest of my face and arms began to burn. Later the sweat would drip the mace into my eyes and I lost my vision for about 15 minutes.

After returning to my hotel room to clean up, I headed out once more to the streets, thinking the day's events were over. There was still a march going through the town so I headed over to take a look. That's when I saw it: a car ploughing at high speed into a crowd of people. I saw someone's shoes fly through the air. The panicked gathering began to disperse and I started to run, still unsure what exactly had happened.

When the emergency services arrived, I saw the paramedics pumping the chest of a woman before loading her into the back of an ambulance. Earlier that day I had been on the demonstration, just yards from the murderer, now I was stood in shock as his victims were driven away to a cacophony of bellowing sirens.

This sleepy university town had just entered the halls of infamy, thanks to the extremists from the alt-right: the name Charlottesville was soon on the world's lips...

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It was an evening in May 2017 and I found myself sitting at the head of a table for a three-course dinner at the Mandeville Hotel in central London. The occasion was the first annual dinner organised in honour of the notorious, now deceased, British far-right 'intellectual' and alt-right favourite, Jonathan Bowden.

Flying into London for the event were some of the most important alt-right figures from Europe and North America. Their arrival times were a closely guarded secret, but I had been trusted to meet one of them off the plane at Heathrow airport and accompany them to their secret accommodation in London. This figure was none other than Colin Robertson (aka 'Millennial Woes'), the UK's most prominent alt-right vlogger, who had been hiding around Europe ever since his real identity was exposed in January 2017.

The dinner itself was the most important far-right gathering to have taken place in some time. The Croatian writer Tomislav Sunić, an important figure in the European New Right and author of the influential *Against Democracy and Equality*, sat next to me discussing the prospect of mass-scale expulsion of non-white British citizens. He asserted that it was possible to "fly everybody home" and that a plane could leave Heathrow every three minutes! At any normal dinner the prospect of forcibly removing all non-whites would be greeted with shock, but repatriation was a relatively uncontroversial topic around this table.

The rest of the night I talked with Brits, Swedes, Lithuanians and Americans. Some of these were super-stars within the movement, such as the never-before-photographed prominent American alt-right figure, Greg Johnson.

Above the sound of clinking glasses men in rented tuxedos discussed eugenics, the coming "race war" and the supposedly ongoing genocide of white people. Smugly they congratulated themselves on managing to keep the dinner a secret, away from the prying eyes of anti-fascists. Little did they know, I was secretly filming the whole thing.

GETTING IN

For almost a year I've been at the heart of a world of extreme racism, antisemitism, Holocaust denial, esoteric nazi rituals and wild conspiracy theories. What I found was a movement that sometimes glorifies Nazi Germany, openly supports genocidal ideas and is unrelentingly racist, sexist and homophobic.

Becoming part of the London Forum, the UK's most important far-right 'think-tank', was not as difficult as its reputation would suggest. I got my foot in the door by claiming to be a disillusioned Swede curious about the alt-right movement in the UK. I said I came to London inspired by Brexit and to get away from the "cultural Marxism" (a favourite phrase for conspiracy-minded, far-right activists) of Swedish universities.

Jez Turner, leader of the London Forum and one of the best known far-right activists on the UK scene,



Jez Turner, leader of the London Forum

quickly invited me to meet up. Later, as paranoia about a mole increased, new members began to be thoroughly vetted and were required to provide letters of recommendation from trusted members.

Luckily for me, Scandinavian heritage and culture is fetishised by some within the UK far right, meaning interest in my Swedish background overcame most suspicion. At formal dinners, for instance, we sometimes opened by drinking from a ceremonial Viking horn, then raising it to the ceiling in a prayer to the mythological Norse god Odin.

One figure from the London Forum showed a particular interest in me as soon as I arrived. Despite being in his mid-fifties, Stead Steadman, a man of diminutive stature, was always dressed in a khaki shirt, khaki shorts and black walking boots; he looked like a cross between a boy scout and a member of the Hitler Youth. Little did I know at the time but this man was to be central to the whole project. Once close to him he opened doors to some of the most influential far-right figures in the world.

The first meetings with Steadman were brief. I was nervous, fully aware that one false step or mistake could end the whole project before it started. He quizzed me about which far-right people and groups I knew in Sweden and displayed an impressive knowledge.

We usually met at the Nordic Bakery in Soho over a coffee and cinnamon bun. I listened to his musings

on National Socialism and what he'd recently read, correcting his Swedish when he made a mistake. He was also very interested in my university studies, feeling that the "quality of people" in the movement was low and he wanted more people like me, young and university educated, to join.

Over time we talked more and more about the movement in the UK, as well as the Forum and the people he knew. Coming back from Stockholm after Christmas I brought him a rare book by the Swedish health writer Are Waerland, that I acquired from the Swedish anti-racism magazine *EXPO*. Everything I did was about building stronger relationships and gaining more information.

Once the trust was built Steadman began openly discussing the London Forum, people they planned to invite and who he liked and disliked within the movement. The information I gathered helped HOPE not hate map the London Forum network and the movements of key activists with precision. We learned of international conferences in Lithuania, Italy and Sweden being attended by British extremists.

It even got to the stage where I was asked to sit in on the vetting meetings for new London Forum members. Steadman, Turner and I would meet applicants who wanted to attend meetings and question them on their background, politics and commitment to the cause.

Soon there was almost nothing happening in the London Forum that I and HOPE not hate did not know.

MY YEAR INSIDE THE INTERNATIONAL ALT-RIGHT (CONTINUED)

LONDON FORUM: THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

Everyone has always assumed that Jez Turner was the most influential person in the organisation: he was the public face and to the outside world, the key player. Originally, our plan was to get to Turner, through Steadman, but once inside a different picture emerged.

In reality, the Forum is almost completely organised by Stead Steadman and a close friend of his, Mick Brooks, but as both of them completely lack charisma Turner was strategically chosen as the leader. Turner supposedly doesn't even have a computer at home and it's Steadman and Brooks who use their contacts within the domestic and international far right to organise speakers.

Brooks is a secretive character and it's difficult to describe his appearance beyond saying he looks utterly normal, nondescript. He rarely opened up to me though he did like to brag about once being in the back of a Hungarian police van with American alt-right leader Richard Spencer after a demonstration turned violent. More recently Brooks' long-running relationship with Arktos publishing has soured after he backed the wrong side in a failed coup.

With time, my relationship with key London Forum players began to open doors to the strange and sometimes extreme world of esoteric nazi rituals, bad poetry and conspiracy theories that makes up the far-right scene in London. Once inside it became clear that the organised political meetings were just one part of this world. Social events are as common as activism. They go to concerts, gallery openings and organise picnics. Some go to meetings on topics they are completely uninterested in, just to be around friends. For many activists their personal and political lives are inseparable.

But hate and violence are always present. These are people that stand up and clap when the Orlando massacre (the shooting at an LGBT night club in Florida that claimed 49, mostly Latinx, lives) is brought up and suggest that the best way to solve the catastrophe in the Mediterranean is with gunships. In these groups, antisemitism is so ingrained that to suggest that the Holocaust actually happened is a joke you make over a pint.

THE LONDON SCENE

While the London Forum sits at the very centre of the UK far-right scene, London is populated by a whole array of groups, all of which I worked my way through. The Extremists Club is a small, strange discussion forum that holds monthly meetings of around 25 people in the upstairs room of the famous Old Coffee House in Soho. Here, the lack of moderation is what attracts the audience.



Stead Steadman and Colin Robertson (AKA Millennial Woes) at Heathrow Airport. Taken on Button Camera.



MY YEAR INSIDE THE INTERNATIONAL ALT-RIGHT (CONTINUED)

On the face of it the meetings are comical. A man in a long, white, curly baroque wig introduces two to three speakers per night covering topics such as gun laws, religion and the lack of freedom of speech, interspersed with poetry performed in Old Norse or Anglo-Saxon English.

Yet there is a dark side to this frankly laughable gathering of extremists. One night I'm having a smoke with Alison Chabloz, one of the UK's most notorious Holocaust deniers, outside the pub. Discussion turns to her impending prosecution for online antisemitism. "It's a PR trick by the Zionists," she says. Then, one of our number dares to ask whether anything would actually convince her the Holocaust had indeed happened, only to be met with widespread laughter. "If you can show me any *real* evidence, I'll change my mind!" Chabloz gleefully exclaimed.

In this world, Holocaust denial and conspiracy theories are commonplace, so much so that a whole group exists to cater specifically for them. I spent endless mind-numbing hours at meetings of the Keep Talking group, listening to speakers deny climate change, debate whether 9/11 was a false flag attack or if an ill-defined "they" sold birth-certificates on the stock market. Trestle tables at the edge of the hall were adorned with Holocaust denial books.

Also active in London are tiny Odinist groups, often with a healthy smattering of nazi adherents. One sunny afternoon a group of us gathered in the Barbican Centre, an iconic brutalist housing complex replete with green areas, for a 'moot'.

Steadman, in his typical khaki shorts, lifted a horn to the sky and began to pray to the Nordic gods before taking a gulp of mead. Then he placed a Viking horn to his lips and blew, but instead of a bellowing blast echoing out a stuttered honk spluttered from his lips.

Sometimes being a mole in the far right was dangerous, nerve racking or scary but at other times it was surreal, ridiculous and frankly comical.

THE TRADITIONAL BRITAIN GROUP AND GREGORY LAUDER-FROST

Founded by Gregory Lauder-Frost in 2001, the Traditional Britain Group (TBG) is a London-based traditionalist organisation that hosts far-right gatherings, dinners and conferences, often including international alt-right figures.

Alongside the London Forum it is a central networking and meeting point for the dissemination of far right and European New Right ideas in the UK, in part due to Lauder-Frost's role as the UK head of the leading alt-right publisher Arktos Media.

The black-tie events have been addressed by the likes of Alex Kurtagic, Tomislav Sunic, John Morgan, Marcus

A 2017 meeting of the Traditional Britain Group



Willinger of Generation Identity, and even the best-known alt-right figure of them all, Richard Spencer. Several Breitbart London writers are known to have attended, and UK-based alt-right organiser Matt Tait is also a regular.

However, unlike the Forum Network the TBG endeavours to maintain a more "respectable" image (for example Jeremy Bedford-Turner, figurehead of the Forum Network, is barred from attending). This enables TBG to be attended by Conservative Party and UKIP members, including the Tory MP Jacob



Rees-Mogg (who later apologised for his appearance) and UKIP MEP Gerard Batten.

When I sit down with lauder-Frost in the Chandos pub near Trafalgar Square, I've hardly had a chance to touch my drink before he openly exclaims that black Labour peer Doreen Lawrence "is a n****r". Beneath the feigned veneer of respectability, he is a gutter racist. As we drink he opens up about the increasingly acrimonious splits within the alt-right that resulted from internal fights in Arktos, the premier publisher of the movement. Being the UK head of

Arktos he knew the ins and outs and explained how then-editor-in-chief John Morgan launched a failed coup and how Mick Brooks from the London Forum had backed him, resulting in him being pushed out as well.

He doesn't hold back and I can feel little drips of his saliva hitting my face as he speaks. He describes his colleague Brooks as a "common bloke" and how Daniel Friberg, founder of Arktos and a leading alt-right figure, is "not a big thinker". Neither does Lauder-Frost like Richard Spencer. He tells me that Spencer, who has spoken at the TBG, is "naive" and "doesn't understand Europe".

By the time I leave the pub it is clear that an important split is emerging within the alt-right movement between some of the biggest players.

* * *

BREAKING AMERICA

If you want to get to the very heart of the alt-right, all roads lead to America. While Europe has produced its fair share of prominent alt-right activists and big names from America regularly visit, it was clear that if I was to better understand the alt-right movement, the emerging split and generally to get closer to the big names, I would have to head across the Atlantic.

During Greg Johnson's short visit to London I had got to know him well. In addition to the Bowden dinner and the conference the following day I had spent an afternoon at his hotel along with Steadman. With Johnson being at the very heart of the emerging split of the alt-right, it was decided I should start the American part of my infiltration with him.

Johnson admired the London Forum so much that he replicated the concept in New York and Seattle with closed conferences of hard-core activists addressed by leading speakers from the far right. Recent events had been attended by big names, such as the internationally recognised antisemite and editor of the Occidental Observer, Kevin MacDonald, as well as the UK's most well-known alt-right vlogger Colin Robertson (aka Millennial Woes).

One sunny Saturday in June, I joined the list of speakers at one of these forums in Seattle. I had intended to attend as a guest but one week before the event Johnson contacted me and asked me to give the opening address, removing any doubt in my mind that I was now accepted as part of this movement. With delicious irony I opened the event by talking about the danger of anti-fascist infiltration.

The Seattle forum is smaller than those in London but, having started just a couple of months ago,

MY YEAR INSIDE THE INTERNATIONAL ALT-RIGHT (CONTINUED)

people tell me that it has grown considerably since. It's organised together with a group called Cascadia, named after the mountain range that lies south-east of Seattle. It's run by a group of young men who call themselves a "tribe" and to become a member you need to be white.

Jeffrey, one of their leaders, says that they've put the limit at 1/8th, meaning that you cannot have more than one-eighth "non-white blood" to be considered for membership and even claim that they require recruits to take a DNA test to prove it.

HITLER TEA POTS AND BBQ FOOD

The day before the forum I'm invited to an exclusive barbecue in a suburb of Seattle at the house of Charles Krafft, the infamous Nazi ceramicist. His home is a temple to National Socialism. Swastikas cover the walls and *Mein Kampf* sits on the bookshelf, alongside works by Mussolini, Evola and WW2 paraphernalia.

Most of the people there are men between 17 and 25 and most carry guns. "We're all about the 14 words," a guy called Kato tells me when I ask about Cascadia, referencing the infamous white supremacist slogan ("We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children"). "Whites are going to be a minority in this country by 2040," he adds before telling me about the impending "race war".

The ultimate goal of Cascadia is to create a completely separate society where members interact with each other socially, economically and, should more women join, then romantically as well. It's a way to preserve the white race (relationships with non-whites are not allowed) as well as a way of avoiding the backlash from "cultural Marxism", a threat that they think increasingly permeates all aspects of American life.

Inspired by the Völkish movement in early 20th century Germany, they take a monthly fee from their members and plan to buy land somewhere in the eastern part of the state in order to create a separate, completely white society.

Visceral antisemitism permeates everything, as does homophobia and sexism. "Throw them in the oven," is a common joke throughout the night as are violent threats towards "race traitors". For the first time, I'm genuinely afraid of being discovered.

Conscious of every gesture I make, I am sure they will notice that I don't fit in. I try asking about their guns and begin to speak English with an even heavier Swedish accent than usual, hoping it will make them more forgiving. But it's too late to back out now, so I take a deep breath, smile, sip my drink and laugh along as they joke about the mass murder of Jews.

UNCOVERING LINKS TO THE WHITE HOUSE

After the Seattle Forum I head to New York. The split between Counter-Currents Publishing and AltRight Corporation (the result of the Arktos row mentioned earlier) had got especially nasty. Having spent a few days at the heart of Counter-Currents I decided I had to go get the other side of the story.

I manage to convince Jason Reza Jorjani, co-founder of AltRight Corporation and editor of Arktos Media, to meet for a drink. I'm sitting across from him in an Irish pub in the shadow of the Empire State Building. The first thing he said was: "You're not in touch with Greg [Johnson], are you?"

I assure him I'm not, knowing he would leave if he ever found out I had spent the last month getting to know people on the other side of the split, some of whom had recently accused Jorjani of being a CIA agent. "It's like the SA and the SS," Jorjani said. "A Night of the Long Knives is coming though."

Jorjani talks for hours, displaying a remarkable arrogance coupled with a tiring self-pity. He's a remarkably extreme character, much more so than his public persona. He sees the world one day being run by a single strong leader and predicts it won't be long before bank notes are adorned with images of Hitler.

I ask about AltRight Corporation and its aims and objectives and he explains how it is a "government in waiting". But then, out of nowhere, as though it was no big deal, he says: "We had connections in the Trump administration, we were going to do things!"

I lean forward, praying that the camera I have hidden in one of my shirt buttons captured what he had just said. I can hardly believe it. In this small Irish bar in Manhattan, I am sat opposite one of the most prominent alt-right figures in the world – from the extreme racial nationalist end of the movement – as he explains to me that he was "the link man" with the Trump administration via Steve Bannon, former head of Breitbart and, until recently, Trump's chief strategist.

Some months after my meeting, in the wake of the bloody violence in Charlottesville, Jorjani unexpectedly resigned from the AltRight Corporation and Arktos books, to commit himself full time to bringing about the collapse of the Islamic Republic of Iran (which he believes will be a major step towards his dream of a new Indo-European World Order).

UNCOMFORTABLY NUMB: REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR INSIDE

Spending a year inside the far right numbs you. The things I reacted to viscerally in the beginning began to almost feel normal. I soon noticed how



Jason Reza Jorjani,
co-founder of AltRight
Corporation and editor
of Arktos Media

little I would react to hearing such extreme racism. I became desensitised. Yet that is what is so scary. Being undercover meant I couldn't challenge their hateful ideas. Bit-by-bit hate began to be "normal". This is the key lesson I learnt. Allowing these hateful ideas to go unchallenged allows them to become normal. It brings about the creeping acceptance of alt-right and far-right ideas in the mainstream. Just look at Donald Trump's failure to properly condemn the bloody events in Charlottesville. If we don't stand up every time we see racism, sexism, homophobia or oppression of any type, we run the risk of it becoming seen as normal.

Overall, though, the sacrifices were worth it and the mission itself was remarkably successful. Once deeply inside the UK far right, I could feed HOPE not hate huge amounts of detail. We knew about every meeting, every location and who was involved. It even got to the stage where Steadman asked me to recruit speakers to the Forum, to vet new activists and even to speak.

I learnt a huge amount about how people and groups are connected, how the movement operates and what it was planning. I found out how the movement interacts internationally and how important the social aspect of activism is in radicalising and retaining members. These groups attempt to become all-encompassing organisations that go far beyond politics, into art, religion and social life making them incredibly difficult to leave. Tragically I've seen how social pressure inside these groups can make ordinary people support genocide.

The far right is often treated with complacency.

Should we let them into the public debate?

Their views might be different, but aren't they just other opinions? What's obvious after a year inside the alt-right is that we cannot become complacent.

These are not just opinions. These are organisations that actively foment hate and promote violence towards large groups of people. They are dangerous and their dangerous ideology must be confronted, wherever it appears.

THE ALT-RIGHT SINCE CHARLOTTESVILLE

THE UNITE THE RIGHT rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, August 12, 2017, was a defining moment for the alt-right, but not in the way the movement had hoped. Announced in the context of escalating violence at alt-right events, Unite the Right was intended to be the moment that the primarily online-based movement demonstrated that its various factions and figures could stand in solidarity for white nationalism, wielding power on the streets against all opposition.

As events transpired, Unite the Right was defined by ferocious violence that resulted in dozens of injuries, culminating in the death of anti-fascist activist Heather Heyer after James Fields, a self-described neo-Nazi, drove a car into a crowd of counter-protestors. In 2019, at a U.S. District Court in Charlottesville, Fields plead guilty to 28 federal counts of hate crime acts causing bodily injury and involving an attempt to kill, and one count of a hate crime act that resulted in death.¹ Whilst the alt-right has long attempted to portray itself as a fresh alternative to stale, thuggish, traditional American white supremacism, in the wake of Charlottesville media outlets across the globe were adorned with images of leading alt-right figures alongside Nazi flags, Klansmen and shield-and-helmet clad activists with makeshift weapons.² The scope of negative coverage was magnified by US President Donald Trump's failure to adequately condemn the white supremacists.

Charlottesville was a hubristic attempt to capitalise on the momentum of Trump's election, but instead gave the alt-right its most infamous moment. Whilst some alt-right figures attempted to claim the abortive event was a victory, Charlottesville significantly intensified negative attention on the alt-right, which in the aftermath has found itself operating in an even more hostile environment and facing a number of considerable challenges. The alt-right will forever be associated with the events of that day, and while the demonstration brought them worldwide attention, it also marked the moment that the movement went into sharp decline. The years that have followed have been marred by infighting and splits, paradoxically meaning that 'Unite the Right' was the catalyst for the disintegration of many of the already tenuous links that held this 'movement' together. While Charlottesville does not represent the wholesale collapse of the alt-right in America, it has resulted in significant tactical shifts and altered the nature of the movement.

Emblematic of the effect of Charlottesville was when, a year later, organiser Jason Kessler unwisely sought to hold 'Unite the Right 2' and faced pre-emptive condemnation across the alt-right for attempting to hold a sequel march to the first abortive rally. Kessler was able to muster a dismal turnout of just 20 activists in Washington DC, down from as many as 1,500 at the previous rally, vastly outnumbered by counter-protestors.³

While the alt-right has undoubtedly endured a long and bruising few years since Charlottesville, the miserable attendance at Unite the Right 2 did not represent the death of the movement, but rather a change in tack. The alt-right has continued to host private conferences, bringing together the biggest American and European names in the alt-right and providing networking opportunities and fostering a sense of community. Speeches can subsequently be uploaded to YouTube and other sites, greatly expanding their potential audience. The Daily Stormer and The Right Stuff have also advocated the organisation of smaller-scale private meetups, referred to as 'Book Clubs' and 'Pool Parties' respectively, aimed at extreme-right community-building.⁴ As such, the post-Charlottesville online deplatformings, lawsuits and infighting endured by the alt-right in the wake of Charlottesville has forced white nationalists to pause, readapt and reconsider strategy both online and offline.

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

The alt-right has, since its earliest days, primarily operated online. Whilst many thousands of internet users may identify with the alt-right, only a fraction of these will have engaged in offline activism. The alt-right uses the internet to recruit, to target its perceived enemies, and to engage in 'metapolitics' – the dissemination of ideas and cultural values, laying the foundation for long-term political change. While Unite the Right was an attempt by alt-right figureheads to venture into street politics, getting boots on the ground still depended on the use of online tools, for example advertising the event, allowing event organisers to communicate, and crowdfunding travel costs. The subsequent catastrophe led many on the alt-right to abandon the endorsement of planned public events, in favour of retreating online and continuing to engage in the culture war through digital means. Online activists can be anonymous, avoiding the doxing and lawsuits that Charlottesville brought on them. "We had successfully been lured out of our element, out of the place we were winning by engaging the culture, into a place where we could not win", wrote Andrew Anglin of the Daily Stormer in March 2018.⁵

However, post-Charlottesville the alt-right has found that the internet is no longer quite the safe haven it once enjoyed. Alongside actions by anti-fascist hackers – for example, Red Ice Creations, the alt-right's premier media network, claimed to have had its social media hacked and its membership database stolen on the day of the rally⁶ – public outcry has prompted a renewed digital crackdown aimed at alt-right-associated accounts on social media platforms, payment providers and advertising



Charlottesville Unite The Right Rally August 2017
Photo Rodney Dunning

platforms. This has, as explored in the chapter Alt-Tech: Co-opting and Creating Digital Spaces, forced some on the alt-right to seek solace in alternative online platforms, sometimes created by the alt-right or its sympathisers. These are marketed for their ‘free speech’ policies and, in the case of payments, can provide greater anonymity. These alternative platforms have had varying degrees of success, however, and engagement in mainstream platforms remains a major area of focus for the alt-right, which has in some areas continued to grow online post-Charlottesville.

Anglin’s Daily Stormer has been victim to particularly severe responses post-Charlottesville, partly due to the outlet branding Heyer a “fat, childless, 32 year-old slut”⁷ and site administrator Andrew Auernheimer (AKA ‘weev’) claiming that he was seeking to “get people on the ground” at her funeral.⁸ Shortly after Unite the Right, the Daily Stormer’s domain name was seized by Google and its hosting provider, GoDaddy, kicked the site off its servers. The Daily Stormer has subsequently moved between hosting providers and has had over a dozen domain names seized, enabling Anglin to call his site the “most censored publication in history.”⁹ “In less than a year between the election and that fateful day in August, we went from the

highest high to the lowest low”, Anglin wrote in March 2018.¹⁰ Despite all this, Anglin claimed in June 2018 that “Daily Stormer traffic is better than ever”, and the site remains the most significant nazi website in the world.¹¹ Elsewhere the website of Greg Johnson’s Counter-Currents Publishing, which suffered online DDOS attacks after Charlottesville, reported a spike in visitors in August 2017, although it returned to approximately 150,000 visitors per month by June 2018, a small increase from spring 2017.¹²

The alt-right has also been hurt financially by online payment providers Stripe and PayPal, both of whom have cancelled contracts with high profile alt-right websites and activists. This began with the pre-Charlottesville cancellation of the accounts of alt-lite personality Kyle Chapman (AKA ‘Based Stickman’), alt-right blog Occidental Dissent and WeSearchr, the crowdfunding site that offered a bounty for the antifascist that punched alt-right figurehead Richard Spencer in January 2017. The crackdown accelerated after Unite the Right, with the accounts of Spencer’s National Policy Institute (NPI), the now-defunct Identity Evropa (replaced by the American Identity Movement in 2019) and Counter-Currents all facing sanctions. Bans by payment providers have been piecemeal, however, and Stripe remains as the processor of several sites connected to the alt-right. As a result the alt-right has sought to establish replacement funding platforms, but with limited success. The Patreon alternative Hatreon, for example, collapsed in early 2018. This has increased the already existing interest in cryptocurrencies, such as Bitcoin and Monero. As decentralised systems they are virtually impossible to censor and allow for a degree of anonymity that is impossible with, for example, a credit card. The rapid rise in the price of Bitcoin during the fall of 2017 helped drive the use of the currency and most public alt-right activists now have cryptocurrency wallets.

However, dependence on effort-intensive payment methods such as cryptocurrencies and cheques has, for some, caused difficulties. Greg Johnson of Counter-Currents announced in August 2018 that his organisation had received just \$8,497.94 so far that year, well short of its \$70,000 target for the year and significantly less than previous years.¹³ Johnson has, however, done well from cryptocurrencies; his wallet was worth over \$100,000 in December 2017, thanks to the high price of the currency at the time.¹⁴ Others have fared even better; Auernheimer had received a staggering \$1,676,039 to his bitcoin wallet as of August 2018.¹⁵ These numbers highlight the tech-savvy nature of the alt-right, a movement looking to stay a step ahead.

Post-Charlottesville many social media platforms also made a renewed effort to ban accounts associated with the alt-right. Twitter has banned numerous high

profile activists, especially after policy changes in December 2017. Gab has quickly gained traction in the alt-right as a Twitter alternative and some of those blocked on Twitter, such as Anglin, have established themselves as among Gab's most prominent users. Gab has, however, largely failed to establish a loyal user base. Many users contribute little to the site, simply maintaining accounts as backups in case of Twitter bans, resulting in comparatively low levels of discussion and interaction between users compared to other social media platforms. This highlights the fact that the alt-right is reluctant to move to alternative platforms unless forced. Platforms such as Gab, Reddit alternative Voat and Facebook alternative VK risk alt-right ghettoisation, which limits the potential to reach new audiences and pull off attention-grabbing media stunts afforded by mainstream platforms. Bans on alt-right accounts can meaningfully limit the alt-right's reach, but such bans have been inconsistent across platforms while some influential users have simply returned to Twitter under different user names.

Despite facing huge challenges post-Charlottesville, alt-right content producers have continued to see growth on YouTube, which is both central in disseminating their message and, whilst it has banned a small number of extreme accounts, is relatively lenient towards the alt-right. YouTube also allows alt-right accounts, such as Colin Robertson (AKA 'Millennial Woes'), to monetise their live streams with 'Super Chats', which allow viewers to 'tip' the creator of the video, now a common way for alt-right YouTubers to monetise their channels, supplanting platforms like Patreon where users may have been blocked.

One corner of the internet has remained relatively untouched, however, and as such continues to be a haven for online alt-right activity. Impervious to content bans are image messageboards such as 4chan and 8chan, which tolerate almost any kind of content, no matter how extreme. The /pol/ board of 4chan has been essential to the movement's growth, and both 4chan and 8chan remain central hubs for the development of alt-right propaganda and online strategies, such as deliberate misinformation and ad hoc hate campaigns, through which the alt-right's culture war is fought. However, in the wake of the murder of 50 people in New Zealand by a far-right terrorist in March 2019, multiple internet service providers in Australia took the decision to block access to websites that spread video footage of the attack and this included both 8chan and 4chan, meaning that not even these might be safe spaces for the alt-right in the near future.¹⁶

SPLITS AND DIVISION IN THE ALT-RIGHT POST-CHARLOTTESVILLE

Unite the Right has, ironically, left the movement more fragmented than ever before, with many activists attempting to shift blame for the mess, and some dissociating from the movement altogether. "There's disarray, there's discord and there's infighting—endless fucking infighting, vendettas" said Colin Robertson in March 2018, summarising simply: "we are fucked."¹⁷ Since Charlottesville there has been intense backlash against figures continuing to engage in street politics and planned public events. Following Charlottesville

Richard Spencer continued on his tour of American colleges, protected by his black-clad nazi bodyguards of the Traditionalist Workers Party (TWP). The expensive tour culminated at Michigan State University in March 2018, when 25 people were arrested after TWP activists violently clashed with anti-fascists, all so that Spencer could address a near-empty auditorium.¹⁸ TWP dissolved just weeks later after leader Matthew Heimbach was arrested on domestic violence charges, eventually pleading guilty to beating the TWP co-founder Matt Parrott, Heimbach's father-in-law. The incident was reportedly sparked by Heimbach's affair with Parrott's wife.¹⁹ The whole debacle was deeply humiliating for the alt-right.

The predictable violence at planned street protests such as Charlottesville has also enabled lawsuits against big name alt-right figures, including a suit brought on behalf of 10 counter-protestors injured at Charlottesville and against event organisers.²⁰ "I am under attack and I need your help", Spencer said in an April 2018 video, "Some of the biggest and baddest law firms in the United States are suing me."²¹ Coupled with deplatformings from funding sites, such lawsuits have been devastating for some figures; Spencer was reportedly so broke in May 2018 that his credit card was declined for a \$4.75 drink.²² Spencer's AltRight.com was taken down by its hosting provider after being targeted by a civil rights group in May; it is now back online but dormant. "It will take the movement years to recover from the bad decisions of 2017", wrote Greg Johnson, "I doubt that Richard Spencer and his various operations like the National Policy Institute will recover at all."²³

The start of 2019 saw an existing schism in the alt-right widen significantly when two central figures, long antagonists, reopened their war. The feud that has been rumbling on at the very heart of the white nationalist alt-right between Greg Johnson and Daniel Friberg – the respective heads of the central publishers of the alt-right, US-based Counter-Currents Publishing and Hungary-based Arktos Media – has again erupted, with accusations of grooming, doxing, alcoholism and criminality being levelled. Whilst some leading figures have tried their best to remain impartial, Johnson has attempted to force figures to take sides, claiming that:

I will not deal with people who deal with Friberg and Forney. I will not do business with people who deal with Friberg and Forney. I cannot, in good conscience, have anything to do with them. They are just cancer, they are just poison, and they are so dishonest. And all their little fanboys, and their enablers, I'm declaring war on you too.²⁴

Splits are nothing new to far-right movements but after two years of post-Charlottesville division this major rupture at the heart of the movement has only served to further divide an already fragmented scene.

In the face of such opposition and internal strife and division one is forced to ask, does the alt-right even exist anymore? Media commentators, many of whom were late to notice its existence, were quick to pronounce its death over the past few years. Even within the movement many have dropped the moniker of 'alt-right' – Greg Johnson has gone back to talking of the "white nationalist movement" – and some, such as Anatoly Karlin in the Unz Review simply declared, "The Alt Right Is Dead."²⁵ However, the alt-

right was never, as some believed, a simple, formal, structured and homogenous far-right movement with an identifiable formation and end date. In our introduction, we defined the International ‘Alternative Right’ as:

An international set of groups and individuals, operating primarily online though with offline outlets, whose core belief is that “white identity” is under attack from pro-multicultural and liberal elites and so-called “social justice warriors” (SJW) who allegedly use “political correctness” to undermine Western civilisation and the rights of white males. Put simply, the “Alternative Right” is a far right, anti-globalist grouping that offers a radical “alternative” to traditional/establishment conservatism. The eclectic and disparate nature of its constituent parts make for large areas of

disagreement yet, together, they are united around a core set of beliefs.

While there have been periods of unity and cooperation – the Trump election causing the greatest period of formal coordination – and periods of division, and variable amounts of offline organisation, the amorphous movement as we define it still exists. The alt-right trolls still plague social media, the alt-right content producers still pump out endless hours of videos and podcasts, alt-right writers still publish reams of articles and alt-right organisers still hold conferences around the world with well-known figures travelling to speak at them. Just because the alt-right does not collectively identify or seek to demonstrate together as they did in Charlottesville, does not mean that the alt-right does not exist. The movement was always a decentralised, distributed network, and it is merely more decentralised again.

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