Identity Politics of the Alt Right: Social Identity Theory Applied

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to uncover how AltRight identity is produced by Richard Spencer in his speech. The selected speech by Richard Spencer, thought leader of the AltRight, serves as the data for this qualitative study. Aristotelian principles within social identity theory encompass the analysis framework. The speaker advocates consistent threats to the ingroup, stressing the need to protect white (white European) ethnicity power and control over resources, and elicits disgust at the outgroups. The speaker utilizes popular cultural references and internet jargon and satire to commercialize AltRight ideas. A key finding from this study is Richard Spencer utilizes zero sum scenarios between ethnic groups, group membership centering on ethnicity. The rhetorical tactics of Spencer serve to demonize those in the "outgroup" and accuse them of discrimination while promoting a positive image of the" ingroup". The findings of this study are consistent with Social Identity Theory.

Keywords: AltRight, identity, social identity, Aristotelian theory of rhetoric, Realistic Conflict theory, identity politics, group behavior, U.S. politics

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1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   General Introduction

This research revolves around group dynamics, the AltRight, Social Identity Theory, and how identity is produced in a rhetorical case. Furthermore, this research is concerned with how groups interact with one another, how individuals and groups respond to claims of discrimination, and the inherent need for membership within a group. This path of research is particularly relevant due to the increased politicization of identity groups, the Altright's connection to and support of President Donald Trump, and the rise of nationalism around the world, as seen through Brexit. Understanding white nationalism, specifically how white nationalist identity is created in American politics, is a topic that considerable time should be allocated towards as this group is becoming a solidified entity. These new white nationalists are socially aware and politically minded, recognizing their ideas are not expressly shared by others and in turn, forgo engaging these ideas in a public forum for anonymity online. Additionally, understanding human behavior through this lens provides a mechanical look inside an identity group's behavior and how identity is created and maintained. Utilizing Realistic Conflict Theory, Social Identity Theory and social dynamics deliver a fascinating perspective. Furthermore, analyzing social groups and their ability to harness power is an incredible view to social movements that have applications outside of politics in the business world, education, and any institution involving people.

The AltRight is an ideal subject for a case study to apply ideas of social identity and *how* identity it is created in the rightwing white nationalist dynamic. The AltRight is a well-known movement in the United States. The AltRight is difficult to define as it is more of a general term referring to multiple ideologies

and political belief systems but can loosely be referred to as rightwing, with white ethnicity/white nationalism being a priority lens through which members view the world. This study is not about the AltRight, in general, but about how Richard Spencer's speech produces AltRight identity. Additionally, this research is about the 'how' not the 'why.' Interestingly, as outlined in the theory based chapter, this research illustrates just how similar different identity groups behave and frame their respective arguments and appeals toward ingroup and outgroup entities.

Research into the AltRight is, for the most part, an examination of the crisis of identity for white Americans. The emergence of this identity movement is not known, although the growth of identity politics is a contributing factor. This work adds a perspective into this topic and provides a useful starting point for future endeavors. Additionally, this research relies heavily on social theories to strengthen the analysis.

The AltRight is not an ideology in the traditional sense; it is an identity movement before all else. The presentation of AltRight identity focuses on victims (members) posed against power, this is the tactical presentation that provides identity stabilization and continued membership; an underdog mentality. The AltRight transcends ideology, to a large degree, and penetrates incredibly tight spheres of influence that have become even more distant from one another. Additionally, Americans today are motivated to ignore reasoning and policy discussion and go to lengths to avoid the mere awareness of policy positions from the 'other side' (Frimer, Skitka, & Motyl 2017.) The current American political climate has rigidly reinforced a particularly narrow understanding of the political. The linear, left/right, two-dimensional paradigm of conservative vs. liberal has limited the movement availability of policy positions for the individual. It has effectively locked Americans into a rigid belief *set*, with corresponding degrees of morality, agency and victimization, and a lens through which to view ideas and the events within the world.

Previous research into the AltRight specifically, is somewhat limited, especially regarding the application of social psychological theories and identity production. This work strengthens the starting point or contextual background, to delve deeper into the AltRight movement. Previous literature on human behavior in response to alleged discrimination provides a fertile ground for this particular research, which is a recurring theme in AltRight rhetoric. Exploring group behavior with Realistic Conflict Theory together with its successor, Social Identity Theory, delivers stimulating research on such themes as: identity, discrimination, group behavior, individual behavior within a group, and social movements. These themes and their contributions to this research, are detailed in the following chapters.

1.2   Previous Research

Previous research on the AltRight illuminates the landscape for this case study. Analysis done by competent writers and researchers define the movement in different ways. Some authors label the AltRight as blatantly racist and are dismissive of all claims, while others focus their efforts on understanding the AltRight through Donald Trump's election victory or the popularity of anti-political correctness. Even more, some authors cite a crisis of insecure masculinity for white men as the main factor of this movement's growth. Could they all be right? The problem lies with the movement's lack of cohesive ideology or organizational structure but each vein illuminates a different part of the rhetoric. The AltRight do not fit neatly inside of a box and many angles can be taken to analyze their voice in discourse. Additionally, the movement is always changing, either by its reputation designation by outgroups or clarification on issues by thought leaders inside the movement.

The AltRight was relatively obscure until *The New York Times* and Buzzfeed ran articles exploring AltRight culture and the infamous Pepe The Frog meme introducing the term 'cuckservative' (McConnell 2016.) This pejorative term was meant to imply conservatives abandoning positions in order to support children of other families. The use of shocking, obscene and pejorative terms are identified with AltRight cultural norms and language use. McConnell (2016), cites Muslim immigration to Europe as a major contributing factor for the rise of the AltRight. McConnell (2016), highlights the terrorist attacks in Europe, such as the Charlie Hebdo attack, mass sexual assaults in Germany and Sweden from Muslim migrants, ultimately giving significant power to rightwing criticism during the cultural clash. During these times, Richard Spencer and the AltRight found supporters who were not necessarily white nationalists but became aware of cultural differences by finding like-minded people critical of violent migrant acts. AltRight supporters would frequently post memes and rhetoric about Europe being 'cucked' by the 'Muslim invaders.' This plays directly into the fear and disgust after attacks. McConnell (2016), continues by citing the American media portrayal of European migration as disproportionally humanitarian while acts of migrant violence went under reported. Whether or not the media downplayed the attacks in favor of an empathetic view of immigration, the AltRight voiced this allegation, as their distrust of corporate mainstream media is prevalent and vehement. Additionally, in the United States, more active social justice demonstrations were met with criticism and the AltRight took the initiative with counter demonstrations, with both sides stereotyping and demonizing the other.

Detractors refer to the AltRight as Neo Nazis and Klansmen but it is not that simple, due to their tactics and rhetoric diverging considerably. The AltRight is a term that encompasses different ideologies ranging from men's rights activists, isolationists, populists, to intellectuals with developed ideas (Michael 2017.) Although the Neo Nazi and Klansmen reference may not be accurate for the majority, the roots of the movement indeed come from white nationalist

movements (Michael 2017.) Furthermore, detractors of Donald Trump's presidency cite that his supporters are comprised of racists but only an estimated 10% of Trump supporters are 'AltRight' (Forscher & Kteily 2020.) The estimations come from only two studies finding a desire for group based dominance over economic anxiety (Forscher & Kteily 2020.) The AltRight voiced enthusiastic support for Donald Trump during the election and utilized online platforms to antagonize and ridicule political opponents. The AltRight trump supporters were vocal and engaged with political opponents across social media platforms. While these estimations may be weak, the findings are congruent with interest based issues for Trump supporters, overlapping with Gray (2018), such as suspicion for mainstream media, trust in alternative media, and collective action for whites (Forscher & Kteily 2020.)

Additional criticism for the enhancement for the movement is directed toward neo-conservatism and pro capitalistic themes in American political discourse (Kelly 2017.) The AltRight frequently denounce traditional conservatism claiming it did not go far enough and that if they embraced more 'racial realist' views they would win more electoral votes. Kelly (2017), argues the AltRight movement is reactionary masculinity, with white male identity being culturally diminished. Pejorative terms like 'cuck' and 'snowflake' are meant to demean the perceived weakness of men caused by liberal views on homosexuality, traditional gender roles, and support for migrants. These terms are projected at men involved with social justice activism and their feminization, as well as conservative politicians who lack the courage to stand against political correctness and cow to liberal policy proposals. Kelly (2017), lays criticism for the movement's growth on the neo-conservative right and states that the AltRight is living in a narrative of the past. While the AltRight is living in a narrative of the past with the traditional view of the nuclear family unit and lack of racial integration, this analysis is insufficient, due to the fact that the AltRight are living and operating in the present as a progressive radical identity

movement. Therefore, liability lies with political forces on the right and the left but self-critical examination is difficult for both political orientations.

To begin with, the AltRight and the intersectional Left leaning identitarian groups share common elements, mainly the preservation of identity (Gray, 2018.) Intersectional arguments with a focus on oppression or marginalization, from a lived experience, are utilized by both groups while the AltRight include ethnic or biological qualities. Additionally, Gray (2018) points out that the AltRight and 'intersectional Left' share the same enemies of neoconservatism, imperialism, and neo liberal corporate behavior. Both groups need an enemy for their formation (Polletta & Jasper 2001), and view their ingroup as subordinate to a dominant oppressive outgroup (Gray 2018.) It is an interesting comparison that both groups would be revolted by but an honest look at the similar group structure. This structural dynamic and the need for an identity group to have an enemy, and place itself as oppressed in relation to a dominant group, is covered in great detail later on in Chapter 2. Gray (2018), believes the AltRight discussions on identity are concerning not because they are unusual but due to the fact they significantly overlap with the identity focus of the 'intersectional Left.' Gray continues, stating that:

> "In effect, the strident activities of these groups, the construction of 'whiteness' as oppression, and the increasingly identity-based authority of progressive activism helped open space for increased popularity of an identity-based politics from the Right. The Enemy category of 'whiteness' being so vilified created an atmosphere for a response giving 'whiteness' a content outside of amorphous 'privilege' and oppression; in such a social space, the alt-right was ready to provide that content. As a matter of political tactics, the alt-right may be gaining saliency because of its ability to combat the intersectional Left on the shared ground of identity" (Gray 2018, 154.)

Interestingly, the common ground shared by the AltRight and the progressive Left even extends to healthcare, both believing the government does not do enough and that Obama's healthcare bill does not go far enough (Bohanon & Styring 2017.)

While the AltRight has different meanings for different entities, some critics get it wrong with this new movement. Love (2017), ties white nationalist festivals and white power music together with the modern AltRight. This is incongruent with the new elements of the AltRight, mainly due to technology and the intentional distancing of the 'old guard' attitudes of overt displays of white power and white supremacy, instead using more tactical and commercial means of support. This is a prime example of misunderstanding the movement, prescribing old behavior and values to a new savvy, socially and digitally aware group. Their rhetoric involves humor, irony, memes, and hyperbole as to deflect criticism, and when criticism comes ridicule the critic for taking it serious. This is a key aspect of the AltRight, the trolling and harassment, for individuals who take the bait.

1.3   Research Question

The research question: How does Richard Spencer produce the concept of AltRight identity in his speech?

Research on identity group dynamics and group identity provide examples of strong literature which informs this study. This study is relevant and useful primarily because it addresses discourse on AltRight identity production. Richard Spencer is the de facto AltRight thought leader, and his voice shapes and refines group ideas and direction. These are the words coming from Spencer himself, not summarized by pundits who compromise their initial analysis blinded by outrage. There is significant information that gets 'lost in translation' by political opponents and this is where the issue lies. Real societal

criticism is mixed with racist ideology in AltRight rhetoric and individuals and experts must separate the two and respond to the legitimate claims rather than haphazardly dismiss all notions. The adage 'Even a broken clock is right twice a day' encapsulates this reasoning.

The research design of this study is a qualitative analysis, specifically a rhetorical analysis of Richard Spencer's speech focusing on the details of how identity is created. The rhetorical analysis utilizes an Aristotelian approach, evaluating how and to what effect an orator's strategies produce group identity through logos, pathos, and ethos. Additionally, this rhetorical analysis employs useful elements of narrative inquiry, in so much as data collection and coding. The primary rationale for a qualitative design centers on the multiple discourses that are produced through analysis and the particular insight into the phenomenon. This qualitative design provides more nuanced views and a mechanical deconstruction of how AltRight identity is produced. One can explore many possible interpretations based on structure or emotional rhythm of oratorial strategies granted by qualitative analysis.

1.4   Thesis Structure

This research is structured by first providing recent literature the AltRight rhetoric.

Secondly, a theoretical framework informs the interpretation and conceptual grounding for the analysis. Contributing studies are highlighted that analyze three specific elements of group dynamics affected by ignorance, victimhood, and ethnic identity. The theoretical concepts provide an explanation of informative tools for analyzing group behavior. Primarily, the theoretical concepts are outlined in such a way in order to distinguish them from one another as tools. The theoretical chapters are dense and mechanical. The logic behind this presentation is due to the highly specific utilization of these tools in

a type of 'handbook' approach equipping the reading with the ability to creatively apply ideas to concepts.

Third, the methodology and findings are presented. Utilizing the Aristotelian approach to rhetoric is a traditional but useful avenue. Logos, pathos, and ethos have stood the test of time. The rhetor of this study, Richard Spencer, does indeed make logical arguments and builds rapport with AltRight members by charismatically reflecting values they hold and emotionally engaging with issues the audience prioritizes with sympathy, anger, and humor. The qualitative analysis illuminates nuance and highlights specific language and vocabulary usage in AltRight culture.

Analysis of the speech by the rhetorician is an in-depth play-by-play and inspection of vague innuendo and the more direct open hostility towards other ethnic groups. There is a style and culture to the AltRight that some popular pundits and experts on right wing issues miss. I argue that popular media simplify the AltRight to the detriment of society as a whole. The AltRight have developed ideology and hold views not uncommon or unheard of to the majority of Americans, chiefly: anti-war sentiment and foreign military intervention, rejection of commercial consumerism, criticism of the income gap and disparity, support for progressive healthcare, support for American jobs and industry, distrust of corporate media, support for traditional values, and promote the solidarity of community and the family unit. Due to overlapping ideas with many Americans the AltRight's members range from all over the political spectrum, with one caveat: white ethnicity. Spencer combines real social criticism with racial undertones and overtones throughout the speech.

Lastly, the discussion summarizes the research, discussing future questions on the topic and bringing forth ideas and new questions.

2   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTS

There are three primary studies that shape the proverbial canvas in which to analyze AltRight identity production. These three works are loosely connected but each provides a unique angle by which the AltRight's successes and failures can be understood, in context. These are aspects of identity production found in the analysis.

First, the concept of motivated ignorance in the current political landscape illustrates the cognitive walls individuals build around their political views and the reluctance to learn about opposing viewpoints. The walls built around ideology become strong and solid. According to this dynamic, the AltRight are able to circumnavigate the walls around ideology, somewhat, and appeal to white identity across multiple ideologies. In this regard, the AltRight appears to be successfully appealing to a superordinate white identity across varying political spheres.

Secondly, what the AltRight is doing, how they make their claims of an oppressed group, are not entirely uncommon in rhetorical form within identity groups. Competitive victimhood is a strategy that transforms political debate into rudimentary tactics. The assertion of discrimination toward an out-group is consistently met by a response detailing some form of equal discrimination suffered from the accused out-group, even if they are a majority group. Roughly speaking, an overly generalized example can be illustrated by *Individual B*: "I was discriminated against by group A". In response, *Individual A*: "I, too, was discriminated against by group B".

Lastly, appealing to and prioritizing identity based on race, in a multicultural society, has its costs. In the third study outlined, priming ethnic identity led to increased bias and less group effectiveness among participants with different ethnicities. While the study defined the non-cohesive behavior associated with

priming ethnic identity, it simultaneously provided a solution to group cohesion by promoting a superordinate identity that all participants shared, which did not include race. According to this perspective, the AltRight are destined to fail. Group cohesion among varying ethnicities is not an objective the AltRight holds. In many ways, any identity group who promote ethnic identity, indirectly work towards the objectives of the AltRight. Priming ethnic identity in a multicultural environment and society does not increase cohesion or effectiveness across ethnicities. The larger application of this study is a mixed bag. The appeal to ethnic identity within a multicultural environment, that is increasingly diverse, can work against social cohesion as it is not inclusive. But can we altogether abandon prioritizing ethnic identity in a multicultural society? These questions will not be answered but they do arise.

2.1   Motivated Ignorance

The new emergence for tightening the spheres of influence can be seen through the monopolization of the most stereotyped beliefs of policy sets in each political leaning. Frimer, et al (2017), present the idea of motivated ignorance. The research asserts that liberals and conservatives intentionally avoid exposure to one another's opinions. This allows for an ideological monopoly in each respective sphere. In the study, the participants chose not to learn about the views of their opponents. This 'motivated ignorance' is further strengthening the walls in which ideology reside outside one another:

> "Rather, people on both sides indicated that they anticipated that
> hearing from the other side would induce cognitive dissonance (e.g.,
> require effort, cause frustration) and undermine a sense of shared reality
> with the person expressing disparate views (e.g., damage the
> relationship; Study 5)" (Frimer, et al 2017, 2.)

Motivated ignorance has significantly reduced the ability for flexibility on policy changes. Essentially, hearing from the other side would cause frustration

and damage relationships; the mental state of cognitive dissonance is the state which individuals wish to avoid. Coincidentally, feelings of discomfort are to be avoided. The desires for liberals and conservatives to remain in their ideological bubbles were matched equally in their intensity. This paper focused on the motivation to avoid hearing "crosscutting information." Un-ironically, selective exposure only to ideas that reaffirm already present beliefs is not an innovative finding. These psychological concepts are neither new or revolutionary but tend to be neglected in the realm of the political, or in relation to information consumption.

When looking at new information or ideas that somehow penetrate the safeties and protections the individual's confirmation bias has mentally fortified, fundamentally their version of reality has been challenged; it is an attack on their understanding of the world and how structures are and ought to move through it. This can be an aspect of cognitive dissonance referred to earlier. Threats to an individual's worldview can be distressful, in the very least. Additionally, this may cast turmoil on the *self* through the associations of social identity groups where the individual is connected, involved or belongs to. The in-group, where the individual is a member, may be implicated in a negative light, and because self-esteem and self-worth is attached to identity and group membership, an attack on a reality or lens that is given by the in-group is internalized as an attack on the self as they are interconnected, according to the application of group membership and self-esteem in social identity theory.

In the arena of increased polarization of ideology, the AltRight triumph, they break through mental fortifications that protect ideology, as they are not an ideology only. They operate on the basis of white ethnicity; they operate within identity. They transcend ideology and are not bound by it. Therefore, they can sidestep ideological criticism because they do not mobilize by the structure. This ability to navigate and move fluidly throughout multiple ideologies is the strongest and most forceful aspect of the AltRight. This is

further evidenced by major corporate media conglomerates collectively unable to identify and give clear parameters of the AltRight in style guides to their writers and editors to follow. In a time where ideology and ideological actors are massively succeeding in their respective bubbles and not outside of it, the AltRight (and other postmodern identity groups one may argue) succeed across many spheres of influence. Look no further than to AltRight group membership entertaining libertarians, conservatives, paleo-conservatives, independents, moderates, etc.; a whole host of various individuals with varying degrees of political motivation and policy beliefs.

2.2 Competitive Victimhood

The success of the AltRight moving throughout multiple ideologies as an identity movement is primarily built on the degree of success of marketing the victimization of white Americans. This dynamic, the marketability of victimization, is a key tenant in the foundation of all collective identity movements (Polletta & Jasper 2001.) Victimhood is a major aspect of group dynamics, as it creates social capital. A study done by Sullivan, Landau, Branscombe and Rothschild (2012), found that groups restore moral identity by claiming that the in-group has suffered compared to the out-group. Of the five studies, competitive victimhood was a major theme. All groups accused of discrimination toward an out-group then expressed views that they were discriminated against the accusing outgroup. Since individuals are motivated to keep a positive view of their own social group, they argue "that when confronted with accusations of in-group harm doing—such as claims of discrimination against another group—individuals will defensively attempt to bolster the in-group's moral status in order to defuse the threat" (Sullivan et al. 2012, 792.) Moral capital and moral authority, as the research argues, has notably increased in value. The authors highlight morality as the most important dimension individuals evaluate their in-group. Additionally, and the most profound, the authors note Nietzche's idea that the good and moral were

once associated with power and might but now, with the rise of Judeo-Christian religion "humility, suffering, and martyrdom became more closely associated with the possession of high moral status" (Sullivan et al. 2012, 779.)

The importance of the trend of victimhood, and corresponding moral authority, should not be overstated. Victimhood is the tool by which groups create agency for advocacy, as Polletta and Jasper (2001), underline in social movements in political mobilization, as well as in Social Identity Theory through group cohesion and growth. The naming of enemies is fundamental in positioning oneself, or the group, to gather support for the cause of injustice, real or perceived. Consequently, competitive victimhood and naming of enemies is not without cost.

2.3   Priming Ethnic Identity

When a collective identity based on ethnicity in a multicultural environment is primed, it leads to less cooperation and cohesion across cultural groups. Naming enemies based on natural identity (ethnicity) is destructive. The work of Chen, Li, Liu and Shih (2010), explored the cohesion of participants after ethnic identity was primed. They found when ethnic identity was primed, it caused cooperation to decline and led to less efficient coordination amongst participants. In comparison, a common identity (school) increased group rational joint payoff maximizing strategy in the prisoner's dilemma game. The prisoner's dilemma is a game within game theory that illustrates two rational individuals might not cooperate, even if it is in their best interests. Chen et al, (2010) expose the nature of bias in conjunction with exposure and promotion of ethnic identity.

This specific study presents two unique elements. First, it not only shows the negatives of disorganized cooperation when ethnic identity is primed but secondly, shows that the promotion of a 'superordinate identity' allows for

cooperation. It diagnoses the problem but provides the solution. The solution centers roughly on the idea that individuals work better when they focus on what they have in common.

When ethnic identity is politicized, according to research, ethnic identity movements will have reduced cooperation with other out-groups within a multicultural environment. Priming ethnic identity for political purposes within a multicultural environment will not translate to success for group cooperation across ethnicities, as all do not share the ethnic identity.

This study points in the direction of a need for a kind of 'superordinate identity.' Although the study never introduces this concept, specifically, it introduces the question of what a shared identity is and can become across multiple groups ranging from ethnic identity to single identity, and single-issue groups. The resolution of the study was to promote the school identity: that all members of the group were UCLA students. This identity transcended ethnic identity and culture, and applied to all members. The school identity acted as a superordinate identity. As explained in Realistic Conflict Theory, an aspect and foundation of Social Identity Theory, superordinate goals are the avenue by which relationships and attitudes from different out-groups work together to create intergroup cohesion. Superordinate goals are goals that are only achieved by multiple groups or individuals within different groups working together to complete. The promotion, outcomes, and solutions that come by means of introducing superordinate goals within intergroup relations can translate to a superordinate identity that act in many ways the same. By promoting a superordinate identity, in this case for example where school identity acted as a binding shared sense of community, positive coordination bypassed the less efficient coordination outcome by priming ethnic identity.

In Summary

These three studies style group cohesion and in-group bias, corresponding discriminating behavior, and negative feelings towards out-group individuals outlined in the social identity approach. Cultural identity acts as a sort of social identity on the basis of ethnicity, underpinning identity and indicating cultural traditions. Identity pierces ideological strongholds and appeals to a more base 'tribal' mentality. The calls and arguments that are hidden with ethnic identity tones become clear in the chaos and fog of endless advertisements for ideology, advocacy groups, volunteering organization, fundraising for charities, which are groups demanding support for a cause. Ethnic identity forcefully pushes past calls towards ideology; it bullies its way through the barrage of group membership on display without having to be explicitly identifiable. This is the strength and power of priming ethnic identity. Identity politics has, without a doubt, become powerfully mobilized in the political.

The priming of ethnic identity allows for the AltRight to transcend multiple ideologies in otherwise monopolized arenas of political thought, especially in more conservative groups. The ethnic white identity acts independently from ideology and spans multiple groups as a superordinate identity. The AltRight uses this as evidenced by the inability to define the AltRight's policy goals as cohesive or consensually agreed to on any grounds, aside from ethnically white membership and white nationalist rhetoric. Thus, identity is the driving force. Rather, ethnically white identity goals are the priority. The AltRight is a natural product of identity politics, in general, that gives significance and meaning to internalizing ethnic and/or cultural identity. When ethnicity becomes a dominant aspect of cultural identity and the main feature of favorable feelings and self-worth, which give meaning to life and regulates self-esteem as understood in Social Identity Theory, it is a natural outcome to assume it will be taken by other ethnicities as a significant part of their self-esteem.

2.4   Social Identity

The outlined theoretical concepts deal with group behavior and group dynamics. First, I will disseminate Realistic Conflict Theory based on Jackson's (1993) comprehensive review that addresses the relative strengths, weaknesses and shortcomings within this theory. Born out of Realistic Conflict Theory, the introduction of Social Identity Theory from Tajfel and Turner's (1979) work fittingly follows. Following this line of Social Psychology research comes Self Categorization Theory developed by Turner and Oakes (1986), included in the social identity method. Lastly, important considerations are outlined on collective identity movements from a sociological perspective outlined by Polletta and Jasper (2001.)

2.5   Realistic Conflict Theory

Realistic Conflict Theory (RCT), also referred to as realistic group conflict theory, explains how intergroup conflict comes from competition over limited resources and conflicting goals, additionally it is particularly useful in this paper as it gives an account for discrimination and prejudice against the out-group that accompany intergroup hostility. Developed by Muzafer Sherif, realistic group conflict theory argues the source of group conflict is each of the respective group's conflicting interests and goals and the competition that ensues over limited resources (Jackson 1993.) Additionally, RCT accounts for the prejudice and discrimination towards the out-group that is linked with intergroup conflict. In this theory resources are things like power, prestige, wealth and can even include social status and influence.

Competition between the in-group and out-group increases the intragroup morale, cohesiveness, and cooperation; basically, facing an opponent builds and strengthens your own team. Correspondingly, the only way in which to moderate and deter group conflict is to work towards a goal that both groups share, a superordinate goal, and can only be achieved by both groups working

together. RCT explains conflict while simultaneously delivering a formula for peace: superordinate goals. RCT operates under the assumption that resources such as power, prestige, or wealth are scarce and finite. Interestingly, RCT implies a winner-take-all understanding of unequally distributed resources, as if a lesser amount of resources by the subordinate group can be described as having no resources at all. In this respect, RCT does not allow for multiple owners who hold varying degrees of resources.

Identification

Sherif's research outlines a fundamental aspect of RCT: group norms, beliefs, and behaviors are directly affected by relationships and interaction with other groups (Jackson 1993.) When the groups compete over resources the group that loses this competition becomes unfavorably stereotyped, the stereotype then normalizes and attaches to the losing group, which leads to more social distance. The intergroup conflict leads to negative stereotyping and prejudice towards the out-group but builds the cohesion and unity within the in-group. The in-group then identifies more with the group because of the need to distinguish themselves from the out-group. The in-group identification is the concept that considers individual identity and self-interest are based on belonging to the group. This increased identification with the group, as a member, starts to assume more of the group identity which leads members to express more of the group's normative beliefs, which in turn increases the probability of conflict (Jackson 1993.)

Racial Integration

Interestingly, RCT allows for an individual to have positive feelings on an out-group but still display opposition if there is a perceived threat or conflict. Citing Bobo (1983) on the use of R.C.T. in regards to the racial integration in the United States through the bus controversy in the 1970s between black-white relationships:

"In so far as whites view blacks as challenging goals and resources they possess and value, they are not likely to translate their favorable attitudes toward the principle of racial justice into support for specific policies like busing . . . whites need not hold blatantly stereotypical beliefs or hostile orientations toward blacks in order to justify to themselves and to others their resistance to black demands for change. Such resistance appears to them as a simple defense of a lifestyle and position they think they have earned and do not question, not as a rejection of blacks as such" (Bobo 1983, 1208.)

Bobo focused on the threat to resources as the source of conflict and conclude that the hostility towards busing and integration was not necessarily overt racism but a threat to norms and values. Jackson contends that it is suggested the threat to resources was the way in which to account for whites believing generally in the idea of ethnic equality and integration but opposing integration, not explicit racial prejudice or overt racism. Researchers Kinder and Rhodebeck's (1982) criticized Bobo's work and found that "support for racial equality is largely autonomous from the stresses and strains of private life and from tangible racial threats" and, as Jackson (1993) continues, "such a finding is in direct conflict with RGCT." (Jackson 1993, 401.)

Summarizing RCT

In summary RCT contends that groups are in competition with one another over resources, recognizing that even if attitudes between groups are favorable, if they perceive any threat or feel they are in competition over resources, negative attitudes will form. Additionally, superordinate goals over a period of time are the remedy for intergroup conflict. RCT also contests contact theory, which advocates that contact and personal experience with members from other groups will reduce conflict and issues concerning discrimination, stereotyping, and prejudice.

2.6   Social Identity Theory

Tajfel and Turner first introduced Social Identity Theory. Social identity theory was born out of the need to enhance Realistic Conflict Theory (RCT) because RCT:

> "does not focus either upon the processes underlying the development and maintenance of group identity nor upon the possibly autonomous effects upon the in-group and intergroup behavior of the 'subjective' aspects of group membership" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 34.)

Social Identity Theory introduces two extremes of social behavior: *interpersonal* and *intergroup behavior*. *Interpersonal behavior* is the behavior between two or more people that are determined by their individual personalities and characteristics not influenced by their social groups i.e. the relationship between a husband and wife. Conversely, *intergroup behavior* is decided by group membership, not the "interindividual personal relationships" between those people i.e. soldiers from opposing armies.

Mobility and Change

Tajfel and Turner (1979) also look at the belief systems attached to the two extremes of social behavior of the individuals through *social mobility* and *social change*, in terms of social groups in their society. *Social mobility* is the belief that an individual can change their position in society and individually join another group as they please, if it better suits their needs. On the opposite side of this is where *social change* is located, where change and movement as an individual is considered impossible. In this *social change* belief system, a fundamental behavior is "in the relevant intergroup situations, individuals will not interact *as* individuals…but as members of their group" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 35.) A significant conclusion was drawn from these two belief systems, specifically with *social change*: the closer an individual is to the *social change* belief system, where social mobility between groups is impossible, the more likely this

individual is to participate and be in unified group actions in the form of social movements. Tajfel and Turner offer a hypothesis on intergroup conflict:

> "An unequal distribution of objective resources promotes antagonism between dominant and subordinate, provided that the latter group rejects its previously accepted consensually negative self-image, and with it the status quo, and starts working towards the development of a positive group identity" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 38.)

Here still, one can assume, the winner-take-all understanding of resources is still not addressed, as examining resources is an underpinning of the theory, I find this lack of examination deficient. Furthermore, if one group does not possess the majority share of resources then effectively, they have nothing. Similarly, if one does not hold a dominant place, the out-group is subjugated. Within this hypothesis the only available position to domination is subjugation. This domination/subjugation aspect of the framework is simplistic and grossly oversimplifying an unsolidified power dynamic of increasing complexity. There is no mention to the possibility of multiple spheres of resources based on vastly different environments within the society where the subordinate group may hold more resources such as power, prestige, and influence. This understanding of scarce resources in both RCT and the following Social Identity Theory evaluate resources one dimensionally; this context advocates that resources are available to all of society only come from one physical location, to be 'won' by only one group, to then have the newly won resources wielded upon all groups in all locations. Essentially, the spring of resources is not geographically situated or limited to one location.

In-Group Bias
Another finding by Tajfel and Turner (1979) is in-group bias. This fundamental quality dictates that the "mere awareness of the presence of an out-group is sufficient to provoke intergroup competitive or discriminatory responses on the

part of the in-group" (Tajfel and Turner 1979, 40.) Correspondingly, highly reliable findings indicate intergroup categorization leads to favoritism and discrimination, respectively and that maximum difference in contrast to the out-group is preferred over in-group profit. In RCT in-group bias is believed to derive from conflict, from intergroup conflict over scarce resources. Social Identity Theory diverts here and claims that desiring positive social identity distinctiveness is the main factor in determining in-group bias/in group favoritism; because self-esteem is a key tenant of Social Identity Theory, the desire to improve individual self-esteem is passed onto the group.

Social Comparison

On social comparison, the conceptualization of the group, as defined by Tajfel and Turner (1979), is:

> "A collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category, share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the evaluations of their group and of their membership of it" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 40.)

Likewise, their definition is in keeping with Sherif (1966, 62):

> "Any behavior displayed by one or more actors toward one or more others that is based on the actors' identification of themselves and the others as belonging to different social categories" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 40.)

Furthermore, they classify social categorization as mental riggings that support the division, cataloguing, organizing and classification of the individual's social environment as well as situate the individual's location in that environment; "define the individual's place in society" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 40.) Social

groups give blueprints to their members to help them identify their position in a context. The social group's blueprints are designed to work in conjunction with comparing the individual to other members of groups.

Self-Image

Here, Tajfel and Turner consider that the term social identity are those aspects of an individual's self-image that lead them to believe which group s/he belongs, primarily: positive self-esteem, positive group membership, and positive comparison to out-groups. Furthermore, "individuals strive to maintain positive social identity," which is based on "favorable comparisons." (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 40.) Similarly, when comparisons to other out-groups are found to be unacceptable, members of the group will do one of two things: leave and join another group with successful favorable comparisons or "make their existing group more positively distinct." (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 41.) This analysis demands an individual's perpetual classification of others.

There are three variables that influence this perpetual classification and differentiation between groups: members must believe in their membership as a part of the self, wholly identify with and define themselves in the in-group; the social environment must allow for comparison between groups; out-group comparability must be adequate, not reserved for every out-group available but specific out-groups with considerations for similarity, proximity, and situational salience. The comparative nature of positively framing oneself is competitive, with the goal of attaining superiority (Tajfel & Turner 1979.)

The Value of Social Status

On the subject of social status, Tajfel and Turner specify that social status be not considered a scarce resource, although this distinction is only applied when dealing with social hierarchies where status is an outcome of intergroup comparison. In any case, the lower the group's status compared to other appropriate groups that meet criteria for comparison, the less the group can

impact or add to positive social identity. The reactions to recognition of low status can be summarized primarily in three ways: individual mobility, social creativity, and social competition.

Individual mobility is a distinctly individualist managed strategy to reach a personal result, casting aside the group. The group's status is not changed by individual mobility because the member dissociates himself or herself with the group in order to climb the social status hierarchy. Tajfel and Turner cite the findings of G.F. Ross (1975) and the "direct linear relationship between low status and the desire to pass upwards into another group." (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 43.) Individual mobility brings to terms the processes by which positive social identity comes from intentional inequality of status.

The clear nature of climbing social status hierarchies is for the express purpose to distinguish oneself from, and more favorably compare to, others. There are two arguments related to mobility through hierarchies that Social Identity Theory does not include or consider. First, social groups are interchangeable based on the theory and reasoning related to self-esteem previously outlined: if positive self-esteem is a major factor in determining positive social identity, and favorable standing by comparing and differentiating other groups placing the member's in-group above the compared out-group which influences positive social identity. It is a practical claim that the social group only serves the purpose of deliberately, strategically, and intentionally disproportionately placing oneself at the top of a given hierarchy against others, subsequently removing all doubt that the individual only identifies and internalizes the group beliefs so far as to how s/he sees themselves in a positive light. Secondly, this theory adversely argues that human social identity is based upon the success of which we positively compare ourselves to others; our interaction within groups are only self-serving in order to feel superior to others.

Social creativity is a second manner of reaction to recognizing a negative comparative situation in which members of the in-group are do not see

themselves positively. This group strategy is mainly set to change and modifying features within the comparative situation. This can be done in three ways. First, the in-group changes what they compare to the out-group; the in-group creates a new facet of comparison where they are superior. Second, the in-group changes the values and terms of comparison once deemed negative and turns it into positive trait- a previously labeled negative trait is now worn as a badge of honor due to the values associated. Third, the in-group will change the out-group to which they are comparing themselves. This last approach details that higher self-esteem comes from the in-group comparing themselves to another group with lower status contrasting to that of groups with higher status.

Social competition is the third reaction to low status, outlined in Social Identity Theory. In this reaction the in-group engages in direct competition with the out-group in order to change each group's positions. Tajfel and Turner hypothesize "following the RCT, that this strategy will generate conflict and antagonism" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 44.) This strategy of direct competition differs significantly as it generates conflict where, alternatively, individual mobility and aspects of social creativity allow for minimizing intergroup conflict.

Tajfel and Turner (1979) do not specify what order, if there is an order, individual mobility, social creativity and social competition happen in. Does social competition come as the first reaction, and if the in-group loses this social competition is it then followed by the less conflicting strategies of mobility and creativity? It is important to note that individual mobility strategy is counterproductive to the group as it weakens the status and morale additionally breaking the cohesiveness of the subordinate group and possibly creating an identity crisis. This individual mobility distorts the group interest and identity, therefore making it harder for members to mobilize for collective action. Basically, upon losing a conflict, members lose morale and the troops break.

Additionally, there is no mention of sharing of resources, specifically related to status. There is no discussion on the possibility or allowance of sharing social status or acknowledging the same prospective status held by different groups. Subordinate groups can compare and accept equal distribution of resources, as it relates to social status. Likewise, resources can be shared equally between subordinate and dominant groups, although not as regularly as between subordinate groups. Resources, the distribution and redistribution, as well as the limits placed on them are deficient in this theory. Additionally, resources and the competition over them are framed as absolute, unable to consider that some resources may not be as disproportionally won or distributed. I contend that resources can be shared, acknowledging that all resources are not awarded as a lump sum to the dominant group, furthermore dominant group resource ownership, aside from wealth, has physical boundaries where resources have varying degrees of impact, which are unaccounted for in RCT and Social Identity Theory.

Summarizing Social Identity Theory

Tajfel and Turner's main contributions in Social Identity Theory are "the integration of three processes of social categorization, self-evaluation through social identity, and intergroup social comparison." (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 46.) Ultimately, when an out-group hinders a group's positive distinctiveness, conflict ensues between the groups:

> "Any threat to the distinctly superior position of a group implies a
> potential loss of positive comparisons and possible negative
> comparisons, which must be guarded against" (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 44.)

2.7 Self-Categorization Theory

"One paradox of social psychology is that the psychological has to do with the individual and opposite of the social entailing the collective entity and social processes." (Turner & Oakes 1986, 237.)

Contemporary social psychology has been individualistic in nature, defining individualism in social psychology is that the "individual is the sole psychological and/or social reality, that the distinctive reality of the group or society is a fiction or fallacy, that 'nothing' emerges in social interaction" (Turner & Oakes, 1986, 238.) Fundamentally, the psychology of the individual is unchanging from the social and non-social settings. Turner and Oakes (1986) disagree with this, responding in 4 parts: individuals cannot be opposed to or distinguished from society and that the individual is the society; the individual and the society represent simultaneous emergent properties of one another; social psychological and social scientific explanation of behavior…"are interactive aspects of the same human process; importance of socially mediated cognition in determining distinctively human social behavior." (Turner & Oakes 1986, 240.) These ideas provided a viewpoint opposed to individualism. By presenting these arguments against individualism in social psychology, "the concept social identity takes on special significance." (Turner & Oakes 1986, 240.)

Social Identity Theory Origins

Tajfel and Turner termed Social Identity Theory through their analysis of intergroup relations and social conflict. The hypothesis of Tajfel and Turner, in social identity theory, basically states that people seek to find positive social identities by comparing in-groups with out-groups. This theory, as Turner and Oakes points out, is anti-individualist because it tries to explain large scale uniformities in social behavior and takes on social conflict from a group member's perspective. Turner and Oakes (1986) believe this concept is lacking because it did not speak to the social psychological interaction. Additionally, as they point out:

> "as the importance of a further assumption made by the theory of a psychological distinction between interpersonal and intergroup behavior became recognized, Turner (1982) discussed how social identity could function as the psychological mechanism that 'depersonalized' self-perception and made group behavior possible" (Turner & Oakes 1986, 240.)

From this reconceptualization, it led to 'self-categorization theory' which describes the basis of the group phenomenon.

Self-Categorization

Self-categorization theory deals in the structure and functioning of the social self-concept. Turner and Oakes (1986) describe self-categorization as "a cognitive grouping of the self as identical (similar, equivalent, interchangeable) to some class of stimuli in contrast to some other class of stimuli." (Turner & Oakes 1986, 241.) In the social self-concept there are three primary self-categorization abstractions: the lowest level is the personal self, categorized as "I"; the next level is a social self, categorized as "we" when compared to an out-group "differentiations between groups of people (class, race, nationality, occupation, etc.)" (Turner & Oakes 1986, 241.); the highest level is categorized as being human with the out-group being animals based on "differentiations between species."

Depersonalization

Turner and Oakes (1986) introduce the link between depersonalization process and social influence as:

> "social (or human) identity perceived between self and in-group members which both leads people to tend to agree and also to expect to

agree in their reactions to or judgment of the same stimulus situation" (Turner & Oakes 1986, 245.)

If this collectivized formula is an interaction between the person and the interaction, similar people in an identical situation should display the same behavior. Depersonalization also introduces self-stereotyping where people start to act in terms of the behaviors associated with their in-group. Depersonalization is not a loss of self or identity but a redefining of the individual identity within the group. When depersonalization and self-stereotyping begin practicing the norms and behaviors of in-group members, simultaneously dissociating with the norms and behaviors of out-group members. "Social norms are the basis as well as the product of influence" (Turner & Oakes 1986, 246.) Additionally, self-categorization denies objective reality testing from social reality testing because data is seen through the lens of the receiver whose worldview is tied to group membership.

Group Polarization
Group polarization:

> "is the tendency of the average response of group members on some dimension to become more extreme towards the initially preferred pole after group discussion (or some related manipulation) than the average of their initial individual responses" (Turner & Oakes 1986, 246.)

To explain further, people tend to accept the social norms that define their group and that "any response stereotypically associated with such a category…tends to be perceived as normative/informationally valid" (Turner & Oakes 1986, 246.) Additionally, an individual that presents arguments or ideas that are more prototypical of the in-group consensus, the more "correct, valued and persuasive" that person will be (Turner & Oakes 1986, 246.) This encourages and strengthens the in-group's consensus as well as rewards

normative behavior and ideas; influence is then given to the most prototypical. Turner and Oakes mention that the:

> "most prototypical (normative, valued) position is not the sum or mean of in-group responses, nor an individual property of the member holding it but is a higher-order category property, reflecting the views of all members and, indeed, the similarities between them and differences in relation to others: the prototypical member's persuasiveness, perceived competence, leadership, etc., are mediated by and based on his or membership in the 'whole"(Turner & Oakes 1986, 250.)

Summarizing Self Categorization Theory

Turner and Oakes provide four summarizing remarks on self-categorization theory: first, that human individuals are both individuals and society and depersonalization is the process where people finish being unique and become the representations and become the living expression of the "historical, cultural and politico-ideological forces" and movements that formed them (Turner & Oakes 1986, 250.) Secondly, the psychological processes of abstraction and self-categorization encourage social norms and responses that are stereotypical of the in-group compared to one's personality; depersonalization allows for influence and unification. In-group-out-group relations reflect what values or norms are considered essential. Thirdly, social identity is a "socially structured field in the individual mind that is a mechanism whereby society forms the psychology of its members to pursue its goals and conflicts" in its respective imagined communities (Turner & Oakes 1986, 251.) Lastly, it provides a group with a shared representation of themselves and their identity.

2.8   Collective Identity Movements

Polletta and Jasper (2001) apply the concept of collective identity to social movements that is quite helpful when applied to the identity movements. In

the 1980's arguments over multiculturalism and affirmative action were labeled and subsequently attacked as "identity politics." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 283.) Additionally, they argue that this marked the beginning of where traditional approaches like lobbying and litigation were first challenged and met by celebrations of cultural and alternative identities. The authors set to answer questions in the realm of political mobilization that collective identity answered. "Collective identity responded to the inadequacies of instrumental rationality as an explanation for strategic choice." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 284.)

Another unanswered question mobilization and process theorists left unexamined dealt with why participants chose to participate in protests: "If people choose to participate because doing so accords with who they are, the forms of protest they choose are also influenced by collective identities." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 284.) Additionally, collective identity filled in the gaps of "instrumental rationality as an explanation for strategic choice," as well as contributing to "understanding the cultural effects of social movements"(Polletta & Jasper 2001, 284.) Collective identity also facilitated measuring the changes in cultural representation and social norms, as opposed to limiting analysis of the movement's impact on institutional reform only.

Defining Collective Identity

Polletta and Jasper (2001) define collective identity as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution."(Polletta & Jasper 2001, 285.) Additionally, "it is the idea of shared status and which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may form a personal identity." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 285.) A collective identity can be given by outside groups to those who don't at first identify with a collective identity, although it has to be accepted by those who the identity is applied to. They continue by arguing that collective identity is expressed through cultural materials. Cultural material can include tangible and intangible

materials such as names, narratives, symbols, verbal style, rituals clothing, etc. but they make the distinction that not all cultural material express collective identity. (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 285.) Furthermore, the authors claim collective identity is very different than "ideology" and "interest groups" when we apply this to people; within a collective identity, members of the group have positive feelings for each another.

In this understanding and discussion of cultural material, the authors Jasper make no mention of cultural heritage and the associated tangible and intangible heritage that give cultural materials significance. Moreover, they do not characterize differences, define terms, or make any suggestion to the connection or relationship between a cultural identity as a collective identity, citing only cultural processes likened to structural ones in analyzing where interest, strategy and politics interact and operate with identity. One can only assume cultural identity, in this instance, is unsympathetically lumped together with collective identity.

Polletta and Jasper (2001), in a sociological context omitting discussion of class and national identities, analyze the role of identity in four primary phases of protest: "the creation of collective claims; recruitment into movements; strategic and tactical decision-making; and movement outcomes." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 285.)

Movement Emergence
In the 1970s and 80s Western Europe, scholars of new social movements started to recognize that protests around homosexuality and feminism, among others, were replacing class based political mobilization, further arguing that participation in these collective movements could not be decided or predicted by class (Touraine 1981 1985; Melucci 1985 1989; Offe 1985; Castells 1997; Laclau & Mouffe 1985; Cohen 1985; and Larana et al's 1994 overview; as cited by Polletta and Jasper 2001, 286.) Likewise, these new participants were not

advocating to "gain political and economic concessions from institutional actors…they sought recognition for new identities and lifestyles." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 286.) Class struggles replaced identity struggles. Polletta and Jasper cite Tilly (1998) "the rise of identity politics in nineteenth century Britain [is attributed] to the increased salience of the national state in people's lives and the new patterns of claims making that resulted." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 288.)

Some argue that these new identities do not come from traditional classifications like race, gender or nation but from "network positions like patronage (Gould, 1998), residence (Gould, 1995), or political affiliation (Mische, 1996)…to explain the creation of mobilized identities, several authors have turned to network analysis." (Gould, 1998; Gould, 1995; Mische, 1996; as cited by Polletta & Jasper 2001, 288.) This is the point where social networks became so valuable. Other authors concentrated on "institutional contexts where new identities are formed." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 288.) Concepts of "submerged networks" (Melucci, 1989; Mueller, 1994; as cited by Polletta & Jasper 2001, 288.) and "free spaces" (Evans & Boyte, 1986; as cited by Polletta & Jasper 2001, 288.) were used to describe institutions removed from physical and ideological control of those in power. (We can think of these places as online digital forums.) These places act as a safe space where "people can develop counter hegemonic ideas and oppositional identities." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 288.) These areas are used as a place to cultivate ideology and acts as an ecosystem of open dialogue and discourse among the group or with those who share the same goals or principles; this represents a perimeter of safety.

Recruitment and Commitment

Polletta and Jasper (2001) talk about how shared interest alone is not enough to motivate the individual to join and participate. There has to be more pressing demands that politically motivate, there has to be immediate dangers, citing Fireman and Gamson (1979):

"a person whose life is intertwined with the group [through friendship, kinship, organization membership, informal support networks, or shared relationships with outsiders]…has a big stake in the groups fate. When collective action is urgent, the person is likely to contribute his or her share even if the impact of that is not noticeable." (as cited by Polletta & Jasper 2001, 289.)

Some commitments or obligations to political and collective identity come with specific roles or positions held in the community, social hierarchy, or even within the family- this is referred to as the loyalty model. From these perspectives, the intersection between reputation, loyalty, and self-interest are fundamental factors in commitment to the collective identity. Furthermore, Polletta and Jasper (2001) interestingly suggest, "Activism for many people is a way to construct a desirable self…activist collective identity can be a satisfying aspect of personal identity."(Polletta & Jasper 2001, 290.) This is where self-interest models come to the foreground in collective identity recruitment and commitment.

Branding as Framing

A fundamental aspect of recruitment is successful marketing; in this sense successful marketing is defined as 'framing'. "Since mobilization does not always require pre-existing collective identities, activists efforts to "frame" identities are critical in recruiting participants." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 291.) This is a principal task as it frames the movement within society; it locates and identifies opponents and allies alike as well as the place between them. Successful framing motivates and creates agency because the movement is framed in such a way that injustice toward the groups is immediate and obvious. I believe this aspect of recruitment can lead to success but also failure. Through this recruitment process, whether or not injustice takes place, the tool for recruitment is essentially victimhood, regardless of conditions. Additionally,

this may be prone to abuse and used as a counterpoint to collective movements, devaluing their claims of injustice, real or perceived.

These social movement groups must maintain their identity to sustain, including participation as a responsibility to membership, as well as incorporating frames of injustice and agency to identify opponents. From a more reductionist argument: collective social movements and identity groups need a persecutor, they cannot function without an oppressor, as they are the victims, the weaker element in the power struggle. Interestingly, I speculate as to the lifespan of a social movement when the opponent or oppressor is defeated. Are old forgotten oppressors prioritized and remembered or are new enemies imagined and created?

Tactical Choice

Decisions made for and on behalf of the movement are crucial to success. Traditionally, it has been observed that a cost benefit analysis of activists is what decides the strategy, targets, tactics, and organizational forms used by activists. There is a new school of thought that argues identity movements do not use as much strategic logic, rather they make their decisions based on the "expressions of who they are as a collective." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 292.) Another form of decision making that may not be instrumentally rational is protest strategy or specific tactics. There are some movements that have protest tactics associated and attached, limiting alliances with other movements and even further cementing their collective identity; some movements opt for legal protest, some advocate for moderate civil disobedience, while others can be more radical. (Polletta & Jasper 2001.) These tactics are also presented to the public as much as the oppressor in defining the collective.

Equally, tailored strategies of protest can come to define a social movement; tactics can come to be a way in which identities are framed. (Polletta & Jasper 2001.) These specific tactics can even come to be a tool of recruitment and

appeal to certain individuals, mirroring their emotional response or encouraging involvement. Conversely, identifying with certain tactics may further exclude potential members. "People develop a taste for certain tactics…some people may develop collective identity on tactical taste." (Jasper 1997; as cited by Polletta & Jasper 2001, 292.) The authors go further and argue that there can be multiple identities within the collective movement: "activists may identify primarily with a movement organization, affinity group, style of protest, or degree of moderation or radicalism." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 292.) There are three identities that can be separate into categories labeled *activist*, *organizational* and *tactical*. (Polletta & Jasper 2001.) Within the social movement there can be some who advocate for more radical or moderate forms of protests, this would constitute a tactical identity, while other individuals within the movement may be loyal to an organization and its members thus resembling an organizational identity. These dynamics can be interesting to trace. Individuals may have tastes and beliefs that intertwine across multiple identities in the movement.

This work hypothesizes some strategies or identities that may be at odds with one another when the members of the collective are applied to certain opponents, creating a battle for *a* or *the* dominant identity. Measuring the psychological influence of comprising some aspect of the tactical, organizational and activist identity would be of huge significance in understanding how multiple beliefs, seemingly at odds, may coexist. How much, if any, political opportunism goes into this conflict of identities must be based on instrumentally rational decisions coupled with a cost-benefit analysis based on individual goals, including the consideration of the collective movement's goals. Additionally, separate identities held by the individual may be dismissed based on the needs of the collective movement. Mapping these crossroads highlights the increasing complexity of an individual's separate identities within one movement.

Another tactical method activists use is the ability to "construct, deconstruct, celebrate, and enact collective identities as a strategies of protest." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 294.) A group may strategically construct its identity based on the kind of opponent they face, it becomes situational based on the audience or others present. Furthermore, styles of rhetoric and points of emphasis can change based on the target audience or opponent. This way of creatively framing issues differently based on audiences or opponents may have an adverse effect of diluting claims based on volume of claims made, lacking a consistent response over various spheres subsequently limiting the impact of the movement's original goals.

Movement Success and Outcomes

Many things not just measured by cultural or institutional impact alone, can define a movement's success. First and foremost, changing the group identity is usually the prime objective of the movement, occasionally including the dynamic of group pride. Second, the "participant's personal identity is changed even after the movement has ended." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 296.) The core collective identity continues to form the person well after the event. Additionally, changed identity can change the landscape of political conflict in the future. These collective identities can have "long-lasting impacts on political institutions and in political spheres well after the movement has run its course" (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 297.) Cultural materials may come to embody an amount of attached significance and subsequently repurposed for future movements similarly to that of the utilization of a certain strategy, tactic, or organizational influence defined by the movement and likewise repurpose those same tactics and effect future uses. (Polletta & Jasper 2001.) Lastly and most importantly, the creation of a "strong movement identity elicits a strong reaction and counter organization from those who are portrayed as the enemy or opponent" (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 297.) Aside from the cultural and institutional impact, these are the fundamental means by which identity movements shape and reshape the political map.

Summarizing Collective Identity

"The collective identity describes the imagined and concrete community, involves an act of perception and construction as well as the discovery of preexisting bonds, interests, and boundaries." (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 298.) Moreover, some individuals can come to acquire a collective identity around certain skills. Skill sets can link individuals with certain forms of protests, but does not automatically give them a collective identity (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 298.) Collective identity, in terms of social movements, is always changing and responses that shape the movement come from different interactions by other groups, organizations, audiences, and opponents (Polletta & Jasper 2001, 298.) Understanding that collective identity is not fixed is fundamental. It is fluid, malleable and always changing, to varying degrees, based on environment and external forces; it can use wide ranging rhetoric and motivate acts; make claims, real or unsubstantiated, while simultaneously disproving other assertions. Ultimately, it is a way in which people understand the world.

3   DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The research question: How does Richard Spencer produce the concept of AltRight identity in his speech?

Research on identity group dynamics and group identity provide examples of strong literature which informs this study. This study is relevant and useful primarily because it addresses discourse on AltRight identity production.

The research design of this study is a qualitative analysis, specifically a rhetorical analysis of Richard Spencer's speech. The rhetorical analysis utilizes an Aristotelian approach, evaluating how and to what effect an orator's strategies produce group identity through logos, pathos, and ethos. Additionally, this rhetorical analysis employs useful elements of narrative inquiry, in so much as data collection and coding. The primary rationale for a qualitative design centers on the multiple discourses that are produced through analysis and the particular insight into the phenomenon. This qualitative design provides more nuanced views and a mechanical deconstruction of how AltRight identity is produced. One can explore many possible interpretations based on structure or emotional rhythm of oratorial strategies granted by qualitative analysis.

This study is of qualitative design. The data is a speech from Richard Spencer. The basis for a qualitative design is informed by previous studies and the potential opportunities for illustrating group dynamics and group identity. Tracy identifies characteristics of qualitative research that are particularly useful for this research: (a) being rich and holistic; (b) offering more than a snapshot of a phenomenon, provides understanding of a sustained process; (c) focuses on lived experience that is rooted in context; (d) interprets participant viewpoints (Tracy 2013, 5.) Working within a qualitative design, in contrast to

quantitative, presents nuanced opportunities for understanding how identity is produced in this case.

Data was obtained in video and transcribed to text form. The data was analyzed according to the Aristotelian framework: Ethos, Pathos, Logos within the lens of group identity and group behavior outlined in the theoretical framework.

3.1 Data Collection

This speech was chosen due to the media attention surrounding viral videos posted by multiple major news outlets from the conference showing audience members giving Nazi salutes. Upon further inspection, the ending of this speech was intriguing as there was coded language mixed with Hail Trump, Hail our people, Hail victory met with Nazi salutes. At first it was hard to understand if this was an obscene joke or shocking attempt to go viral, as the AltRight does and says shocking things to garner media attention. After reading articles and commentary describing the event and the AltRight, in general, I believed the articles lacked depth or background information. In order to understand the significance of this group I began reading what little had been written about the AltRight and considered that the authors had limited knowledge and held opinions on issues such as internet subculture that were out of touch and disconnected. I viewed the video in its entirety and believed this would be a perfect case study, as Richard Spencer spells out exactly the movement's ideology, what they stand for, what the goals are, and who the enemies of the AltRight are.

The data obtained for this study is Richard Spencer's speech which was examined in both video and text form. The speech was first obtained in video format on YouTube from the channel RedIceTV (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xq-LnO2DOGE). Video recording of the speech is in English, thirty-two minutes in length. The video was reviewed numerous times and field notes were written.

Next, the video was transcribed into text. The text is a word-for-word transcription and is considered to be the "raw data" of this study. The transcription contains approximately 3300 words. While transcribing, time stamps were included following every 2 sentences for quick retrieval to video form. Noteworthy reactions from the audience such as "applause" were included in the transcription. Speech mechanisms used by Spencer such as intonation, volume, and other expressions were not included in the text. By examining the speech through text, the content of the speech provides informative perspectives.

The combination of video and field notes, coupled with text transcription, provide a holistic examination, consistent with the qualitative design and research aims of this study.

3.2   Ethical considerations

Richard Spencer, the rhetor, is not assigned a different name due to his popularity and notoriety in the U.S. and internationally. Permission to use the speech was not needed due to public access via YouTube. The data obtained is not of a sensitive nature as it is shared publicly.

I was aware of my role as the researcher and the potential for bias, especially given the subject matter. The analysis is intended to be neutral, focusing on the mechanical tools of *how* identity is built rather than the moral implications of *why*. I maintained neutrality by utilizing personal reflections and discussing the data with my peers and supervisor. Speaking strategies and effective use of communicating with the audience is the focus of this study, not the obvious moral implications of the white supremacist/white nationalist content. The mechanical speaking devices, according to group dynamics concepts, are prioritized.

A major point should be addressed before continuing: this analysis is not an endorsement of white nationalist ideology or sympathetic view of aforementioned thought processes. Rather, this work is an analysis of the mechanical devices used by an orator to shape identity and to what degree and how the audience receives the information.

3.3   Context: thick description of speech environment

Context is essential to understanding the content of the data and the use of rhetorical devices to build collective identity. Recognizing the surrounding context of the subject matter and viewing it not in isolation but as part of an interaction between the rhetor and the audience is in line with the following tenant of narrative inquiry: "narratives are dependent on individual's past and present experiences, her or his values, the people the stories are being told to, the addressees, and when and where they are being told." (Moen 2006, 60.) Contextual elements influence the ways in which the rhetorical devices are received by the audience. Such contextual aspects include the setting in which the speech takes place and the demographics of the audience and speaker. These contextual elements are presented in the following sections as thick descriptions. The use of thick descriptions is important to meaningful, qualitative research as noted by Tracy (2013) as they demonstrate immersion and documentation in a specific context in order to produce general conclusions and connections to theory.

3.4   Ethos, Pathos, Logos

Data was analyzed according to the Aristotelian 'Rhetoric' (Aristotle, trans. 1909.) In this subchapter, The three pillars: ethos pathos and logos, are described. In addition, steps taken during the analysis process are presented in Table 1. Lastly, a more detailed description of the analysis steps are presented.

The classical Aristotelian framework of rhetorical analysis has three pillars of rhetorical appeals that are used to measure the persuasion of an audience: ethos, pathos, logos. Persuasion can be measured in a host of ways, but in this case it will fall under the art of persuasion and the individual act of persuasion. One must consider the rhetor and the audience, the target of persuasion. How well does the rhetor, Richard Spencer, persuade the audience, the AltRight community?

Ethos

The ethical appeal of an argument is foundational. Ethical appeal provides different meanings in modern linguistics, in contrast to the implied definition in rhetoric. In the modern sense, ethics or ethical decisions are seen as good moral choices, done consistently, that affect the majority for good. In rhetoric, the appeal of ethos is highly specific; the definition is more contextual (Rapp 2010; Sproat, Driscoll, & Brizee 2012; Varpio 2018.) Ethos, in the classic sense, is how the audience measures the speaker's credibility. For example, a physician who is speaking to an audience mainly composed of mechanical engineers may not necessarily earn the trust and credibility of the audience. This example illustrates how subjective and contextual ethos is. Fundamentally, earning trust and authority from the audience is the foundation of this pillar.

More specifically, there are two subcategories by which the ethos of the speaker can be measured: extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic is the experience, the background, the education, and character of the speaker. Intrinsic is how the orator speaks. Using the analogy from above, a physician's extrinsic ethos appeal may be weak, as his background is not within the mechanical engineering community but the intrinsic appeal may be strong due to speaking style. These two sub elements are important to remember when examining rhetoric and speakers. Additionally, in rhetorical analysis, personal examination of the speaker's credibility should be avoided, as the credibility must be measured from the audience point of view. To reiterate, intrinsic and

extrinsic ethos examination from the audience point of view may not match the personal examination, in keeping with sound analysis.

Pathos

The pathos appeal, or pathetic appeal, is similarly misconstrued in linguistic use outside of rhetoric. The term *pathetic* has a demeaning set of uses in the modern lexicon but in rhetoric, pathos is the emotional appeal. Pathetic appeal, like ethical appeal, has a very different set of uses, implications, and connotations in rhetoric; clearly defining terms and definitions is important in language. The contrast between the classic and modern terms serves as an indication of how complex and specific language use can be understood.

Pathos is the appeal to emotion. Appeals to emotion are appeals to identity, appeals to common struggles, dreams, and fears. Ultimately, pathos is the appeal of the human element. The speaker produces an identity that connects with the audience; this appeal consists of feelings and evoking emotional states. To revisit our analogous reference, pathos for the physician speaking to an audience of mechanical engineers may have a strong pathos connection by sharing experiences of studying long hours as a prospective engineering student before committing to the field of medicine. This appeal to identity forms a common bond through the 'struggle' of studying long arduous hours. This emotional appeal, from the audience perspective, is recognition of hard work and communicates that the speaker knows something about the journey of becoming a mechanical engineer, thus building some aspect of ethos.

Frequently in pathos appeals, speakers and politicians use words like 'we' and collective terms to cognitively solidify the group identity relationships around the speaker and audience. It is important to recall the value and power in creating a group identity outlined in RCT and Social Identity Theory, as it applied to building pathos. Additionally, speakers may use vivid language, stories, and inspirational quotes. Audience emotion is the primary focal point: a

speaker's emotion may be positive or project anger but their intention for the audience to feel a certain emotion is independent from their own.

Logos

The logos appeal is the logical appeal. Similar to ethical and pathetic appeals, logical appeals do not have to be logical. Logos relies on strategies used to make appeals or arguments, not whether it makes sense to the audience or analyst. It is paramount to understand how the audience perceives the argument as logical. There are a host of strategies a speaker may use such as: cause and consequence, comparison, analogy, testimony and authority, and syllogism.

The logos appeal postulates a 'conclusion', to some extent (Rapp 2010; Sproat. et tal 2012; Varpio 2018.) In this case, conclusion is interpreted as the place where answers are given. The causes and effects are presented in this pillar of the three appeals where the speaker and audience come to the heart of the matter. Vast oversimplifications of multifaceted, complex ideas are made and may be backed up by precedents and/or examples. Citing authority and testimony are operated in this appeal.

All three pillars of rhetoric are dependent on and affect one another. As this research perspective implies, creating and shaping identity together with the audience is integral in the Aristotelian framework. Numerous intervals illustrate arguments that encapsulate all three pillars of rhetoric or overlap to some degree, while other arguments may have a combination of various forms or classifications. Additionally, the analyst's evaluation interprets the assignment of each perspective classification. The analyst's assessment should be informed by immersion in the data and contextual landscape, understanding and recognizing even the smallest nuance.

3.5   Steps of analysis

The steps taken during the analysis process follow Tracy's (2013) guide for data analysis in qualitative research. They are listed below in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Steps of Analysis

1. Data Immersion Phase

    a) Several viewings of video of speech
    b) Made field notes of video of speech
    c) Transcribed video into text and read the text
    d) Made notes from reading the text
    e) Reserved judgement and remained open to multiple meanings
    f) Maintained a neutral role as researcher, discussed data with supervisor and peers

2. Primary Cycle Coding

    a) Identified main ideas and the structuring of them in the speech
    b) Grouped main ideas together to form themes

3. Secondary Cycle Coding

    a) Analyzed themes according to theoretical framework
    b) Identified ethos, pathos, and logos through specific quotes in emergent themes
    c) Presented overall findings and reinforcing quotes

In the data immersion phase, the data was familiarized through watching and listening to the speech, transcribing text, and reading the text through. Furthermore, notes were made of thought-provoking or significant moments. Additionally, discussions of the data were made with peers and supervisor. Thorough familiarization with the data is essential for later phases of analysis. Consistent with elements of narrative analysis, important codes and later themes of meaning developed from the data.

The second phase of the analysis, primary cycle coding, focused on structure and main ideas. As identified by Tracy (2013), this stage in the analysis is concerned with the "what" of data. Accordingly, notes and codes were made to reflect the actual information of the data in a simplified form and do not involve interpretation. For example, the following excerpt from the data was highlighted and assigned four codes:

"In a culture which offers video games, endless entertainment, drugs, alcohol, porn, sports, and a thousand other meaningless distractions to convince us of another reality, we want to cut all of that away." (5:45)

The four first-level codes produced from this date item include: redefining morality (MORAL), setting new moral directives for Americans (NEW AMERICA), organized manipulation (PROPAGANDA), and "us vs them" comparisons (USvs.THEM).

Next, all first-level codes were assembled together in a table. Reviewing the table, and referring back to the data enabled refining the codes. Tracy (2013) suggests refining codes through a constant comparative method where the researcher reevaluates the codes and revises.

Lastly, in the secondary cycle coding phase, strong quotes falling under major themes were interpreted and analyzed according to logos, pathos, ethos.

4   ANALYSIS

4.1   Defining the Outgroup

Two major themes are at work in Spencer's speech, in accordance to identity production within Social Identity Theory: defining the outgroup and defining the ingroup. The following text identifies the first theme of the outgroup through evidence from the speech. Within this theme are sub themes used by Spencer to further distinguish the outgroup. These sub themes include the perversion of truth by the media and the immorality of those setting standards in society.

The theme of defining the outgroup could also be considered a purpose of the speech. Spencer's intentional characterization of "them" or the outgroup plays a major role in building an identity for the ingroup. Locating and focusing on a low status group when measuring oneself is not reserved for the political extreme or hate groups. Favorable comparisons are what drive everyone, regardless of values. Social Identity infrastructure is built on the notion that individuals find favorable comparisons by which they are seen more favorably. Favorable comparisons produce and regulate self-esteem, which can be argued as positive emotion, and they drive our identity. Favorable status is a main driver in self-esteem, positive emotion, and confidence. Spencer is not unique in his presentation of negative characterization and imagery of an outgroup in order to seek favorable comparison that elicits positive self-esteem but the type and specificity of negative characterization is unique in this case.

The AltRight can be more accurately characterized by what they hate rather than what they believe. Spencer's speech reflects what is most obvious about the AltRight: their disdain for social justice warriors, leftists, communists, but especially the media. Spencer goes deep in showing disgust toward the liberal

class sphere, and toward the Republican mainstream to a lesser extent. This is incredibly effective for the audience.

Recent work explored how sexual disgust were found to increase the odds for voting for Donald Trump and Republican views. This is helpful when viewing AltRight rhetoric as there is significant hatred promoted towards outgroups, specifically towards social justice activists and outgroups who are perceived as having compromised moral character. Sexual disgust was a bigger indicator of socially conservative voting behavior than compared to pathogen disgust. (Bellingsley et al., 2018.) The association to disgust and pathogens is a hypothesis that explains the presence of pathogens and infectious diseases may lead to a strategy mitigating threats of disease in the form of conservative political orientation. From the pathogen avoidance model researchers found that "behavioral immune strength, as indicated by fear of contamination and disgust sensitivity, is positively related to social conservatism (i.e., right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, religious fundamentalism, ethnocentrism, collectivism, and political conservatism)." (Terrizzi et al. 2013, 99.)

4.1.1   Press Credibility

Spencer maintains the media is dominated by left leaning institutions and biased organizations bent on redefining American normality at the cost of white Americans, and consumed with the goal of denying Trump legitimacy, offering no objective viewpoint and delivering ideological talking points. Spencer is keying in on press credibility and bias, which is trending negatively.

> "In a culture which offers video games, endless entertainment, drugs, alcohol, porn, sports, and a thousand other meaningless distractions to convince us of another reality, we want to cut all of that away." (5:45)

Here, Spencer identifies the immorality of society as an active, manipulative device that his audience, the AltRight, must rise above. Spencer asserts that this culture of immorality and consumerism is a facade that hides truth. One might recall the scene in The Matrix when Neo is shown the true reality of the world he lives by choosing to take a red pill that awakens his consciousness to the true reality. The AltRight frequently use this analogy. This enlightenment terminology is popularly known as "being red pilled." The search for truth is the basis of Spencer's point. In this sense, "distractions" that Spencer references have more intent, making them more akin to lies.

Spencer paints a clear picture of the outgroup with specific references to the media. Following, evidence from the speech is provided, summarized and investigated for the use of rhetorical devices (logos, pathos, and ethos.)

> "The mainstream media or perhaps we should refer to them in the original German: *lugan presa.*" (2:33)

This is an obvious reference to Nazi Germany. *Lugan presa* translates to "lying press," which was used by Hitler emphatically. It is important to note that the response from the crowd were cheers, applause and they even repeated "*lugan presa.*" Clearly, Spencer knows his audience and his audience is responding. Spencer makes a striking blow to the mainstream media by calling them liars in an acute manner.

This short but powerful referencing of terms popularly used by Nazi Germany and Hitler plays a part in building ethos. This is not a subtle hint to the audience. Perhaps, this could be considered to be a form of "dog whistle language." However, it is clear these messages are not coded nor hidden within language.

"It's not just that many are genuinely stupid. Indeed, one wonders of these people are people at all or instead soulless Gollum, animated by some dark power to repeat whatever talking point John Oliver stated the night before."(3:25)

Here, Spencer characterizes and dehumanizes the outgroup. By referencing John Oliver, a comedian with left leaning positions, as the outgroup's authority and source of information. Spencer further insults and discredits the outgroup for being easily controlled by entertainment media, equipping information gathered by comedians and late night talk show hosts. He references "soulless Gollum," with regards to the media being a puppet. Spencer's remark: "If they are people at all" promotes the point that left leaning positions advocated by media talking heads have no stake in what they say, rather they just read the teleprompter or regurgitate talking points, not an inherently racist dehumanizing characterization of personhood of the outgroup. While this point of political information coming from late night formatting may have roots in truth, Spencer dramatizes this notion and therefore, the harsh characterization of the outgroup goes deeper building more ethos with audience.

"It's especially amusing, considering the indignant whining we heard only two weeks ago about how unconscionable it was that Donald Trump was supposedly going to refuse to accept the election results and how he was going to unleash his supporters into the street, really who can take these people seriously ever again?" (6:46)

Describing the media outrage around Trump takes credibility away from the media. He acknowledges a news cycle that fully embraced sensational journalism in predicting violence, outrage, turmoil and social upheaval. This is another instance of Spencer highlighting the bias of the media and reminding his audience that they should not be trusted, now or ever.

Spencer elicits recent media coverage that is fresh in the minds of his audience. Spencer, tactfully points out the absence of logic and reason in the media's coverage to further build the logos and ethos of his arguments and definition of the media as the outgroup. The lack of logos in the media builds the argument for Spencer. This is of meaningful as it exemplifies the use of logos to weaken the opponent and not to directly build the position or argument for the orator.

> "The hysteria surrounding his election doesn't show that he is extreme but it shows how unhinged the press and chattering classes have become. We are told of the massive rush of hate crimes against non-whites by evil racists emboldened by Trump's victory. Amazingly these crimes have never been captured on video. That violence which does exist, that violence which does exist, seems to consist of direct physical attacks against Trump supporters." (24:17)

Spencer continues to tap into the distrust of media representation, there is some basis for skepticism of presentation with considerations to ideologically biased perspectives and reporting with the public's degrading trust in media. Media distrust and biased presentation may play a large role in the feeling towards mainstream media. The underlying theme is the lack of evidence based news stories on the claim of hate crimes. This logos argument asks 'where is the evidence?' The scientific literature is clear on bias and cognitive dissonance, meaning this bias works both ways. There may be evidence contrary to what Spencer is claiming but the bias may be affecting the audience behavior in recognizing it.

Additionally, Spencer cites viral videos of Antifa and far left groups attacking Trump supporters, seemingly peaceful bystanders. The audience is presented with allegations of white hate crimes but lacks evidence of the crimes, while simultaneously turning the audience's attention to videos of left wing attacks on Trump supporters, further damaging the credibility of the media and their

biased presentation of crime, specifically political violence. Spencer attaches this far left attack on moderate Trump supporters as the media defending the attacks on whites. This implicit association is logical: there is no evidence of the white crime but evidence of whites being attacked. Logos is building ethos in this case.

> "And even when this is captured on video CNN political commentators and the former press secretary for Bernie Sanders can smirk "oh my goodness poor white people". (24:57)

Spencer is further sowing distrust of the media by exposing a potential bias by media talking heads who have a political position opposite trump. This additionally may effectively translate into the distrust of media in general, and a major theme of this speech is the "lying press" filled with biased people who misrepresent the facts and only present content that fit their ideology. There is truth to this argument of media bias and misrepresentation. Spencer knows this is a sore subject for many people regardless of ideology, and for this reason attaching the mistrust to the AltRight message is skillful. Take an aspect of truth and attach it to the product, in order to sell it better.

> "What we see is that the liberal hegemony that govern society will not permit any reform, even the kinds of moderate reforms that could salvage the whole system. The undercurrents of almost all press coverage in the days since Trump ascendancy is that white people should not be permitted to vote." (25:10)

This is an interesting turn of events, mentioning the absurdity of the press, their dominance and hegemonic power over information and how they are lying, manipulating, misrepresenting events and implying giddiness over violence of whites making the claim that whites should not be permitted to vote. This is a huge leap of faith the audience has to make without evidence. This imagery and

fear claim is heavy and substantial. The ethos and logos Spencer has built, as well as the pathos, over the course of the speech carries him through this baseless claim.

4.1.2   Morality redefined

Spencer proceeds to define the outgroup on a deeper, fundamental level in terms of morality or rather the perversion of morality by the outgroup. Spencer describes the new normal as defined by degenerates and propagandists, and calls into the question the character of those who are defining the new normal. In a cadence and rhythm he delivers the answer to "what is the new normal?" in a rhetorical style that begins with outlining a series of illogical absurdities that characterize the outgroup.

> "In a culture which offers video games, endless entertainment, drugs, alcohol, porn, sports, and a thousand other meaningless distractions to convince us of another reality, we want to cut all of that away." (5:45)

Interesting point here to morality and the reference to rejecting vices and social ills; concepts that the mainstream implore one to consume. Distractions that distract from the 'truth' is what is implied. He is calling the AltRight and white Americans to rise above this kind of filth. This brings in another thought about Spencer's previous reference as being a cultural Christian according to how he would follow religious norms in so far as, it is a cohesive property that binds people together under a common set of ideals and beliefs, rather than any real conviction of faith.

> "Worn out celebrities like Madonna, who have based their entire lives on transforming themselves into clumsy symbols of sex and materialism claim to be offended by the indecency of Donald Trump." (8:07)

Immoral symbols of sex and materialism are used to highlight hypocrisy and prime sexual disgust. He builds his case with an extreme example with Madonna's career being built on sex and materialism, and as a public figure who has expressed hypocritical disdain for Trump's immoral behavior. This case is a strong logos argument that makes comparisons and establishes conflicting moral consistency that reinforces the characterization made previously of the outgroup being hypocrites, counterfeit and inconsistent.

> "Journalists don't fight for free speech but lead the charge to restrict it."
> (8:23)

> "In the current year, the state wars against the nation, rather than protecting it. And what is the state of the world? What is the status quo that our normal President Barack Hussein Obama, the community organizer from Chicago, is now shilling for in his latest foreign tour?"
> (8:30)

Spencer is highlighting Obama as nothing more than a community organizer, delegitimizing his role as president relegating him to a puppet. The word "shilling" is a fairly new pejorative term that refers to being "sold out" or representing moneyed interests, over those of the governed populace. This "shilling" is meant to represent the leadership and direction the outgroup has, with dishonest and untrustworthy leaders who "sell out" for the status quo, keeping progress stalled.

Moreover, this is a logos argument, with the implication that the "normal" state of affairs is that of the President's highest position being community organizer. This is a part of a bigger discussion of criticism that Obama faced when running for office, his lack of experience. Placing the emphasis on weak experience, community organizing as the highest level of authority, and his possible foreign ethnicity, by mentioning Obama "Hussein" the middle name with the

implications and connotations to Islam, is a persuasive argument to the audience. Obama's accomplished academic career is overlooked in this case. The two biggest criticisms Obama faced in office were his lack of experience and alleged foreign nationality, popularly known as the "birther controversy", advocated heavily by Donald Trump coincidentally, and his alleged ties to Islam and Islamic fundamentalism. All of these emotions are evoked and rediscovered in this excerpt.

Spencer is making logos comparisons to a normal background, the background of a president that the media held was "normal" and contrasts it to what the media now thinks is abnormal regarding Trump. For the audience this is a strong case that resonates. It is an audience to whom he is reminding of the fear that was the 'Foreign-born, closet Islamic extremist Obama.' Pathos and logos are working in sync with lack of credible authority by outgroup leadership.

> "Let's look at what the government does: the bulk of the threats we face especially the Islamic state or Muslim terrorists operate, operating within our own societies, have been enabled by our own governments if not quite invented by them." (8:53)

Now the audience has a better indication as to why Spencer primed Obama's middle name, in order to focus the delivery of reminders of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism in the Middle East and abroad. Spencer articulates that most of the threats that "we" face, "especially" Muslims are "among us" is an emotional appeal to fear. He is painting a picture of terrorists for the audience, not a foreign land but here, in the US. Spencer is utilizing fear and instructing the audience to fear.

Terrorists "enabled by our own government" could be the reference to the arming of the Taliban in Afghanistan in the 1980s proxy war with Russia. Alternatively, this may imply the arms and weapons provided to rebels in Syria

and weapons given to the Kurds. The third possibility could point to the implication of weapons falling into the hands of ISIS soldiers or the indiscriminate drone bombing where civilians are killed and those civilians within the bombed community radicalize out of vengeance. These are criticisms made by many Americans who are unsympathetic to an aggressive American foreign policy dating back before the Gulf War, indifferent of ideology or perspective. Spencer may be implying that invasion of foreign lands create terrorists against perceived invaders. No proof is given to this claim. Pathos is the driving force of fear by the implication of Muslim terrorists operating within American societies.

4.1.3   Anti-War Sentiment

"Massive armies, huge navies, terrifying weapons which could destroy the whole world over and are subsidized at ruinous cost, are actually used to further policies which make all of us less safe." (9:12)

Spencer builds logos here that the US is spending big money on arms and weapons and military, which is fact-based, but adds that these policies make Americans less safe since they motivate terrorists. Essentially, the use of these armies and military inspire terrorists. Interestingly, here is the antiwar side of Spencer and the AltRight ideology emerging within a mainstream belief criticism of foreign policy, overlapping with the progressive Left. The antiwar perspective is well developed and argued, as it is consistent with mainstream liberal arguments during the Bush-Iraq years. These antiwar arguments are made by critics from across ideologies and regularly cite how the US taxpayer is expected to provide for global military upkeep.

"and Europe defended by American armies, refugees who commit horrific crimes are set free but citizens who criticize them are arrested." (9:28)

Citations are not given for this argumentation but the credibility is consistently shown, this is a real fear. Where the wrongdoing of refugees are not prioritized or reported on, or if there may be factual evidence of this, either way, this is believed by the audience due to Spencer establishing that the media is biased, full of lies, and protects leftist ideology rather than report facts that unfavorably contradict narratives. This highlights the narrative theme of media hypocrisy and lies told by the media.

The logos of media untrustworthiness has clearly been established. The American armies are the ones who are defending Europe, according to the audience. Additionally, this has a logos argumentation when one looks closely at NATO and the total number of U.S. military installations in Europe. Spencer has particularly well developed and well-reasoned antiwar themes.

> "Meanwhile at home the protection of the borders the primary and for some the only national security responsibilities the government, is ignored." (9:40)

The claim of US armies and money invested Europe at the expense of the states is heavily nationalistic. This is the classical nationalist logos argument coming out. The criticism of military expenditure in foreign lands while 'our people are suffering' is a familiar narrative. Spencer makes parallels to European refugees and illegal aliens, bringing the audience along enough to fill in the gaps. Logical argument as presented here with pathos, identity building elements.

> "Indeed, Western governments go out of their way to seek out the most dysfunctional immigrants possible and relocate them at taxpayer expense." (9:51)

This may be true that refugees are relocated at taxpayer expense, but the implication that they go out of their way to find dysfunctional immigrants implies nefarious intent. More importantly, the idea of nefarious intent builds on the notion that the press and government is actively lying to the people. It creates and idea that there is a plan to undermine western civilization, white communities to be exact, and provide generous support to non-whites. The logos argument claim that the outgroup is sick and disgusting enough to knowingly relocate the worst of dysfunctional immigrants is constant throughout the speech.

Spencer walks the audience thorough the process of identifying the outgroup as degenerate and neurotics, while actively destroying white communities would be a logical step for the outgroup. This is angered displayed working: foreign intervention first with war, then with the relocation of refugees at the audience's expense. The next step is meant to be 'you did not vote for this,' and represents a lack of control for what happens in the imagined communities for the ingroup. This is mixed with a pathos argument where Spencer is priming the audience and flirting with the idea of hopelessness for the ingroup.

> "The non-government organizations who support this colonization effort
> are given huge amounts of money to make their own communities
> worse." (10:02)

He mentions colonization, implying there is a concerted effort underway to take over land and take control. The resettlement of large amounts of refugees is seen as colonization and something to be feared for the audience. This is the threat of extinction to the white community, its implications are similar to the heritage protections of minorities. While the outgroup is presented as destroying their own communities, the audience is informed that white communities willingly "cuck themselves" in this regard. In this frame, the logical argument is present by showing just how absurd it is to make one's own community worse. The question is implied: Who would do that? Spencer is

defining the outgroup that is unhinged, unstable, and unrelenting in their quest of white community destruction.

4.1.4   In the current year, what is normal?

> "This of course begs a question what is normal in 2016? In the current year late-night comedians don't tell jokes but give us lectures on what should never be laughed at." (7:50)

Interestingly Spencer claims late night TV hosts, as they are perceived as left leaning, frequently build the show around Trump jokes, ridicule and mocking of political positions, specifically conservative ones. Spencer is building credibility with the audience as late night hosts represent a unified ideological group, consisting of straight, white men, with non-diverse background ironically.

This excerpt is appealing to reason; it is the logos argument. "They are trying to make sure Trump is not normalized," he is responding by asking "what is normal?" This is the first note of the cadence that Spencer will use, by answering the question of "what is normal?" He argues society is desensitized to political discourse that was previously out of place on entertainment talk shows, and that Americans expect increasing focusing on political content. Spencer argues that Americans are desensitized to a format by which comedians advocate and shape political discourse. Spencer believes Americans look to this media as an authority informational source, to the detriment of the ingroup.

Spencer has a strong case for the political heavy formatting of late night but, unsurprisingly, does not criticize the lack of racial diversity of hosts.

"Is this normal? With the founding fathers, who created the American ideals we hear so much about, think this is OK?" (10:12)

"And let's look at the culture: in the current year one's career can be ruined and one's life destroyed, if you express anything other than admiration for a man who wants to cut off his genitals and say he's a woman." (10:25)

This is logos performing perfectly in how gender reassignment is presented as genital mutilation. Additionally, irony and sarcasm are elements of delivery at work, in a classic AltRight style. This introduces the unnatural position of masculinity, as the AltRight have a more traditional ideal of male masculinity in addition to traditional, conservative understanding of gender and sex.

To the audience this is the absurdity that is being pushed by neurotic people who hate Trump, hate whites, and hate 'us,' and destroy white communities. The audience is told to not just consider what the outgroup is saying, but what the outgroup does to themselves, to consider the degenerate source of the information. This level of disgust dives deeper into sexual disgust. Interestingly, as noted earlier, sexual disgust is an even bigger predictor of right wing view than pathogen avoidance. (Bellingsley et al., 2018) Sexual disgust is tied to traditional masculinity in the AltRight, based on the sheer volume of the word usage of "cuck."

This is a pathos argument as well, playing on the emotional security and threat to masculinity and sexual disgust which trigger a response of revulsion and aversion for the ingroup. This presentation of transgender community destabilizes the ingroup worldview where masculinity is narrow and established in a binary historically traditional sense.

> "In the current year a white who takes pride in his ancestors accomplishments is evil but a white who refuses to accept guilt for his ancestors sins is also evil, maybe even more so." (10:58)

This is the first time in the speech race relations are mentioned. Logos and pathos are operating here, where identity has falsely been built on guilt. Rather, Spencer speaks to rid his audience of this yoke as he claims that whites should be proud of being who they are. This argument is centered on heritage. This poses a question to heritage for all, and cultural identity for all people. It is important to note this part of the speech received major applause from the audience.

> "In the current year white families work their whole lives to send their children to universities where they will be told just how despicable they are." (11:17)

Here, Spencer is referencing popular campus culture and social justice activists. Spencer implies a white student attends university to be mocked due to their white heritage and white identity. Viral videos of activists and protest tactics on campus provide logos proof to this claim for the audience. The socioeconomic undertones connected to higher education costs go largely unmentioned. This speaks volumes about how the AltRight sees themselves; the AltRight are individuals who attend university, denoting financial means.

> "In the current year, a wealthy Jewish celebrity bragging about the end of white men is the one speaking truth to power." (11:34)

Another argument centered on hypocrisy of the media is made. Spencer mocks the absurdity of the media being so disconnected from reality and mentally inept. This is the first time Jews are mentioned, specifically.

Logos and pathos are used to build this argument. Overall, the voice or perspective in which Spencer presents his argument is Menippean in nature. This Menippean voice is pessimistic, overwhelmed by the problems of the world. This voice is framed by the cadence of "in the current year." Again, Spencer draws on relevant, current issues that are fresh in the minds of the ingroup audience. By pointing out all of the absurdity that exist within the current time period, Spencer magnifies and multiplies them while creating a sense of urgency.

> "In the current year, if you are physically strong you are fragile. Black is beautiful but whiteness is toxic. Government doesn't stop crime but subsidizes it. White privilege is very real but race is just a social construct and if facts are too disturbing you can always retreat into the safe space of box juice, teddy bears, and endless empathy where reality doesn't have to matter anymore." (11:43)

Logos is strong in this cadence, white privilege in a time where race is a social construct represents an outgroup that is inconsistent and hypocritical. The logical argument is present and the opponents are labeled as hypocrites. Now one can see the heart of the ingroup tone. The reference to campus safe spaces, and the lack of emotional resilience shown by university students in conflict is used to mocking effect.

Pathos is strong where "white is toxic", parallels are made and various rhetorical devices are used at once. Mocking campus culture of safe spaces are highlighted and students who are characterized as having emotional instability are mocked, with the association of psychological instability. Many of these ideas of criticism or ridicule towards campus behavior are not strictly prohibited to the AltRight or even rightwing discourse, but are incorporated or charged into the whiteness angle by the AltRight. The AltRight, and Richard Spencer, are not the only entities to mock social justice outgroups, just as it is not solely social justice outgroups who mock AltRight members. Regardless,

citing campus safe spaces, teddy bears and empathy serves to demean the perceived infantilization of students in university.

4.1.5   Disgust

> "Today, neurotics and degenerates are presented to us as heroes. Beauty is openly denigrated as an offence against equality and we are ruled by a government which, despite confiscating an outrageous amount of wealth, can't fulfill its basic responsibilities defending a people and a territory." (12:13)

"Neurotics and degenerates" are referred to as the outgroup, the outgroups who hold hegemonic power within the political sphere and exert significant influence in the media. Whiteness is referred to as beauty and the entire source of why the outgroup is offended. Spencer implies the basis of the white existence is offensive to the outgroup, which translates to an active outgroup dedicated to negative and threatening behavior for the ingroup.

This racial element is coupled with a non-controversial criticism of government taxation and spending management. The pathos framing of whiteness as an offense is tactfully attached to a logos claim of poor administration of government responsibilities, with nationalist undertones. This excerpt is a great example of how Spencer presents two arguments, one being a common trope towards government mismanagement and high taxation, while in the same breath introducing a racial element. It is a tactic used through the speech.

> "But the premade signs of those leading the protest against Trump, probably some of those outside this very building, come from some of the most extreme communist groups in the country, the most murderous

ideological force in history. It feels almost embarrassing to make this argument because we know no one will take it seriously." (12:48)

The continued use of "we" in delineating outside foes is consistent. Logos is pronounced here, coupled with the implication that people fail to accept historical record and objective realities where communism has failed. Additionally, there is an immediate and present threat cited to the audience that, "outside of this very building" implying there waits a host of extreme communists who seek to harm the ingroup. This is identity building if nothing else in this speech is. Spencer cites protestors outside of the building, the same outgroup that violence has already been referenced and ascribed.

"We need to remind ourselves of these things, none of this is natural. None of this is normal. This is sick, disgusting. This is a sick-disgusting society run by the corrupt, defended by hysterics drunk on self-hatred and degeneracy." (13:27)

Interesting use of degenerates here, and "sick", producing the imagery of poor moral values of people and their obsession with material possessions, operating on greed and power motivated to criticize their racial identity. Materialism and the obsession to deny one's heritage, background, ancestors, and enslavement of people is a major highpoint in the speech for the audience. Spencer is producing imagery that persuades the audience that these "degenerates" have poor moral character, no ethos and lack the moral authority to criticize anything.

This ethos argument is similarly logical as the "degenerate" ideals advocated by the "new normal" that are sick-disgusting are not normal. Spencer is dehumanizing those who are reprehensible to the outgroup. Pathos arguments with the emotion disgust is robust. "Sick-disgusting" ideals are presented as

running counter to all the things that are good, moral and upstanding for the audience, it is the logical pillar of this argument.

"Degeneracy…sick…disgusting." This is an important aspect of language to look for. The use of natural/unnatural argument may be a synonym for normal/not normal but it may be representative of a deeper nuanced meaning of what natural is. The audience views the outgroup as people who hate themselves, hate their whiteness, willing to destroy themselves. This position in the speech is strong and further builds the group identity, as the outgroup is seen not only as the enemy, but an enemy with internal rot, sick-disgusting conditions. Spencer has rationalized just how illogical the outgroup is, how materialist and depraved they are hits a vein with his audience, as the applause is raucous.

> "Contrast this to Hillary Clinton's poll tested "Stronger Together", what does that even mean? Her coalition was made up of mutually hostile tribes only united out of a hatred of whitey, that is to say out of a hatred of us." (18:45)

> "Contrast that to the Hillary constituency: the black political machines and the guilt-ridden liberal suburbanites who work their entire lives to move away from them; the left-wing activists who think they are fighting the system by working for the federal government; the multinational CEOs and the Latinos they've imported to clean their houses. "Stronger Together": there are no two parts of this coalition who could ever be in the same room together for any length of time." (20:20)

"Hatred of whitey," the racial characterization of the outgroup is a demeaning representation. The reference to Hillary's less than cohesive political coalition is a valid observation. Primarily, this is a logos argument of unwilling participants who are bound together with Hillary under their collective hatred for ingroup

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whites. Spencer is mocking the hypocrisy and absurdity of those involved, literally comparing and contrasting this against the Trump support base.

> "Sjw's always project and the American left is driven by anti-white hatred, full stop. It has no other goals, no real aspirations, nothing to look to. It is a nullity and we have nothing in common with these people." (26:57)

Group identity is on display as Spencer places the liberal locus as positioned against whites. He sees the political positions reduced to identity politics, he may be correct in interpreting the "social justice warriors" as an identity movement but Spencer wants identity politics too: white identity politics. He wants social justice activists as opponents, as his ideology is based on group identity and groups must compete. White Altright group identity only works as positioned against other movements, especially identity movement, where race is the basis of membership. Spencer may assert that this is unfavorable, the anti-white sentiment, but this is necessary for the AltRight to exist.

> "Think of the concepts that are now designated problematic and associated with whiteness: power, strength, beauty, agency, accomplishment." (27:40)

Spencer argues that the outgroups are jealous, essentially. He is arguing for a logical deconstruction of whiteness that the outgroup is envious of, while providing encouragement to the audience of the values ascribed to them, i.e. power, strength, beauty. He articulates to the audience that out groups hate ingroup identity, simultaneously assigning the concepts of power, strength, beauty, agency and accomplishment to the ingroup.

4.2   Defining the Ingroup

4.2.1   Use of We, in context to Donald Trump

> "I don't think I'm alone (we)in thinking how surreal all this is. Of course those of us in the alt-right always took president elect Donald Trump and his chances seriously. Unlike everyone else we weren't surprised or at least not that surprised. We knew he could win. many of us thought all along that he could win." (2:05)

> "This was the year when random shitlords on Twitter, anonymous podcast host, and dissidents working deep within the Beltway Right proved that they objectively understood politics better than the Republican strategist and political consultants snarking at us every night on MSNBC." (2:51)

The term "shitlords" is a reference to internet slang, trolling culture; users who 'shitpost' online in order to antagonize and provoke by using ironic memes with hostile language, politically incorrect terminology or racist language. Shitlords are not considered inherently racist but more of an indication of the nature of a provocateur without boundary.

Spencer uses "us" as an avenue to highlight the ingroup; defining the ingroup may occasionally connect to referencing the outgroup. The use of the term "snarking" is meant to point out the alleged ridicule to the ingroup by mainstream strategists. This represents the underground nature of rhetoric happening independently of the mainstream that serves inclusive and exclusive language, strengthening "we" by associating the mainstream strategists as disconnected. Spencer may be indicating what popular culture has been referencing: that political discourse has become so tightly regulated that it has moved outside of the public space, to an underground space where open

discourse is allowed and no issue is off limits, including criticism of highly controversial topics. This negative reference to authority and the charge of lack of credibility to the status quo authority is the delivery that logically solidifies the ingroup esteem. Spencer implies that the ingroup knew better about the political atmosphere than the pundits and consultants who "snarked." This is a prime example of the concepts of "submerged networks" (Melucci 1989, Mueler 1994) and "free spaces" (Evans and Boyte 1986) that are used to describe institutions removed from physical and ideological control of those in power to foster and grow counter hegemonic ideas. Multiple forms of new media are recognized as the submerged networks where these ideas were fostered, i.e. Twitter, podcasts, 4Chan, etc.

"But even though we always took Trump seriously." (3:45)

This particular use of "we" is exclusory with reference to Trump and the strong verbal and emotional emphasis on this word. Structurally, Spencer begins the speech by characterizes "them" followed by the emphasis of "we." Spencer uses "we" in a context that outlines the ingroup always knew Trump would win. The ingroup predicting Trump winning tightens the favorable group comparison, by which the ingroup knew the outcome compared to the disconnected outgroups who never took Trump seriously.

> "It was that moment when we knew Keke had smiled upon us and that magic was real." (4:08)

Internet slang, terminology, with the use of Keke as a trolling word is exclusory and denotes a specific and nuanced understanding of new media. Magic is referred to as meme magic, as the use of Keke precedes it. This is immensely important, as references to memes and Internet subculture are powerful to the ingroup. This is ethos building, group building, and identity building. The use of memes and constant references represent the underground nature of the movement, the "submerged networks" (Melucci 1989, Mueler 1994) and "free

spaces" (Evans and Boyte 1986). To understand the movement and their goals, ideology, and operational mobility, Internet subculture needs to be understood fully as it is a main tool, if not the only one.

> "We willed Donald Trump into office; we made this dream our reality."
> (4:35)

The explicit use of "we" and the notion of creating one's own reality further builds the group identity and provides a direction for ingroup behavior. This is meant to see the vision of the imagined community come to life. The implication is: "we" did this and "we" made it happen, providing the audience with accomplishment and encouragement. Building the grand identity of a powerful but marginalized AltRight is successfully delivered to the ingroup through "we made this dream our reality." Spencer is attaching the AltRight brand to Trump's victory, and success against perceived great odds.

> "And if we will it, it is no dream. A quote I'm sure our friends at the anti-defamation league know very well and this Trumpian dream was only the beginning." (4:45)

The reference to the quote "And if we will it, it is no dream" may be a subtle ridicule to the Anti-Defamation League by implying some aspect of Jewish influence. In this context, the quote is attributed to Theodore Herzl author of *Old New Land*, who promoted the establishment of a Jewish state and is considered the leading founder of the Jewish State. This subtle racist connotation is meant for the ingroup, as Spencer invites the ingroup to the joke while ironically quoting a Jewish author.

4.2.2   Imagined Ideals of the White community

"In a culture which offers video games, endless entertainment, drugs, alcohol, porn, sports, and a thousand other meaningless distractions to convince us of another reality, we want to cut all of that away." (5:45)

Spencer delivers an interesting point to morality by rejecting vices and social ills; alleged distractions that the mainstream culture want the ingroup to consume. This positions the ingroup as an entity under attack, with the threat of undermining awareness as constant. The introduction of morality boundaries to the ingroup are connected to rejecting consumerist culture that distract from the implied 'truth.' The implied truth is understood as the white ethnostate.

Spencer is calling the ingroup to rise above 'filth' that is produced to pacify and distract the ingroup from achieving their goals, intentionally compromising their ideals and values. He builds the ethos by explicitly declaring "we want to cut all of that away," which is a directive to reject these distractions as a cohesive group decision; he is taking charge of the direction of morality and ingroup directional values and outlook. This represents prime stereotypical ingroup behavior as it is recognized, further giving credibility to Spencer as a speaker and a leader to the ingroup.

"We demand to live in the world that we imagine." (6:03)

The ingroup wants their imagined communities realized. This ethnostate is the imagined community realized by the ingroup. More specifically, this ethnostate is exclusive in its ideology, as not all whites share the ingroup AltRight values and identity outlook. This language, imagination and mobilization are that of most postmodern identity movements like feminists, civil rights, gender, etc. The repeated conceptual use of dreams harkens to Martin Luther King Jr. It may be a conscious way to repurpose a popular narrative theme most are already familiar. Spencer straightforwardly builds the ethos of the ingroup by

vocalizing the direction of the group and paying credence to demands of the realized imagined community.

> "But on another level- What we want is something normal, something almost prosaic, maybe even boring." (15:05)

After dismantling the current state of normal, as defined by the outgroup, Spencer defines the ingroup's interpretational normal as something boring. Again, the duality reference to normal and abnormal, natural and unnatural, "in the current year," where "men are cutting their genitals off", the ingroup want a classic boring life as understood by the nuclear family, community involvement, lack of consumerist culture, etc. Structurally, Spencer draws the portrait of abnormal, dictated as normal, by the outgroup in the speech but follows this by favorably drawing the picture of normal, the ideal as defined by the ingroup. This normal is that of a homogeneous community without genital mutilation. This is the downward social comparison explicitly detailed in Social Identity Theory, framing the groups in such a way as to create a favorable comparison. The imagined ideal community is a homogeneous white community with shared values and meaning.

> "Why is something as simple as starting a family, owning a home, and leaving a legacy to your children seen as an almost impossible dream for so many Americans? Why must there be two incomes for a family to simply break even? Why is it impossible to build a real civic society because the whim of a federal bureaucrat or a social justice warrior can impose section 8 housing, refugee resettlement or some other population transfer scheme deliberately designed to break apart functional white communities." (15:20)

Now Spencer illustrates the whiteness, identity, and victimization of the threat to otherwise peaceful and aspiring ingroup whites, with goals of only

prosperity and happiness ruined by outgroup immigrants and Section 8 housing advocated by "social justice warriors," Section 8 housing is the subsidized housing provided by the government for individuals who qualify as low income. This use of "we" is more indirectly applied through the use of "white communities" and it corresponds to deliberate destruction. The advancement of outgroup resources comes at the cost of ingroup resources, outlined in Realistic Conflict Theory in a zero sum understanding of finite resources.

There is the logos argument in the rather, not so radical idea of socio-economic criticism of income and families that work to make ends meet. This is also the intrinsic ethos application of struggle and hard work; the things that are hard that society have to do together that previous generations did not do. It is implied that this is a time where one income would be enough for families to live on, where the father would go to work and the mother would stay home and care for the children and rear them; a classical and traditional perspective of clear gender roles and economic division. In this sense, this is a call to the traditional understanding of the nuclear family, traditional gender roles and to a time where things were much simpler, coincidentally, lacking much racial integration, circa 1950-60s. But this call to the economic state of struggle that varying ideologies share, is then tail ended with the intentional destruction of white communities. Spencer takes this economic income criticism that is not uncommonly held, arguably, and attaches intentional ingroup race discrimination. This is a prime example of how Spencer weaves popular criticism with a highly contested white supremacist perspective. The ingroup communication is delivered as not a byproduct of multicultural environment but as an intentional colonization of ingroup space. This is identity building and naming of the opponent, while acknowledging destruction of ingroup space.

"Despite these supposedly egalitarian values, America was until this
past generation a white country designed for ourselves, and our
posterity. It is our creation it is our inheritance and it belongs to us."
(21:41)

Spencer has been building ingroup credibility and reliability throughout the
speech, by outlining the threats to the ingroup by outgroup stress,
marginalization of the ingroup, and discrimination toward the ingroup. At this
point, Spencer now builds ingroup esteem by speaking directly to white
ingroup ownership of the political sphere "America" i.e. "it is our creation...it
belongs to us." This is a transitional piece of the speech that marks a turning
point, where defining ingroup status and building the case against the
outgroup somewhat halts, in favor of directly building ingroup esteem by
outlining goals, merits and appeal. More specifically, Spencer boldly begins a
narrative more in line with white ingroup aspects of social progress. Logos,
pathos, and the intrinsic ethos are all utilized simultaneously.

4.2.3 Morality

"What we are fighting for is a new normal, a moral consensus that we
insist upon and Donald Trump is a step forward, a step towards this new
normal but even he is deeply compromised by our society." (23:10)

Redefining 'natural' and 'normal' morality is a major theme, as it is the
counterpart to the unnatural and abnormal behavior designated towards the
outgroup. Spencer places Trump as a starting point toward this new "moral
consensus" while also expressing doubt as to how far he can represent the
ingroup values and behavior. This is the first time in the speech Spencer
expresses doubt to the Trumpian dream the ingroup has attached themselves.
This builds credibility from the ingroup, as the AltRight attached themselves to
Trump for as long as he was useful to build their movement.

"You can imagine hypothetically some situation where a president Trump or whoever slaps some ramshackle America together as it limps along for a few decades. Where the boot is lifted off the neck of white America just long enough to keep the whole thing going. Yet the left can't permit even that. Natural conservation, workers' rights, income inequality, mass transit, whatever stated values the left supports have been thrown out in order to pursue a remarkably crude and simplistic anti-white hatred that is behind it all. And even more than during the election itself the mask has been ripped off since November 8th." (26:06)

Spencer's stylistic rhetorical strategy works by combining common criticism in the form of natural conservation, workers' rights, income inequality, mass transit, and weaves them into anti-white hatred. Logos, from the ingroup perspective, works to give strong argumentative authority to measurable economic criticism that is popularly held but combining racial ingroup discrimination as the natural explanation.

"SJWs always project and the American left is driven by anti-white hatred, full stop. It has no other goals, no real aspirations, nothing to look to. It is a nullity and we have nothing in common with these people." (26:57)

Group identity is on display, fostering a favorable comparison to the outgroup bent on anti-white hatred. Spencer sets the liberal social justice positions as a prominent outgroup enemy set against the ingroup, defining the opponent clearly as a successful identity movement strategy outlined by Polleta and Jasper. Additionally, he sees the political positions reduced to hostile identity politics in a zero sum scenario, as read in Realistic Conflict Theory. Although Spencer criticizes the identity politics of the pejorative social justice warriors, he simultaneously and contradictorily advocates ingroup identity politics. Ingroup cohesion is dependent on this relationship, as ideology is conceptualized as

group identity. White AltRight ingroup identity effectively works as a position against identity movements by which racial awareness is the central tenant/concept and by extension, self-esteem. He may assert that the 'American left' has no real aspirations but the anti-white sentiment, but ingroup identity is dependent on this assertion.

4.2.4 Classical Colonial

> "To be white is to be a striver, a crusader, and explorer and a conqueror. We build, we produce, we go upward, and we recognize a central lie of American race relations. We don't exploit other groups we don't gain anything from their presence they need us and not the other way around." (28:05)

The repetitive use of "we" is a powerful rhetorical strategy and communicates a strong message of reassurance to the ingroup audience that they are important, that they are powerful, and they matter. Additionally, the speaker includes himself in the audience by utilizing this pronoun; Spencer is building the ethos. The focus is on three words: "they need us." These three words are revealing about the state of the ingroup, according to Spencer's worldview.

From a structural overview of the speech, threats to the ingroup have been named, fear and intimidation have been recognized, and the doubt has been introduced only to be dispelled by narration of a classical white American image as the perceived antidote. The speech has been organized according to problem-solution, a binary system of belief: natural/unnatural, normal/abnormal, resist/cuck. Spencer is encouraging a mentally defeated and discouraged ingroup at this moment. He is appealing to both the radical racists and the working class whites who are poverty stricken or unhappy with their status and perceived lack of agency. He appeals to both groups with rhetorical logos and pathos.

The imagery associated with a striver, a crusader, explorer and conqueror are romantically colonial. This historical romanticism of imagery is a source of inspiration to Spencer and the ingroup, as these are stereotypical ideals that exist in contrast to outgroup acceptance. The period of European colonization exemplify competition over land when Europe was arguably at the height of technological advancement, and exploration was a concept that was both exciting and uncertain while empowering. This imagery is powerful and calls on cultural identity and ancestry, depending on singular racial achievement. It is an effective rhetorical tool for motivating a sense of idealism in the imagination for the ingroup, framing historical record as unfavorable and shameful period of history read by the outgroup(s). Spencer paints a picture of the 'white man' exploring new lands and taking and doing what they wish. He provides a necessary imaginary inspiration in the midst of outlining a series of outgroup attacks against the ingroup audience. Spencer is outlining the hate towards the audience and immediately providing emotional and inspirational relief. This is psychologically demanding, as shame is highlighted followed by stimulating encouragement. This blueprint of duality is outlined thoroughly in Social Identity Theory as the cognitive process by which groups and individuals achieve self-esteem.

> "Whiteness or rather, identity, is being forced on the deracinated consumerist last man that is European America. No one is going to be permitted to escape this process. Great historical changes are imminent when people are forced into a binary choice flight or flee, join or die, resist or cuck." (28:35)

Spencer explicitly reveals his binary perspective. This binary perspective is most easily seen through Realistic Conflict Theory, where there are losers and winner with finite resources in zero sum scenarios. Recognition of identity and corresponding conflict is forced on ingroup(s) by outgroups, according to the

ingroup mentality; if race becomes a central tenet to identity, then all groups must recognize race as meaningful and a central piece of identity self-esteem. According to Social Identity Theory, if groups begin to regulate their self-esteem according to race, positive racial perspectives and comparison will inevitably emerge, locating an arena where conflict will arise. Again, Spencer may claim to disdain this strategy by outgroups, he motivates and organizes by this same strategy.

> "That is the position of white people right now. Two weeks ago I might have said the election of Donald Trump would actually lessen the pressure on white Americans but today it is clear his election is only intensifying the storm of hatred and hysteria being directed against us." (29:20)

> "As Europeans, we are uniquely at the center of history." (29:41)

Spencer is further calling on the European imagery, and classical colonial romanticism separating from the ideal of America and the melting pot, in favor of a singular racial perspective crediting European and American progress exclusively to white identity groups. Older European imagery is steadily increasing and intensifying, all but replacing an American image while building the ingroup pathos and logos at a critical, structural juncture in the speech.

> "We are, as Hegel recognized, the embodiment of world history itself. No one will honor us for losing gracefully, no one mourns the great crimes committed against us, for us it is conquer or die." (29:46)

Binary choices, further illustrating duality and zero sum scenarios are a fundamental support this speech rests on. Ingroup emotional appeal and the grim presentation and framing of the white dilemma in current American social conflict, is stereotypical behavior and rhetoric from the ingroup, which serves to

build Spencer's credibility as a thought leader for the ingroup. Even more, this is a call to strength; perceived weakness only hinders ingroup achievement and self-esteem. Spencer calls for the ingroup members to harden themselves, strength is the basic logos and ethos tone that is presented. The audience perspective is the focus of this narrative. Spencer is mobilizing the ingroup to frame their perspectives in a binary, zero sum avenue appealing to logos.

> "That is the great struggle we are called to. We are not meant to live in shame and weakness and disgrace. We were not meant to beg for moral validation from some of the most despicable creatures to ever populate the planet. We were meant to overcome. Overcome all of it because that is natural and normal for us because for us as Europeans it is only normal again when we are great again." (30:31)

Spencer has been slowly introducing the ingroup to the notion of a European identity, creating this imagery and forming a historical or heritage argument. These are pathos claims meant to inspire and give credence to the ingroup audience member who can place their social woes and obstacles at the feet of multiculturalism and the relegation of white social status. He is citing the colonist, the explorer traveling to distant lands. Additionally, Spencer is citing strength, by not "living in shame and weakness and disgrace." This strength argument is meant to harden the audience, to motivate them. Possibly to harden them against using their faculties to deconstruct the argument that is presented, but mainly to hold them solidly against outgroup criticism they will undoubtedly face, with the critics seen as weak, disgusting, social justice warriors. His use of "despicable" and implied disgust is meant to neutralize the arguments the outgroup will give, as disgust is a highly volatile persuasive tool. In this regard, Spencer is inspirational for the ingroup and playing to his audience in a way that he has prepared perfectly. He knows his audience thoroughly, more accurately than anyone else, including outgroup critics. Furthermore, Spencer knows this speech will be seen by others outside of his

core audience of ingroup members, so there exists some widespread appeal that is moderating his articulation.

4.2.5   In the Current Year

> "In the current year white families work their whole lives to send their children to universities where they will be told just how despicable they are." (11:17)

Spencer references popular campus culture where social justice discourse and protest is prevalent in media circulation. Spencer is keying in on the nuclear family dynamic of value systems that place a university degree as meaningful but expensive for working class families. This is a specific line for a specific group that may or may not be the current ingroup. Spencer is drawing on popular viral videos online of activists and their tactics on campus in order to make this claim logical to the current ingroup and prospective ingroup members, fundamentally priming pathos.

> "We invade the world and fanatically invite entire populations who despise us. We subsidize people and institutions who make our lives worse just by the sheer fact of their existence. We run up deficits and pretend the laws of history simply don't apply to us because of American exceptionalism, this cannot go on any longer and it won't." (13:57)

Spencer presents a logos argument in the rhetorical cadence of "in the current year" about United States foreign policy commitments around the world and the totaling deficits on the subject of military expenditure. Laws of history are a logos authority reference, drawing the comparison with the United States foreign policy to the overextended Roman Empire. The anti-war sentiment is strong throughout the speech, which is not uncommon criticism outside of the ingroup ideology.

"At some level, we demand the impossible. Even those half joking memes about Donald Trump as God Emperor or is the progenitor of some glorious Imperium, testify to that yearning for something more. Yes, we should insist on our dreams on the conquest of space, on the development of revolutionary technology, for a humanity that is greater than we are today, for a race that travels forever on an upward path." (14:20)

Spencer continues to create the image of the colonialist and exploring, repurposing it in the context of the space frontier. It is not clear if he is referencing human race or the white race because there is mention of space and humanity, but the implication can be made that it is the white race based on the tones and style of white identity pervasive throughout the speech. Spencer is speaking of technology, innovation and exploring, beckoning to colonialism and exploration. This imagery of a meta narrative of exploration and adventure into the unknown, a "yearning for something more" than just Donald Trump attached concepts, is realizing and vocalizing the imagined community and its goals. This vivid imagery is pathos and intrinsic ethos. This is powerful imagery for the audience, stirring inspirational belonging and agency.

"Yet MAGA is also forward-looking, this idea that we can do this, that America can be what it was, that this idealized past can be restored. More than that, that it can reach new heights, be greater than ever before. As Donald Trump put it, "we're going to win so much we're going to get tired of it". This is the new normal. This is the new normal we're promised, an America of greatness but also an America with functional communities and the possibilities of those little things a satisfying life for ordinary people." (17:45)

"In the last week of his campaign Trump was hosting several rallies a day, including one near here in Northern Virginia. A friend of mine who was there told me that he was several hours late, that is Trump, but no one in the audience wanted to leave and it became so late that small children, there were many families at the rallies, started falling asleep parents actually put coats on the ground to form a kind of bed for the children to sleep in and surrounded them to guard the sleeping youngsters." (19:09)

Pathos is layered in extreme facets in this case. Spencer is highlighting outgroup fear and potential harm, fully describing imagery around protecting young children against those who would threaten them. Spencer implies that group identity was naturally formed in a public sphere, based solely on white identity and Trump support as the bond. The implication of guarding children is built on potential harm or danger. This is the intrinsic appeal, and a logical one where supporting Trump is noble but primarily where communities of ingroup whites come together to guard against the potential harm towards sleeping children. This is the identity building part of the speech were individuals rally around a mutual leader who is here to protect the community.

Spencer articulates that this is the pillar of traditional white values and identity that has been under attack, and Trump provides the identity building mechanism as the solution. This imagery idolizes Trump as the binding agent. While AltRight ingroup identity is largely built around Trump, he is the only a tool by which the AltRight currently rally around. Citing Trump is a tactic used by Spencer and the ingroup for the purpose of strengthening the community.

"There was this kind of effortless high trust society, an entire people awakening to their own existence and realizing not just that they exist and have an identity but that they can be caring and they can be strong." (19:58)

"Despite these supposedly egalitarian values, America was until this past generation a white country designed for ourselves, and our posterity. It is our creation it is our inheritance and it belongs to us."
(21:41)

Spencer is beginning to articulate detail where the white ingroup is deserved respect and inheritance. He is providing ownership mentality to ingroup members within the sphere of public space. Logos, pathos, and the intrinsic ethos are all maintained and primed here. The applause of the audience merits a short pause by the speaker, validating the declarations.

"It's an alternative, it's a real alternative to the whole system of lies."
(23:00)

This is a strong morality reference to perceived lies and distrust of outgroups, building the ingroup ethos and priming the emotional outlook towards outgroups, solidifying group identity. Spencer implies "we" have been lied to and "we" are taken advantage of. This is a crucial aspect of the speech where he persuades the audience to embrace an alternative to lies with a logos and pathos appeal. Structurally, this part of the speech comes at a time where the outgroup has been represented as disgust and filth, and the ingroup has been symbolized as achievement and ambition; he presents a choice to the audience. This is powerful text and highly thoughtful delivery at an important place within the speech. Spencer delivers an alternative he paints, contrasted to the outgroup defined and dominated world he has detailed to the audience.

4.2.6 Memes

"I think it's only fitting that I follow that splash of cold water that only Sam Dixon can deliver but long live the god Emperor." (1:46)

Building group identity in the AltRight is heavily dependent on ridicule and more importantly, provocative satire and irony, most easily identified through various memes. Memes are not inherently AltRight, rather they are used as tools of expression by individuals and groups to communicate varying ideas, many times in an ironic or humoristic way. In this case, the "god Emperor" is a reference to Trump, in an ironic capacity. The constant references to memes throughout the speech convey to the ingroup that Spencer, and the ingroup by extension, are self-aware of the absurdity that declares Trump a "god Emperor" to save America from peril. Additionally, trolling is an integral part of the AltRight, or Spencer's specific version of the AltRight, and declaring love for Trump, in an outlandish capacity, is to provoke those who disagree with Trump, his behavior, ideology, or his policies. In this perspective, provocative memes are more antagonistic in form.

The God Emperor meme is born out of lore from the Dune series sci-fi canon, and Dungeons and Dragons Warhammer 40,000k table top game. This represents a deep dive into subculture memes and cultural references not wholly understood by outgroups due to the lack of context around Dune and the Dungeons and Dragons tabletop game with lengthy canon and developed community. The concept of God Emperor comes from a sci-fi world where the god Emperor is embodied by strength and raw power, something of an antihero. This meme has been used to a much larger extent by those who champion Trump as an opponent of political correctness and embody strength and confidence to speak in a combative way, no matter the associated costs.

As for the meme's effect, this is an indication of the background and context needed to fully understand use in popular culture and value in the AltRight. To incorrectly understand the meme is to misunderstand and misdiagnose use, misdiagnosing value. Additionally, this is ethos building by Spencer where he

cites highly specific language and imagery largely reserved for those with some understanding of memes and internet culture, as well as AltRight language and imagery use. Building the audience credibility is not difficult for Spencer, as he is already known to the audience but rather, it builds this specific case of audience credibility from the beginning of the speech.

> "It was that moment when we knew Keke had smiled upon us and that magic was real. And though we might use these terms half-jokingly they represent something truly important, the victory of will." (4:21)

Spencer reveals the self-aware irony that is pervasive within the ingroup culture and AltRight movement, as this is a major component of communication and discourse within the group. This self-awareness is important to note due to popular discourse criticism of online posts that either, willfully or ignorantly lack the recognition of irony and ironic context by which these memes and trolling posts originate, further disconnecting media pundits. Much of the ingroup culture is dependent on irony and meme culture that actual values may be disguised in humor. It is not so much that the humor has cultural value, which may be the case, but that humor and irony are so intertwined within discourse it is difficult for an outgroup member to distinguish the two from one another.

Spencer confesses these terms are uses half-jokingly, while maintaining the jokes and memes are a part of the identity that the ingroup have accepted as a discourse strategy for achievement through the cultural idea of Trump. This strategy for humor is an effective measure in the tactical choice for this particular movement, outlined by Polletta and Jasper (2001). It builds ethos within the ingroup and any instance where outgroup criticism is leveled toward the originally ironic discourse benefits the ingroup, and the outgroup critic suffers embarrassment, possibly unaware of the intention or value due to lack of context.

"At some level, we demand the impossible. Even those half joking memes about Donald Trump as God Emperor or is the progenitor of some glorious Imperium, testify to that yearning for something more. Yes, we should insist on our dreams on the conquest of space, on the development of revolutionary technology, for a humanity that is greater than we are today, for a race that travels forever on an upward path." (14:20)

Intertwining memes throughout actual value declarations is effective ingroup rhetorical strategy on the part of the speaker; the recognition of a half joke essentially represents some comedic or satirical state of actual thought or belief but the imagery associated with "white strivers" and the "conquest of space" carries legitimate meaning within the ingroup. Trump as god Emperor, is a calling to the idea of a great cultural masculine strongman-leader to save the country from social justice warriors who advocate anti-white hatred, who hold humanity from innovation and conquest of space. This ideal is the culmination of ingroup fears and pathos goals coupled with ironic faux cult of personality devotion. This text is met with rousing applause from ingroup audience and significantly builds Spencer's credibility as the ingroup's stereotypical representation of thought.

4.2.7   Hail Trump, Hail our People, Hail Victory

"Hail Trump, hail our people, hail victory!" (31:20)

Arguably the most recognizable sound bite of the speech rests within the last line and the corresponding Nazi salutes provided by the audience. There is the immediate representation to Hitler and Nazi Germany but there is more than meets the eye. One can understand Spencer's strategy throughout the entirety

of the speech by analyzing the very last line. "Hail victory" translates to *Sieg Heil*. More importantly, "Hail Trump" is a reference to an existing meme culture for the audience, featuring Trump as 'God Emperor' and the memes related to the often times self-aware absurdity of Trump's cult of personality. It comes as no surprise that Spencer would mention "Hail Trump" knowing the audience understands that this utterance will easily troll and provoke outgroup members. In this context, "Hail Trump" is a humoristic meme for the ingroup audience that comes to embody something more representative of spite towards outgroups who are critical of Spencer, Trump, and ingroup ideology. "Hail Trump" is a tactical choice made by the speaker to antagonize but may include a strategy to disarm the impact of the following words "hail our people" and "hail victory." Essentially, Spencer cites a meme and weaves visceral radical white ideology together with it.

Fundamentally, the incorporation of "hail our people" and "hail victory," used in combination with the meme of "Hail Trump," is the most important point to note. Spencer utilizes an antagonistic meme with aspects of actual historical Nazi lexicon. Considered extremist in nature, Spencer exposes his version of the AltRight as exclusive to white nationalist identity and indicates rather openly, white supremacist values, if not already recognized throughout the structure of the speech. "Hail Trump" is the strategy to mitigate and devalue "hale our people" and "hail victory." The audience knows "Hail Trump" is a meme, an ironic and provocative declaration meant to troll outgroups. Counterintuitively, Spencer dedicated time in the speech to outline how Trump is not the ingroup ideal candidate by highlighting his flaws and inconsistencies. More importantly, Trump's cult of personality is something more malleable and meme-able, more widely interpreted. Some members of the ingroup audience may be there for the memes only, some for the fascism discourse, some for the overt racism, but Spencer's meme and trolling proficiency is the main sell to the potential outgroup audience.

News outlets and articles that focus on "Hail Trump" lack context and only play into the strategy that Spencer has planned by crafting his speech in a tactical way. "Hail Trump" is an ironic meme and the absurdity is clearly addressed throughout the speech. Additionally, "Hail Trump" provokes outgroups who do not accept or understand the use of self-aware memes that support or ridicule Trump's cult of personality, which adds to the ingroup excitement of use.

This three part declaration effectively achieves a primary goal: it motivates the ingroup identity, priming it and hardening the perceived membership, and provides a group that will value provocateurs, trolling, ironic meme use, and extreme satire. Outgroup members recognize major outlet criticism of "Hail Trump" and react which, in turn, rewards ingroup trolling. Spencer is effectively masking Nazism in satire, in order to provide low hanging fruit to outgroups. To his moderate AltRight supporters, members interpret the entire line as a meme; to the high level ingroup supporters who understand the Julius Evola reference 'Children of the Sun', understand the translation into German "Hail victory" (*Seig Heil*); for outgroups who lack contextual awareness of internet subculture and AltRight culture, they interpret this as something more akin to Trump's white supremacist fascist followers, focusing on "Hail Trump." From this perspective, this last sentence is tactical and strategically advantageous to the ingroup and serves to align the moderate commercial AltRight together with the version of AltRight who hold race realist/white supremacist beliefs. Spencer's goal is not to persuade the outgroups, as such. The strategy throughout the speech is seen from the last line of the speech: interlace white identity and white supremacy under the guise of satirical and ironic rhetoric. This strategy nerfs outgroup criticism and claims of racism by ingroup citation of the satirical elements throughout ingroup discourse.

Lastly, upon hearing the declaration ending the speech, some audience members made overt displays of the Nazi salute. The closing of the speech was

met with *Sieg Heil* salutes and the "race realist," white supremacist ingroup of the AltRight, revealed the more fundamentalist aspects of the ideology. Spencer's previous reference earlier in the speech to the mainstream media, cited in the original German "*lugen prese*", is a clear indicator that the speaker is aware of the translation of "hail victory."

5   DISCUSSION

To summarize, it is useful to revisit the research question: How does Richard Spencer produce the concept of AltRight identity in his speech?

First, Spencer effectively communicated his goals and persuaded ingroup direction clearly with racial undertones and overtones. He articulated threats to the ingroup, and expressed outgroup motivated discrimination towards the ingroup thereby priming pathos reaction while providing ethos value systems. He presented logos layered group comparisons that favorably compared the ingroup towards multiple outgroups simultaneously. Spencer indicated significant evidence for stereotypical ingroup behavior by voicing ingroup discourse in a public space. Furthermore, he built group identity by presenting favorable comparisons where the ingroup was presented as being discriminated against, while providing goals and steps for the ingroup to achieve said goals in response. More to the point, Spencer primarily framed whites as a cohesive group and compared them to threatening outgroups as holding white community destruction goals.

The findings confirm initial thoughts about how the AltRight is a reactionary antagonistic group primarily, then a developed ideology mainly led by a small group of individuals that shape the group's ideas. Spencer is a charismatic speaker who knows how to articulate big ideological issues to his audience with casual language, utilizing humor and analogy, making his ideas accessible to anyone. He presented only two choices to his audience: allow yourselves to become a 'disgusting hypocrite' ignorant of white communities being destroyed or proudly embrace your white identity and encourage one another.

While beginning research in 2016 on the AltRight, this work has provided an insight to both radical and moderate racist ideology, anti-SJW hate forums, meme culture, 'shit posting', Jewish hate communities, Trumpian meme foot

soldiers, and endless swastikas and SS insignias. What does it say about the state of our society that allows an environment, unintentionally, to grow and foster these ideas? Who is to blame? The AltRight are given much more credit than what they deserve, in many instances, but not enough in others. They are a useful enemy for political entities whether or not the AltRight are involved. Afterall, social movements need enemies, as outlined earlier, and who one chooses as an enemy can define the movement; who will not support fighting racism? Additionally, the AltRight are a scapegoat for political purposes or negative outcomes for various outgroups. Many times they are used as a tool. This is expedient but incredibly dangerous as it builds the character and allure of the AltRight. The AltRight were relatively unknown until the election, when Hillary Clinton cited them as consisting of a core element of Trump's political base. The bad publicity further builds the attraction and seduction of trolling and 'pissing off SJWs.' Essentially, the bulk of the recruiting is done by the outgroups. If Richard Spencer and the AltRight are selling an idea, and it is being bought, why is there nothing better being sold? Why are many different social grievances being taken up by the AltRight moniker? Furthermore, there are no competent challenges in popular debate that are unemotional or taken seriously toward the AltRight. This works *for* radicalization. Journalistic opportunism clickbait articles urgently stating that 'Trump is literally Hitler' invite ridicule and work *for* radicalization. One can imagine the provocative responses in the comments section to this type of news or blog article.

The group strategy is to elicit a reaction by responding to ideas with nonsensical, ironic or outrageous hyperbolic provocations in order to destabilize the emotional baseline of detractors. Ridicule and 'trolling' follow these reactions if they are posted online. Online users who see this material connect with trolling and ridicule without the racist ideology and therefore recruitment has begun unknowingly. The entry into this dynamic yet convoluted world begins with humor and outrage, and the radicalism and racism slowly bleed into the joy of watching compilations of 'triggering

feminists.' The extreme left and the extreme right love one another. What this means, frankly, is that they love to hate each other. They need each other and expect violence from each other. It is reminiscent of European football hooliganism, where it is less about the team (ideology) and more about hating the other.

Spencer and the AltRight weave humor and memes with rightwing racist ideas. This brand of white nationalism is new and quite different from the old guard, i.e. Klansmen. This version of white nationalism is modern and consists of individuals with varying backgrounds. Some meme loving members just hate social justice warriors and others want the more heavy 'steak and potatoes' of fascist racism ideology. Regardless, both individuals receive the white nationalist messages but to different degrees and in different ways. Memes and supporting Trump are not an indication of AltRight members, as some would choose to believe. As we have seen earlier, Spencer and the AltRight use memes communicatively as this is a highly sharable tool used online. Additionally, as we have seen earlier, the group uses Trump as a tool to further their goals and he is not their ideal leader. Trump's political adversaries utilize a sound politically tactical strategy to hyper inflate the AltRight support of Trump, in order to paint his administration and supporters as a whole, as racist. Other groups utilize this strategy of citing the AltRight for tactical or expedient purposes but ultimately, it only gives the AltRight more power, even more so if the organization or entity crying foul is particularly disliked. The AltRight also utilize this tactic by hyperinflating radical social justice activists influence in order to identify an enemy. This is common stereotyping behavior by groups to marginalize and delegitimize the other (outgroups).

Social Identity Theory was particularly useful when analyzing the AltRight but an adjacent finding emerged: these radical groups do not behave all that different from one another or from their counterparts. An even more optimistic realization on the human condition was that, according to Social Identity

Theory, everyone utilizes favorable comparisons in order to maintain self-esteem. Individuals all identify with a group: teachers, musicians, a political orientation, mothers or fathers, an administrative position, mechanics, digital programmers, etc. Due to group membership, individual behavior changes based on the group an individual identifies with, and societal expectation of behavior in the same regard. These cognitive behavioral ideas come with new dynamic self-esteem indicator sensitives or jealousy, and stereotypical opinions of other groups or members of groups emerge. One may boldly criticize the AltRight for radical discrimination of other humans to an extremely dangerous degree but we all hold this ability and possibly, we do not vocalize it, but we employ it to some capacity. It is who we compare ourselves to that is different.

Excerpt from analysis that succinctly provides a closing thought:

> "Spencer explicitly reveals his binary perspective. This binary perspective is most easily seen through Realistic Conflict Theory, where there are losers and winner with finite resources in zero sum scenarios. Recognition of identity and corresponding conflict is forced on ingroup(s) by outgroups, according to the ingroup mentality. Alternatively, if race becomes a central tenet to identity, then all groups must recognize race as meaningful and a central piece of identity self-esteem. According to Social Identity Theory, if groups begin to regulate their self-esteem according to race, positive racial perspectives and comparison will inevitably emerge, locating an arena where conflict will arise. However, Spencer may claim to disdain this strategy by outgroups, he motivates and organizes by this same strategy. "

5.1   Limitations

The limitations of this study are the ignored visual rhetoric, and highly interpretative analysis, as it is a qualitative design. Additionally, the role of the

researcher and my background affect the way I perceive elements within the speech. As an American, a question arises: how would another individual from another country or culture receive and interpret the tactics and rhetorical analysis? Furthermore, this study's limitations lack analyzing long term effects. Interpretations of analysis is biased, as I view the AltRight negatively, as racist and white supremacist movement, propped up by political opponents. Due to this bias, possible negative frames may have been interpreted where there was little or none present.

5.2 Future implications of this study

Future implications of this study can relate to other fields and disciplines. The theoretical lens by which this case is viewed can be utilized in areas that include but are not limited to organizational leadership, communication strategies, social media behavior, and classroom management within the field of education.

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