

White genocide, ethnocrisis, and far-right identity politics: Constructing white nationalist identity through Twitter discourse

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ABSTRACT

Collective identity is not a static construct, but grows and changes as the world changes around it. In this study we approach identity as a discursive construct that takes shape through words and concepts with shared meanings among a community of knowers. Specifically, we analyze the white nationalist discourse on Twitter to expose the emergence of a far-right identity politics, which appropriates the rhetoric of left politics advancing the position of marginalized groups. By constructing narratives around ethnocrisis to reflect concurrent efforts by liberals to de-center whiteness in politics and culture more broadly, white nationalists have leveraged digital publics to position white people, white men in particular, as an oppressed class, dispossessed of social and cultural agency. In order to examine and illustrate its conceptual and discursive character, we perform a digital ethnography of the white nationalist discourse by pairing computational and qualitative methods on a data set comprising 146,210 Twitter users and 211 million utterances from 2010-2017. Employing a simple frequency-based method of lexicon extraction, we generate a large and comprehensive set of terms associated with the white nationalism, which we manually classify into thematic categories representing the conceptual space that is white nationalist identity. We explore how this “imaginative geography” reveals new developments in the political movement of white supremacy as well as persistent themes from earlier incarnations of the movement. Drawing on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative analytical paradigms, this study reinforces the value of social media as a particularly tractable site for discourse analysis, and thus identity construction.

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1 Introduction

In July of 2022, Tucker Carlson joined other prominent conservative figures in amplifying claims that white people were under siege when he invoked the “Great Replacement” theory on his nightly Fox News show. By framing demographic change and racial equality as a form of oppression, Carlson legitimized a long-standing rhetorical tradition in which white reactionaries cast themselves as victims of social progress (Glickman, 2021). This rhetoric of white victimhood has long been central to white nationalist ideology, identity formation, and political action programs. Just as white supremacists during Reconstruction feared the loss of social dominance, contemporary white nationalist movements mobilize similar anxieties, portraying white people—especially white men—as imperiled by racial equity initiatives. The amplification of these narratives on mainstream platforms reflects how discursive filters shaped in online environments increasingly mediate public discourse, blurring the boundaries between fringe digital spaces and institutional decision-making.

In February 2025, the National Science Foundation (NSF) joined other federal agencies in a sweeping effort to comply with Executive Order 15141, illustrating the emergent institutionalization of these “Great Replacement” narratives and accelerating the resultant reactionary backlash against diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. The order mandated the termination of “discriminatory” programs related to “diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility,” effectively enacting the ideological reversal that positions racial justice as an existential threat. In response, the NSF compiled a list of flagged terms—including diverse group, equality, marginalized, racial, social justice, and systemic—that would trigger automatic review of research and grant proposals (Novak, 2025). This systematic assault on institutional language reflects a broader reactionary effort to capitalize on white victimhood and reassert the centrality of white men in cultural and political life. These discursive filters—cultivated in white nationalist digital spaces—function to reshape institutional policy, demonstrating how language weaponized online migrates into mainstream governance and reinforces exclusionary agendas. To understand their emergence and structure, we look to the discursive environments where they take shape, circulate, and evolve.

These persistent narratives highlight how ethnoexclusionary social and political movements take shape in and influence the day-to-day interactions and conceptual infrastructure of the present (Nagel and Grove, 2021). White nationalism continues to evolve, taking on new forms and serving different social functions across time and space (Lipsitz, 2006). While maintaining continuity with its historical antecedents, white nationalism has found contemporary meaning in digital publics, where its supporters construct and sustain an identity of victimhood (Mihelj and Jiménez-Martínez, 2021; Adams and Roscigno, 2005; Anahita, 2006). As such, academics, activists, and policymakers have increasingly turned to digital spaces to explain the (re)surgence and (re)calcification of nationalist sentiments (Mihelj and Jiménez-Martínez, 2021; Adams and Roscigno, 2005).

In this study, we approach identity as a discursive construct shaped through language—words and concepts that carry shared meanings among a community of knowers. Specifically, we analyze the white nationalist discourse on Twitter to uncover how a far-right identity politics has emerged, which appropriates the rhetoric of left-wing movements aimed at advancing marginalized groups. Employing narratives of ethnocrisis, white nationalists have leveraged digital publics to position themselves as an oppressed class, dispossessed of social and cultural power Jardina (2019). To examine this evolving identity, we employ a mixed-methods approach that combines computational and qualitative techniques. We present a digital ethnography of white nationalist discourse, analyzing a dataset of 146,210 Twitter users and 211 million utterances from 2014 to 2017. Using a frequency-based method of lexicon extraction (Monroe et al., 2008), we generated a comprehensive set of terms associated with white nationalism. These terms were then manually classified into thematic categories that represent the conceptual space of white nationalist identity. This approach is similar to a small scale analysis of the white nationalist discourse by Graham (2016), who combined text clustering with close reading to examine rhetorical strategies by which white nationalists engage political rivals.

Our analysis reveals both new developments and persistent themes. Drawing on Edward Said’s 1977 concept of imaginative geographies—collectively constructed perceptions and narratives of space that shape how places and people are understood within a given cultural or political context—we examine how white nationalist digital communities mobilize historical abstractions and new motifs to map out conceptual spaces that reinforce an ethnoexclusive identity under constant threat. In response to the increasingly identity-focused political reality, white nationalist digital publics filter political realities through these motifs, positioning themselves as distinct from more mainstream conservative movements that are less explicit about centering race, and whiteness, in particular (Gray, 2018; Gardell, 2019).

These motifs coalesce to construct narratives of ethnocrisis and ethnostalgia that position minorities as privileged, while casting white people as innocent and vulnerable victims Ross (1990); Jardina (2019). While white supremacy implicitly underpins various logics across the political spectrum, including aspects of liberalism, we show that white nationalism explicitly draws on and instills an activated white political identity of dispossession in its participants. This contributes to emerging understandings of white nationalist digital publics as complex discursive projects of organized political

identities, ideologies, and agendas (Belew and Gutiérrez, 2021; Bright et al., 2020; Krzyżanowski and Krzyżanowska, 2024).

This paper proceeds by situating our understanding of white nationalism within broader discussions of nationalism and identity construction. We draw on the concept of imaginative geographies as a particularly useful approach to understanding white nationalism as a discursive identity construct. To capture the discourse of white nationalism, we analyze a set of Twitter data collected in 2017, comprising both white nationalists and users adjacent to the discourse. By comparing term frequencies between white nationalists and a similar outgroup—nationalists who do not have an activated white identity—we generate a list of terms that captures the semantic content of white nationalist discourse. We then employ qualitative analysis to draw out key conceptual threads that constitute white nationalist identity.

From there, we examine the lexicon to understand how this community of knowers engages in ethnocrisis and ethnostalgia to construct an identity of white victimhood, positioning perceived challengers as victimizers (Ross, 1990; Barton Hronešová and Kreiss, 2024). By focusing on emergent themes such as boundary work, consciousness raising, and the appropriation of left-wing political rhetoric, we reveal how the imaginative geographies of white nationalism constitute an activated white identity with distinct political understandings and action programs.

This study characterizes the conceptual space of white nationalist digital publics, mapping their discursive boundaries and exploring how meaning is made within these spaces. By extracting a white nationalist lexicon and analyzing its conceptual themes through a combination of close reading and descriptive statistics, we reinforce the dominance of historical motifs while uncovering new ones. These include the appropriation of leftist identity politics, a resurgence of race science through evolutionary psychology, and entanglements with the allied discourses of 4chan and organized misogyny. Mapping these developments in the discourse are key to rendering white nationalism meaningful as the movement responds to and shapes the sociopolitical conditions of the here and now.

1.1 Reading nationalist identity construction as an imaginative geography

Koch (2023) conceptualizes nationalism as a fundamentally spatial expression of community primarily concerned with delineating borders of (dis)possession, with varying degrees of inclusivity and exclusivity. Simultaneously preoccupied with imagined futures of regression and revival, while yearning for an imagined past, nationalisms render pasts, presents, and futures useful through discursive constructs that decontextualize, abstract, and selectively forget. This enables the production of identities of possession, that are under continuous discursive production yet perceived by their constituents as fixed and innate (Said, 1994; Koch, 2023; Eldar, 2023).

To understand how these identities are produced, adapted and maintained to the context of present political age requires an understanding of the digital publics in which they take shape. Scholars have increasingly turned to the concept of imaginative geographies to elucidate the processes underlying nationalist identity construction. Introduced by Edward Said (1977) and further developed by others (Desbiens, 2017; Koefoed and Haldrup, 2020; Ganesh and Froio, 2020), imaginative geographies refer to the ways anxieties and aspirations are projected onto spaces and peoples, constructing notions of distance and difference. This framework allows us to examine how political understandings of identity are formed and how they contribute to the demarcation of “us” versus “them”. The rise of digital publics has added new dimensions to the study of nationalist movements. These online spaces serve as primary sites for discursive construction, informing imaginative geographies and their translation into political action programs (Törnberg and Törnberg, 2016; Mahmood, 2019; Ganesh and Froio, 2020; Koch, 2023). However, as Luger (2022) notes, there is still a gap in understanding the role of these digital publics in the processes that constitute nationalism.

Scholars such as Lipsitz (2006) and Gray (2018) have highlighted how white supremacy centers on maintaining and amplifying an exclusionary project grounded in the possessive investment in whiteness. To understand how members of the white nationalist community construct and filter reality, we turn to Ferber’s 1999 post-structuralist account of white supremacy as a complex and diverse discursive construct of theories, practices, and knowledge which aims to define the boundary around whiteness and instantiate an idealist position of whiteness and a politics of white advocacy. By examining the lexicality of white nationalist digital publics through the lens of imaginative geographies, we can gain insight into how these communities filter reality to inform and construct identity (Murthy, 2012; Heritage and Koller, 2020; Koefoed and Haldrup, 2020). This approach allows us to understand how white nationalists construct narratives of ethnocrisis and ethnostalgia, positioning themselves as innocent victims under constant threat of dispossession.

In light of this scholarly context, our study employs the framework of imaginative geographies to analyze the discourse of white nationalist digital publics. This approach promises to shed light on the logics underpinning ethnoexclusionary nationalist identity construction, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how nationalist identities are formed, maintained, and mobilized in the digital age.

Considerable attention has been paid to the use of the Internet as a tool for white supremacist recruiting and producing solidarity (Burris et al., 2000; Adams and Roscigno, 2005; De Koster and Houtman, 2008; Caiani and Kröll, 2015; DeCook, 2018). Less attention has been paid to its role in discursive boundary making. Murthy (2012) in characterizing online discourses as Bakhtinian “dialogic communities” has drawn attention to social media as both a site and model system of discourse. Online communities are well-suited to studying both the global, e.g., social and symbolic boundaries, and local, e.g., interaction and rhetorical tactics of discourse, as well as mesoscopic features such as network community structure and diffusion dynamics. Digital publics have become a ubiquitous, and, for some, even primary site of social action, particularly for political discourse and fringe communities, of which white nationalism is both. The study presented here draws attention to how white identity politics evolved during the 2010s, while also retaining their discursive core. Furthermore, it demonstrates the efficiency and breadth of a particular computational approach to characterize a rhetorical space. Finally, it advances the methodological and theoretical position of social media in the sociological imagination.

2 Data and Methods

2.1 Data collection

The target population for this study is a set of Twitter users who are engaged in the white nationalist discourse through their Twitter accounts. In order to make inferences about these users, we compare them to a similar outgroup, a control population of users who might have become white nationalists but did not, or did not yet. In order to capture both core and peripheral members, we employed a coarse sampling method. We selected 29 seed accounts of prominent white nationalists and collected a list of their followers. All but one are public figures, publications, or publication editors who are identified as white nationalists in at least one journalistic or hate-group monitoring source. The two most prominent white nationalists on Twitter at the time, Richard Spencer and Klan leader David Duke, were excluded over concerns they were too much a part of the general far-right discourse and would contribute to the sample many non-white nationalist accounts and few non-redundant white nationalists, as most committed white nationalists would follow at least one of the less prominent seeds. This sampling approach produced a population of 172,944 unique Twitter accounts in September-October 2017. We then used Twitter’s REST API to gather each user’s 3,200 most recent tweets, the maximum number of historical tweets available for user timelines. Of the original 172,944 users in the aggregated ego network, we collected 146,210 users’ timelines, approximately 211 million tweets. We were unable to pull data from users whose accounts had been deleted since the time of sampling or were private and thus inaccessible. These data were collected in October 2017, shortly after the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, VA, and largely represent the state of the discourse from 2014-2017. While the themes have likely persisted, an updated account using these methods is impossible due to the purging of white nationalists from Reddit in 2015 (Hern, 2015) and Twitter beginning in late 2017 (Olson, 2017), and though white nationalists may have recently returned to recently rebranded “X” (Rodriguez-Louette, 2024), placing API access behind a paywall has significantly hampered academic research (Grevy Gotfredsen, 2024), and would have made a project such as this impossible.

2.2 Lexicon extraction

We employed a simple frequency-based method of lexicon extraction reviewed in Monroe et al. (2008). The method works by defining an ingroup, here white nationalists, and relevant outgroup, here nationalists without an activated white identity, and calculating the relative frequencies or rate of use/knowledge for all terms in the corpus. There are many ways this calculation can be performed depending on how the groups are defined and how the counts for each term are calculated, reviewed in a paired methodological piece by one of the authors (Dunivin, 2024). Because the ground truth of each author’s identity as a white nationalist is unknown and the scale of the data prohibits ground truth labeling, we employ a simple heuristic to cheaply assign identities to each author. We use a small set of highly meaningful and widely used white nationalist identity markers to noisily label all users who have used one of these terms a white nationalist. This process is described in greater detail abstractly by Dunivin (2024) and substantively for this analysis below. We strongly encourage those interested more deeply in the NLP methods described here to refer to this companion methodological study, which was published in this same volume.

Every author in the corpus followed at least one white nationalist Twitter account. Therefore, these data almost certainly capture both genuine white nationalists as well as those peripheral to white nationalism, but not necessarily engaged in the discourse. We leveraged this assumption to automatically apply in- and outgroup labels in preparation for the relative frequency calculation. The ingroup is carefully defined using a set of four terms and associated hashtags summarized in Table 1. These terms were selected after dozens of hours of close reading white nationalist Twitter accounts and other contemporary media. All users who have used at least one of these terms in an original utterance (tweet, rather than retweet) are taken as the ingroup. This is a very loose boundary. There is strong reason to believe it captures some

Table 1: Counts of seed terms in the corpus. Raw count gives the total number appearances in the corpus. Users shows the number of authors who have used a term at least once. The first set of terms are used to identify white nationalists for the purposes of extracting a group-specific lexicon. The second set of terms are used to identify mainstream nationalists.

Term	All Tweets		No Retweets	
	Raw	Users	Raw	Users
14 words	5,000	2,456	3,597	1,387
#14words	2,438	976	1,453	345
1488	5,531	3,490	3,852	2,324
#1488	816	444	685	332
antiwhite	87,514	25,072	37,422	9,402
#antiwhite	19,109	4,675	10,280	1,045
white genocide	41,220	15,145	20,494	7,401
#whitegenocide	117,042	15,280	45,386	4,443
Term	Raw	Users	Raw	Users
MAGA	97,031	29,958	45,282	26,971
#MAGA	1,574,769	57,407	476,421	14,175

Table 2: Group size for various group formulations based on usage of seed terms. Users are treated as part of a group if they have used one of the terms in a given set of seed terms (WN: white nationalist; MAGA: mainstream nationalist).

Category	Users	Users (no retweets)
all	146,210	–
WN	36,624	17,213
WN only	8,792	9,362
MAGA	60,993	33,565
MAGA only	33,161	25,714
WN & MAGA	27,832	7,851
neither	76,425	103,283

non-white nationalists and excludes some genuine white nationalists. However, the objective is to produce ingroup and outgroup labels that are overwhelmingly correct, not perfectly so. Graham (2016) employed an almost identical seed term selection process, up to number of seed terms and the inclusion of #whitegenocide and #antiwhite as white nationalist seed terms. “White genocide” and “anti-white” reflect the white nationalist narrative of dispossession and oppression, and are widely used with 7,401 and 9,402 users who tweeted the phrases respectively (excluding retweets containing the phrases).

In the process of extracting lexicons and measuring descriptive statistics (much of which is unreported here), we formulated two distinct outgroups summarized in Table 2. One is simply the negation of the ingroup: all users who have never tweeted one of the seed terms (but may have retweeted them.) A second formulation attempts to capture only “mainstream” nationalists, or those nationalists who are not engaged in a rhetoric of White identity politics. Here the outgroup is defined as all authors who have tweeted in support of candidate/President Trump with “(MAGA)” (Make America Great Again), but have not tweeted one of the white nationalist seed terms. Both outgroup formulations produced equally strong lexicons. The lexicon analyzed below was generated by taking as the outgroup all authors who had not tweeted a seed term.

We produced many lexicons before settling on the one reported and analyzed here. The documents for this lexicon included only original utterances, i.e., no retweets. Both the term counts and scaling parameter were the simplest configuration detailed by Dunivin (2024). The counts for each term were “raw” counts in that a term was counted each

time it appears in the corpus, rather than once per author or document, and the scaling counts for each group was the sum of these raw counts (the total number of term tokens in each group's corpus.) Two thresholds were selected after a cursory reading of the lexicon, as these thresholds may be arbitrarily chosen at any point after the relative frequency calculation. Terms that appear in the final lexicon must have been used by at least 250 authors irrespective of group and have an odds ratio greater than 5 (5 times as much use among white nationalists as non-white nationalists.) The white nationalist lexicon extracted through these parameters is extensive and broad. Strong boundary markers can be found beyond each of these thresholds, however, we judged the list produced by these parameters sufficiently comprehensive, general, and unmarred by ambiguous or erroneous symbols for the purpose of the following analysis. The complete lexicon is available in the Appendix.

2.3 Close-reading the lexicon

A large and diverse group-specific lexicon has many possible uses. One of the simplest is an object of study in itself. In the following paragraphs, we analyze a lexicon generated through the method described above. Importantly, this analysis does not differ notably from a traditional, i.e., non-computer assisted, close reading of a group-specific lexicon. When encountering an unfamiliar term, we occasionally used targeted close reading to rapidly bring up a set of examples of the term usage in the corpus. Apart from this, the analysis is a traditional close reading of a set of terms in the text. However, this set of terms could only have been generated using a computational method, and is far superior, as well as more efficient, than assembling a lexicon through qualitative methods themselves. In other words, the description of the symbolic boundary, i.e., the lexicon, is extracted through computational/quantitative methods, but the inference around the symbolic boundary is executed through traditional qualitative analysis.

We hand-coded a lexicon of 841 terms, which were selected with an arbitrary odds ratio cutoff of 5. A majority of the terms down to an odds-ratio of 3 are still strong boundary markers, e.g, implicit 3.46, orcs 3.37, white lives 3.29, melanin 3.27, death squads 3.26, oppression olympics 3.16, separatism 3.09, black supremacy 3.05, sickle cell 3.05, kosher 3.00. The final coding scheme has 27 categories and is summarized in Table 3. Several other codes are not reported due to infrequency and are aggregated under "Other". Each term was assigned at least one code; many were assigned multiple. Table 4 lists examples of the categories which will be discussed in the deep reading below. The Appendix gives the complete lexicon and encodings. There is considerable overlap between particular codes. Similarly, many terms are captured multiple times in the lexicon, due largely to pluralization, tense, parts of speech, and spelling variants. The summary statistics do not compress these variants, but our close reading and Table 4 largely ignore morphological variation.

The themes identified through hand coding a white nationalist lexicon are used to derive three interrelated and overlapping strands of white logic that shape the imaginative geography at the core of white nationalist political frameworks. By extracting and analyzing this network of meaning we demonstrate how white nationalists construct and enact their identity through discourse. First we characterize the central theme of white nationalist discourse, ethnocrisis. From there we look to the ways that boundary work demarcates white nationalist identity from other opposing and interrelated identities, and thus defines their conceptual framework. Finally we look at how consciousness raising terms reveal the appropriation of the rhetoric of left identity politics along with concepts from political theory to articulate a political program of "white advocacy" and recruit members to their cause.

The following section reports a qualitative analysis, an ethnography, of the white nationalist discourse informed by three strands of sources. The first is a close reading of the lexicon generated through our NLP method as described above. This comprises the substantive core of our analysis and allows for rigorous demonstration of the discursive themes through direct reference to the lexicon. The second is a close reading of tweets and authors in our data set. This ethnography preceded our NLP analysis by several years, as we familiarized ourselves with our subject, identified subfields, factions, and major actors, many of whom served as our seed accounts. Our close reading of messages, concepts, and symbols that make up the discourse also occurred during the process of developing our NLP pipeline, and was deepened through targeted close reading of tweets in the data set informed by the lexicon. Finally, our ethnography draws on theoretical and empirical accounts of white nationalism from other researchers (e.g., Ross, 1990; Said, 1994; Ferber, 1999; Gray, 2018; Jardina, 2019). These perspectives were invaluable in contextualizing our own observations of our data set in the broader field of white nationalism across discursive platforms and throughout history. What follows is truly a mixed-methods approach to ethnography. Our NLP approach exploits the massive amount of data we mined from Twitter, allowing for robust accounts of patterns we may have missed through close reading, and which are more challenging to rigorously demonstrate using qualitative analysis alone. The qualitative reading of the lexicon leverages expert human interpretive capacities to induce much more complex sets of relationships than are possible using quantitative methods.

Table 3: Summary statistics for hand-coded categories. Categories are displayed in descending order by mean odds. Full Lexicon (**bold**) shows summary statistics for the entire white nationalist lexicon (excluding the seed terms.) “Occurrences” refer to the Mean and Median number of times each term in a category appears in the data set, excluding retweets.

Category	# Terms	Mean Occurrences	Median Occurrences	Mean Rank	Mean Odds
Whiteness	129	4855	956	359	14.49
WN Media	103	1758	1058	341	13.72
Code	29	1498	1040	279	12.59
Left Discourse	29	2049	1000	320	12.29
South Africa	11	1075	901	261	11.83
Race Mixing	18	1334	1165	383	11.54
Governance	28	1907	1060	301	11.29
Jews	79	6760	1176	342	10.85
Irony	37	2535	1117	331	10.84
Full Lexicon	841	3076	1024	421	10.46
Nazi	31	1539	871	401	9.99
History	15	1116	1033	397	9.95
Boundary Work	30	3070	1047	390	9.80
Demographics	70	1586	821	416	9.71
Evolutionary Psychology	10	714	668	403	9.71
Slur	41	1752	859	409	9.48
Leftism	33	3108	1051	478	8.82
Anti-black	18	2036	923	435	8.80
Islam	18	2811	1416	561	8.69
Holy War	8	3545	1396	564	8.68
Dispossession	6	3097	1227	416	8.61
Blackface	32	2232	1046	477	8.52
Other	55	2258	949	466	8.41
Biological	28	1247	669	469	8.25
Ethnicity	51	2918	848	501	8.17
4chan	67	4127	1273	508	7.74
Misogyny	42	4388	1244	515	7.70
Anti-gay	9	1688	1803	595	7.10

3 Discussion

In constructing imaginative geographies of ethnocrisis and ethnostalgia, white nationalist digital publics mobilize discourse to create, rather than merely describe, an identity of powerlessness (Said, 1977; Gregory, 1995; Koefoed and

Table 4: Themes identified through hand coding a white nationalist lexicon. Terms are listed in rank order by odds ratio, i.e., the most distinctive words among white nationalists are listed first. Alternative forms are left out of the sample unless they are informative, whereby variants are indicated with parentheses, e.g., (low) birth rates, as both "birth rates" and "low birth rates" appear in the lexicon.

Theme	Sample Terms
Jews (irony)	cohencidence, schlomo, goy, gorillion, kvetch, shiksa, shekel, gevalt, oy vey, shabbos, talmudic
Slur	muds, negroid, sheboon, shitskin, heeb, jewess, chimpout, negress, nogs, lampshades, noods, jewed, kike, nigs, skypes, chimping, rapefugee, mudslime, swarthy, beaner, spic, niglet, negros, pajeet, bantz, darkies, nigger, gook, sand nigger
Blackface	gibsmedat, dindu, gibs, (wuz) kangz, nuffins, rayciss, ebil, anudda, obongo, dindu nuffin, sheeet, wypipo, nibba, tbh fam, (b)ooga, famalam, (kill) whitey
Boundary Work	jewish supremacist, alt lite, cuckservative, race traitor, white leftist, white jews, wigger, hapa, new right, #frogtwitter, black nationalism, #altrightmeans, albinos, black supremacist, black racist
Consciousness Raising	white propoganda, white rhetoric, white agenda, white interests, white advocacy, white pill, white movement, white identity
Left Discourse	(racist) anti-white, diversity means, jewish privilege, #whitelivesmatter, white identity, white hate, white violence, identitarianism, white rights, white victims, white racism, white identity politics, european identity, #whiteguilt, racial identity, #blackprivilege, ethnic identity, white oppression
Dispossession	white genocide, dispossession, deracinated, degeneracy, rootless, demoralization
Political Theory	reaching levels, vibrancy, ethno, greatest strength, serious country, slave morality, fasces, horseshoe theory, institutional power, balkanize, cultural enrichment, overton window, healthy society, accelerationist
Code	codeword, code word, rahowa, ourguys, lampshades, groyper, nood, skypes, greatest ally, fire rises, milkers
Demographics	demographic replacement, ethnostates, white minority, third world immigration, homelands, naturalization act, population removal, physical replacement, homogeneous society, (low) birth rates, white flight, urbanite, self segregate, immigration act, migrant invasion, import millions, diversity quotas, homogeneous, outbreed, flood europe, native population, demographic trends, overrepresented, great replacement, #deportthmall
Biological	negroids, race realist, racial differences, dysgenics, iq differences, human biodiversity, subspecies, caucasoid, conserved, biological reality, outbreed, average/low iq, admixture, genetic differences, physiognomy
Evolutionary Psychology	pathological altruism, group preference, (high) time preference, high trust, parasitism, social cohesion, pattern recognition, egalitarian
Islam	white sharia, #pegida, (mass) muslim immigration, islamification, #notallmuslims, muslim rape gangs, mohammedans, londonistan, muslim rapists
4chan	\pol, pozzed, larp, cuck, (red/black/white) pill, soyboy, groyper, poasting, pepo, shit tier, sperg, wife's son, normies, neets, austically, press f, 8chan, gersh, henlo, cummies, incel, wew (lad), autists, manlets, edgelords, shitlord
Masculinism	cuck, (red/black) pill, soyboy, #mgtow, wife's son, shit test, numale, manlet, heartiste, incel, beta cuck

Haldrup, 2020). As such we use the extracted lexicon to outline the logics underpinning white nationalist imaginative geographies, and the activated political understandings and identities they produce.

We first turn to the themes emergent in the lexicon revealing preoccupations with demographics and impending ethnocrises that dominate the discursive frameworks of white nationalist digital publics, and delineate the borders of "ours" and "theirs". From there we map the ways the discourse constructs an identity of dispossession against abstractions of perceived challengers through the use of slurs, boundary work, and race science. Moreover, we examine how the lexicon reveals entanglements with allied discourses of troll culture and men's rights, and how these communities share tactics and provide opportunities to recruit new members to the white nationalist movement. Finally, we analyze the lexicon to understand how these identities are enacted and performed. This process leverages political

agenda building and consciousness raising to produce action programs with the goal of maintaining and amplifying possessive investment in whiteness.

Figure 1 presents a model of the white nationalist identity. We take the themes of the discourse, most of which occur in the coding scheme given by Table 3, and map the relationships between them so as to visualize our theory of the white nationalist identity. This conceptual mapping is a distillation of our ethnography, informed also by other research on white nationalist ideology and organizing. We encourage readers to refer back to this diagram while reading the discussion.

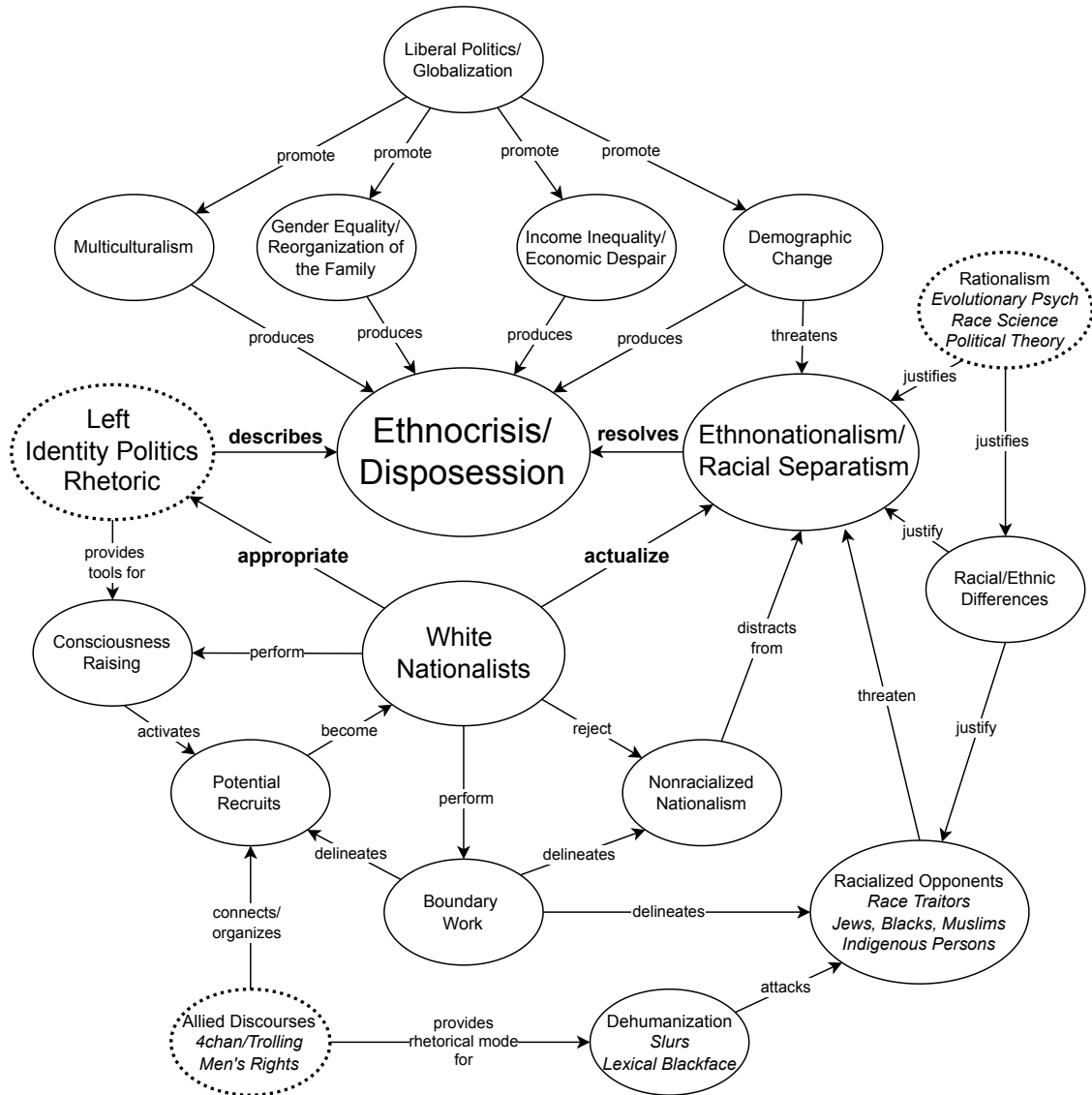


Figure 1: A model of the white nationalist discourse. Key processes are represented by bold text at the center of the figure. Novel elements in the development of the white nationalist identity are indicated by dotted lines.

3.1 Ethnostalgia and ethnocrisis

A preoccupation with demographics looms large in the discourse of white nationalists. By leveraging demographics to selectively (re)construct and (re)mobilize narratives of the past, present, and future, white nationalist discourse actively constructs and adapts their identity in response to a reality filtered through constant threat of the ultimate manufactured ethnocrisis: the imaginary of white genocide. Implicit in this narrative framework is ethnostalgia, or a yearning for a decontextualized and mythic ethnoexclusive past and future, against which looming ethnocrisis is constructed. Ethnostalgia cleaves an idealized past/present of white innocence from the political and historical realities

that challenge this narrative (Ross, 1990; Said, 1994; Eldar and Jansson, 2023; Koch, 2023), rendering white spaces eternal, inherent, and ripe for dispossession. This ethnostalgic yearning for white innocence, and its potential to be victimized, can only exist if historical and spatial realities are not only ignored, but intentionally recast into a perpetual state of ethnocrisis (Ross, 1990; Krzyżanowski et al., 2023, p. 28). This nostalgia is a powerful and essential discursive tool enabling white nationalist communities to create a shared identity that positions them as disenfranchised and dispossessed. Language plays a crucial role in populating these imaginative geographies with perceived demographic threats, constructing a community of knowers, where strategic victimization becomes central to the white nationalist identity (Koefoed and Haldrup, 2020; Kydd, 2021).

The use of "white genocide" is not merely figurative or exaggerated rhetoric within these communities. Rather, it reflects a widespread and earnest belief central to white nationalist identity. In our corpus, the phrase "white genocide" appears 41,220 times across tweets by 15,145 distinct users, with the hashtag "whitegenocide" used an additional 117,042 times by 5,280 distinct users (Table 1). Combined, these terms appear roughly half as frequently as the widely popular U.S. far-right slogan "MAGA", underscoring just how fundamental this framing is within contemporary white nationalism. The prevalence of the term in this data set highlights the seriousness with which the concept is treated by adherents, who actively mobilize the term to articulate an existential threat to the imaginary of an idealized past white society.

It is important to note that it is not the material realities of this idealized past that characterize ethnostalgia, but the recasting of the roots of these realities. Ethnostalgia reconstructs and yearns for a space and time more explicitly shaped by western imperialism and post-war economic prosperity, where the embeddedness of traditional gender roles and racist societal structures did allow white men to more brazenly reap benefits at the expense of others. Though these historical continuities continue to shape the present, the post-war order that is the object of yearning was a time where material realities of exploitation were more readily enjoyed by white men, particularly in the United States where the English-language movement is centered. Ethnostalgia lies in the recasting of these material realities—(white) workers' rights, the development of (white) suburbs, and stable (white) employment—as organic, inherent, and detached from the underlying power structures of racial capitalism that created them. Though these post-war material advantages were in many ways engineered to (re)possess a system of racial dominance perceived as under threat from post-war demographic shifts, ethnostalgia filters these developments through a process of selective forgetting (Eldar and Jansson, 2023), that absolves white men from their implication in these exploitative power structures. By obscuring and willfully ignoring the de facto and de jure segregation that rendered these material realities as sites of heavily guarded white prosperity, ethnostalgia recasts this period as rightful and timeless, bolstering an identity of white victimhood in the face of perceived threats of dispossession. Figure 2 juxtaposes this ethnostalgic image of a "traditionalist" "white society" against the ethnocrisis of "degeneracy" that is "white genocide".

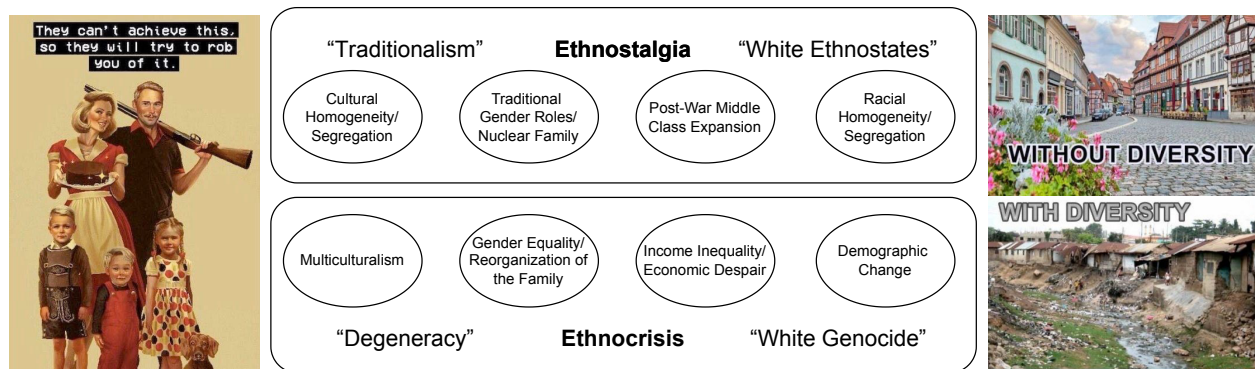


Figure 2: Elements of ethnonostalgia giving way to their characterization under ethnocrisis with illustrative memes.

Ethnostalgia provides a decontextualized past to yearn for and an ethnoexclusive future to hope for, and underpins a collective identity under siege from manufactured ethnocrises. Using verbiage that creates and amplifies fears, white nationalist digital publics position demographic shifts as looming crises of the present and future—continuously producing, adapting, and reinforcing an identity of dispossession. Terms range from relatively neutral, e.g., "demographic trends", "urbanite", "naturalization act", "birth rates", to pointed e.g., "white minority", "self-segregate", "homogeneous society", "diversity quotas", to inflammatory, e.g., "demographic replacement", "population removal", "migrant invasion", "import millions", "flood Europe". Notably, mainstream anti-immigrant rhetoric is absent from this list. This is not so much because white nationalists actively avoid the terms used by far-right nationalists without an activated white identity, but rather because the closest outgroup primarily consists of the latter. While white nationalists use language that delineates a narrower space rooted in an ethnoexclusionary discourse, activated white identity, far-right nationalists employ terms that cast a wider net—maintaining right-wing and nationalist ideals that extend

beyond strictly ethnoexclusionary boundaries. Therefore the high frequency in both in- and outgroup neutralize one another. Deeply embedded in white nationalist discourse, these enduring and contemporary motifs instill a sense of solidarity and righteous legitimacy grounded in manufactured dispossession and disenfranchisement.

A set of “dispossession” terms delineate the consequences of the imagined ethnocrises: the oppression of whites; and coalesce around the ultimate imaginary of dispossession: white genocide. “Deracinated”, “rootless”, and “demoralization” all describe alienation. “Alienation” itself is not used due to its historical association with the discourse of the political left. Both “degeneracy” and “dispossession” refer to “white genocide”: the destruction of “white culture” and subversion of “white power”. Previous incarnations of the white supremacist movement have invoked white genocide to refer to race-mixing and being “outbred” by non-whites, but the cultural meaning has also been used in the discourse for some time (Ferber, 1999). We also see the resurgence of classic fascist terminology for ethnocrisis. “Degeneracy” (degenerazione, Entartung) dates to the origins of fascism in the 19th-century and generally refers to the decay of social, moral, or biological order (De Donno, 2006; Macuglia, 2014). It has been widely used in race scientific, fascist imperialist, and anti-modernist argument, notably in Nazi Germany (Buckley, 2001). Similarly, “cultural Bolshevism/Marxism” links contemporary left identity politics to the rhetoric of the Third Reich, where it was used to frame modern art, liberalism, and intellectualism as existential threats to the Aryan people. In contemporary reactionary discourse, this framing is echoed in the pseudo-academic concept of “postmodern neo-Marxism”, a term popularized by evolutionary psychologist and alt-right darling, Jordan Peterson, to allege left ideological dominance in academia (Burston, 2020). Peterson’s use of this term recalls the “cultural Bolshevism” ethnocrisis narrative, portraying liberalism as a conspiratorial force undermining Western civilization.

In framing their grievances in terms of cultural and economic dispossession, white nationalists position themselves as marginalized and deprived of cultural identity by multiculturalism, immigration, and affirmative action (Ross, 1990; Jardina, 2019). In constructing a discursive system that inverts realities of (dis)possession, white nationalists are able to detach themselves from, thereby avoiding implication in, the existing power structures that produce material benefits for white communities at the expense of those they marginalize (Ross, 1990; Kydd, 2021). This preoccupation with demographics is one way the white nationalist digital public inverts and mobilizes marginalization, producing a collective identity of dispossession. This discredits and delegitimizes the reality of communities who are actively marginalized, and positions them as existential threats to whiteness. The verbiage of dispossession strategically mobilizes a manufactured sense of victimhood to rally support by tapping into fears of decline. With ethnostalgia and ethnocrisis established as the key frameworks of white nationalist epistemology, we now explore the boundary work white nationalists engage in to delineate membership in this community of knowers.

3.2 Boundary work: Abstraction and dispossession

Imaginative geographies play a crucial role in the process of identity formation as they serve as techniques of representation that dramatize differences to solidify an ingroup identity and delineate who is to be objectified and controlled (Said, 1977; Koefoed and Haldrup, 2020; Douglas et al., 2005). By constructing notions of belonging and providing a shared sense of place, imaginative geographies help form a sense of self and identity (Mahmod, 2019). White nationalist digital publics do this by adopting a longstanding strategy of deploying language that entangles notions of innocence with whiteness (Ross, 1990, p. 36), and abstracts minorities and other perceived discursive rivals as powerful threats. By perceiving and (re)making a world in which they are victims, white nationalists mobilize identity politics to adapt their identity to the present moment (Ross, 1990; Gray, 2018; Jardina, 2019), adapting to contemporary notions of segregation and subjugation.

One of the principal preoccupations of white nationalist digital publics is the construction and maintenance of a distinct, race-based ideological identity through differentiation from other conservative movements perceived as more “inclusive”, and thus positioned as a threat to the identitarian white nationalist project. The extracted lexicon is rife with fine-grained, multilevel, and highly targeted boundary work that deploys highly specific derogatory language meant to center white nationalism as a unique, activated, and immutable white identity embodied by a select community of knowers. This community exists and defines itself in direct opposition to the more “culture”-centered identity touted by more mainstream American conservatives (Gray, 2018).

Building on the work of Hodge and Hallgrimsdottir (2020) we can think of this boundary work as checkpoints demarcating the border of a deeply ethnoexclusionary imaginative geography. At the far frontier of the borderscape are abstractions of black diasporant, global south migrant, and indigenous communities positioned as both inferior and at the same time powerful threats to the maintenance of white innocence (Ross, 1990; Jardina, 2019). Essential to the construction and maintenance of an identity of white victimhood under constant threat, this frontier is largely delineated by slurs.

The ontological fantasy of white innocence can only exist in implied contrast with an abstraction that denies the humanity of its perceived challengers and inverts historical realities to position those who are marginalized as powerful threats and white nationalists as themselves dispossessed (Ross, 1990, p. 37, Jardina, 2019; Heritage and Koller, 2020). Slurs underpin the imaginative geographies of historical abstraction by constructing narratives that dehumanize and demonize the perceived adversaries *de jure* by (re)shaping the discursive boundary between us and them, and delineating an ever evolving conceptual space of whiteness under constant threat. This rhetoric sketches the borders of collective white identity in digital publics, laying the groundwork for the production and translation of narratives of dispossession and victimhood into the wider social fabric and political realities.

White nationalist digital publics are perhaps most easily recognized by outsiders through the pervasive use of hate speech (Meddaugh and Kay, 2009; De Gibert et al., 2018). There is a large and growing interdisciplinary literature on hate speech, which draws from political science, psychology, communications/media studies, and law/criminology (Tsesis, 2002; Douglas, 2007; Hine et al., 2017; Chetty and Alathur, 2018). Beginning in the 2010s, computational social science exploded with approaches to automated hate speech detection, which now dominates the discourse across disciplines (Fortuna and Nunes, 2018; Gollatz et al., 2018; Wong, 2024). The hate speech paradigm emphasizes violent speech that targets a one or several social categories (MacAvaney et al., 2019). Lexically, hate speech is epitomized by slurs, leading to a set of approaches that rely on keywords (Davidson et al., 2017). However, much hate speech can only be understood through larger linguistic constructions e.g., “I hate [minority group]” or “[Locale] would be better if [minority group] weren’t here”. Accordingly, word embeddings produced through deep learning bear promise for automatically capturing more sophisticated meanings in text (Yin and Zubiaga, 2021). Indeed, it seems likely that the powerful natural language understanding of large language models may completely replace these prior approaches. We focus here on slurs in part as a nod to their former dominance in the computer science literature on hate speech, and because their bluntness serves as a unique lens on the white nationalist discourse and our method of lexicon extraction.

Many slurs appear in the lexicon, but they represent only a small fraction of it, and do not occupy the highest echelons, i.e., the most distinctive terms. Among the slurs in the lexicon, the highest odds ratios are less common and novel slurs. More common slurs are used by racists who are not actively engaged in racist discourse or white identity politics. Slurs for Jews are the exception, since antisemitism is more prevalent among white nationalists than the far-right who are not engaged with white nationalism.

After the frontier of historical abstraction, the first checkpoint of the borderscape engages fine-tuned white identity politics to filter out individuals perceived as white who subscribe to progressive politics, racial equality, and multiculturalism. Terms like “race traitor” reinforce ingroup loyalty by demarcating those who deviate from white nationalist ideology, while terms like “hapa” (half-Asian/Pacific Islander) and “albino” target those who present a conceptual challenge to the idealized racial image. Additionally, terms like “white leftist” and “white Jews” are used to target white individuals who oppose or subvert whiteness. At the border closest to the imagined heartland of the digital public is a checkpoint meant to filter out those perceived as only superficially committed to the white nationalist project, and thus positioned as a threat to white interests. Terms such as “new right”, “alt lite”, and “cuckservative” demarcate white nationalist from broader conservative, far-right, and nationalist movements perceived as too ignorant, too inclusive, or overly compromising on their racial and extremist ideologies.

Those who cross the border into this community of knowers use a set of specific terms to perform identity in response to current identity politics, and assert their distinctiveness from more inclusive nationalist and conservative movements through opposition to minority groups (Bostdorff, 2004; Gray, 2018). Through a common language of decontextualization and historical abstraction, members of the white nationalist digital public signal belief in white innocence, superiority, and victimhood. Terms like “black nationalism”, “black supremacist”, and “black racist” are used to perform a disremembering, deemphasizing, and remaking of historical realities to fortify notions of white dispossession and position advocacy for black rights as an existential threat to white innocence discursively positioning whites as the vulnerable minority (Jardina, 2019). At the same time, terms like “FrogTwitter” signal membership in an ingroup reliant on memes, irony, and coded language to simultaneously disseminate white nationalist ideas while evading detection and distinguishing those who are in the know (Lobinger et al., 2020). Collectively, these terms serve to delineate the boundaries of white nationalist identity, reinforcing ingroup cohesion while excluding those who do not conform to their ideological standards. This boundary work is essential for maintaining the distinctiveness of white nationalism from other nationalist or conservative movements.

3.2.1 Outgroup appropriation: Lexical blackface

Like all nationalisms, white nationalism centers possession in all its forms. One way this community sets themselves apart from more inclusive nationalist projects is through discursive appropriation of the outgroup. Once the outgroup is defined, defiled, and rendered threatening, their discourse is appropriated and weaponized into the white nationalist lexicon. Much like the imaginative geographies of orientalism produced an Orient to objectify, overpower, and

appropriate (Said, 1977; Gregory, 1995), white nationalist lexicon relies on violent appropriation in a key demonstration of the power of their imaginative geography to construct and control. This motif serves to identify like-minded community members, and indicates an in-depth knowledge of, complex interaction with, and mobilization of contemporary identity-politics in the white nationalist discourse. A majority of anti-black terms engage a form of ironic digital blackface that is explicitly racist. Most of these terms employ a fictitious African American patois, which dehumanizes in both form and content. “Gibsmadat” (give me that) and “dindu nuffin” (didn’t do nothing) are novel slurs that originated on 4chan. “Tbh fam” (to be honest, fam) appropriates AAVE slang, though may simply reflect the relative youth of the white nationalist cohort as compared to the outgroup. “Famalam” is genuine (though somewhat uncommon) AAVE slang, but is consistent with the ironic patois. “Wypipo” also plays on the patois, but originated in radical black online discourse to refer to whites (Smalls, 2018), before migrating to broader left anti-racist circles with a similar usage.

3.2.2 Racism rationalized

One of the key motivations of the white nationalist digital public is legitimizing the borderscape that defines their community of knowers, and the political realities they produce. While popular understandings might equate white nationalists with the memeification of racism, contemporary motifs of the white nationalist project reflect a complex discourse that mobilizes pseudo-science and the entrenched and often implicit racism of particular social scientific literatures to theorize and legitimize racism. In the white nationalist discourse this is typically referred to as “race realism”. Academic racism has a long history of upholding and legitimizing white nationalist collective identities and the political understandings they produce by rationalizing race as an immutable characteristic (Said, 1977; Gregory, 1995; Gardiner, 2005; Koefoed and Haldrup, 2020). New motifs show this rational framework extends to portray racism itself as a natural part of the human condition, and central to societal structure. This framework situates ethnoexclusionary practices and racial hierarchies in academic discourse that is mobilized by white nationalists to legitimize their identity and political goals.

In the lexicon, we see how race is rationalized through biological and psycho-biological terminology, paralleling the way Christian nationalism legitimizes racial hierarchies by framing them as divinely ordained or aligned with moral order (Perry et al., 2022). “I.Q.” is often invoked in white supremacist argument, as well as the target of personal insult (as is typical of the related, but distinct, rationalist online discourse). Genetic determinism and evolutionary argument, e.g., “admixture”, “genetic differences”, and “conserved [trait]”, are employed to justify white racial superiority and isolationist immigration stances. Race science terminology, e.g., “caucasoid”, “negroid”, “subspecies”, and “physiognomy”, is common. Demographic rhetoric is also biologized, e.g., “outbreed”, simultaneously rationalizing and dehumanizing. Rationalized racial rhetoric has been employed by white supremacists as long as race science has existed. Its use among white nationalists is thoroughly documented (Ferber, 1999).

What is new, and is apparent from analyzing this lexicon, is that racism is itself rationalized. Evolutionary psychological discourse has provided a scientific line of argument justifying racial and ethnic hierarchies and segregation. The evolutionary psychological community, while suspect for other reasons, is largely not directly responsible for segregationist or racial hierarchical hypotheses, though it is, along with behavioral genetics, undoubtedly the greatest source of race science in the academy. “Pattern recognition” is an evolutionary explanation for recognizing difference in outgroups. Evolutionary psychology is used both to denigrate particular ethnic groups (biology/culture) as inherently deficient, e.g., “time preference”, but also to argue for ethnic homogeneity as biologically necessary for “social cohesion” or a “high trust” society. The biological drive for “group preference” is a racialized extension of kin selection, a leading evolutionary account of altruism (Eberhard, 1975; Foster et al., 2006). “Pathological altruism” is the misapplication of the evolutionary drive that enables “parasitic” outgroups to subvert society. This is a biologized account of the white savior, except here the white savior develops a racial awareness and recognizes that saviordom will destroy him, i.e., “white genocide”. The relatively recent emergence of evolutionary psychology as a respectable race science is documented in Saini’s 2019 book on the resurgence of race science under the banners of “human biodiversity” and “race realism”, both of which appear in the lexicon. Some (e.g., Gray, 2018; Saini, 2019) describe a biologized view of race as requisite to white supremacist ideology. We acknowledge that biological essentialism is typical and dominant, but not necessary either to espouse white nationalist rhetoric or develop an intellectually rigorous white nationalist worldview. White nationalists pose a society centering the “ethnos” as the anchor of social cohesion and cultural coherence. In this sense the biological and sociological arguments for the ethnostate merge. The former argues that *Homo sapiens*’ evolutionary history demands ethnic segregation, the latter that *Homo socius* requires a shared culture “rooted” in a “homeland”.

3.2.3 Allied discourses: Organizing, recruitment, and origins of white identity politics

Identity is defined both through negative (who we aren't) and positive (who we are) boundary work (Lamont and Molnár, 2002; Mahmod, 2019). Both the substance and form of the boundary work captured by the lexicon show not just discursive ingroup and outgroup demarcation, but also overlapping identities with the white nationalist community. In addition to the Dark Enlightenment subset of the rationalist discourse (Aikin, 2019), we also see strong associations with the related discourse of masculinism, or men's rights, and the anonymous Internet forum, 4chan.

4chan's mark on the discourse is particularly visible in the use of irony and post-irony in the lexicon. By post-irony we refer to the use of irony that deliberately sends differing, even contradictory, messages to different audiences, simultaneously intends ironic and sincere interpretations of a message for certain audiences, or attempts to confuse and annoy readers who cannot interpret the irony. DeCook (2020) calls this "coded irony", which she characterizes as the ethos underlying the troll culture of 4chan and the alt-right. Irony is employed by 4chan users in their memetic warfare, which comprises boundary work, consciousness raising, and outright attacks on political opponents by those with various deep and shallow entanglements with white nationalism (Nagle, 2017; Merrin, 2019; DeCook, 2020; Blodgett, 2020). The use of irony is particularly visible in the theme of lexical blackface, but also similar set of terms referencing Jews, some of which appropriate Yiddish to evoke identitarian and antisemitic themes such as "goy" (gentile), "shiksa" (gentile woman), "shekel" (money), "kvetch" (complain), and "oy vey/gevalt" (dismay).

In addition to the (post-)ironic rhetorical mode, multiple sets of terms associated with 4chan are apparent in the discourse. Most notably a set of terms capture entanglements with the discourse of organized misogyny, which is internally known as the men's rights, masculinism, or meninist movement. White nationalists and men's rights activists actively and passively recruit from the population of disaffected men on 4chan, diagnosing their conditions through the frameworks of their identity politics and providing solutions in the form of organizing around identity.

The presence of men's rights terms in the discourse of white nationalism reveals how white nationalist identity is not merely a white identity politics, but a white male identity politics. This supports the origin of the current incarnation of white nationalist discourse in the political organization around (white) male identity and against inclusive representations in video games known as GamerGate, which was largely coordinated by means of leaderless, self-organization (Zhukov et al., 2020; Massa and O'Mahony, 2021) on 4chan, and later 8chan (Nagle, 2017; Mortensen and Sihvonen, 2020). Both the movements for men's rights and white nationalism have since continued to use the tactics developed during GamerGate to attack opponents and recruit new members to the movement.

3.3 Activated white identities: Consciousness raising and political theory

Much of the above discussion has looked to the discourse of white nationalist digital publics to understand who is allowed membership to this community of knowers, how membership is legitimized, and how their identity is produced and maintained in the context of present political realities. From here we turn to how these identities are activated and performed. These conceptual spaces center imaginaries of white dispossession, positioning whiteness as a neglected and oppressed class. By appropriating the rhetoric of anti-racism, white nationalists construct a political agenda centered on the myth of systemic discrimination against and dispossession of whites, and dehumanization of their perceived enemies. These narratives of decline and dispossession are central to producing and legitimizing action programs of repossession for dominant groups who perceive themselves in decline (Kydd, 2021; Landry et al., 2024). Following Gray's 2018 characterization of the white nationalist discourse as a "white, male identity politics", we provide evidence of a novel formulation of the white supremacist movement that has adopted and profited from the rhetoric of left emancipatory politics. This is a response to the institutionalization of identity politics in the 2010s, what is now known as "wokeness" (this term was not yet used in 2017 by white nationalists, and today is used widely by the dominant wing of U.S. conservatives as well as white nationalists), as well as the prior institutionalization of multiculturalism in the 1990s and the decline of the post-war industrial socioeconomic order since the late 1970s. "Anti-white", "racist anti-white", "[anti-]white hate", "[anti-]white violence", "white rights", and "white oppression" appropriate the rhetoric of anti-racism to develop a "white identity politics". Noting the success of the "social justice warrior", and holding them among others as responsible for the conditions of white genocide, white nationalists have appropriated the rhetoric of left identity politics and modified it for their own purposes.

Still, wanting to distance themselves from their left opponents, white nationalists have their own term for identity politics, "identitarianism". They use identitarianism to refer not only to white identity politics, but all identity-based movements. In this way Zionism is an "identitarian" movement, much as Israel is an "ethnstate". Here, the rhetoric of the left is also employed to combat left politics. "#whitelivesmatter" is a response to #backlivesmatter, much like the mainstream far-right adopted #alllivesmatter and #bluelivesmatter. White nationalists similarly refer to "Jewish" and "black" privilege to undermine the notion of white privilege. The so-called men's rights or meninist movement has also adopted the term female privilege, though it does not appear in this lexicon. "Diversity means" is a rhetorical trope



Figure 3: A panel of white nationalist consciousness raising memes. The bottom left panel, which is partly obscured by an anti-Semitic caricature speaking in lexical blackface, reads “DIVERSITY MEANS Chasing Down The Last White Person.”

employed to construct an association between multiculturalism and “white oppression”, e.g., “Diversity means white genocide”.

A set of meta-discursive terms appears near the top of the lexicon and speaks to the political action program. “White propaganda” and “white rhetoric” both engage a sense of doing politics. “White agenda”, “white interests”, and “white advocacy” motivate a white identity politics. The phrase “white pill” references the “red pill”, which originates with the discourse of misogyny (Aikin, 2019). The red pill refers to a scene in the film, *The Matrix*, where the hero, Neo, chooses to consume a red pill, liberating himself from the oppressive false consciousness of a computer-simulated world. While initially associated with men developing an emancipatory gender awareness, the term has taken on a life of its own with “red pilling” or “pilling” referring to the instillation of an emancipatory ideology in oneself or others, with various pill colors corresponding to particular ideologies.

Consciousness raising is perhaps the principal activity of political discourse. It draws in new participants, defines the in- and outgroups, and establishes political goals by diagnosing problems and proposing solutions. The lexicon illustrates how political goals are demarcated by terms describing imaginative geography of ethnocrisis which is remedied by white advocacy leading to a white ethnostate. White nationalists use terms like “ethnostate” and “balkanize” to signal a political action program based on exclusion and racial unity with terms like “serious country” and “healthy society”. Their political frameworks also theorize an ethnocrisis wherein minority groups have disproportionate “institutional power”. Concepts such as “slave morality” depict equality as a weakness, promoting a hierarchy based on strength and dominance. The use of “Overton window” suggests the desire to shift public discourse boundaries, while the term “accelerationist” indicates a call to action to hasten societal collapse out of which a white ethnostate can be (re)established. These elements demonstrate how discursively constructed identities employ networks of diverse and complex meaning to develop and promote extremist political strategies.

4 Conclusion

To understand the conceptual space that constitutes white nationalist identity, we must examine its lexicality. This study, focusing on the discourse of white nationalist digital publics, illuminates how this community of knowers processes information and constructs their worldview. By examining the themes that emerge from capturing their group-specific terminology on Twitter, we reveal a comprehensive network of concepts and behaviors that construct the narrative of white victimhood and dispossession, deeply rooted in concepts of ethnocrisis and ethnostalgia.

Our findings underscore the centrality of imaginative geographies in shaping and sustaining an activated white identity. Digital platforms emerge as critical spaces for the propagation and evolution of white nationalist ideology, where language manipulation and strategic use of digital tools create and reinforce symbolic boundaries. These boundaries delineate their own identity from various outgroups, legitimizing exclusionary and supremacist agendas.

This research contributes to our understanding of how extremist ideologies adapt and thrive in digital environments, highlighting the ongoing relevance of spatial thinking in nationalism studies. Moreover, it demonstrates the power of discourse analysis to provide a comprehensive picture of identity construction and action. Our approach of blending computational text processing and qualitative analysis combines the scale and depth of social media data with the synthetic and interpretive power of social theory-informed human readers. By understanding the mechanisms of identity construction and boundary-making in these digital communities, we can develop more effective strategies to understand ideology, community, and social movements in the digital age.

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A Raw output of lexicon extraction up to relative frequency 5

Table 5: Raw output from the method applied to the white nationalist data set. Terms are listed to a relative frequency cut-off of 5.00. Population consists of all followers of 29 white nationalist seed accounts downloaded using the Twitter API over a period from September to October 2017. White nationalist in-group consists of all users who know one of the seed terms (relative frequency = inf). Outgroup are all other users in the population.

Term	Relative Frequency	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
white_genocide	inf	7699	0
#whitegenocide	inf	4596	0
1488	inf	2408	0
#antiwhite	inf	1055	0
antiwhite	inf	971	0
#14words	inf	357	0
#1488	inf	341	0
pro_whites	108.30	336	3
#stopwhitegenocide	84.37	349	4
white_propaganda	48.29	849	17
anti_whites	39.96	1281	31
white_societies	35.78	296	8
#whitegenoci	34.89	676	17
#14w	32.15	513	14
white_immigration	31.57	555	17
#whiteg	30.97	353	10
white_interests	30.46	441	14
#waronwhites	30.34	251	8
white_rhetoric	29.89	680	22
white_civilization	28.94	419	14
#whitegeno	27.90	763	24
rahowa	27.78	431	15
#whitegen	27.77	538	17
#whitesharia	26.88	278	10
#whitegenoc	26.17	686	23
daily_shoah	24.14	624	25
negroids	24.01	298	12
white_advocacy	24.00	273	11
#whitegenocid	23.66	674	25
white_nations	23.06	1240	52
white_agenda	22.97	665	28
#whitege	22.92	418	16
demographic_replacement	22.59	514	22
@whiteresister	22.24	253	11
racist_anti_white	21.39	376	17
george_lincoln_rockwell	21.27	484	22
race_mix	20.84	431	20
racemixing	20.75	279	13
shoah'd	20.09	665	32
mike_enoch	19.34	600	30
muds	19.22	636	32
white_pill	18.73	833	43
#openbordersforisrael	18.50	708	37
cohencidence	18.50	574	30
mudsharks	18.29	454	24
jewish_supremacists	17.89	407	22
#antiw	17.75	263	13
jewish_propaganda	17.70	366	20
dysgenics	17.53	290	16
international_jewry	17.29	304	17
civic_nationalists	17.26	357	20
kevin_macdonald	17.22	463	26
jewish_interests	17.10	336	19
schlomo	16.77	503	29
weimerica	16.73	571	33
white_sharia	16.44	833	49
ethnostates	16.28	505	30
@jmcfeels	16.25	353	21
miscegenation	16.08	1164	70

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
#holohoax	15.95	363	22
oosh	15.87	361	22
jewish_supremacist	15.85	590	36
shoahed	15.79	588	36
mestizos	15.66	680	42
sheboon	15.64	275	17
holohoax	15.31	1061	67
white_anti	15.24	788	50
mudshark	15.24	788	50
race_mixing	15.13	2175	139
white_society	15.05	607	39
@tharightstuff	14.95	433	28
greg_johnson	14.88	477	31
jewish_influence	14.82	659	43
white_countries	14.59	2943	195
@millennialwoes	14.55	331	22
jewish_privilege	14.46	598	40
dr3	14.37	416	28
civic_nationalist	14.24	545	37
shitskins	14.21	338	23
zyklon	14.13	526	36
#liftwaffe	14.13	263	18
whitepill	14.09	306	21
ethnonationalism	14.04	450	31
dispossession	14.03	537	37
jewed	14.02	406	28
andrew_anglin	13.98	940	65
#hitlerwasright	13.94	274	19
@tgsnttv	13.81	300	21
anglin	13.77	1296	91
jew_media	13.68	396	28
afrikaners	13.54	420	30
white_south_africans	13.47	850	61
@seventhsonts	13.46	362	26
ramzpaul	13.39	637	46
wotan	13.23	260	19
anglins	13.22	287	21
@toedit	13.20	396	29
european_peoples	13.19	491	36
#fashthenation	13.17	395	29
heebs	13.14	299	22
nonwhites	13.04	1025	76
ourguys	12.93	254	19
jewish_supremacy	12.85	678	51
hail_victory	12.83	995	75
white_ethnostate	12.82	716	54
mestizo	12.78	793	60
@jazzhandmcfeels	12.57	273	21
amren	12.55	519	40
race_realism	12.50	879	68
rwds	12.50	504	39
white_brothers	12.37	307	24
@radiorenegades	12.29	305	24
huwhite	12.05	561	45
jewtube	12.03	336	27
kvetch	11.97	297	24
civic_nationalism	11.94	1050	85
@rudhum	11.91	308	25
#defendeur	11.89	298	22
@lanalokteff	11.82	391	32
jewish_question	11.76	584	48
mulattos	11.74	255	21
pathological_altruism	11.74	437	36
dispossess	11.71	494	37
fellow_whites	11.68	580	48
nood	11.67	338	28
genocided	11.54	919	77
lampshades	11.52	584	49
afrikaner	11.49	309	26

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
@identityevropa	11.49	297	25
anudda	11.39	365	31
racial_differences	11.31	725	62
jewish_control	11.23	418	36
shoah	11.19	2210	191
typhus	11.16	508	44
white_identity	11.14	1866	162
race_traitors	11.13	495	43
natsocs	11.12	299	26
race_realist	11.11	517	45
boers	11.08	573	50
jq	11.05	2092	183
zog	10.97	2111	186
shitskin	10.89	338	30
white_nation	10.83	1064	95
juden	10.82	649	58
shlomo	10.81	693	62
jewess	10.77	1125	101
shiksa	10.75	378	34
hellstorm	10.74	311	28
tim_wise	10.74	433	39
third_world_immigration	10.68	552	50
wns	10.67	651	59
european_heritage	10.66	507	46
good_goy	10.62	1351	123
white_country	10.61	2184	199
dysgenic	10.59	449	41
ethno_state	10.59	843	77
high_trust	10.45	562	52
white_immigrants	10.43	496	46
jewing	10.42	388	36
iq_differences	10.37	268	25
jewish_media	10.33	801	75
gibs	10.30	1534	144
bugmen	10.24	646	61
coudenrove	10.23	328	31
western_man	10.20	612	58
@amrenaissance	10.20	306	29
#whitepride	10.20	517	49
nsm	10.17	263	25
hapa	10.14	304	29
multicult	10.13	398	38
kikes	10.12	1738	166
white_children	10.12	2921	279
gorillion	10.11	951	91
groyper	10.01	352	34
@jartaylor	10.01	590	57
natsoc	9.94	894	87
heimbach	9.94	411	40
stormer	9.93	493	48
subspecies	9.93	421	41
chimpout	9.90	655	64
european_identity	9.89	317	31
negress	9.81	416	41
white_self	9.78	344	34
admixture	9.77	394	39
jews_hate	9.77	798	79
damigo	9.69	391	39
pozzed	9.67	950	95
celler	9.67	290	29
deracinated	9.67	270	27
dailystormer	9.64	329	33
clown_world	9.59	982	99
nazbol	9.59	357	36
ethnostate	9.56	2443	247
sub_saharan_africans	9.50	393	40
ramz	9.48	461	47
roman_salute	9.47	744	76
physical_removal	9.45	440	45

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
white_minority	9.43	517	53
jewish_identity	9.39	272	28
european_americans	9.33	386	40
white_history	9.33	550	57
white_leftists	9.33	357	37
white_area	9.31	260	27
group_preference	9.30	327	34
ethnic_germans	9.27	278	29
nogs	9.25	957	100
kalergi_plan	9.23	678	71
kvetching	9.19	694	73
@occdissent	9.14	548	58
#goybye	9.09	470	50
native_europeans	9.09	329	35
white_communities	9.05	412	44
goys	9.00	2867	308
dindus	8.99	1385	149
wn	8.97	1892	204
blackpilled	8.87	596	65
jewish_power	8.86	495	54
white_areas	8.86	403	44
npi	8.81	747	82
milkers	8.80	264	29
farm_murders	8.76	290	32
trs	8.76	1250	138
non_europeans	8.74	443	49
genociding	8.72	478	53
red_ice	8.69	818	91
bolshevism	8.69	1042	116
jewry	8.67	933	104
aryan_race	8.64	295	33
nigs	8.63	732	82
poz	8.58	1021	115
chimping	8.57	461	52
nsdap	8.55	725	82
white_europeans	8.55	1220	138
@nathandamigo	8.55	380	43
white_south_african	8.53	291	33
#removekebab	8.53	291	33
zundel	8.52	326	37
diversity_means	8.51	625	71
alt_lite	8.51	2173	247
shekel	8.50	844	96
black_mob_violence	8.50	290	33
world_immigration	8.46	569	65
kalergi	8.40	417	48
european_ancestry	8.37	251	29
bugman	8.34	828	96
white_racism	8.33	2068	240
hatreon	8.31	275	32
wiggers	8.31	335	39
negroid	8.30	618	72
rootless	8.25	904	106
uncuck	8.23	400	47
skypes	8.23	417	49
joos	8.22	527	62
jewy	8.18	516	61
identitarianism	8.16	363	43
evalion	8.16	363	43
genetic_differences	8.16	287	34
boer	8.13	723	86
soyboy	8.13	395	47
ftn	8.12	504	60
zyklon_b	8.12	512	61
white_jews	8.11	344	41
varg	8.10	444	53
faceberg	8.05	433	52
weev	8.03	806	97
@commonfilth	8.02	257	31

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
moonman	8.01	497	60
oswald_mosley	8.00	306	37
third_worlders	7.94	870	106
american_whites	7.92	295	36
cuckservatism	7.92	352	43
identitarians	7.91	638	78
alt_light	7.89	1159	142
soyboys	7.89	253	31
kike	7.89	2480	304
white_heritage	7.82	372	46
ebil	7.79	266	33
heeb	7.78	330	41
poasting	7.77	265	33
kangz	7.75	1282	160
lee_park	7.74	312	39
goyim	7.67	4696	592
blackpill	7.66	776	98
semitism	7.66	380	48
white_media	7.65	277	35
beardson	7.64	395	50
holodomor	7.64	924	117
east_asians	7.63	663	84
time_preference	7.63	276	35
racial_group	7.61	543	69
cucky	7.60	692	88
white_hate	7.59	966	123
#goy	7.59	294	34
black_pill	7.59	1012	129
heritable	7.53	335	43
european_people	7.53	1106	142
dindu	7.53	2273	292
ourguy	7.52	925	119
identity_evropa	7.49	271	35
white_families	7.48	557	72
#dogright	7.47	533	69
white_groups	7.46	293	38
dr_duke	7.46	879	114
white_population	7.43	1053	137
white_race	7.42	4674	609
multicultural_society	7.42	491	64
kangs	7.41	483	63
american_renaissance	7.40	528	69
@apurposefulwife	7.40	459	60
white_farmers	7.39	764	100
cucking	7.38	2818	369
identitarian	7.37	1174	154
nibba	7.37	465	61
redpilling	7.37	663	87
nords	7.36	274	36
ethnocentrism	7.35	304	40
ethnic_identity	7.34	357	47
aryans	7.33	1160	153
mulatto	7.30	1125	149
birthrates	7.26	638	85
uncucked	7.25	405	54
turner_diaries	7.23	269	36
untermensch	7.22	336	45
white_majority	7.19	930	125
multiculti	7.19	424	57
race_culture	7.19	394	53
accelerationism	7.19	394	53
ethno	7.19	1390	187
rhodesia	7.19	758	102
lampshade	7.17	445	60
ethno_nationalism	7.16	615	83
#dingotwitter	7.15	281	38
codeword	7.13	612	83
multiracial	7.06	781	107
utr	7.05	321	44

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
@ramzpaul	7.05	831	114
fashy	7.01	1798	248
national_action	7.01	348	48
european_descent	7.01	442	61
white_culture	7.00	2122	293
sperg	7.00	738	102
ethnic_nationalism	6.98	325	45
ingroup	6.96	252	35
accelerationist	6.92	272	38
sheeit	6.92	644	90
spics	6.90	571	80
jews_control	6.87	703	99
golden_dawn	6.86	582	82
wuz_kangz	6.85	1190	168
white_world	6.83	452	64
race_traitor	6.82	825	117
nuffins	6.81	338	48
white_flight	6.80	984	140
judaic	6.77	252	36
@redicetv	6.75	384	55
population_replacement	6.74	544	78
cuckoldry	6.69	934	135
jewish_problem	6.66	317	46
tbh_fam	6.66	647	94
shitlib	6.64	1565	228
rayciss	6.64	604	88
neets	6.63	672	98
british_girls	6.61	369	54
henlo	6.59	259	38
third_world_immigrants	6.59	293	43
poast	6.57	401	59
spergs	6.57	333	49
jewishness	6.57	564	83
mudslimes	6.56	251	37
#cuckservatives	6.56	373	55
wuz_kangs	6.55	576	85
racialism	6.55	298	44
white_violence	6.55	711	105
@bronzeagemantis	6.53	250	37
#tradlife	6.53	405	60
cuckservatives	6.52	1672	248
#spenceratuf	6.52	364	54
european_civilization	6.52	337	50
non_whites	6.51	4607	684
evola	6.49	544	81
beaners	6.49	517	77
@taramccarthy14	6.49	302	45
white_babies	6.48	1547	231
jewish_elite	6.47	348	52
#defendeurope	6.46	541	81
joo	6.45	487	73
goy	6.44	4856	729
worlders	6.41	895	135
shitlibs	6.41	1842	278
nonwhite	6.40	1132	171
black_country	6.38	330	50
racial_groups	6.37	369	56
fash	6.35	1845	281
shekels	6.34	2484	379
@millennialmatt	6.32	255	39
yid	6.31	300	46
lügenpresse	6.30	678	104
booga	6.28	318	49
world_immigrants	6.27	324	50
germanic	6.25	1287	199
traditionalism	6.25	931	144
sperging	6.24	342	53
higher_iqs	6.24	329	51
wifes_son	6.23	735	114

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
shabbos	6.23	638	99
volk	6.23	425	66
swpl	6.22	328	51
nrx	6.21	501	78
hate_whites	6.21	1496	233
white_mans_burden	6.20	327	51
sheeit	6.19	890	139
semites	6.18	908	142
vibrancy	6.16	452	71
larper	6.16	452	71
mud_huts	6.15	630	99
dispossessed	6.15	356	56
#nrx	6.14	349	55
greatest_ally	6.12	1190	188
homelands	6.11	1764	279
phenotype	6.11	455	72
naturalization_act	6.11	297	47
kwa	6.10	410	65
saxon	6.09	1027	163
white_persons	6.09	277	44
reaching_levels	6.07	584	93
shit_tier	6.07	659	105
fire_rises	6.05	857	137
universalist	6.03	368	59
ashkenazi_jews	6.03	505	81
mixers	6.01	261	42
chinaman	6.01	261	42
race_matters	6.01	323	52
sportsball	5.96	998	162
#lügenpresse	5.96	271	44
khazar	5.95	529	86
incel	5.94	461	75
white_identity_politics	5.91	513	84
north_africans	5.90	360	59
#trad	5.90	289	43
european_women	5.90	689	113
faggotry	5.89	1266	208
european_culture	5.88	1112	183
ashkenazi	5.87	1038	171
atomized	5.86	315	52
demographic_change	5.83	386	64
racial_identity	5.83	591	98
ooga	5.82	295	49
obongo	5.82	349	58
social_cohesion	5.78	568	95
mass Rape	5.76	518	87
anglos	5.76	1024	172
enoch_powell	5.74	588	99
btfo'd	5.74	433	73
national_socialism	5.71	2576	436
greatest_story	5.71	708	120
western_europeans	5.70	289	49
weimar_germany	5.69	300	51
anglo_saxons	5.67	352	60
#cuckservative	5.66	785	134
urbanite	5.66	363	62
dindu_nuffin	5.66	2897	495
shit_test	5.65	257	44
horseshoe_theory	5.65	508	87
overrepresented	5.64	496	85
supremacism	5.63	681	117
aryan	5.61	3250	560
sub_saharan	5.61	441	76
pattern_recognition	5.60	440	76
conserved	5.58	675	117
talmudic	5.57	778	135
homogeneous	5.56	1259	219
degeneracy	5.55	5043	878
oy_vey	5.55	3247	566

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
ethnic_diversity	5.54	292	51
vdare	5.52	314	55
black_africans	5.52	485	85
weimar	5.51	946	166
sephardic	5.49	267	47
immigration_act	5.49	886	156
white_pride	5.48	1503	265
sheeeiit	5.48	255	45
redpilled	5.45	1510	268
rapefugee	5.44	456	81
sodomites	5.44	850	151
non_jews	5.43	1051	187
reconquista	5.43	640	114
ubermensch	5.40	279	50
waffen_ss	5.39	357	64
usury	5.39	1121	201
david_irving	5.38	445	80
non_jew	5.37	389	70
fasces	5.37	283	51
vox_day	5.37	688	124
talmud	5.34	1602	290
daily_stormer	5.33	1930	350
#whites	5.33	314	57
egalitarianism	5.32	979	178
imperium	5.31	445	81
zionist_jew	5.29	394	72
white_crime	5.28	1158	212
black_nationalists	5.28	371	68
press_f	5.27	730	134
white_victims	5.26	457	84
cuckolds	5.25	472	87
european_immigrants	5.24	379	70
demographically	5.22	610	113
@stevesailer	5.22	356	66
flood_europe	5.21	318	59
alt_righter	5.19	526	98
forney	5.19	429	80
larp	5.18	1109	207
cultural_marxist	5.18	1606	300
rape_gang	5.17	278	52
cuckservative	5.16	1832	343
niggers	5.16	3411	639
gentiles	5.16	1307	245
cuckery	5.16	704	132
white_baby	5.15	730	137
larpers	5.13	908	171
dr_david_duke	5.12	339	64
white_neighborhoods	5.12	429	81
kantbot	5.10	322	61
ethnic_group	5.10	1351	256
somali	5.10	712	135
#refugeesnotwelcome	5.10	274	52
homogenous	5.08	1077	205
racial_diversity	5.08	420	80
heartiste	5.08	252	48
anti_racists	5.07	530	101
orbiters	5.07	257	49
ethnics	5.05	444	85
multi_racial	5.05	402	77
pocs	5.05	616	118
diversity_quotas	5.05	308	59
1790	5.05	480	92
redpills	5.04	532	102
western_people	5.04	271	52
negroes	5.04	1558	299
white_family	5.02	830	160
swarthy	5.01	347	67
cummies	5.01	264	51
neet	5.00	885	171

Term	Odds Ratio	Users ⁱⁿ	Users ^{out}
interracial	5.00	1873	362
frankfurt_school	5.00	952	184