

Alt-Right YouTubers

Exploring Alt-Right YouTube Networks and Narratives

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Summary of Key Findings:

Our multi-step, multi-tool analysis displayed 1.) dis-unity and relatively small strategic alignments amongst Alt-Right content creators, 2.) multiple in-roads and bridge figures between general YouTube content and Alt-Lite content, 3.) highly national and racial tones and narratives in YouTube titles and keywords, and 4.) a sense of newsroom style reporting existing across all clusters' content.

1. Introduction:

During our two-week-long Summer School at The University of Amsterdam, we were exposed to a narrative by both Marc Tuters and The Home Office of The United Kingdom, which discussed the precarious status of the Alternative Right political movement in the United Kingdom and Europe with questions around its prescience of Naziism and other forms of political extremism. Both parties elicited numerous questions around the nature of their power across different digital media and mediums, acknowledging that the field was largely un-explored and in-development. We were instructed to look at different clusters of this Alt-Right universe, as per the suggestion of The Home Office of the United Kingdom. These were the Alt-Right Core, the Alt-Lite, and European Union and United Kingdom (hereafter EU & UK) specific channels. The Alt-Right Core was said to resemble traditional news networks in their delivery and distribution and have content that was characterized by 'white nationalist' and 'anti-establishment' sentiments, such as that of the YouTube channel AltRight.com. The Alt-Lite was said to resemble more contemporary web content in both delivery and distribution such as memes and GIFs and while also characterized by anti-establishment tones would take a large stance on being 'anti-politically-correct' as exemplified by Milo Yiannopoulos. Finally, the EU & UK channels were similar to the Alt-Lite in delivery and distribution but instead had more geographically-specific issue based tones, notably 'counter-jihadism' and 'anti-Islam,' like that of InfoWars. It was the intent and directive of our sub-project to utilize Bernhard Rieder's YouTube Tools to their fullest extent in order to better explore the Alt-Right Community on YouTube. In doing this, we attempted to discover the alignments, connectedness, and positioning strategies of Alt-Right content creators while also determining how general users of YouTube may be exposed to Alt-Right content both natively and directionally. Doing this not only feeds into larger projects hosted by The Digital Media Initiative but also allowed our group to explore how we might better understand the Alt-Right in an effort to combat its implied extremist tendencies.

2. Initial Data Sets:

Please, list and describe your data sets.

- Our team utilized and ran Bernhard Rieder's [YTDT Channel Info Tool](#) for 30 YouTube 'seed channels,' suggested by officials from The Home Office of The United Kingdom, which were deemed reflecting of unique Alt-Right communities (i.e. the Alt-Right Core, the Alt-Lite, and European Union (hereafter EU) and United Kingdom (hereafter UK) specific channels). Those results were partially translated and downloaded into a [Google Sheet](#), under the name Alt-Right Network YTDT (Master) Channel Info Download, which contains: the aforementioned categories created by the home office, individual channel identification codes, individual YouTube channel

titles, individual YouTube video identification codes, individual YouTube video titles, and the published dates for those aforementioned YouTube videos.

- Our team ran and utilized Bernhard Rieder's YTDT Video List Tool using the YouTube channel identification codes of the 30 seed channels provided by The Home Office of The United Kingdom.
- Using a series of geographic-specific keywords, pertaining to issues in The United Kingdom and, more broadly, in Europe (i.e. UK, U K, U.K., United Kingdom, Britain, Great Britain, GB, England, London, Europe, EU, European, European Union, and Brexit) and a series of narrative keywords based on the scale of Alt-Right extremism (called the Alt-Right Spectrum) created by The Home Office of the United Kingdom (i.e. anti-establishment and anti-establish for "anti-political correctness"; gender, feminism, and man for "gender inequality / manosphere"; race, white, and white race for "race realism / anti-realism"; anti-democracy for "anti-democracy"; nation and nationalism for "white nationalism"; Jewish and Israel for "the Jewish question"; and white and supremacy for "white supremacy"), we analyzed all YouTube video titles and descriptions collected to see if there were correlative relations or frequencies within the various Alt-Right communities.
- Utilized and ran Bernhard Rieder's YTDT Channel Network Tool for the 30 YouTube Seed Channels to understand the features and subscriptions that connected the various networks. Four clustered iterations of this analysis was conducted: 1.) a Master Seed Channel list, 2.) an Alt-Right Core list, 3.) an Alt-Lite list, and 4.) an EU & UK channel list. For each cluster analysis, we imported the channel identification code "Channel ID" of each YouTube Seed Channel. In the first iteration, we set the crawl depth to '1' and ran iterations with and without subscriptions data. In the second iteration, we set the crawl depth to '2' and ran the iteration with subscriptions only.
- Our team imported the four clustered iterations, at both crawl depths (i.e. '1' and '2'), with and without subscriptions (when applicable) into Gephi to observe the networks individually (i.e. how the Alt-Right Core, the Alt-Lite, and the EU & UK channels either featured each other in a friends network at crawl depth '1' and recruited and connected to other YouTubers at crawl depth '2') and together (both Master Seed List analyses).
- We then calculated and analyzed the modularity class for each cluster. When the crawl depth was set at '1' the size of the nodes was calculated by the number of subscribers. When the crawl depth was set at '2' the size of nodes was calculated by the measure of 'in-degree.'
- We focused, specifically, on calculating channels that linked modularity clusters for the Master networks. At a crawl depth of '2,' we quantified how many times a node was present in each cluster as well as those nodes that had a high frequency of in-links and out-links.
- After our initial analyses, we began to examine narratives that would link channels together by using a word frequency counter in the YouTube video titles. In the first round, we examined 14 channels with an existing high frequency of links. In the second round, we combined the 14 titles into various clusters, based on their modularity clusters within the Master Seed List network, and compared word frequency in video titles to show how Alt-Right narratives changed throughout time.
- Finally, our team compared data from an existing list of linked videos on the platform 4Chan with our Master Seed List in order to identify potential cross-over and/or cross-platform channels.

3. Research Question(s):

Clearly state your research questions and any hypotheses or expectations.

Our questions largely stem from discussions held with representatives from The Home Office of the United Kingdom. Both Richard Rogers and Marc Tuters provided initial suggestions for the framing of this language to fit the context of their larger report. While we explored a multitude of sub-questions and queries our overarching questions were the following:

- R1.)** How strategically aligned is the Alt-Right?
- R2.)** What strategies are employed by the Alt-Right when positioning their content?
- R3.)** What are the most significant narrative cluster in the Alt-Right?
- R4.)** Are there emerging narrative clusters and/or actors outside of the Alt-Right?

These questions were predicated on several assumptions from The Home Office of the United Kingdom: 1.) that Alt-Right communities were developing in Europe, specifically in The United Kingdom, 2.) that the Alt-Right movement began and stemmed largely from the United States, 3.) that the movement was well-connected, insular, and while small in number relatively impregnable for new voices to be heard or for main voices to be muted. These sentiments were echoed and reflected upon both by Marc Tuters in his presentation ‘Culture War 2.0: Mapping Alt-Right Web Cultures,’ at The University of Amsterdam Digital Methods Summer School 2017 as well as by representatives of The Home Office of The United Kingdom in June and July of 2017.

4. Method(s):

Explain your method(s) and approach(es).

We have broken down our methods section by discussing how the various following platforms and tools were used to gather, analyze, and visualize the data we used to answer our questions.

- Bernhard Riedher’s Digital Media Initiative (DMI) YouTube Data Tools (YTDT)
 - We used the Channel Info Tool to collect biographic information on 30 Alt-Right channels. In particular, we collected channel identification codes, channel titles, video identification codes, video titles, video descriptions, the dates the videos were published, the duration and length of each video, and the view count, like count, dislike count, favourite count, and comment count of each video as of July 01st 2017 for the crawl depth of ‘2’ and as of July 05th 2017 for the crawl depth of ‘1.’
 - We used the Channel Network Tool to conduct ‘feature’, ‘subscription’, and joint feature and subscription network analyses, at two different crawl depths, of 30 Alt-Right YouTube channels.
- Gephi
 - We used Gephi versions 0.9.1 and 0.9.0 to visualize and analyze the feature and subscriptions networks Alt-Right Communities (i.e. ‘The Alt-Right Core’, ‘The Alt-Lite’, and ‘EU & UK Channels’) both together and separately, at multiple crawl depths, as suggested by officials from The Home Office of the United Kingdom.
- Microsoft Excel

- Excel was used to create multiple charts, spreadsheets, and graphical visualizations to show the percentages of keyword occurrence on a sample of 48,000+ Alt-Right YouTube video titles and video descriptions.
- The keywords chosen for this analysis were either related to geographic and region-specific terms (e.g. United Kingdom) or to narrative-specific terms pertaining to the Alt-Right (e.g. nationalism narrative) as requested by The Home Office of The United Kingdom.
- WordArt (formerly known as TAGUL)
 - We used WordArt to create word cloud visualizations which show the most frequently occurring key terms in the titles and descriptions of over 48,000+ Alt-Right YouTube videos.
- Rawgraphs
 - We used Rawgraphs to analyze and visualize the video publication rhythm throughout time for channels that linked clusters together at a crawl depth of '2'. We did this to compare the evolution of Alt-Right narratives and dialogues to see if there were different entry points into the three modularity clusters.
- ImageJ
 - Using ImageJ, we created a video thumbnail canvas of Alt-Right YouTube channels by downloading the images of the 30 seed channels via the 'DownThemAll' Firefox plug-in. The canvas was first organized by hue and saturation and then by contrast using the montage macro. We chose to show the contrast prepared canvas in this report due to its readability.

5. Findings:

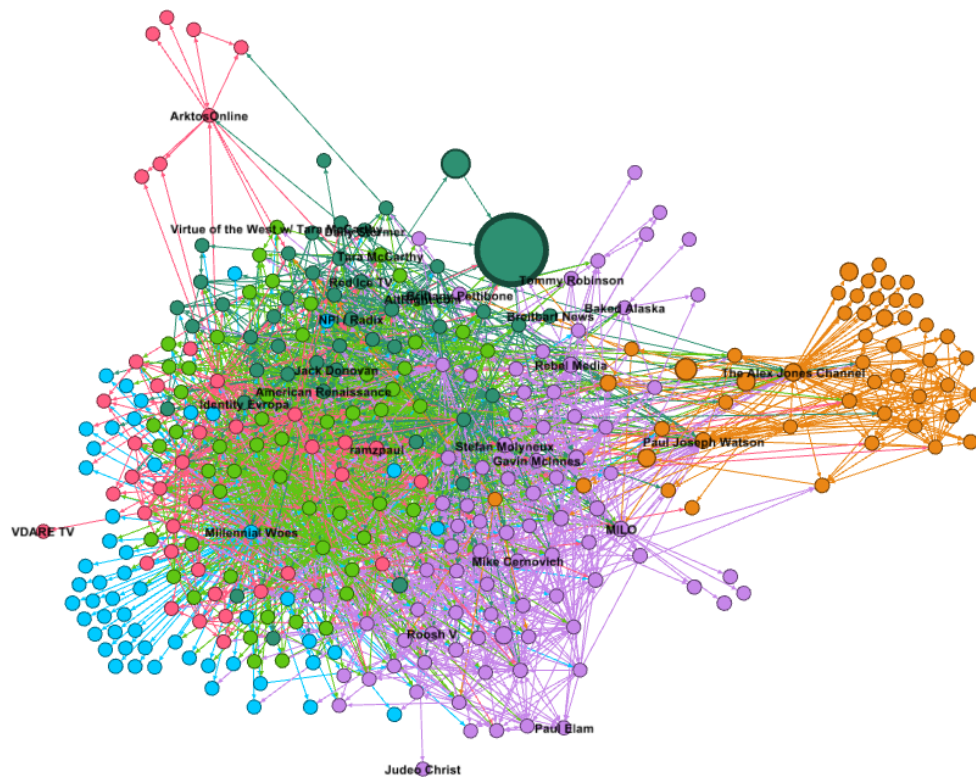
Network Analyses:

The networks were extracted using Bernhard Rieder's YTDT Channel Network Tool from 30 seed channels selected and categorized by The Home Office of the United Kingdom. The YTDT Channel Network Tool crawls a network via YouTube's 'featured channels' function, as well as via individual channels' subscriptions. We imported each YouTube channel's channel identification code (hereafter Channel ID) into the tool and set about to run analyses across the three clusters, with the 'Alt-Right Core' (six seeds), the 'Alt-Lite' (12 seeds), and the EU & UK specific channels (ten seeds) as well as in combination with one another (Master Seed Network). We did so across a crawl depth of '1' and a crawl depth of '2' both with and without subscriptions. By creating separate networks for these lists and parameters, we were able to adopt different points of view and tell richer stories of the panorama (in this case, the whole network), vantage points (singular nodes), and journeys (following chains of nodes). For the purposes of this essay, we mainly focus on panoramic views, diving into vantage point or particular chains of nodes only when relevant.

Using the ForceAtlas 2 algorithm, as developed by Blondel, Guillaume, Lambiotte, and Lefebvre (2008), we ran a query for the 30 seed channels at a crawl depth of '1' both with and without subscriptions. With three threads, a tolerance (speed) of 0.1, an approximation of 1.2, scaling of 2.0, no stronger gravity applied, gravity level of 1.0, no dissuaded hubs, no linlog mode applied, overlap prevented, and an edge weight influence of 1.0, we then ran a modularity report based on Lambiotte, Delvenne, and Barahona Laplacian Dynamics (2009) with the parameters of randomization on, edge weights on, and resolution at

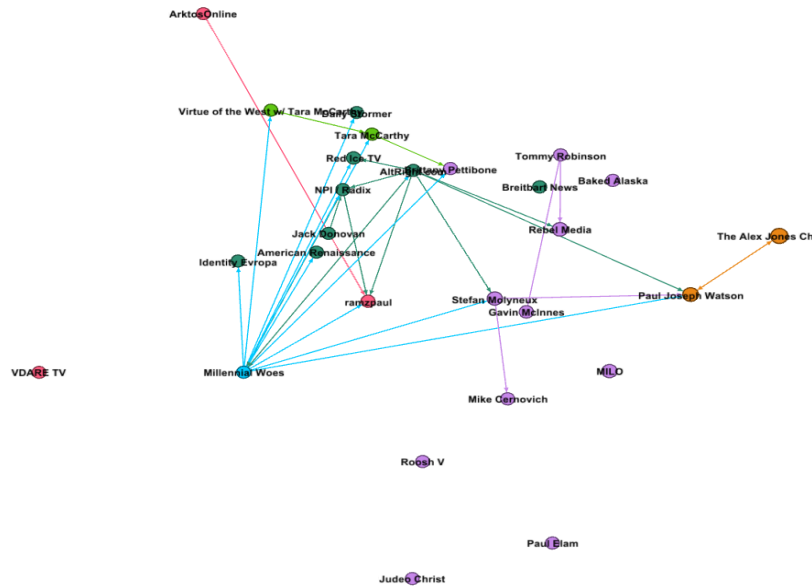
0.95. Our results gave us a modularity of 0.284, a modularity with resolution of 0.26, and six distinct modularity community clusters. We then colored the nodes based on the modularity community clusters and sized the nodes based on their number of subscribers on YouTube as of July 04th 2017.

The following figure is a representation of this query, with only those channels on the seed names list shown in black font.

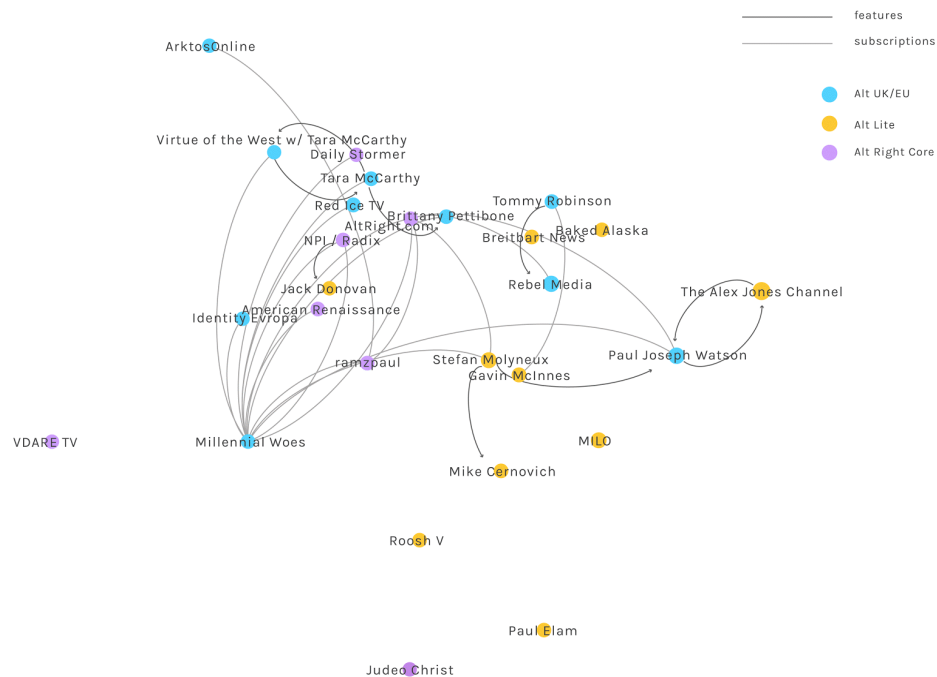


From here, we were able to identify the following distinct communities: The 'North American Alt-Right Media Networks' (14.07% of the total and teal in color) including seeds channels: Daily Stormer, Red Ice TV, Breitbart News, American Renaissance, AltRight.com, NPI/Radix, Jack Donovan, and Identity Evropa; The Millennial Woes Community (16.21% of the total and blue in color) featuring the Millennial Woes seed channel only; the 'Debates on Eurasianism, Immigration, and Identity' community (12.23% of the total and pink in color) featuring the Ramzpaul, VDARE TV, and ArktosOnline seed channels; the Mainstream Alt-Right Celebrity community (14.98% of the total and orange in color) featuring The Alex Jones Channel and Paul Joseph Watson seed channels; the Tara McCarthy Community (16.51% of the total and green in color) featuring both Tara McCarthy's solo channel and her Virtue of the West collaboration seed channel; and the 'Alt-Lite Group-Targeting Personalities' community (with 25.99% of the total and purple in color) featuring the Rebel Media, Stefan Molyneux, MILO (Milo Yiannopoulos), Gavin McInnes, Mike Cernovich, Tommy Robinson, Roosh V, Brittany Pettibone, A Voice for Men (Paul

Elam), Baked Alaska, and Judeo Christ seed channels.



Even at a crawl depth of '1', this visualization still proved difficult to read to try and understand how connected and strategically aligned the various Alt-Right clusters were. By removing all but the seed channels interconnectedness (as shown in the figure above), we were able to see that the seed channels, which were meant to be representative of clustering and central hubs for the Alt-Right community at-large seem rather disjointed as show by further segmentation of seed channels with and without feature and subscriptions as illustrated in the GIF image copied below.

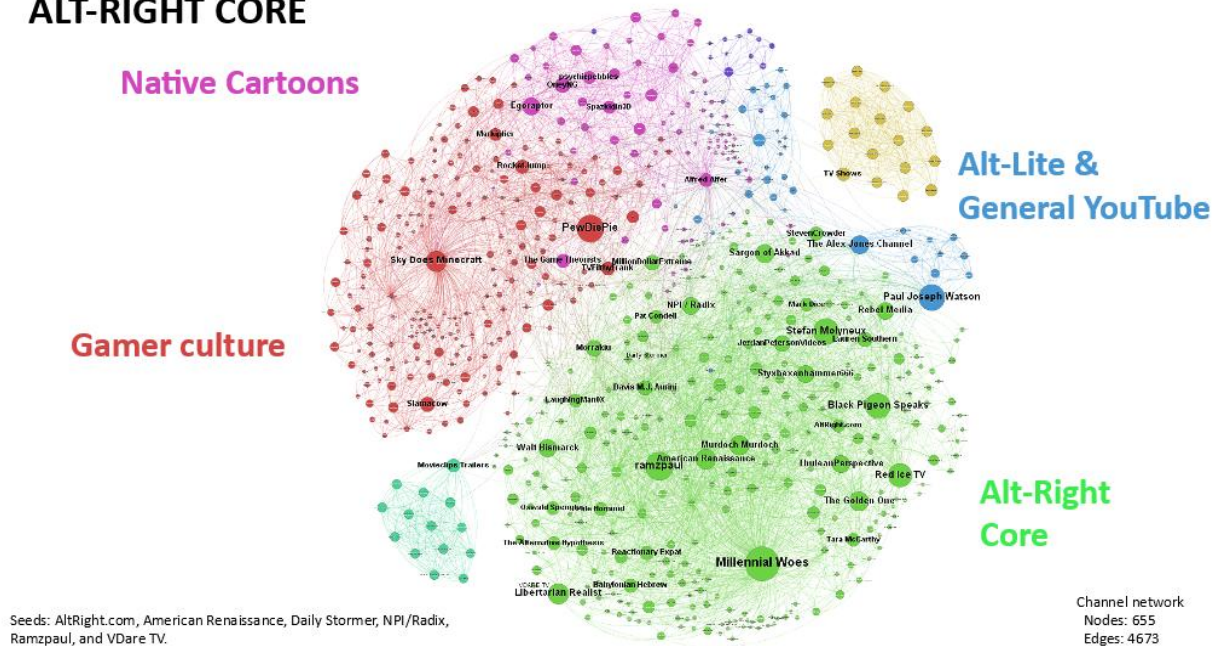


By acknowledging that there is fragmentation and disunity among the Alt-Right creator community at large and within the carefully curated clusters of The Home Office, we determined that it would be valuable to explore each community at a crawl depth of ‘2’, using largely the same parameters in Gephi, to try and understand why there might be disunity through an examination of the larger feature and subscriptions and, by extension, the potential audiences and bridge figures to Alt-Right content.

ALT-RIGHT CORE:

The six seeds of the Alt-Right Core seed list formed a network comprised of 655 channels (nodes) and 4673 interactions (edges). It has seven clusters. The top four represent 92.4% of the network.

ALT-RIGHT CORE



The network is compact and centralized. The top four clusters are all interlaced, even though the largest green cluster seems slightly distanced and internal. The largest *Alt-Right Core* (green) cluster constitutes 43.97% (288 nodes) of the network and is highly interlinked. The most influential nodes (based on in-degree links) are Millennial Woes, Ramzpaul, and Stefan Molyneux. Looking at the connections between clusters, TVFilthyFrank (purposefully “offensive” comedy), and Alfred Alfer (YouTube native cartoons) appear to be important.

KEY INSIGHT: TVFilthyFrank and Alfred Alfer might make us intuit that what ties the Alt-Right Core to a wider set of interests is a particular type of niche, aggressive, in-joke culture.

The *Gamer Culture* (red) cluster constitutes 30.38% (199 nodes) of the network and is characterized by gaming and parodic comedy videos. This cluster consists of gaming and comedy channels including nigahiga and TVFilthyFrank, pop culture parodic channels like How It Should Have Ended, and parodic music like ERB. PewDiePie, Sky Does Minecraft and Slamacow also stand out.

KEY INSIGHT : The centrality of PewDiePie in a network focused on gaming is hardly surprising, but the close link between this network of gamer and gaming-culture channels and the *Alt-Right Core* becomes interesting given PewDiePie's recent controversies. This network does not suggest that he is Alt-Right, but instead suggests overlap between PewDiePie's audiences and those of Alt-Right channels.

The *Native Cartoons* cluster (fuchsia) is closely interlinked with *Gamer Culture* and constitutes 12.37% (81 nodes) of the network. It is characterized by YouTube native cartoons, comedic animations, which feature gamer content. Crossroads for this network are Egoraptor, OneyNG, and The Game Theorists, as well as Alfred Alfer.

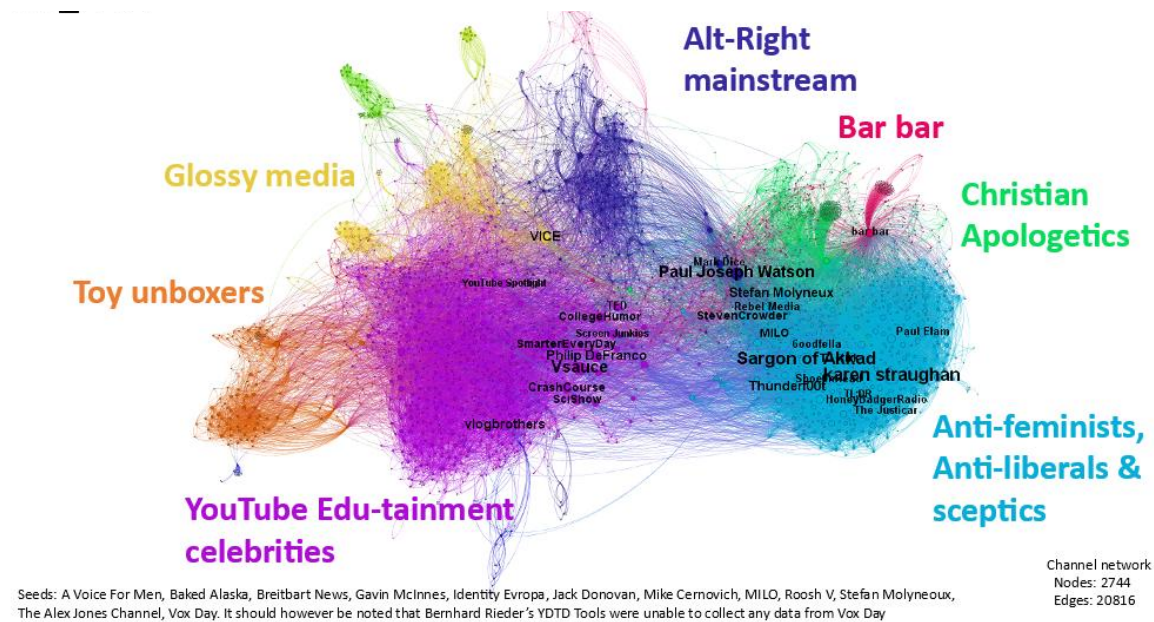
The *Alt-Lite and General YouTube* cluster (blue) constitutes 5.65% (37 nodes) of the network and features Paul Joseph Watson, The Alex Jones Channel, and YouTube Spotlight. This cluster is a mix of YouTube branded channels (including Music, News, Sport, and Popular), and channels from the Alt-Lite and EU & UK seed lists.

KEY INSIGHT: The Alex Jones Show and Paul Joseph Watson are pulled towards the *Alt-Right Core*, whereas YouTube Spotlight is pulled towards *Native Cartoons* and *Gamer Culture*. We believe this suggests is that channels connected to the Alt-Right, like Paul Joseph Watson, The Alex Jones Show, and THEINFOWARRIOR are comparatively more mainstream than other Alt-Right YouTubers given their comparative high connectivity with general YouTube.

Three smaller clusters *Traditional Media Comedy* (2.75%, dark purple), *TV* (2.75%, yellow), and *Movieclips* (2.14%, green) are less significant to the overall analysis and only tangentially connected to the Alt-Right. *Traditional Media Comedy* consists of Comedy Central, South Park, and stand-up comedians like Kumail Nanjiani and Jeff Dunham. *TV* consists of YouTube channels featuring television shows (e.g. Drama TV Shows and International TV). *Movieclips* consists of different channels featuring cinematic trailers.

ALT-LITE:

The 12 seeds of the Alt-Lite seed list formed a network comprised of 3,271 channels (nodes) and 28,461 interactions (edges). It has 15 clusters, seven of which constitute 93.4% of the network.



The Alt-Lite network is much less centralized than the Alt-Right Core network.

The largest cluster, *YouTube Edu-tainment Celebrities* (fuschia), constitutes 26.41% (864 nodes) of the network, is comprised of Social Media Entertainers (like the vlogbrothers and Casey Neistat) and educational entertainment channels (like CrashCourse, SciShow, Veritasium, and CGP Grey), and has prominent bridge figures like Vsauce, Philip DeFranco, and vlogbrothers. Notably, none of our seeds are in this cluster.

Christian Apologetics (green), our second largest cluster, constitutes 16.85% (551 nodes) of the network. The top crossroads in this cluster are Max Kolbe, TEDx Talks, and InspiringPhilosophy. Notably, Max Kolbe is connected to seed channel 'A Voice For Men' as a contributor and is a central bridge-figure in multiple clusters. Other prominent channels include: DrCraigVideos, Acts17Apologetics, and Ravi Zacharias International Ministries.

KEY INSIGHT: The *Christian Apologetics* cluster combines Christian apologetic messaging from different denominations. These channels tend to be aggressively proselytizing, with cases of Anti-Atheism and Anti-Islam messaging also shown.

The *Anti-Feminists, Anti-liberals and Sceptics* (turquoise) cluster constitutes 15.96% (522 nodes) of the network. Karen Straughan, Sargon of Akkad, and Thunderf00t are central to this network with other channels (including four seed channels) like Stefan Molyneux and Paul Elam also providing relevant connections.

The *Alt-Right Mainstream* (dark blue) cluster constitutes 13.24% (433 nodes) of the network and is comprised mainly of influencers like Paul Joseph Watson, Mark Dice, and The Alex Jones Channel. Other notable channels include: RT, WeAreChange, The White House, THEINFOWARRIOR, and Gavin McInnes. While this cluster features Alt-Right celebrities like Alex Jones or political channels, like The

White House, this cluster also includes channels whose producers do not label themselves as Alt-Right, like WeAreChange and StormCloudsGathering. This cluster contains five of our seeds. It is worth noting that both Paul Joseph Watson and Mark Dice are close to the *Anti-Feminists, Anti-Liberals and Sceptics* cluster, whereas The Alex Jones Channel pulls more towards mainstream YouTube clusters like *YouTube Edu-tainment Celebrities* and *Glossy Media* (yellow).

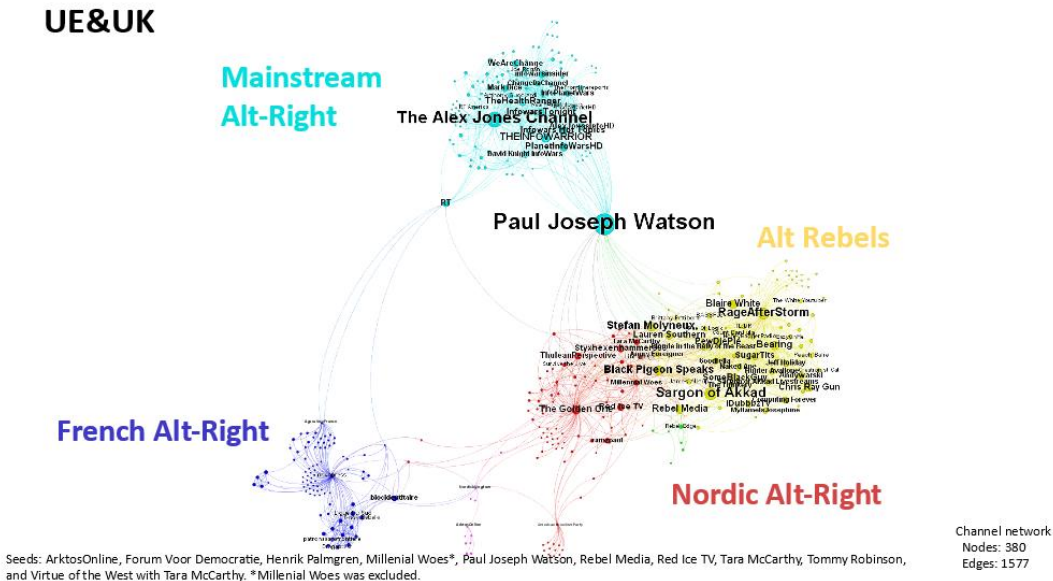
The *bar bar* cluster (red) constitutes 8.59% (281 nodes) of the network. This cluster's content was disparate, with top crossroads ranging from *bar bar*, to *National Geographic*, and *The Onion*. This clusters includes several independent non-Alt-Right news channels, as well as comedy channels like Miranda Sings, edu-tainment channels like NurdRage, and alternative living like Kirsten Dirksen.

The *Glossy Media* cluster (yellow) constitutes 6.42% (210 nodes) of the network with VICE, VICE News, and Noise as primary influencers with “glossy” magazines like GQ, WIRED, and Vogue also in the mix. Interestingly, Gavin McInnes (co-founder of VICE, and notable Alt-Lite personality) is located in our *Anti-Feminists, Anti-Liberals and Sceptics* cluster but not in *Glossy Media*.

Smaller, less significant, clusters represented in this network ranged from Toy Unboxers to Jazz and Blues Music to The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Men's Lifestyles.

EU & UK Channels:

The ten seeds of the EU & UK list formed a network comprised of 380 channels (nodes) and 1577 interactions (edges) with six clusters. The top four represent 97.46% of the network.



While this network is almost exclusively Alt-Lite, Alt-Right, and Conservative content, it is disparate and full of holes.

The *Mainstream Alt-Right* cluster (turquoise) is the largest, constituting 29.74% (113 nodes) of the network. The top crossroads are Paul Joseph Watson, The Alex Jones Show, and THEINFOWARRIOR,

thus characterizing the network by mainstream right-wing thinkers and news channels like Russia Today (RT). Prominent channels include: RT, WeAreChange, and TheHealthRanger (also part of Alex Jones' brand).

KEY INSIGHT: Paul Joseph Watson functions are not only as a crossroad within the *Mainstream Alt-Right* cluster, but also as a bridge to the *Nordic Alt-Right* (red), and *Alt-Rebels* (yellow). Other bridge figure, RT, links to both the *Alt-Rebels* and the *French Alt-Right* (dark blue).

The second largest cluster, *Nordic Alt-Right* (red), constitutes 22.63% (86 nodes) of the network, with its top crossroads being TheGoldenOne, Styxhexenhammer666, and Red Ice TV. Other prominent channels in this cluster are ThuleanPerspective, Tara McCarthy, Ramzypaul, and Martin Sellner.

KEY INSIGHT: *Nordic Alt-Right* comprises Swedish and Northern European content, as well as content featuring paganism and historical warfare. The *Mainstream Alt-Right* ties into the *Nordic Alt-Right* via Paul Joseph Watson, as well as RT. This cluster seems closely related to the *Alt-Rebels* cluster.

The *French Alt-Right* cluster (dark blue) constitutes 22.11% (84 nodes) of the network, with top crossroads of blocidentitaire, Nissa Rebela, and Ligue Du Sud. It is characterized by French content connected to Alt-Right interests. Notably, the pathway from the *French Alt-Right* to the *Nordic Alt-Right* is Nordisk Ungdom, a Swedish Alt-Right youth organization, which is, in turn, tied to Arktos Online.

The *Alt-Rebels* cluster (yellow) constitutes 21.05% (80 nodes) of the network, with crossroads of Sargon of Akkad, RageAfterStorm, and Black Pigeon Speaks. This cluster comprises libertarian and conservative channels connected to Rebel Media, alternative news outlets, and channels focusing on 'free speech'. This cluster is closely tied to the *Nordic Alt-Right*.

Toy Unboxing videos and smaller Alt-Right channels constitutes a fifth cluster, at 2.89% (11 nodes in fushia) of the network, with top channels including: TheEngineeringFamily, Nordisk Ungdom, and Killer Clowns and Ghosts. Notably, ArktosOnline acts as a bridge figure between this cluster and *The Nordic Alt-Right*.

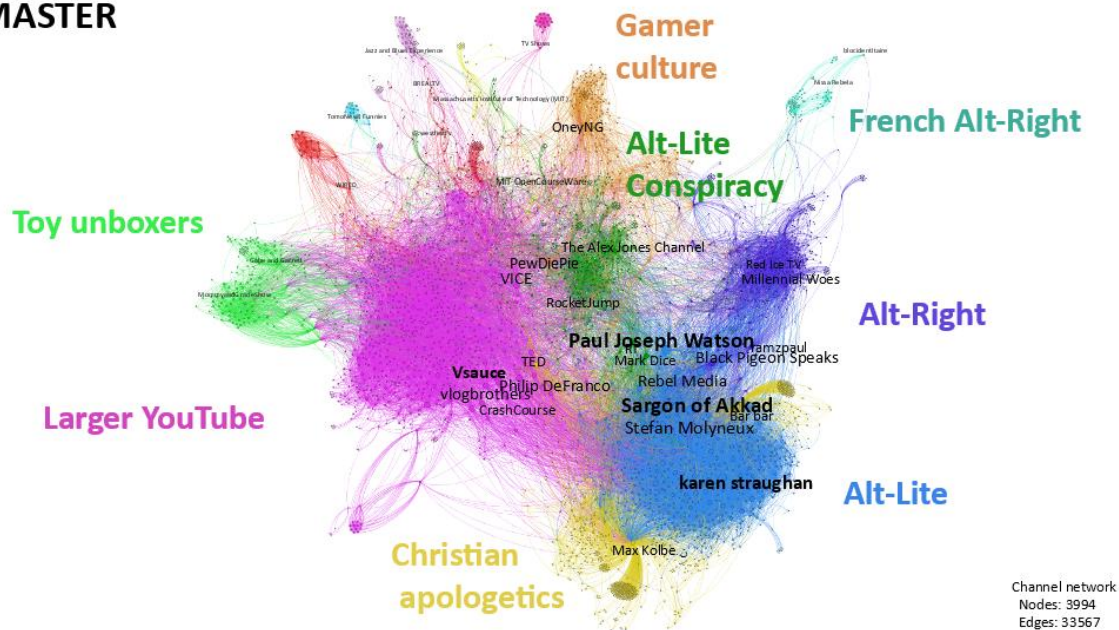
The sixth cluster, *Rebel Media* (green), constitutes 1.58% (6 nodes) of the network, with crossroads Rebel Edge, Le Rebelle Media, and The New Brit.

KEY INSIGHT: *Rebel Media* cluster consists mainly of channels related to Rebel Media, although Rebel Media itself is in *The Alt-Rebels* cluster, which is a canadian media operations, which in turn suggests a UK-EU Canadian overlap.

MASTER LIST:

The seeds of the master seed list formed a network comprised of 3,994 channels (nodes) and 33,567 interactions (edges). It has 15 clusters. The top seven represent 89.26% of the network.

MASTER



The largest cluster, *Larger YouTube* (fuschia), constitutes 23.54% (940 nodes) of the network, with top crossroads of Vsauce, VICE, and Philip DeFranco. This cluster resembles the *YouTube Edu-tainment Celebrities* from the Alt-Lite Network, but has absorbed channels like VICE, Movieclips, and YouTube corporate channels like YouTube Spotlight. Notably, Vsauce and Philip DeFranco linked more towards the *Christian Apologetics* (yellow) and third *Alt-Lite* (blue) clusters, whereas VICE linked more towards the *Alt-Lite Conspiracy* (green) cluster. Interestingly, a slim tendril towards the bottom of the cluster, is similar to the *Movieclips* cluster we found in the Alt-Right Core Network. It should be pointed out that these channels found may lean more liberal in their content, but we attribute this to a flow between *Larger YouTube* and the *Alt-Lite* via Philip DeFranco who serves as a crossroad for discussion and debate.

The *Christian Apologetics* (yellow) is the second largest cluster constituting 20.08% (802 nodes) of the network, with top crossroads of bar bar, TED, and Max Kolbe. This cluster merges the *bar bar* and *Christian Apologetics* clusters found in the Alt-Lite Network. Other crossroads range from Big Think, to National Geographic, to The Onion, and Christian apologetics channels. This cluster does not contain any seeds and appears to be strongly correlated with the *Alt-Lite* cluster. The disparate nature of the cluster made it difficult to categorize and name. This cluster is oddly shaped, and has three sub-divisions, one coalescing around bar bar, another coalescing around TED, TEDx Talk, and Big Think, and another coalescing around Max Kolbe.

The third largest cluster, *Alt Lite* (blue), constitutes 14.87% (594 nodes) of the network, with cross roads of Sargon of Akkad, Paul Joseph Watson, Karen Straughan, Rebel Media, Lauren Southern, and MILO. The cluster features seven seed channels and is seemingly a merger between the *Alt-Right Mainstream* and *Anti-Feminists, Anti-Liberals and Sceptics* from the Alt-Lite Network. Paul Joseph Watson hovers at the edge, linking to both the *Alt-Lite Conspiracy* and *Alt-Right* clusters.

The *Alt-Lite Conspiracy* cluster (green) constitutes 10.92% (436 nodes) of the network, with crossroads of Mark Dice, The Alex Jones Channel, RT, David Icke, and THEINFOWARRIOR. The Alex Jones Channel

is the only seed in this cluster. This cluster is similarly composed to the *Mainstream Alt-Right* in the EU & UK network. This cluster is distinguished by its focus on journalism and unraveling conspiracies.

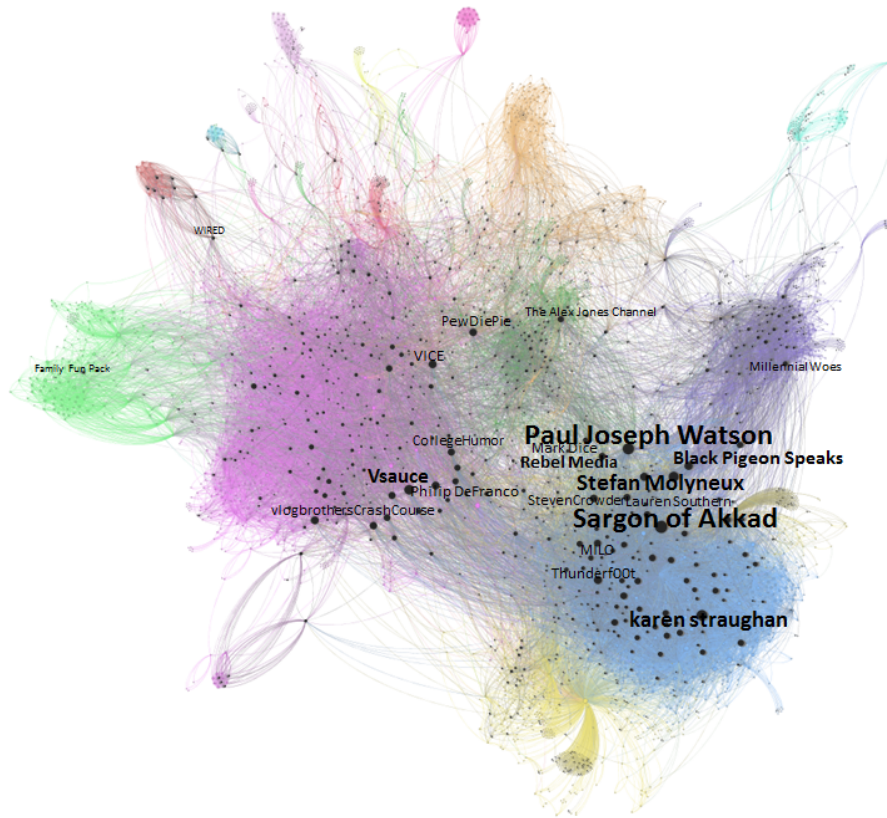
The *Alt-Right* cluster (purple) constitutes 9.06% (362 nodes) of the network, with top crossroads of Black Pigeon Speaks, ramzpaul, and Millennial Woes. It contains 15 of our seeds, six from the Alt-Right Core seed list, four from the Alt-Lite seed list, and five from the EU & UK seed list. Because of the overwhelming presence of Alt-Right Core seeds, we named this cluster in its namesake. Notably, Millennial Woes is embedded in the cluster while ramzpaul and Black Pigeon Speaks remain closer to the *Alt-Lite* cluster.

The *Gamer Culture* (brown) cluster constitutes 5.78% (231 nodes) of the network, with top crossroads of PewDiePie, RocketJump, OneyNG, Sky Does Minecraft, Tobuscus, Slamacow, and nigahiga. This cluster is characterized by content focusing on comedy and gamer culture, containing none of our seeds. Note the centrality of PewDiePie, who links to both *Larger YouTube* and *Alt-Lite Conspiracy*.

Smaller clusters includes: Toy Unboxers (fluorescent green) at 5.01% (200 nodes) of the network, Chill Hop (red) at 3.08% (123 nodes), Jazz and Blues (pink) at 2.58% (103 nodes), French Alt Right (fluorescent turquoise) at 2.08% (83 nodes), and MIT (yellow) at 1.05% (42 nodes).

4CHAN COMPARISONS:

Having been given 40,706 channels (stemming from 137,112 videos) that were also on 4chan, we compared this data with our Master Seed List to determine crossover between the platforms. We identified 859 crossover-channels in our YouTube Master List out of 3,994 channels.



Acknowledging that 4chan/pol/ is an Alt-Right space, we concluded that the term /pol/ is used in Alt-Right forums and should be used as an Alt-Right view of YouTube. The largest portion of links to 4chan are by channels in modularity clusters associated with the *Alt-Lite*, *Alt-Right Core*, *Christian Apologetics*, *Alt-Right Conspiracy* and *French Alt-Right* clusters (65%). The ten most influential 4chan crossover channels are: Sargon of Akkad, Paul Joseph Watson, karen straughan, Stefan Molyneux, Vsauce, Black Pigeon Speaks, Rebel Media, Thunderf00t, VICE and Philip DeFranco.

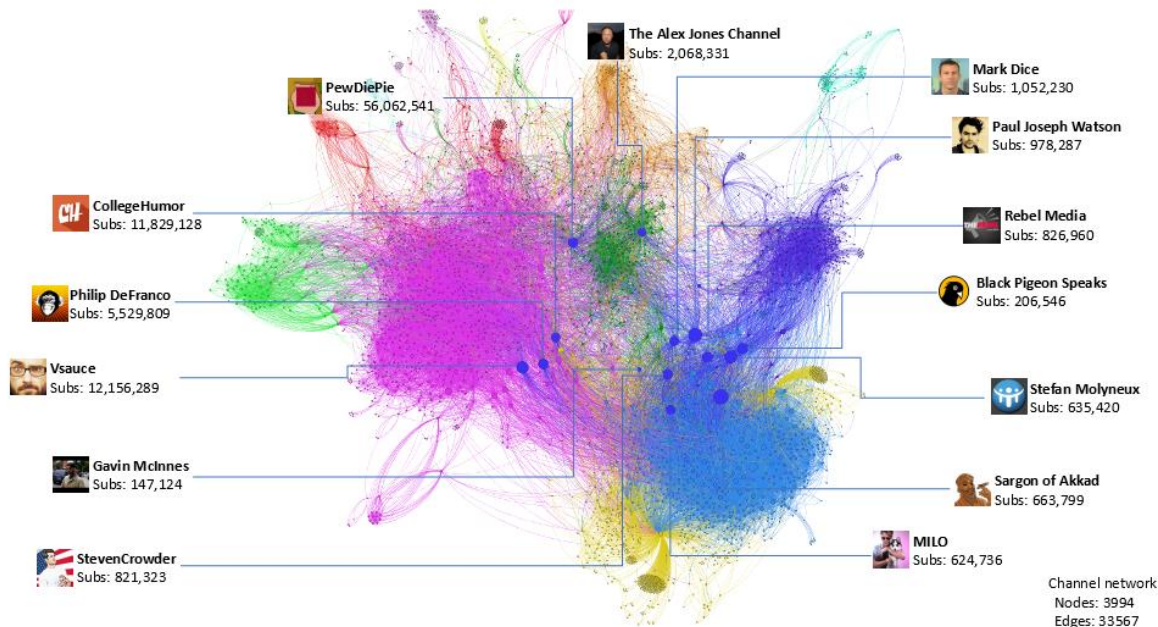
KEY INSIGHT: This analysis emphasizes that the Alt-Right exchanges content in conversational ways across media, signifying multiple entry points to their ideological narratives.

CHANNELS LINKING CLUSTERS:

The goal of our narrative analysis was to analyze narratives which offered entry points into multiple Alt-Right modularity clusters (applying Louvain algorithm which explores and identifies clusters conformed through density of interactions, shaping groups with high affinity – in terms of strong interactions among the channels). In order to find these areas of debate, we developed a metric to identify channels that were firmly rooted in one cluster, which also simultaneously linked to other clusters by calculating channels which linked modularity clusters in our Master network. We quantified the number of clusters a node was present in, and sampled those that had a large amount of links to multiple clusters. The metric is both quantitative and qualitative in nature, allowing us to quantify how many clusters a node is present in and then rank their levels of influence. We then took a sample of controversial communities and excluded any non-polarizing channels like "YouTube Spotlight" and "TEDx Talks". In

contrast to betweenness-centrality (a metric describing how central a node is within a network as a whole), our metric is based on in-links, under the assumption of the influence of each node when connected to another as exemplary of offering entry points into other clusters.

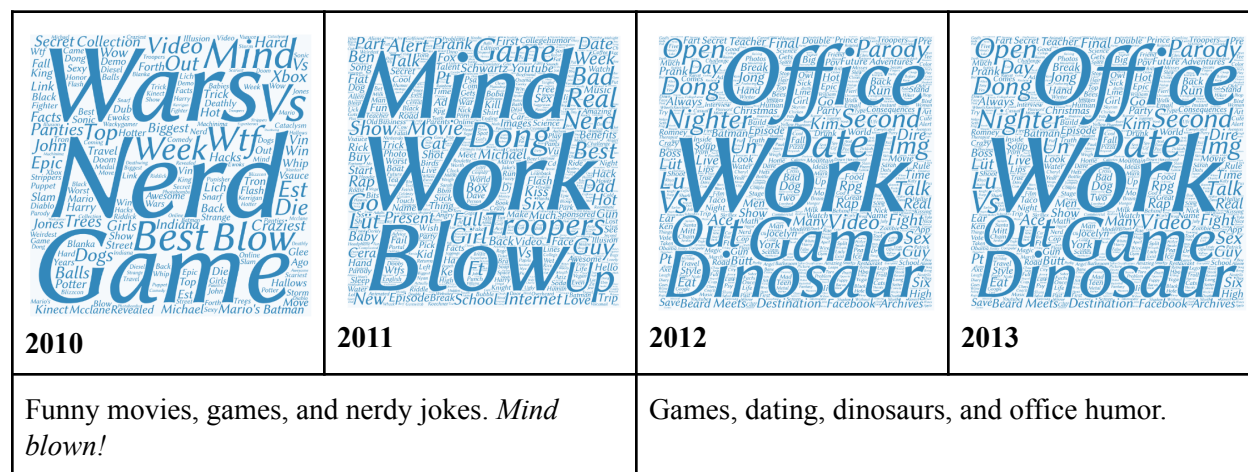
MASTER: THE CHANNELS LINKING CLUSTERS

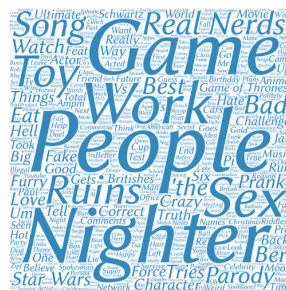
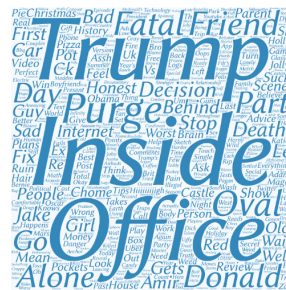


Having identified particular channels, we then combined them into respective clusters; College Humor and Vsauce, into *Larger YouTube*, PewDiePie alone representing *Gamer Culture*, Black Pidgeon Speaks and Mike Cernovich as *Alt Right Core*, Mark Dice and Alex Jone as ‘*Alt-Lite Conspiracy*’, and Gavin McInnes, MILO, Paul Joseph Watson, Rebel Media, Sargon of Akkad, Stefan Molyneux and Steven Crowder as the *Alt-Lite* cluster. We then queried for the most used words in each of these clusters, per year between 2010 and 2017, excluding general words like “www”, “com”, and “pt” (part).

Larger YouTube; Building Bridges During Election Time

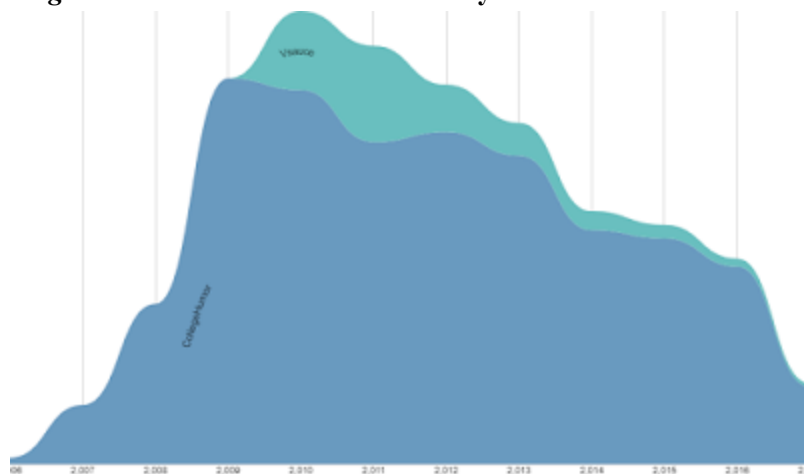
College Humor and VSauce



 2014	 2015	 2016	 2017
Games, Anime, and Star Wars. <i>Working all-nighters.</i>		Trump happened	Still Trump, but returning to a normal tone.

Content-wise, the *Larger Youtube* cluster seems disconnected from the Alt-Right until 2016. In that year, both VSauce and College Humor produced lots of content on Donald Trump, were referred to by the Alt-Right, or were referring themselves to the Alt-Right. In 2017, the content moves back to normal, although becoming more diversified. It is noteworthy, that nerdy senses of humor and the Alt-Right seem compatible (see also our analysis on *Gamer Culture*). In some ways, the US election has made the Alt-Right visible for consumers and creators alike.

***Larger Youtube* Video Publication Rhythm Over The Years:**



Publishing-wise, the 2016 US election was not a prolific subject for the *Larger Youtube* channels. The largest publishing peak was in 2009 for Collegehumor and 2010 for VSauce.

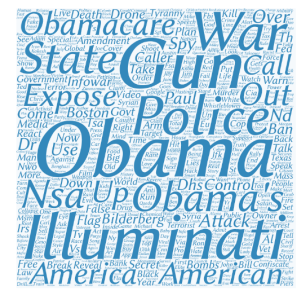
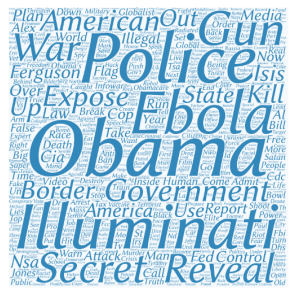
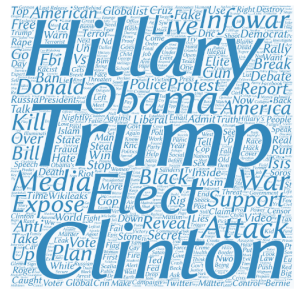
Gamer Culture -- An Alt-Right Sense of Humor?

Pewdiepie

While one may think that PewDiePie's recent controversy for publishing anti-Semitic jokes and Nazi-esque imagery would have caused a decrease on his publishing rate, we can see here that his decreasing publishing trend started in 2015.

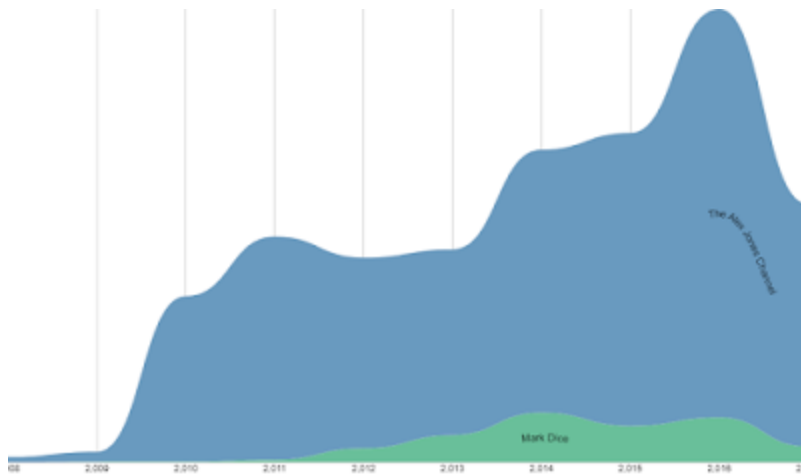
Alt-Lite Conspiracy; Consistently Against Liberal Media and Politics

The Alex Jones Channel and Mark Dice

 2010	 2011	 2012	 2013
Against Obama. Conspiracies on TSA, Illuminati, Bilderberg and media. Pro-gun ownership.			
 2014	 2015	 2016	 2017
Against Obama. More conspiracies.		Pro-Trump, against Clinton	Fake news. Info wars.

The *Alt-Lite Conspiracy* cluster has remained consistent over the years, by both positioning themselves against Barack Obama and feeding conspiracy theories. In 2016 attentions shifted to Pro-Trump sentiments, whereas post-election content focuses on conspiracy theories around liberal media who call for Trump's impeachment. This Alt-Right anti-establishment stance clearly resonates in this cluster.

Alt-Lite Conspiracy Video Publication Rhythm Over The Years



In this figure, it is clear how Alex Jones benefited from the 2016 elections subject, from the video publication perspective.

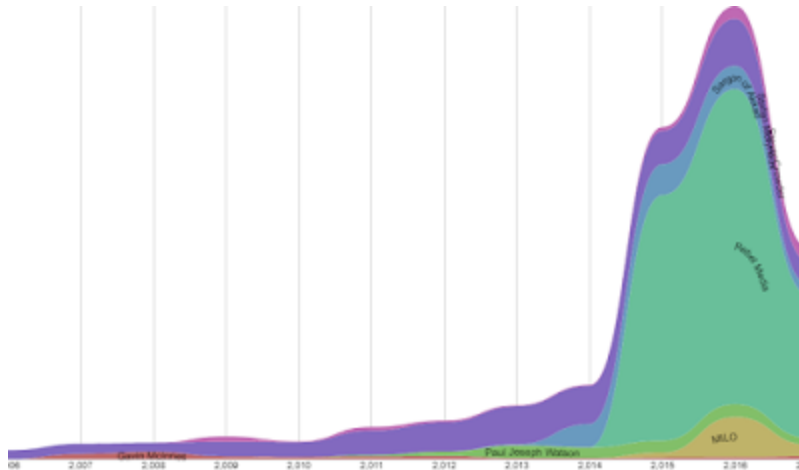
Alt-Right Lite; Radicalized Conservatives

Gavin McInnes, MILO, Paul Joseph Watson, Rebel Media, Sargon of Akkad, Stefan Molyneux, and Steven Crowder

2010	2011	2012	2013
Free speech, truth, Anti-Occupy Wall Street, pro-gun.			Conspiracy theories, Bilderberg, secret wars
2014	2015	2016	2017
Gamergate, Anti-Feminism, ISIS and the election of Trudeau.		Pro-Trump, Anti-Trudeau, Anti-Liberals and Anti-Muslim.	

In the early years, this cluster focused on stereotypically conservative themes, including: gun ownership, freedom of speech, and anti-liberalism. However, in 2014 the content began radicalizing, conspiracy theories became more salient, and, when focusing on GamerGate, anti-feminism emerges. Since 2015, the focus has been consistently on anti-liberal politics and media and pro-Trump.

Radicalized Conservatives Video Publication Rhythm Over The Years



Rebel Media, Milo, Stefan Molyneux and Steven Crowder significantly increased their video publication rate during the 2016 elections. This was consistent with the rate of radicalization in the content in this cluster's nodes.

Alt-Right

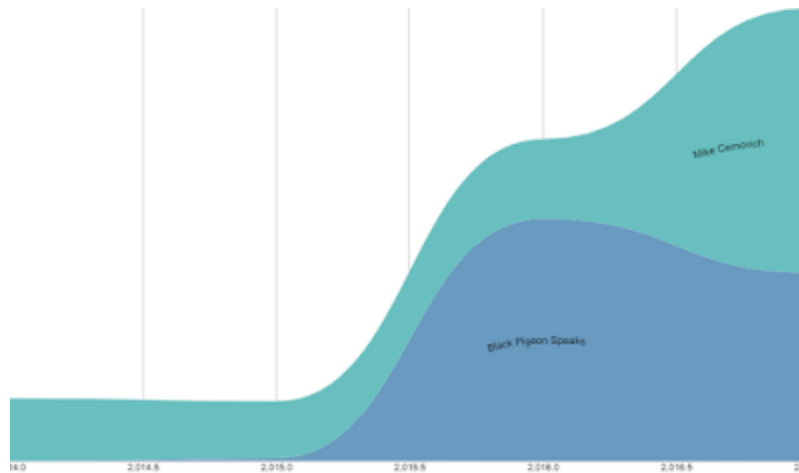
Mike Cernovich and Black Pidgeon Speaks

2014	2015	2016	2017
Gamergate, anti-feminism, ISIS and the election of Trudeau.	For Trump, against Trudeau, liberals and Muslims..		

For these two nodes data collection began at 2014 due to its availability. While anti-feminist narratives surfaced in the *Alt-Lite* cluster in 2014, the *Alt-Right Core* starts focusing on masculinity themes. When the refugee crisis started in Europe in 2015, the content shifted its focus to the threats Islamic refugees pose to Western culture, mostly referring to contextual happenings, like Hungary. 2016 is devoted to the

US elections with pro-Trump and anti-Clinton stances. Post-election, however, the focus shifts to fake news which aims to discredit Trump. There are a lot of similarities between the *Alt-Lite* and the *Alt-Right Core* with a similar starting point in 2014, suggesting that the *Alt-Right Core* seems to be a radical evolution of mainstream conservatism.

Alt-Right Video Publication Rhythm Over The Years



We can see how recent the Alt-Right Core cluster channel nodes are. Where Black Pigeon Speaks published its first video in 2015 and reached a publication peak in 2016, Mike Cernovich start publishing in 2014 but reached his publication peak in 2017.

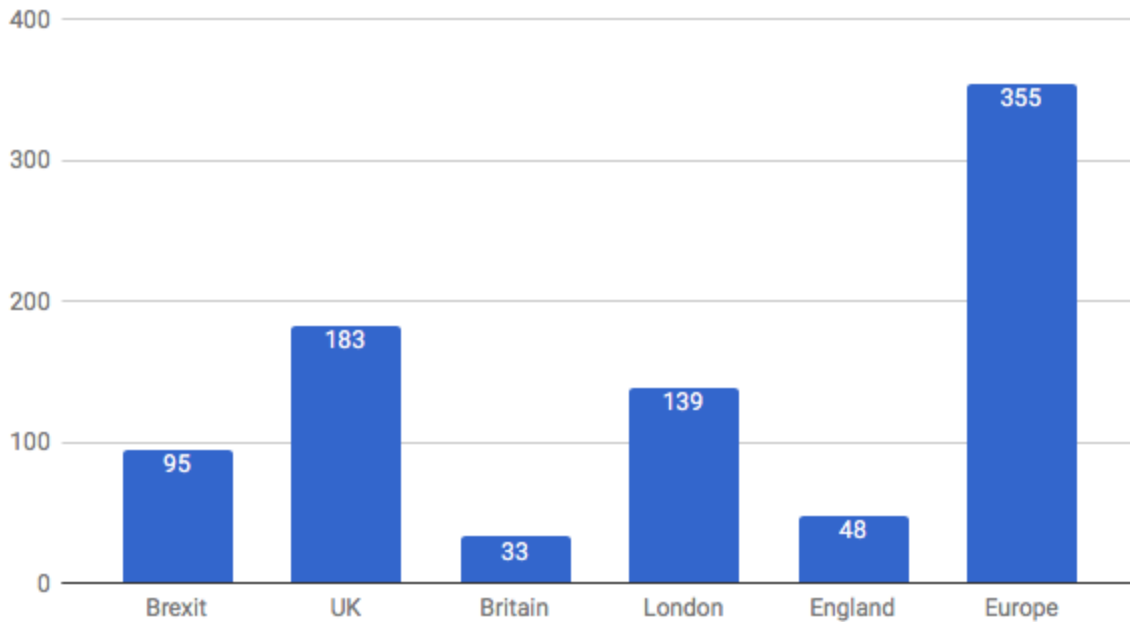
Keywords Analysis on YouTube Alt-Right, Alt-Lite and EU-UK clusters: A Top-Down Approach

Keywords Related to Geographical Issues:

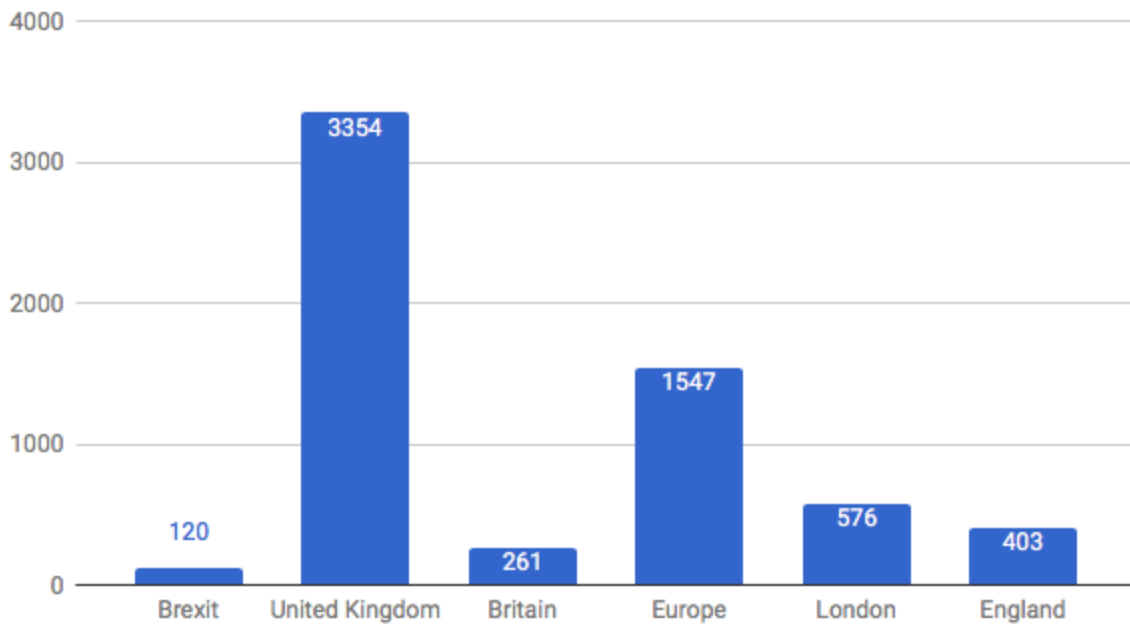
The Home Office of the United Kingdom suggested that we choose keywords related to the geographical location of this specific European and United Kingdom-specific political events (e.g. Brexit) to query against our YouTube data and results. Using these keywords, we conducted a co-occurrence analysis to measure their frequency in both the titles and descriptions of those 48,586 YouTube videos we extracted. We then divided these videos into three clusters: Alt-Right Core, Alt-Lite and EU & UK channels by Home Office specifications, using Microsoft Excel valuing and filtering.

This first graph shows the co-occurrence of the keywords in the video title, with the most evidence relating to the word “Europe”, with a word frequency of 355 out of 37,553 video titles. We also coded the words related to Europe, for example “UE” or “Union Europe”, but they were not particularly relevant, possibly due to content producers efforts to use clear and attractive words. The other words, relating to the United Kingdom, showed a keywords frequency of 498 out of 48,586 video titles. We tried to find the most common words for referring to the United Kingdom, by filtering the text with additional words, such as Great Britain, but obtained no results.

Geo Keywords in Video Title

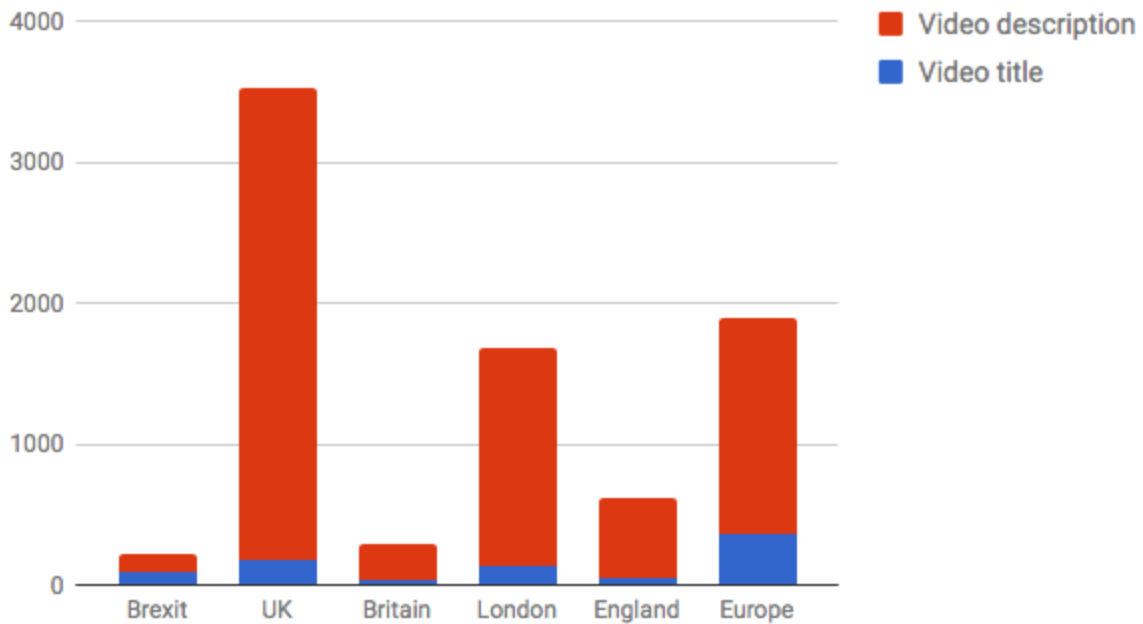


Geo Keywords in Video Description



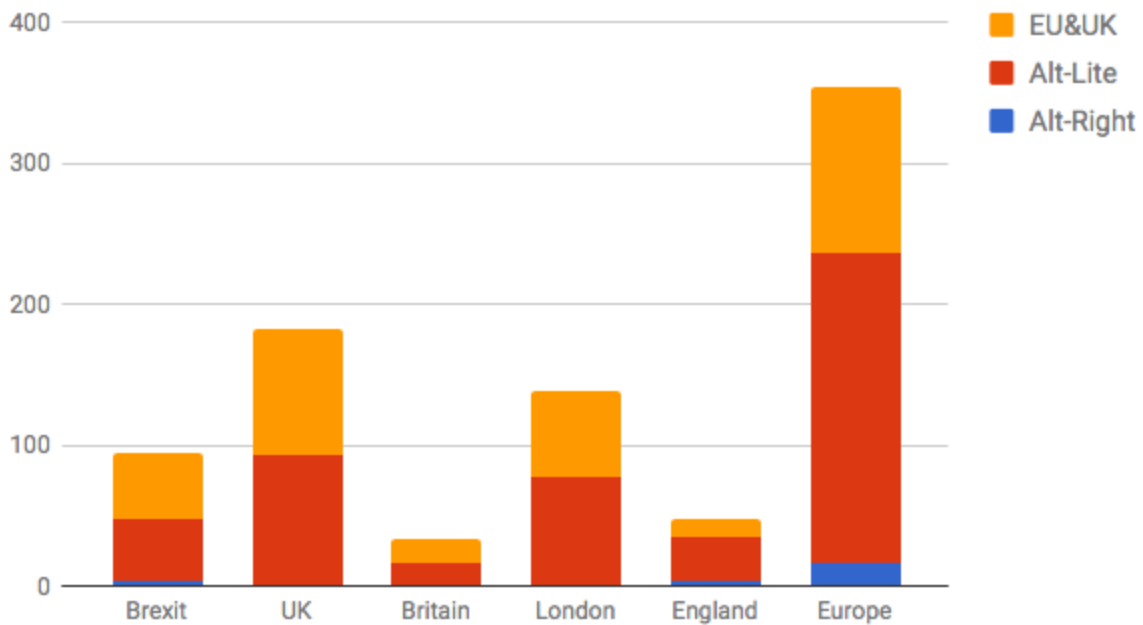
This graph above shows the co-occurrence of the keywords in the video descriptions of our dataset. The predominance of the word “UK” is for sure caused by the presence of an high number of links containing the “.uk” suffix in web URLs. Additionally, this graph confirmed the predominance of the keyword Europe. However, the discourse on YouTube around “Brexit”, was surprisingly less relevant although in-line with the title analysis we conducted.

Geo Keywords in Video Title and Description

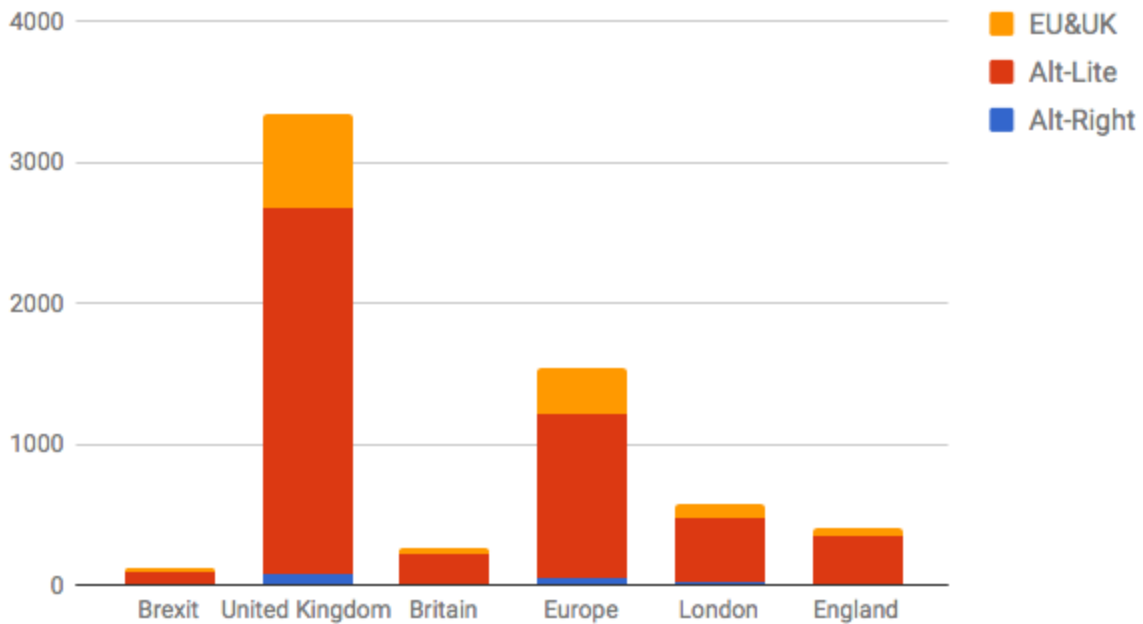


The graph above compares the distribution of keywords between both title and descriptions, emphasizing keyword relevance and prevalence in video descriptions. As shown in the previous graphs, there is a veritable equilibrium for “Brexit” occurrence in titles and descriptions.

Geo Keywords in video title x group

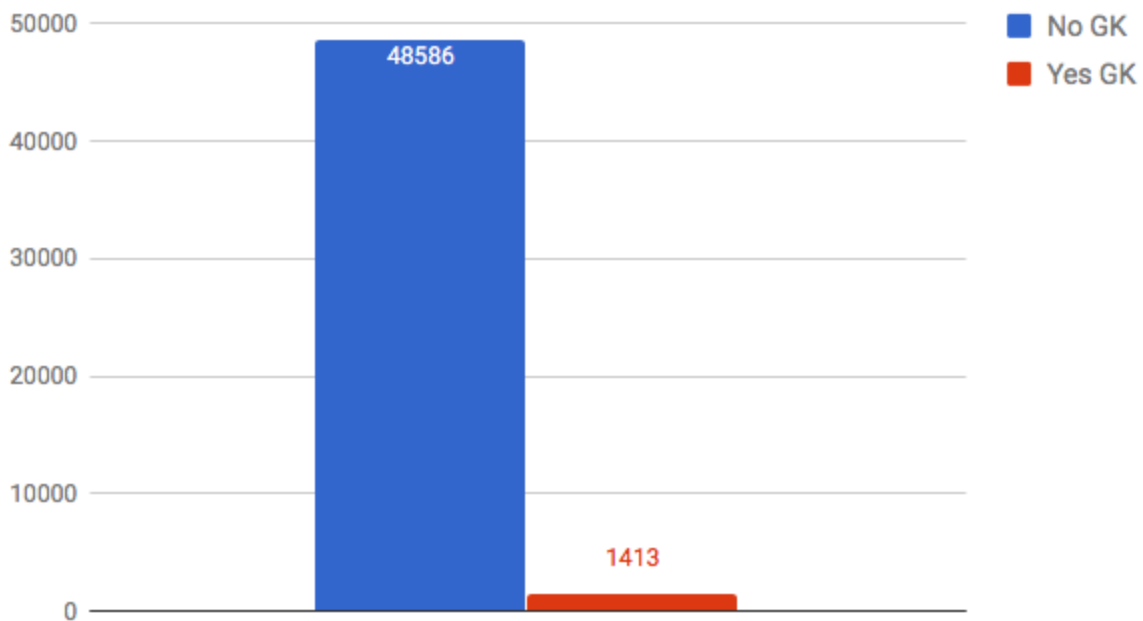


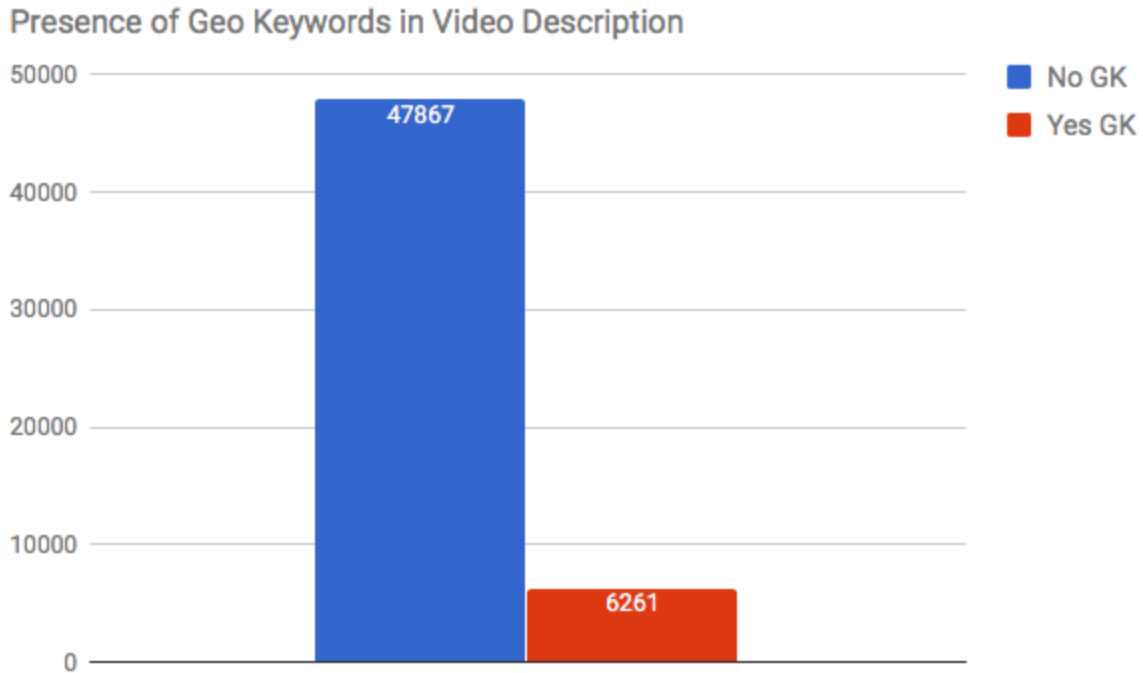
Geo Keywords in video description x group



Splitting the distribution of the keywords through clusters in the two graphs above, we found out that keywords mostly occur in *Alt-Lite* cluster discourses. This is due, in part, to the larger size of that cluster, the wider reach of their features and subscriptions, and their gateways into more popular and mainstream YouTube content.

Presence of Geo Keywords in Video Title

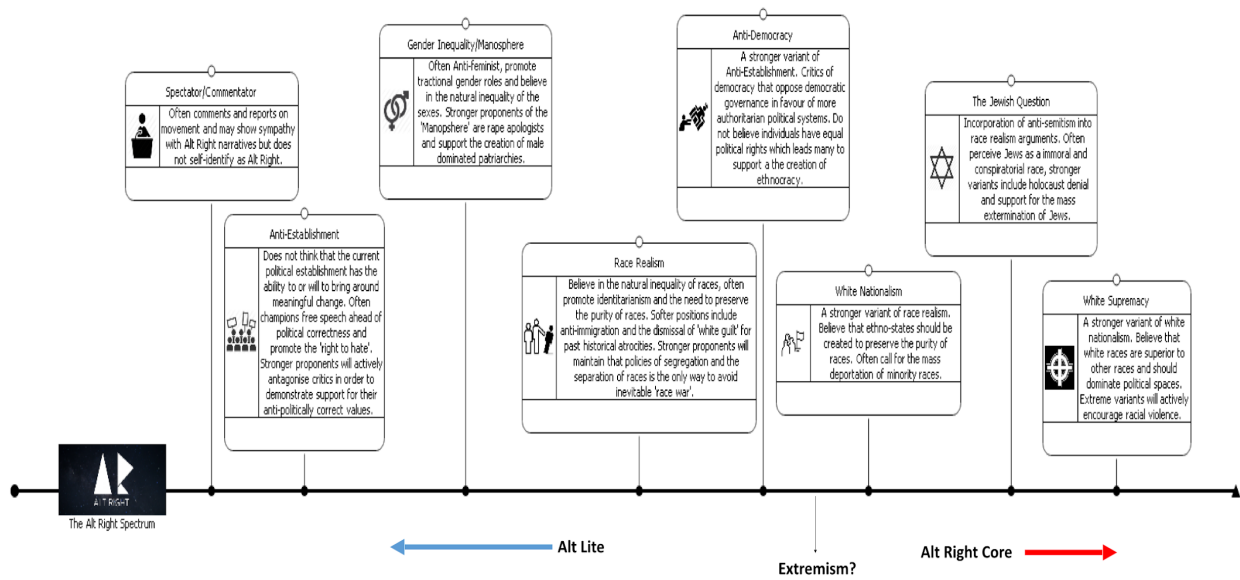




More generally, the presence of keywords relating to geographical issues is more relevant in video descriptions. This is likely because of the platform vernacular to offer more complete discourses by writing longer video descriptions. In general, these keywords do not seem to be recurrent. This is likely due to our extended dataset containing too many heterogeneous issues, with those relating to European and UK political events being much more recent, post-2016.

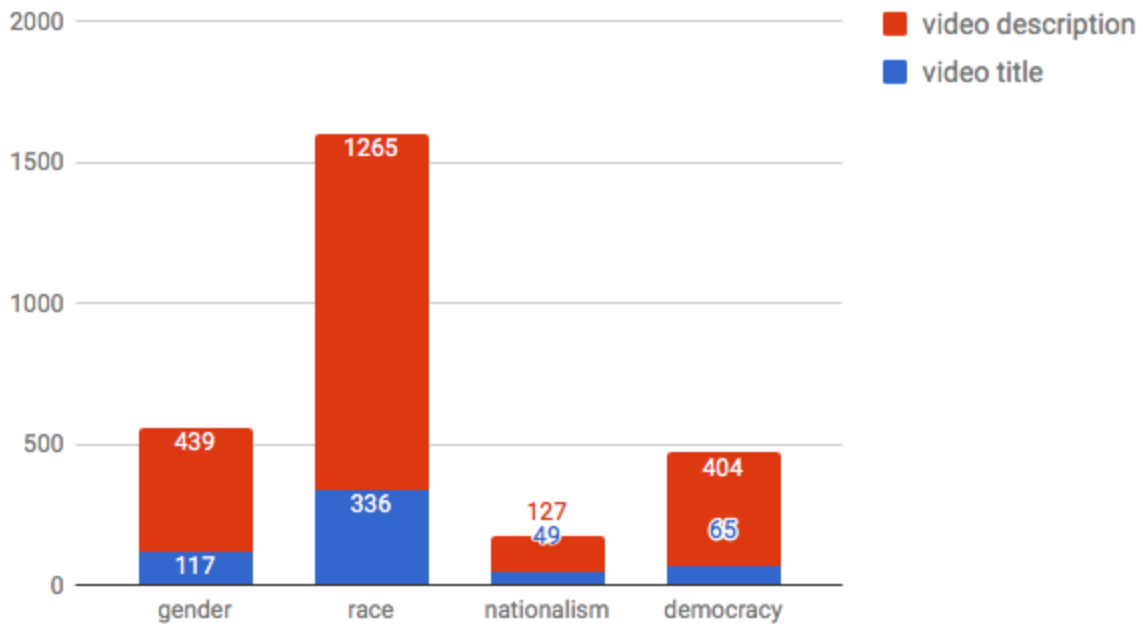
Keywords Related To Thematic Issues:

Using the Home Office's Alt-Right Spectrum (below), we examine certain thematic elements in both the YouTube video titles and descriptions in our 48,586 video dataset. After considering four main themes present in this spectrum, namely gender, race, nationalism and democracy, we split these issues into more specific keywords (shown below) to verify the frequency of more issue-specific questions related to Alt-Right rhetoric.



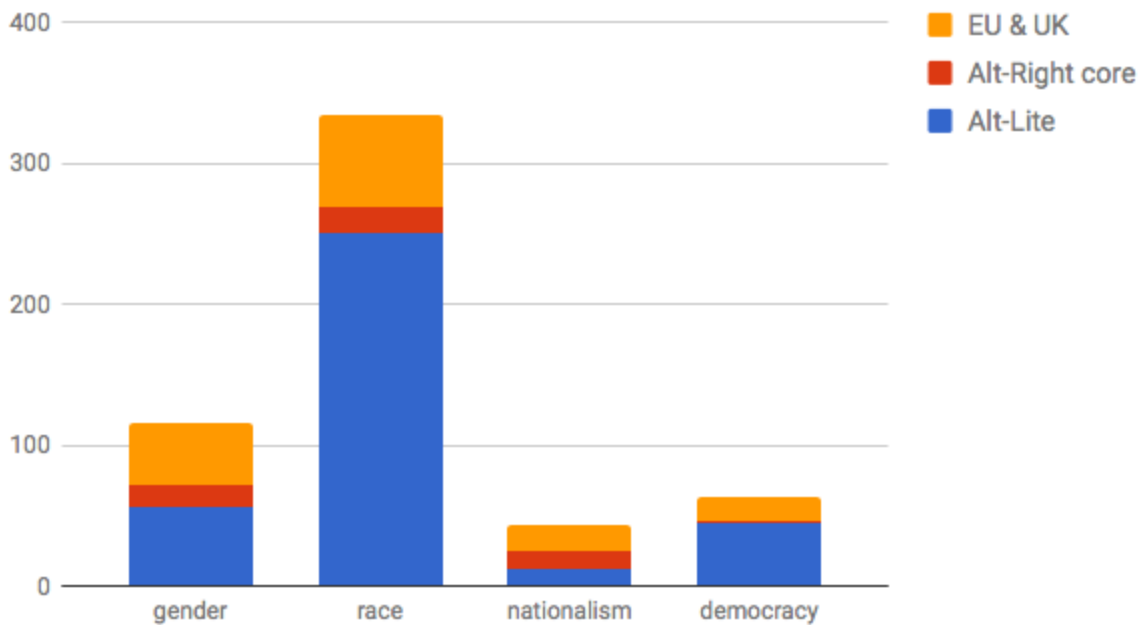
gender	race	nationalism	democracy
feminism	muslim	nation/national	anti-democracy
manosphere	white+race	immigrants	anti+establishment
	white+man	immigration	establishment
	jewish		

Thematic Keywords in Video Title and Description

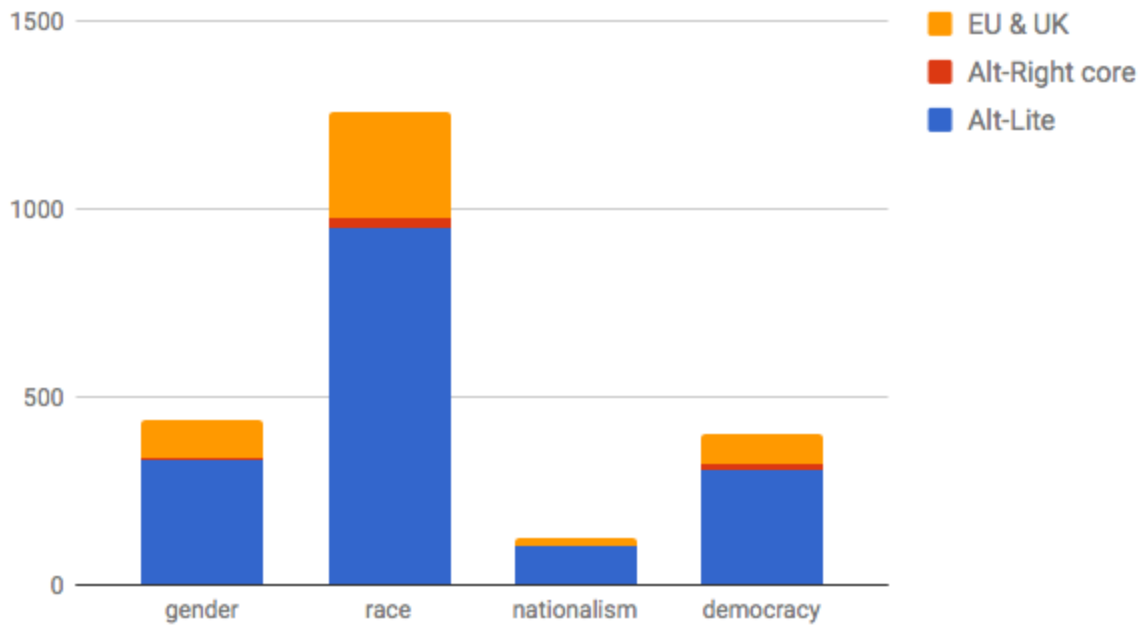


The graph above shows the frequency of the general thematic issues. The keyword “race” was the most frequent, both in the titles and in the descriptions of the videos. It outlines an evident predominance of these types of discussions in the Alt-Right discourse. Additionally, gendered and democratic discourses seem to be recurrent in Alt-Right discussions.

Thematic Keywords in Video Title per Group

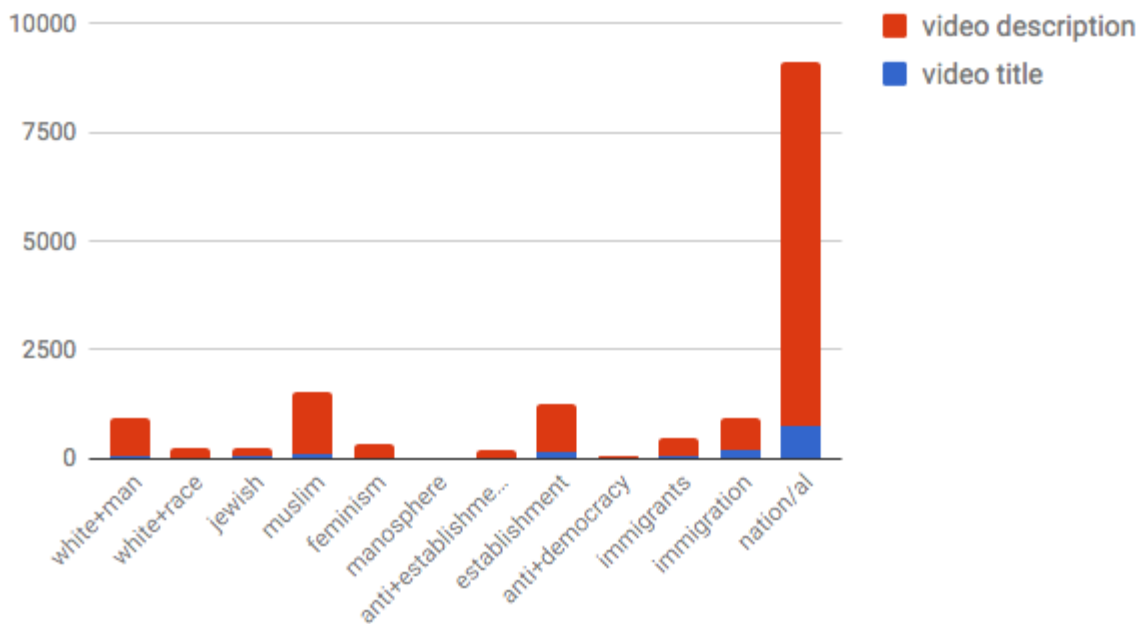


Thematic Keywords in Video Description per Group



As we found with our geography-based terms, there is a predominance of Alt-Lite usage as opposed to the other community clusters. That aside, specific thematic keywords around the ‘nation/al’ theme proved highly relevant. Interestingly, this result stands in opposition to the previous generic thematic analysis.

Sub-Thematic Keywords in Video Title & Description



The purpose of conducting a bottom-up approach was to compare and contrast our observed correlations and findings between our top-down selected geographic and thematic keyword analyses. By doing this, we also expanded our methodological approach in an attempt to triangulate our data and remove potential biases presented by the term selection of the Home Office.

EU & UK Channels:



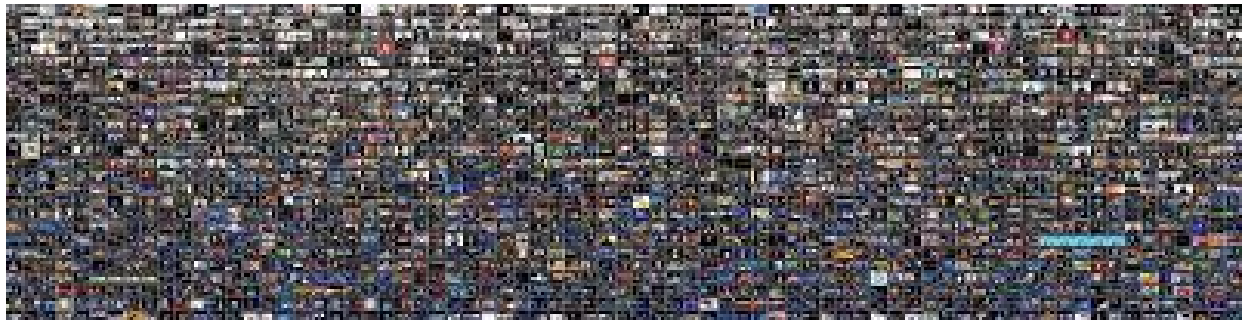
30x

Alt-Lite:



The Alt-Lite word cloud was dominated by The Alex Jones Channel, accounting for 85% of the cluster. However, the word “Trump” was the largest word in clusters the included and excluded Alex Jones as does “Hillary” and “Clinton.” The words “true” and “truth” also topped both iterations of the cluster. When including The Alex Jones Channel, the word “Obama” appears as a top subject whereas when excluding Alex Jones it does not appear whatsoever.

Video Thumbnail Canvas:



The exercise above shows how Alt-Right video publishers choose to present often the first exposure of their content to the public in the form of their video thumbnail images. This canvas is organized by contrast by applying the macro montage using ImageJ Software. We determined that, the main characteristic of these thumbnails were that they resembled the look of a television newsroom set or reportage where a human face appears to be reporting breaking news. The most predominant color is blue which is highlighted in the bottom half of the canvas, representing over fifty percent of all thumbnails analyzed.

6. Discussion:

The modularity clusters' internal dynamics seem to show resemblance with those of *fan cultures* and *participatory cultures*, in which members create content revolving around certain themes or stories and simultaneously offer additional entry points into an overarching narrative (Jenkins, 2006; Scolari, 2009). Although these entry points are often discussed as parts of transmedia storytelling created by mainstream media, we argue that this framing offers a useful perspective on our analysis of Alt-Right narratives.

Similar to how sets of sub-stories contribute to narrative worlds in transmedia storytelling, the content within our modularity clusters revolve around certain ideologies thereby plotting events in ways that are congruent with their views and viewers. Secondly, the content is exchanged in a conversational settings, through mediums both including and beyond YouTube, such as Twitter, Facebook, and 4chan. The continuous conversational exchange of content results in so-called *story circles* that catalyze content creation and offer entry points into overarching narratives (Couldry, 2014).

In terms of our deliverables for the Home Office of the United Kingdom, we identified numerous sub-clusters in our network analyses, which lead us to believe several things. The first is that the Alt-Right YouTube creators are less connected and less aligned than we had previously assumed. Secondly, we acknowledge that because of this dis-alignment and dis-unity, the clustering developed by the Home Office does not accurately reflect true natures of creator communities in the Alt-Right narrative universe on YouTube. When factoring in our larger network analysis at the second crawl depth, we can clearly see that there are numerous general interest in-roads to Alt-Right content, that the Alt-Lite is seemingly ubiquitous on YouTube's "featured channel" function whereas the other clusters were far too niche to be truly recognized as distinctive, that the Alt-Right Core is incredibly insular and interlinked but has less clout and size than the other two clusters, and that the EU and UK specific channels are largely reflective (and could be absorbed) within the greater Alt-Lite community, as little regional distinction was determined. This was triangulated by our geographical keyword analysis, where we found that keywords relating to the United Kingdom were most relevant for the Alt-Right Core community, but these numbers paled in comparison to European keywords. In general, this analysis underlined Alt-Right YouTube vernacular practices including: short, clear, and timely titles; longer and more emotionally charged/descriptive texts; and weblinks to other YouTube channels or website. From a thematic standpoint, we discovered that themes of the national (high frequency of "nation/al" word in both video title and description) and race (high frequency of "race" word in both video title and description) dominated the discussions of most Alt-Right YouTube clusters but only really during the last 18 months. Our bottom-up word cloud analysis triangulates this with Alt-Right Core video titles keywords are the correlating with race and nationalism, as well as gender, whereas the Alt-Lite and EU/UK clusters were overrun by the prevalence of the words 'true' and 'truth.'

7. Conclusion:

In short summation, it is clear that the Alt-Right universe on YouTube is not ephemeral but it is also not ubiquitous. While the in-roads to Alt-Right content are seen readily through recommendations, features, and subscriptions via second degree connections of creators who occupy Alt-Lite and similar spaces, these creators are often not the stereotypical radicals touting white nationalism, naziism, and extremist violence goals. In no way does this excuse or condone the racist, ethnicist, sexist, genderist, and misogynistic tones of other Alt-Right YouTube personalities. It does, however, raise further questions about the Home Office's scale of extremism and radicalization. We suggest that one might better consider Alt-Right discussions in YouTube as revolving around particular relevant topical issues, such as Brexit, or groups that are disliked in silos (e.g. a racist sentiment but not misogynistic) and that further research could be conducted by identifying creators who combine and "extreme-ify" topical happenings and events with tones of dislike and hatred and veritable finger-pointing to particular individuals. Our thumbnail and keyword analyses also raise questions of how Alt-Right content fits into discussions of fake news, alternative facts, and post-truth era politics as many are seen "reporting" (both in content and delivery) on political issues and being received as such, as shown by some of our comment analysis. It is up to agencies like the Home Office and academics alike to better understand this community of creators, the

narratives they weave, and how they work together -- if there is any hope of combating their efforts and messaging.

8. References:

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