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The Role of Violent Conspiratorial Narratives in Violent and Non-Violent Extreme Right Manifestos Online, 2015-2020

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Executive Summary

Conspiracy theories have been talked about a lot recently as a key ingredient in the radicalisation of extreme right-wing lone actor (RWLA) terrorists.¹ Whether it be the dehumanising language within dangerous online ecosystems, the gamification of certain violent acts or the ease with which instructional materials to carry out such attacks can now be shared, conspiracy theories have been noted by some scholars as having a “radicalisation multiplier” effect.² This provides a self-sealing and exclusive explanation of reality – immune to evidence and reason – that enhances the likelihood that extremists opt for immediate, superordinary action that may in some cases lead to violence.³

While there now exists an academic consensus stressing the importance of extremist words that sharply delineate, reify and polarise in- and out-group identities, much research remains to be done on the precise qualitative difference between the structures and linguistic markers that are evident in violent, conspiratorial language – especially on the extreme right – and how such language encourages an individual into violent action.⁴

The aim of this GNET report is therefore to add additional empirical evidence and analysis that is useful to tech companies and that further elaborates and elucidates the difference between violent and non-violent manifestos when it comes to conspiratorial and violent language. Using in-depth qualitative content analysis of these manifestos in conjunction with text-mining techniques in order to perform a systematic quantitative analysis of key terms therein, the report finds:

1. **Conspiratorial Narratives:** The common denominator in all violent and non-violent extreme right manifestos surveyed is the conspiratorial narrative that the white race is becoming extinct and being replaced by non-whites.
2. **Linguistic Differences:** In terms of linguistic features, there are considerable differences within the RWLA manifestos and between them and non-violent manifestos as to the targeted out-group, format and solutions prescribed by the authors.

1 Allam, H., “Right-Wing Embrace Of Conspiracy Is ‘Mass Radicalization,’ Experts Warn”, *NPR*, 15 December 2020, online at: <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/15/946381523/right-wing-embrace-of-conspiracy-is-mass-radicalization-experts-warn?t=1642494720120>.

2 Bartlett, J. & Miller, C., “The power of unreason: Conspiracy theories, Extremism and counter-terrorism”, *Demos*, August 2010, online at: https://demosuk.wpengine.com/files/Conspiracy_theories_paper.pdf?1282913891.

3 Sustein, C.R. & Vermeule, A., “Conspiracy Theories: Causes and Cures”, *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 17:9, April 2009, online at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9760.2008.00325.x>

4 See: Haslam, N., Loughnan, S. (2014), “Dehumanization and Infrahumanization”, *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65, 399–423. doi: 10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115045; Reicher, S., Haslam, A., Rath, R. (2008), “Making a virtue of evil: A five-step social identity model of the development of collective hate”, *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 1313–44; Leyens, J.-P., Rodriguez-Perez, A., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Gaunt, R., Paladino, M.-P., Vaes, J., Demoulin, S. (2001), “Psychological essentialism and the differential attribution of uniquely human emotions to ingroups and outgroups”, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 31, 395–411. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.50; and Savage, R. (2013), “Modern genocidal dehumanization: A new model”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 47, 139-161. doi: 10.1080/0031322X.2012.754575.

3. **Linguistic Similarities:** More importantly, however, what is evident is how similarities overshadow differences between the violent and non-violent manifestos. Using the Grievance Dictionary, we found that two of the non-violent manifestos sampled had violent and threat-based language equal to or greater than other RWLA manifestos.

Below is a snapshot summary of the structure of these narratives, using Baele's conspiratorial narrative archetypes (2019):⁵

Baele's (2019) Conspiratorial Narrative Archetypes for Violent Right-Wing Extremist Manifestos

	Far Out-Group	Close Out-Group	Hybrid Groups	In-Group
Roof's 2015 Manifesto	Black community	Black Americans	American 'Patriots' (or those that support American Democracy)	'Suppressed white people'
Tarrant's 2019 Manifesto	Non-Europeans & non-Western foreigners	Non-Europeans & non-Western foreigners in white nations	Corporations and states, globalists, mainstream conservatism and the left	European people/ Western peoples
Earnest 2019 Manifesto	'International Jewry'	American Jews	Private capital, celebrity culture and the entertainment industry	White people
Crusius 2019 Manifesto	Hispanic community	Hispanic community in America and more specifically in Texas	Republicans and Democrats, corporations	'Patriotic Americans'
Balliet's 2019 Manifesto	Non-white populations	German Jewish population	Federal Republic of Germany	'Suppressed white people'
Rathjen's 2019 Manifesto	Individuals with ethnicities from the Middle East, North Africa and East Asia	Turkish, North African and Middle-Eastern migrants to Germany	Germans who do not wish to expel foreigners	Ethnically white Germans

⁵ Baele S. J., "Conspiratorial Narratives in Violent Political Actors' Language", *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 38(5-6), 706-34, 2019. doi: 10.1177/0261927X19868494.

Baele's (2019) Conspiratorial Narrative Archetypes for Non-Violent Right-Wing Extremist Manifestos

	Far Out-Group	Close Out-Group	Hybrid Groups	In-Group
Der Dritte Wegg Manifesto	'Foreign Dominance'	Unemployed foreigners and asylum seekers in Germany	German 'internationalist' and 'capitalist' actors	German 'people'/race
The Traditionalist Worker Party Manifesto	Non-white, non-Christian peoples of non-European descent	Non-white, non-Christian, non-Europeans of non-European descent in America	American 'politicians' and 'oligarchs'	'European people'
Nationalist Alternative's 'Anti-Jerusalem Declaration'	'International Jewry'	Australian Jews	'Liberal Whites' and the liberal establishment	Australian population

Overview

While there exists an academic consensus stressing the importance of extremist words that sharply delineate, reify and polarise in- and out-group identities, much research remains to be done on the precise qualitative difference between the structures and linguistic markers that are evident in violent and non-violent conspiratorial language, especially on the extreme far right, and how this encourages an individual to violent action.⁶

What we have found in this report is both striking and, in some cases, unexpected. Looking through the qualitative analysis of the manifestos, we can find that the common denominator in all manifestos is the common conspiratorial narrative that the white race is becoming extinct and replaced by non-whites – though the timeline for action and the call to action is brought forwards and obviously tilted in a more violent direction for RWLA manifestos. In terms of linguistic features, there are considerable differences within the RWLA and non-violent manifestos as to the targeted out-group, format and solutions prescribed by the authors. For example, while Hispanics are the target of Crusius' ire, so black people are the main out-group for Roof and the Islamic population fulfils this role for Tarrant and Rathjen. What is also interesting is the differing levels of conspiratorial language used between these manifestos; Rathjen is the outlier in his focus on the paranoid conspiracy of a secret organisation monitoring his every movement.

Using the Grievance Dictionary,⁷ what is evident is how similarities overshadow differences between the violent and non-violent manifestos. On the whole, we found a greater percentage of violent and threat-based language in four of the six violent manifestos when compared with that of those cleaving to non-violent manifestos. Worryingly, however, we see in the cases of Roof and Rathjen something equal to the threat-based language of the violent manifestos. In the case of the Der Dritte Weg and Traditionalist Worker Party manifestos, the language is perhaps more violent and threat-based than the violent manifestos.

In sum, then, what we have found is a more complex issue than expected. Both violent and non-violent manifestos use dehumanising terms to define their out-groups and draw the horizon for people to take action (violent or not) in such a way that defined out-groups appear an existential threat. We hope the charts and tables in this report aid tech companies, policymakers and practitioners

6 See: Haslam, N., Loughnan, S. (2014), "Dehumanization and Infrahumanization", *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65, 399–423. doi: 10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115045; Reicher, S., Haslam, A., Rath, R. (2008), "Making a virtue of evil: A five-step social identity model of the development of collective hate", *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 1313–44; Leyens, J.-P., Rodriguez-Perez, A., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Gaunt, R., Paladino, M.-P., Vaes, J., Demoulin, S. (2001), "Psychological essentialism and the differential attribution of uniquely human emotions to ingroups and outgroups", *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 31, 395–411. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.50; and Savage, R. (2013), "Modern genocidal dehumanization: A new model", *Patterns of Prejudice*, 47, 139–161. doi: 10.1080/0031322X.2012.754575.

7 van der Vegt, I., Mozes, M., Kleinberg, B. et al., "The Grievance Dictionary: Understanding threatening language use", *Behavioural Research* 53: 2105–19, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-021-01536-2>.

to appreciate this overlap but also to use the findings herein in terms of the structure, patterns and themes to identify the functionality of dehumanising rhetoric, how it works and how it can be used to create dangerous ideological ecosystems that encourage individuals to action in aid of a conspiratorial, exclusionary cause. In the interest of academic humility, we do not suggest any predictive nature of the modelling stipulated but instead throw the gauntlet down to other practitioners and researchers to use the Grievance Dictionary and Baele's archetypes of 2019 to analyse violent, conspiratorial language in other online extremist communities.

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1 Introduction

Conspiracy theories have been talked about a lot recently as a key ingredient in the radicalisation of right-wing lone actor (RWLA) terrorists.⁸ Whether it be the dehumanising language within dangerous online ecosystems, the gamification of certain violent acts or the ease with which instructional materials to carry out such attacks can now be shared, conspiracy theories have been noted by some scholars as having a “radicalisation multiplier” effect.⁹ This provides a self-sealing and exclusive explanation of reality – immune to evidence and reason – that enhances the likelihood that extremists opt for immediate, superordinary action that may in some cases lead to violence.¹⁰ This has been most certainly typified in recent accounts of violent radicalisation pathways of RWLAs, with the Christchurch, El Paso and Hanau shooters all subscribing to different versions of Renaud Camus’ ‘Great Replacement’ conspiracy theory.

To some extent, one could argue that all – or most – extremist narratives and ideological propaganda are conspiratorial. Whether it be beliefs in white genocide, the aforementioned Great Replacement or Zionist Occupied Governments, both violent and non-violent far-right groups and actors tend to follow a narrative structure that adopts rigid and simplistic thought patterns, apocalyptic thinking and a dualistic division of the world into friends and foes.¹¹ Despite this, however, the qualitative difference between what pushes extremist actors and groups towards violent radicalisation trajectories and what pushes extremist actors and groups towards violent radicalisation trajectories and what pushes them to non-violent ones, or between the two, is important, both for scholars and practitioners alike. For, while there now exists an academic consensus stressing the importance of extremist words that sharply delineate, reify and polarise in- and out-group identities,¹² much research remains to be done on the precise qualitative difference between the structures and linguistic markers that are evident in violent and non-violent conspiratorial language – especially on the far right – and how these encourage an individual to violent action.

The aim of this GNET series report is therefore to add additional empirical evidence and analysis, which will be useful to tech companies, that further elaborates and elucidates this difference and the powerful effects of language, exploring the role of conspiratorial narratives in the

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- 8 Allam, H., “Right-Wing Embrace Of Conspiracy Is ‘Mass Radicalization,’ Experts Warn”, *NPR*, 15 December 2020, online at: <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/15/946381523/right-wing-embrace-of-conspiracy-is-mass-radicalization-experts-warn?t=1642494720120>.
 - 9 Bartlett, J. & Miller, C., “The power of unreason: Conspiracy theories, Extremism and counter-terrorism”, *Demos*, August 2010, online at: https://demosuk.wpengine.com/files/Conspiracy_theories_paper.pdf?1282913891.
 - 10 Sustein, C.R. & Vermeule, A., “Conspiracy Theories: Causes and Cures”, *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 17:9, April 2009, online at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9760.2008.00325.x>.
 - 11 Berger, J.M., *Extremism*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
 - 12 See: Haslam, N., Loughnan, S. (2014), “Dehumanization and Infrhumanization”, *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65, 399–423. doi: 10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115045; Reicher, S., Haslam, A., Rath, R. (2008), “Making a virtue of evil: A five-step social identity model of the development of collective hate”, *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 1313–44; Leyens, J.-P., Rodriguez-Perez, A., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Gaunt, R., Paladino, M.-P., Vaes, J., Demoulin, S. (2001), “Psychological essentialism and the differential attribution of uniquely human emotions to ingroups and outgroups”, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 31, 395–411. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.50; and Savage, R. (2013), “Modern genocidal dehumanization: A new model”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 47, 139–161. doi: 10.1080/0031322X.2012.754575.

radicalisation journeys of RWLAs from 2015 to 2020.¹³ In particular, it explores the violent conspiratorial archetypes evident within the manifestos of six key RWLA shooters (Dylann Roof, John Earnest, Tobias Rathjen, Patrick Crusius, Stephan Balliet and Brenton Tarrant) to suggest why such individuals moved into violent action as well as the structure and quality of violent conspiratorial narratives on the far right.

Moreover, as a point of comparison, it will also use three case studies of manifestos from both active and disbanded far-right groups that do not call for violence explicitly as a means to achieve their goal, as is the case of RWLA terrorists; this is why these manifestos have been described as non-violent. Nonetheless, they are included in the analysis as their texts may create dangerous ideological ecosystems and offer dehumanising rhetoric that can inspire lone actors (TBI 2019).¹⁴ Such a counter-case will be used to delineate structures and keywords of violent versus non-violent conspiratorial narratives that could be helpful to social media companies interested in using algorithms to moderate this content as well as governments and law enforcement wanting to build profiles of online ecosystems and milieus that embolden this type of activity.

The report relies on a mixed methods approach, using in-depth qualitative content analysis of the manifestos in conjunction with text analysis techniques in order to perform a systematic quantitative analysis of key terms therein. Moreover, it will use Kruglanski et al's (2018) Significance Quest Theory & Baele's (2019) violent conspiratorial archetypes¹⁵ in order answer the following questions:

1. To what extent can conspiratorial narratives play a pivotal role in the radicalisation journeys of extreme right-wing lone actor terrorists?
2. What is peculiar about extreme far-right conspiratorial narratives and their ability to inspire violence?
3. And, most crucially, what linguistic markers can we use to delineate violent and non-violent manifestos on the extreme far right?

The report will start with a review of the literature looking at conspiracy theories and the role of the Internet in the radicalisation of RWLAs before outlining the mixed methods approach adopted. Moving on from this, the report will outline the quantitative and qualitative analyses of conspiratorial language in the six violent and three non-violent manifestos after which key similarities in structures, themes and linguistic markers will be outlined and discussed. Finally, conclusions and recommendations of the research for researchers, policymakers and technologies will be outlined as, "Since many lone actors signal their attack before it takes place, analysing and understanding potential signals in written communication is important for countering attacks".¹⁶

13 This time period was selected due to it being during a prominent period of right-wing radicalisation and stochastic terrorism with similar attack styles, ideological inspirations and communicative methodologies evident, such as livestreams, manifestos and leakage behaviour on extreme-right forums).

14 Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, "Narratives of Hate: The Spectrum of Far-right Worldviews in the UK", September 2019, online at: <https://institute.global/policy/narratives-hate-spectrum-far-right-worldviews-uk>.

15 Baele, 2019; and Kruglanski, A., Jasko, K., Webber, D., Chernikova, M., Molinaro, E., "The Making of Violent Extremists", *Review of General Psychology*, 22(1), 107–20, 2018. doi: 10.1037/gpr0000144.

16 Kaati, L., Shrestha, A. and Cohen, K. "Linguistic analysis of lone offender manifestos," *2016 IEEE International Conference on Cybercrime and Computer Forensic (ICCCF)*, 2016, 1–8. doi: 10.1109/ICCCF.2016.7740427.

2 Literature Review

The study of conspiratorial language and narratives as a predictor of right-wing violence has experienced a boom in recent years. With a recent rise in far-right terrorist attacks across the globe, researchers have turned their attention to spotting the enabling factors in RWLA violence and how conspiracy theories may play a role within this radicalisation process. In a 2019 article, Stephane Baele asserts that, while there now exists an academic consensus stressing the importance of words that sharply delineate, reify and polarise in- and out-group identities, much remains to be done to characterise this type of language fully and hence better understand and evaluate its exact role in violence.¹⁷

In particular, Baele points out that linguistic efforts to sharpen and polarise group identities are simply too widely used by non-violent actors to play a pivotal role in what Ingram calls the “crossing of the violence threshold.”¹⁸ Using the examples of the Nazi regime, the Rwandan genocide and Islamic State, Baele finds that suspected, complex and multi-layered aggression against an in-group by multiple enemies, with “World Jewry” acting as the farthest enemy, can provide legitimised violence against close in-groups (that is, German Jews) and, from 1940, the Allied states.

Zooming out, Baele uses in-group, out-group and hybrid group schema that are useful for this report and suggests that traces of linguistic markers about the timing and extent of violence are important. In terms of variables, in Baele’s analysis, far out-groups are those at the origins of the crisis, constituting the edge of the conspiratorial narrative. In the eyes of extremist actors, “they are the first cause of the problem, they animate the plot at a distance”, while close out-groups “are those with a secondary role in the plot, who tend to be located closer (geographically or in terms of everyday encounters) to the in-group”.¹⁹ Traitors are “originally in-group members who more or less intentionally promote the out-group’s interests” while the contaminated in-group is “made of in-group members whose identity is partially changed following contact with out-group members” (intentionality is the main difference here).²⁰ Finally, the pure in-group is based on “language that produces a positive homogenous in-group” and “is as important as language that negatively portrays out-groups”.²¹

Another recent study to explore the centrality of conspiracy theories within violent extremism is that of Gregory Rousis, F. Dan Richard, and Dong-Yuan Debbie Wang (2020) exploring conspiracy theory use not just within (that is, among violent extremist groups and non-violent extremists) but also outside extremist milieus (such as, among

17 Baele, “Conspiratorial Narratives”.

18 Ingram, H., “An analysis of Islamic State’s Dabiq magazine”, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 51, 458–77, 2016. doi: 10.1080/10361146.2016.1174188.

19 Baele, “Conspiratorial Narratives”, 714.

20 Ibid, 715.

21 Ibid, 715.

moderates).²² Using text analysis software, the researchers coded passages of text for conspiratorial and/or violent content. What they found was that while violent extremists were significantly more likely than the other groups to use conspiracy theories and promote violence, when it came to specific conspiratorial narratives on the loss of in-group significance in violent tracts, neo-Nazis were significantly more likely than IS and al-Qaeda to promote loss of significance. This suggests that not just certain out-groups but also certain types of narratives boost susceptibility towards violence and that perceived loss of significance of an in-group plays a key role in this, something that will be elaborated at the end of the literature review.

Another study to explore the quality of certain conspiratorial narratives to inspire extremist violence specifically on the right is that of Holger Marcks and Janina Pawelz (2020) of two online, anti-immigration campaigns in Germany.²³ What they found is a network of narratives, where narratives of imperilment supported by narratives of conspiracy and inequality converge into a greater story of national threat and awakening. Likewise, they found that by constructing a narrative of collective self-defence, violence becomes a logical option, even if violent action is not explicitly proposed. This finding resonates with other literature on the importance of certain texts to inspire terrorist attacks by lone actors.²⁴

In particular, Marcks and Pawelz's article focuses on "dangerous speech" – that is, narratives that are dangerous insofar as they convey the feeling that drastic action has to be taken against one or more particular groups. This drastic action is connected to extreme imperilment and what is prescribed as its logical consequences. In order to do this, Marcks and Pawelz use two anti-immigration mobilisations online to "first expose the core of the great story of threat and awakening by breaking down the argumentative connection between the concrete and the abstract threat. [They] then order the functional relationships between these narratives of imperilment and other (side) stories that also appear in the campaigns."²⁵ In their schema, useful again for the analysis below, they distinguish between the central narrative, any concrete threat, any abstract threat, any perceived inequalities/grievance narratives, any conspiracies and any action proposals.²⁶ They find that narratives of conspiracy and inequality in particular help to feed the imperilment narrative and are "used to construct a situation of collective self-defense, which demands extraordinary measures and the regeneration of strength" that will bring about the rebirth of the nation.²⁷

Another study that provides more quantitative flesh on the bones of other empirical explorations of the effects of conspiracy beliefs on violent extremist intentions is the 2020 study by Bettina Rottweiler and Paul Gill of the relationship between conspiracy beliefs and violent extremism in Germany.²⁸ Based on a nationally representative survey

22 Gregory J. Rousis, F. Dan Richard and Dong-Yuan Debbie Wang, "The Truth Is Out There: The Prevalence of Conspiracy Theory Use by Radical Violent Extremist Organizations", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2020. doi: 10.1080/09546553.2020.1835654.

23 Holger Marcks and Janina Pawelz, "From Myths of Victimhood to Fantasies of Violence: How Far-Right Narratives of Imperilment Work", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2020. doi: 10.1080/09546553.2020.1788544.

24 See: Hamm, M. S. and Spaaij, R., *The Age of Lone Wolf Terrorism*, New York: Columbia University Press.

25 Marcks and Pawelz, "From Myths of Victimhood", 10.

26 Ibid, 6.

27 Ibid, 14.

28 Rottweiler, B. and Gill, P., "Conspiracy Beliefs and Violent Extremist Intentions: The Contingent Effects of Self-efficacy, Self-control and Law-related Morality", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2020. doi: 10.1080/09546553.2020.1803288.

of 1,502 respondents, they found that a stronger conspiracy mentality leads to increased violent extremist intentions. Most interesting, however, is their exploration of the tempering effect of individual characteristics on the extent of these violent extremist intentions. For example, Rottweiler and Gill found that individuals exhibiting less self-control, holding a weaker law-relevant morality (i.e. higher propensity for ignoring rules and law-breaking) and scoring higher in self-efficacy (i.e. personal capabilities to effectively handle a variety of challenging situations and life stressors.) tended to have higher levels of violent extremist intentions. Such a study, therefore, chips away at the assumption that every individual harbouring conspiratorial beliefs would act out in violent ways and places front and centre individual-level risk factors in enabling extremist violence, which we explore further below.

A final recent qualitative study relevant to our own that has helped to explore the ideological themes and key terms used in RWLA manifestos is Rakib Ehsan and Paul Stott's 2020 study of Brenton Tarrant, John Earnest and Patrick Crusius's terrorist manifestos.²⁹ In particular, Ehsan and Stott's report finds that demographic replacement is a key conspiratorial common denominator between all manifestos and that the theme of a concerted 'invasion' from close and far out-groups – variously from Muslim, Jewish and Hispanic populations – is revisited time and time again. At a linguistic level, Ehsan and Stott also noted the use of quips, in-jokes and self-referential comments from gaming communities, known as 'shit-posting', was evident throughout all three manifestos. Most worryingly, they found the stochastic nature of references in each manifesto created a clear thread from attack to attack, with Tarrant referencing Anders Behring Breivik and Crusius referencing Tarrant in turn. This is also evident in the manifesto of the Poway Synagogue Shooter, John Earnest, analysed below.

To conclude, then, this report will build on the studies cited above by taking a more in-depth look at a greater cross-section of violent and non-violent manifestos that animate the far right at this time, adding a greater scope of evidence compared to existing studies. In particular, it will draw on Baele's archetypes for the qualitative assessment of manifestos, Marcks and Pawelz's notion of abstract and concrete threat and the mixed-methodology of Ehsan and Stott by adding the use of term frequencies, pairwise correlations and the Grievance Dictionary in order to assess the quality of violent versus non-violent language and the role of conspiracies therein. This will all be drawn together within a broader framework of Significance Quest Theory drawn from Kruglanski et al., which suggests that the need for personal significance – a desire (both at the individual and collective level) to matter, to "be someone" and to have meaning in one's life – is the dominant factor that underlies violent extremism and that this relies on a justifying ideological narrative and, crucially, a network of fellow travellers with which to elucidate and justify violent action.³⁰

29 Ehsan, R. and Stott, P., "Far-Right Terrorist Manifestos: A Critical Analysis", London: Henry Jackson Society, February 2020, online at: <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/HJS-Terrorist-Manifesto-Report-WEB.pdf>.

30 Kruglanski et al., "The Making of Violent Extremists".

3 Methods

The findings of this report are based on a mixed methods approach that pioneers both a qualitative and quantitative analysis of nine manifestos: six violent manifestos that have been published by RWLA terrorists in the period between 2015 and 2020 and three manifestos published by three far-right parties located in three different countries. The latter includes the German party Der Dritte Weg, the American Traditionalist Work Party and the Nationalist Alternative and the Australia First Party. The aim of this report is to conduct descriptive linguistic comparisons between two different types of text; although they belong to the same family of far-right groups, sharing a nativist understanding of current social and political phenomena,³¹ they differ with regard to the extent that they embrace violence openly in their manifestos. Our intention, therefore, is not to provide generalisable results that would require the use of statistical methods; rather, it should be understood as an attempt to document the markers of violent and non-violent language, which potentially can form the basis for further research through the use of big data and the study of a larger number of cases.

In this report, we have utilised Baele's conspiratorial archetypes for the qualitative assessment of manifestos alongside several text-mining tools to analyse and better understand the structure of language in violent and non-violent manifestos, the key words that are unique to each manifesto and how they relate to each other. More specifically, we have calculated the values for the Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency (TF–IDF) measure, which show how relevant certain words are to a document within a broader collection of documents, allowing us to draw systematic comparison within and across these key texts. Values close to zero indicate that the word appears often across all documents, while values close to one are an indication of the uniqueness of the word in each document. Moreover, we measured the correlation among non-adjacent pairs of words, which shows how often these words tend to appear together “relative to how often they appear separately”³² in selected sections within each document (in our case the limit was set to 10 lines for both violent and non-violent manifestos). We also used the categories developed for the Grievance Dictionary,³³ which intends to help researchers assess the characteristics of written language based on 22 categories (e.g., violence, grievance, threat), and how different ideological groups discuss current issues. Finally, we should add here that for the quantitative analysis and in order to process the manifestos we used several cleaning and parsing techniques, including removing stop words and URL links, replacing contraction and non-ascii characters, removing punctuation, or correcting misspelled words. For instance, terms such as ‘therefore,’ ‘however,’ and ‘whilst’ have been removed from the plots because they are less meaningful and do not add context to our analysis.

31 Mudde, C., *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511492037.

32 Silge, J. and Robinson, D., “Text Mining with R: A Tidy Approach”, O'Reilly Media, Inc., 2017.

33 van der Vegt, I., Mozes, M., Kleinberg, B. et al., “The Grievance Dictionary: Understanding threatening language use”, *Behav Res* 53: 2105–19, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-021-01536-2>.

4 Analysis (I): Key Themes and Terms in Violent Manifestos

Dylann Roof's Manifesto – “The Last Rhodesian”

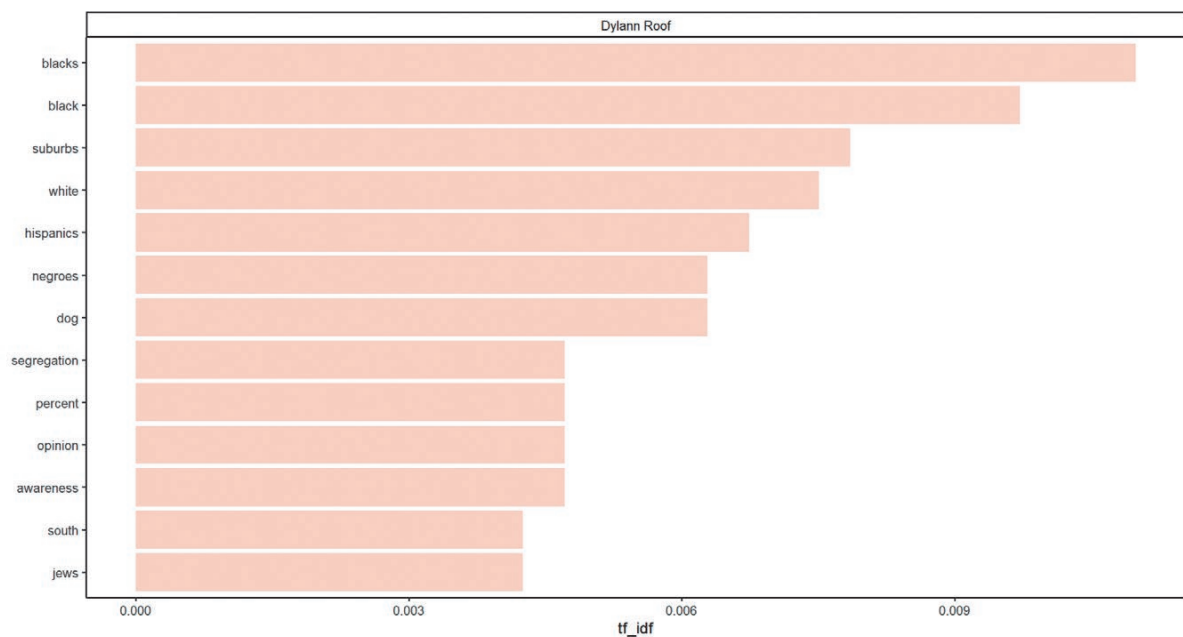


Figure 1: Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency measures (n = 12)

In 2015, just before carrying out an attack at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, Dylann Roof wrote a 2,444-word manifesto and published it on his website LastRhodesian.net. Throughout the manifesto, Roof provides reasons for the attack, justifies justification his choice of target and describes the “sense of awakening” he had experienced that had led him to think and act in this way. While doing so he also provided an insight into the conspiracy theories that motivated him towards violent action.

Roof describes his sense of awakening as a consequence of reading about the Trayvon Martin case. Soon he found himself researching “black on white crimes” and came across different websites (for example, The Council of Conservative Citizens) and numerous statistics on black on white murders. Roof then started to believe that a white genocide was under way and that black people were trying to replace white populations. Fuelled by this injustice towards the white race, he started to plan his attack against black people.

Thus, as shown by the recurrent reference to ‘black’ or ‘blacks’ in Figure 1, the dominant theme in his manifesto is his hatred towards black people, even though he briefly mentions Jews and Hispanics as

well, with both also appearing in our TF-IDF measures and correlation graph (Figure 2). His main “enemy” – or what we define as his far out-group – are black people, but more precisely black people in Charleston, or the American South (this is what we define as his close out-group). When talking about his out-group, Roof adopts certain derogatory terms and remarks – from calling black people “lower [human] beings” to mentioning false and fake information such as “[black people] have lower Iqs [*sic*], lower impulse control, and higher testosterone levels”.

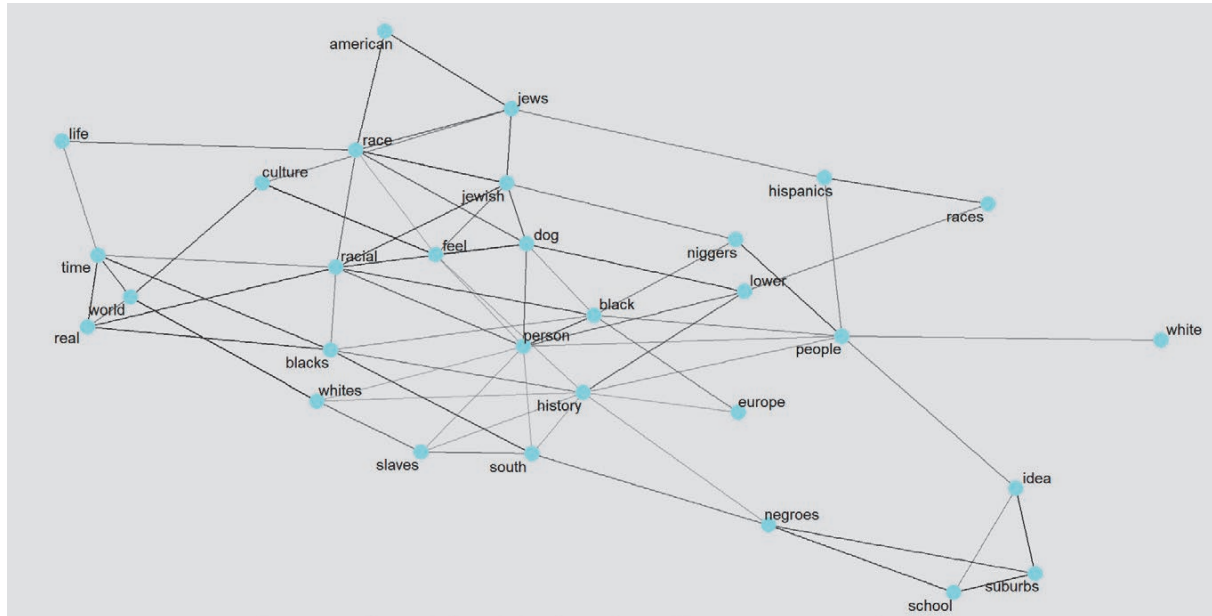


Figure 2: Pairs of words in Roof's manifesto (correlation > .25, common words: $n \geq 4$)³⁴

Roof sees himself as the only man brave enough to save the white race. He decides to take action in order to protect suppressed white people (what we define as his in-group) from being replaced by black people. Roof is motivated into carrying out the attack for two reasons. First, as there is no one else taking action against black people, he feels a sense of responsibility to do something about the current situation. Second, he feels a sense of urgency, a need to initiate a race war before it is too late (in other words, before the number of black people overtakes that of white people) and to take back what rightfully belongs to white people. While he does not specify the amount of violence required to stop this white genocide from occurring, he does call upon other “great White minds” to carry out more violence or simply to do something about the current situation.

34 For short documents $n \geq 4$, while for documents whose length is between 10–30 pages, $n \geq 5$. For documents the length of which ranges between 30 and 50 pages, $n \geq 7$. For long documents, $n \geq 10$.

John Earnest's Manifesto – “An Open Letter”

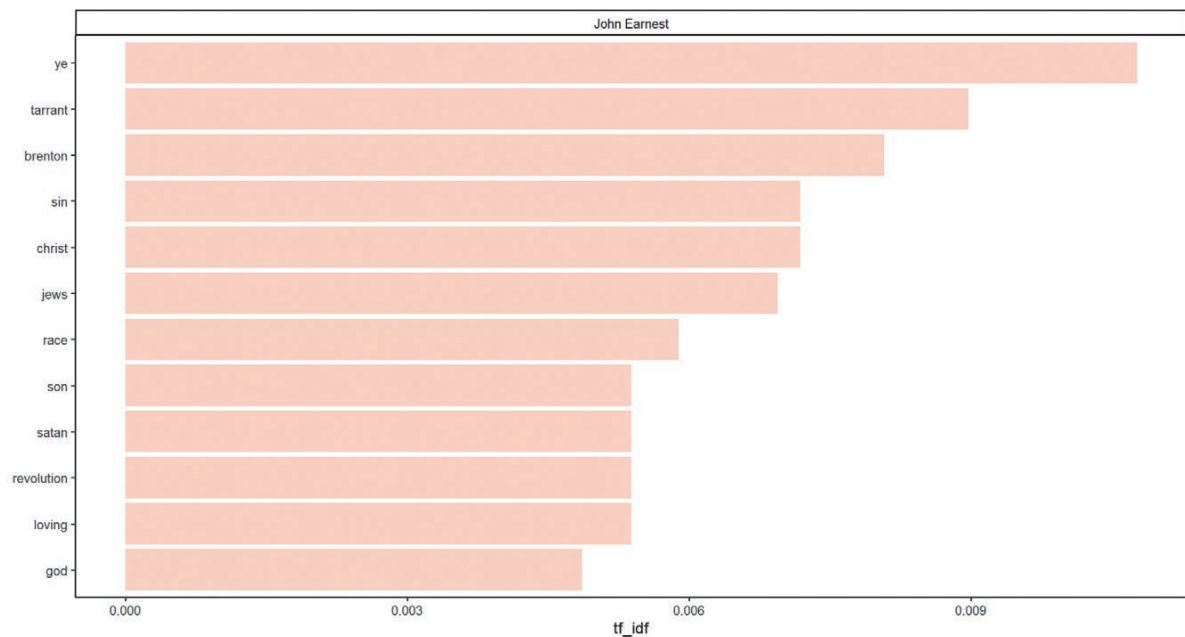


Figure 3: Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency measures (n = 12)

Slightly longer than Roof's terrorist screed at 4,216 words and seven pages, John Earnest's pre-attack manifesto, “An Open Letter”, takes on a more antisemitic conspiratorial flavour than those of Tarrant and Roof. The main theme in his manifesto is his hatred of the Jewish population. For him, Jews are at the centre of all social ills. The “International Jewry”, as he defines it, is responsible first and foremost for the destruction and genocide of the white race, in particular the European race. Starting with his own genealogy from “European ancestry”, the then 19-year-old nursing student weaves a large web of grievances into a super conspiracy about the role of the International Jewry in carrying out tyranny and genocide against the “European People”, with both “Jews” and “race” appearing in our TF-IDF measures (Figure 3).

For example, he sees Jewish far and close out-groups, ranging from private capital to celebrity culture and the entertainment industry, as “play[ing] a part in the destruction of my race” and conceives there being “no other option” than to “kill Jews”. While he does also mention other populations, such as Hispanics, black people and Muslims, Earnest sees them only as puppets of the International Jewry; by taking down the Jews, he would ultimately be taking down these other populations as well. The wording he uses to describe Jews and the blame he places on them are clear characteristics belonging to traditional far-right conspiracy theories.

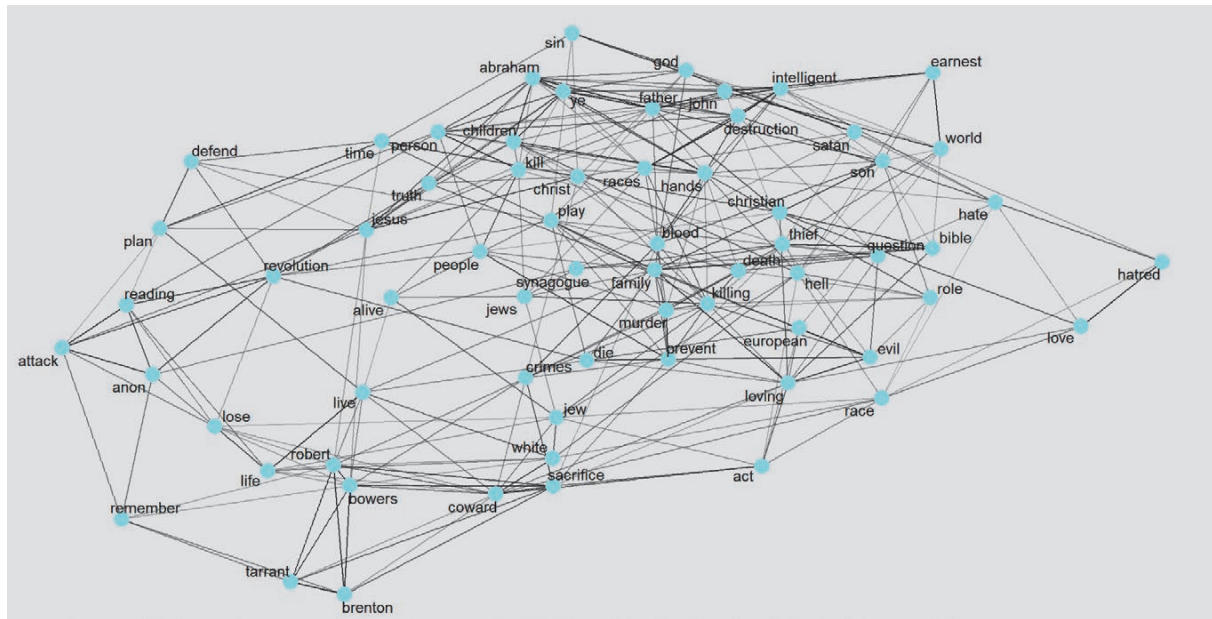


Figure 4: Pairs of words in Earnest's manifesto (correlation > .25, common words: $n \geq 4$)

Moreover, such dehumanising language is a key part of the linguistic markers in his manifesto. Referring to Jewish populations as “squalid and parasitic”, “vile anti-humans” and “tyrannical and genocidal”, he emphasises the urgency of violent action, bringing it to the immediate present and encouraging others to commit attacks in the short-term for long-term, accelerationist revolutionary effects (with this appearing in our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto). For example, he frequently talks about the “momentum we currently have”, a momentum generated by other right-wing terrorist attacks (a “catalyst”); he also boasts of the short period he had within which to conduct an attack (“Four weeks ago, I decided that I was doing this. Four weeks later I did it.”) and the notion that “we are running out of time...We need to be martyrs.”

Another distinctive feature of Earnest's An Open Letter is its more overtly religious flavour, with “Christ”, “sin”, “satan” and “God” appearing in the correlation graph and high up in our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto. He blames Jewish people for the “murder of the Son of Man – that is the Christ” and quotes from several Bible verses to justify his actions. He also casts his actions in the light of a grander eschatological schema that fit into Kruglanski's Significance Quest Theory, suggesting that he is a soldier with “the honor and privilege of defending his race” and that his actions are part of an “encompassing history and context of the entire Bible and the wisdom it takes to apply God's law in a broken world.” Not unsurprisingly, Earnest notes “God” 14 times in his relatively short manifesto and often links Christianity and race as the pure in-group, with private capital (“[Jewish People] using usury and banks to enslave nations in debt and control all finances for the purpose of funding evil”) and modern conservatism (“useless, spineless coward[s]”) as hybrid groups.

A final distinctive feature of Earnest’s manifesto is how, both in its features and broader delivery, Earnest’s “sense of awakening” and specific inspiration for his April 2019 Passover attack is tied to the Tarrant’s Christchurch attack. Indeed, both the words “Brenton” and “Tarrant” appear highest in our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto. In Earnest’s

mind, then, it was “Brenton Tarrant’s sacrifice” in March the same year “that something just clicked in my mind. ‘If I won’t defend my race, how can I expect others to do the same?’ I immediately got to planning, and I never looked back.” We can see this influence in a previous arson attack and, when discussing tactics, the manifesto also notes that “I used a gun for the same reason that Brenton Tarrant used a gun”. Unsurprisingly, then, Earnest directly copies the communicative tactics associated with the Christchurch attacker too, both posting his manifesto to 8Chan and attempting a livestream to Facebook (on this occasion, the attempt failed).

Tobias Rathjen’s Manifesto – “Skript mit Bilder”

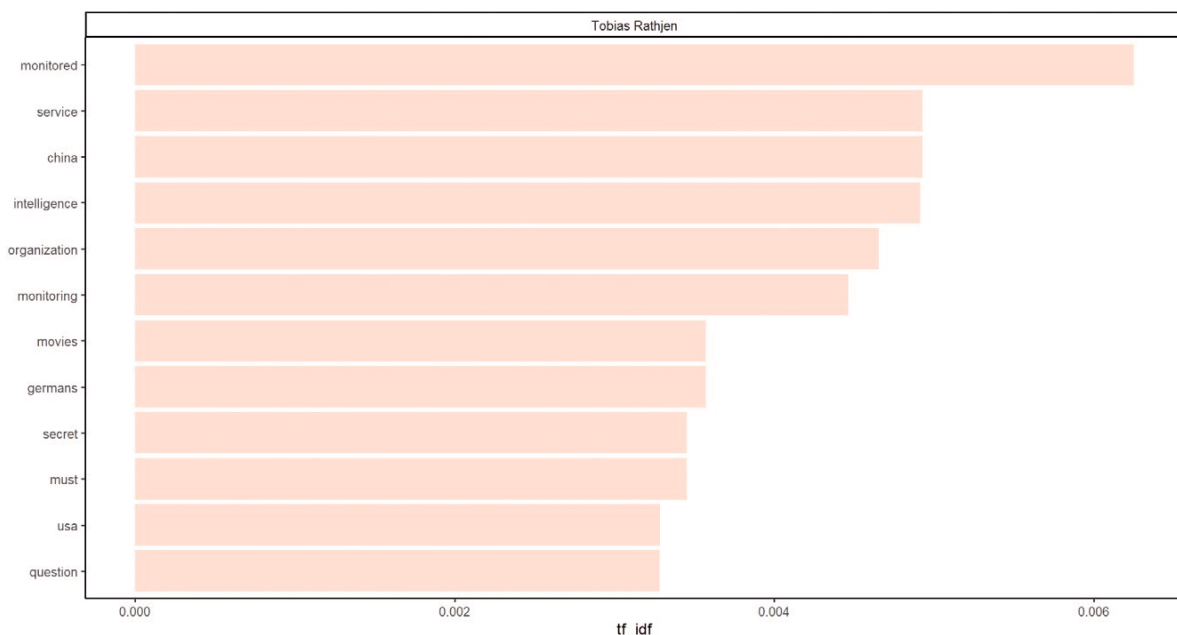


Figure 5: Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency measures (n = 12)

In the days leading up to his February 2020 attack on a cafe and shisha bar in Hanau, Germany, the Hanau shooter, Tobias Rathjen, uploaded three videos as well as a 24-page ‘script’ that is now interpreted by many as his manifesto. Made up of 8,868 words and divided into eleven sections, the manifesto is a mixture of conspiracy theories about UFO contact, alien abductions, satanic ritual abuse, masonic conspiracies, time travel, alien races and telepathy, all interlaced with Rathjen’s more fantastical personal account of his main motivations as a warning to the German people of a super-conspiracy by an imaginary para-governmental “secret service” organisation (unsurprisingly, words such as “monitored”, “monitoring”, “service” and “organisation” appear high up in our TF–IDF measures for the manifesto). To some extent, then, some of the typical far-right ideological tenets based on an exclusionary and eliminationist theory concerning race, religion and other minorities are present; nonetheless, they are secondary to this other set of super-conspiracies.³⁵

35 This is something that has been picked up by other systematic analyses of Rathjen’s manifesto. See: Crawford, B. and Keen, F., “The Hanau Terrorist Attack: How Race Hate and Conspiracy Theories Are Fueling Global Far-Right Violence”, *CTC Sentinel*, March 2020, online at: <https://ctc.usma.edu/hanau-terrorist-attack-race-hate-conspiracy-theories-fueling-global-far-right-violence/>.

Where far-right themes are present, these can be divided into more real and abstract threats posed by out-groups that Rathjen identifies as either “backward” or “destructive”. In the former sense, Rathjen chillingly lists a hierarchy of non-ethnic Germans (with German being a key frequent term) that “must be completely destroyed” (that is, a genocide visited first on those from North Africa, the Middle East and South East Asia) and then those that, euphemistically speaking, Rathjen suggests need “fine-tuning” (those from Africa, South and Central America and the Caribbean). In particular, tellingly due to his target selection, he singles out Middle-Eastern migrants from Iraq and refugees from Afghanistan; he regards both groups as “both geographically and politically as [sic] the center of evil or backwardness and Wests need to be developed”. He goes on to suggest that a contaminated in-group of Germans who do not wish to expel foreigners “are either ignorant or too weak or too stupid to solve the problem that is, to send everyone out of the country again”.

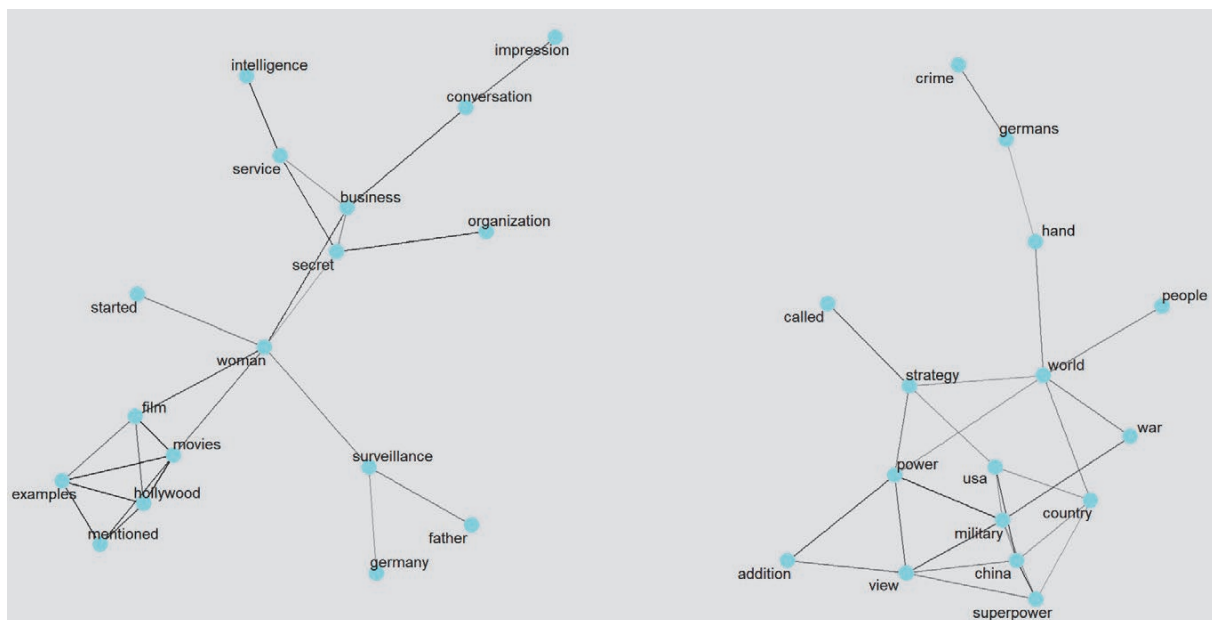


Figure 6: Pairs of words in Rathjen's manifesto (correlation > .25, common words: $n \geq 7$)

In a more abstract sense, Rathjen prescribes military elimination of regimes and the creation of a Western economic defence supranational entity to counterbalance Mexican and Chinese hegemony and boost the USA, as shown by the appearance of “China” and “USA” in our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto (“I have now devised concrete tactics and a basic strategy for the successful military elimination of these regimes”, “the primary objective of this organisation must be to ensure that our high technology does not reach China, i.e. a form of technology lock is imposed and monitored.”) In particular, Rathjen suggests that a conversation with a friend in Frankfurt in 1999 and the events of 9/11 were turning points for him (“I can date today ... the day of my birth to September 11, 2001.”)

The structure and non-ideological content of the manifesto also set Rathjen's screed apart from others analysed here. While there are personal, biographical elements as seen in other RWLA manifestos, the focus here is on Rathjen's growing awareness of the “secret service” (see Figure 6) organisation he outlines at the beginning. The manifesto

also does not involve a personal “Q&A” section or the satirical, mocking style of Earnest's and Tarrant's manifestos. Moreover, each of the conspiracies shared are anti-establishment in nature, so that he regards his proposed actions as a “double blow, against the secret organisation and against the degeneration of our people!” Significantly, signs of paranoia and mental ill health are more significant in Rathjen's manifesto, with claims of telepathy, infant memories and time loops littering the logic of his narrative. He also repeatedly claims that he has the ability to predict the plots of movies, which explains another frequent word in our text-mining analysis of the manifesto.

Patrick Crusius' Manifesto – “The Inconvenient Truth”

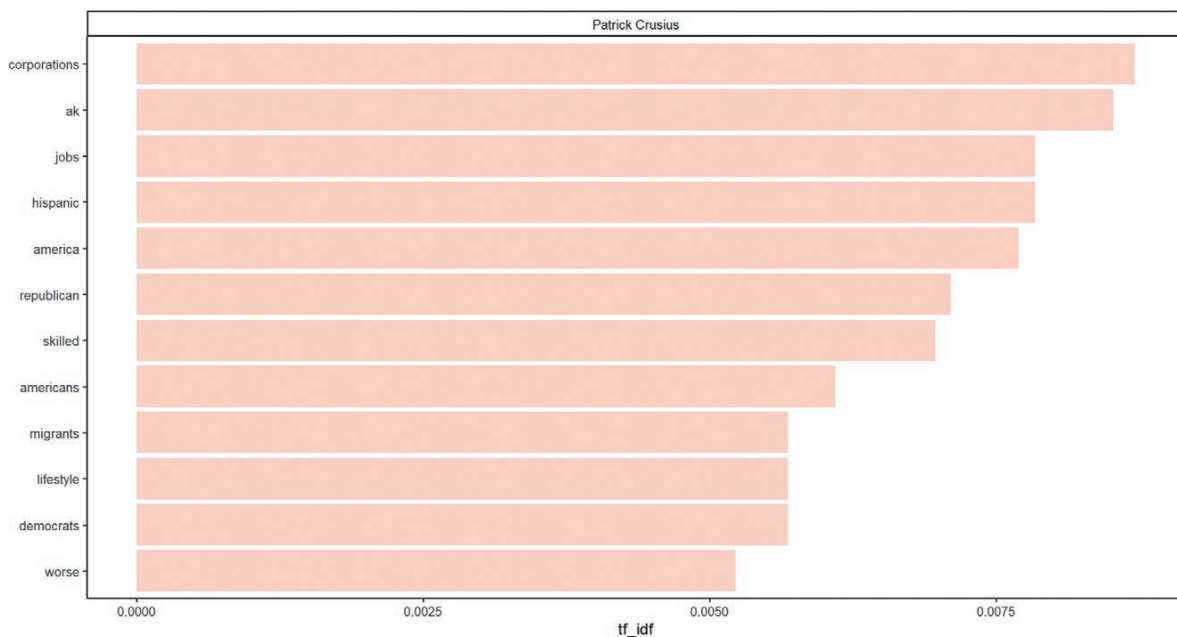


Figure 7: Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency measures (n = 12)

In August 2019, before carrying out his attack at the Cielo Vista Mall in El Paso, Patrick Crusius wrote a 2,356-word manifesto, entitled “The Inconvenient Truth”, and published it on 8chan. The pre-attack manifesto contains white nationalist themes and elements belonging to ethnic replacement narratives.

Crusius divides the manifesto into six paragraphs with separate titles; however, the main theme of his manifesto is his hatred towards the Hispanic population (making this his defined far out-group and one of the most frequent terms cited in the manifesto). More specifically, he is concerned with how the Hispanic population is contaminating, invading and replacing white people in his “beloved Texas”. Crusius describes them as “invaders [who are causing] harm to the country” leading to its destruction. Thus, his close out-group is the Hispanic community in Texas while his in-group is “Patriotic white Americans” who are against immigration (“immigration” scores high in our TF–IDF measures for the manifesto). While he would only harm an “invader” and not a “fellow American”, he does also blame Democrats, Republicans and corporations for failing the American population (these are hybrid groups). In his view, Democrats are to be blamed for opening the borders and allowing an influx of immigrants

from the south, Republicans for being pro-corporation and not thinking about the future of the American people and corporations for being pro-immigration. According to Crusius, corporations welcome immigrants because they can pay them minimum wages. “Corporations” ranks at the top of our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto.

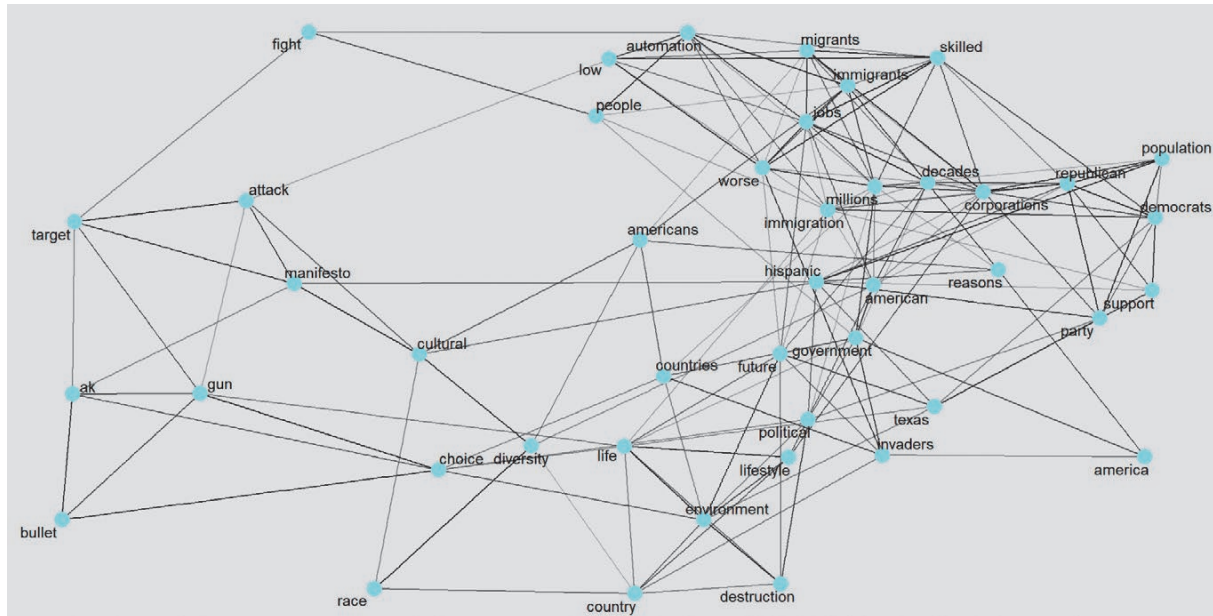


Figure 8: Pairs of words in Crusius' manifesto (correlation > .25, common words: $n \geq 4$)

Compared to the other manifestos featured in this report, Crusius' is the only one, as Figure 8 shows, to mention the environment. More specifically, he blames governments and corporations for decimating the environment and “creating a massive burden for future generations”. As he is not able to kill his fellow Americans, he sees Hispanics as the only others who can be blamed for the destruction of the environment.

Crusius dedicates a whole paragraph of his manifesto to explaining his choice of weaponry with a list of pros and cons that others should consider as well (hence the acronym “AK” ranking near the top of our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto). Even though he admits that he did not spend a lot of time planning the attack, he was still motivated to do it “before he lost his nerve”. Just like Earnest, but perhaps not to the same extent, according to our TF-IDF measures, he was a supporter of Tarrant and was encouraged by Tarrant's manifesto to carry out the attack.

Before concluding his manifesto, he tries to encourage others to carry out attacks – emphasising the importance of attacking small and less dangerous targets as well (“do not throw away your life on an unnecessarily dangerous target. If a target seems to[o] hot, live to fight another day”). While there is no imminent and direct sense of urgency in Crusius' manifesto, he does tell his readers that it is not too late to save America from destruction (“worse” being another common term in his manifesto) – prompting others to follow his lead and to fight to reclaim their country.

Stephan Balliet's Manifesto – “A Short Pre-Action Report”

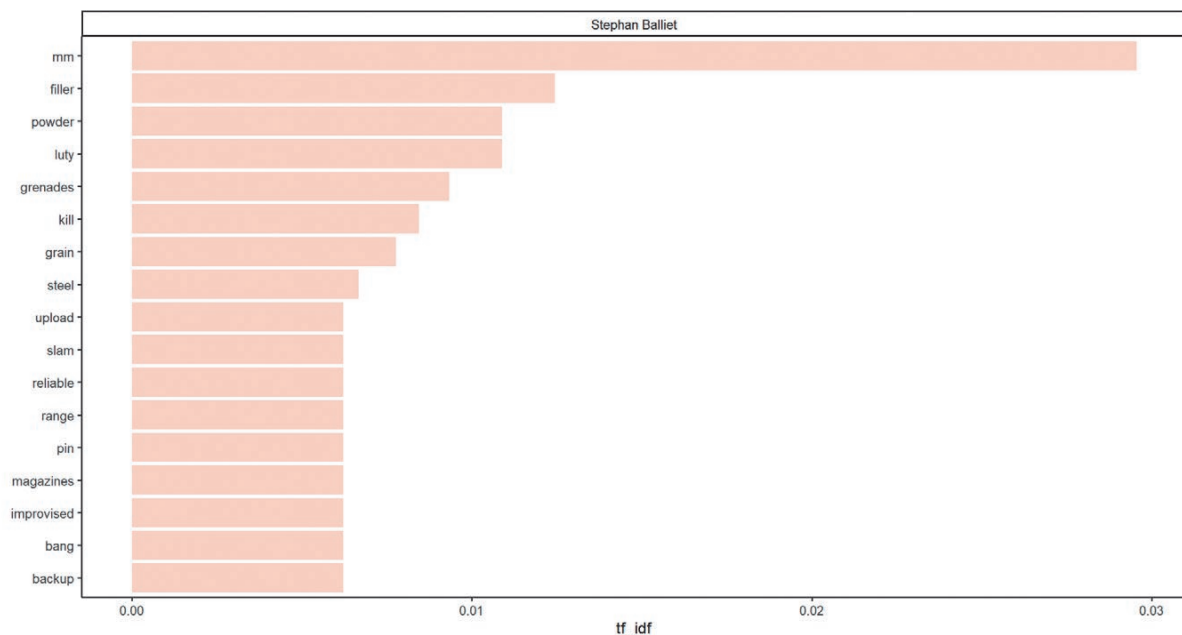


Figure 9: Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency measures (n = 12)

In October 2019, Stephan Balliet, in an attempt to copy Tarrant, decided to livestream his shooting at the synagogue in Halle on the gaming website Twitch. Before his attack, he also published on Meguca a 16-page manifesto in which he mentioned his “[live]stream” and prompted viewers to watch it.³⁶ Unlike the other manifestos analysed and as demonstrated in the appearance of weapon-related terms in our TF–IDF measures, Balliet’s manifesto consists of few words, multiple pictures and detailed instructional material, such as “how to make your own gun” with a 3D printer. For instance, Figure 10 shows that many pairs of words that appear refer to weapon-related terminology. Nonetheless, conspiracy theories, here regarding the Jewish population, are at the centre of this manifesto.

Balliet’s main aim while carrying out the attack was to “kill as many anti-Whites as possible” (making this his far out-group), but with a “preference for Jews” in Germany (his close out-group). He blames Jews for all social ills and to a certain extent also blames the BRD (the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, the Federal Republic of Germany) for “spending tax money on Jew safety” (therefore classifying the state as a contaminated in-group). When planning his attack, not only did he choose a “location with a high population of Jews” but he also explains his decision for it to take place on a specific Jewish religious holiday: “the best day of action should be Jom [*sic*] Kippur, because even ‘non-religious’ Jews are often visiting the synagogue on this date.”

36 Meguca is a far-right message board that was shut down after Balliet’s attack.

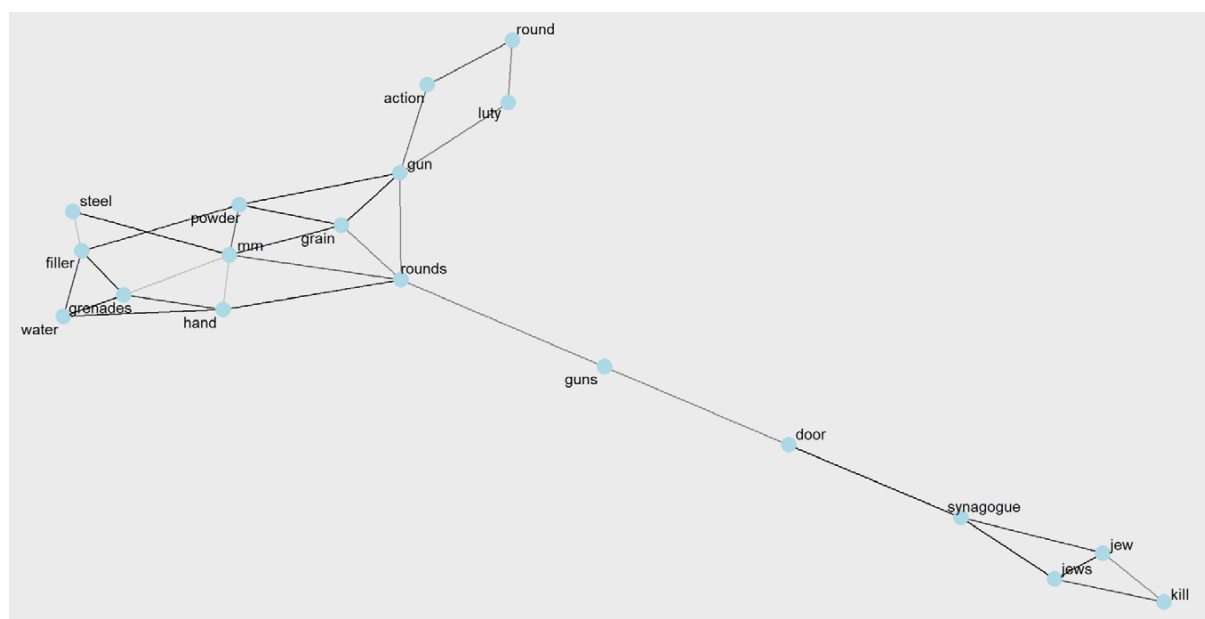


Figure 10: Pairs of words in Balliet's manifesto (correlation > .25, common words: $n \geq 5$)

Unlike Earnest or Crusius (who admit to not having enough time to prepare), Balliet's attack is a consequence of a calculated plan of action, as demonstrated by his lengthy description of weapons, possible scenarios and the frequent use of the word "back up". Throughout the manifesto, there is not a sense of urgency to carry out the attack; for Balliet, what is crucial is to "get the job done".

While killing Jews was one of the listed objectives in the manifesto, Balliet does also mention that he would like this attack to "prove the viability of improvised weapons" and "increase the moral [sic] of other suppressed Whites by spreading the combat footage" (just like Roof, "suppressed whites" are also Balliet's in-group). He concludes his manifesto with a call to action in an attempt to motivate others into carrying out similar attacks: "go in and kill everything. Improvise, if when something [sic] goes wrong. Drive away. Kill some more. Repeat until all Jews are dead". On the final page of his manifesto, he lists a series of achievements that he would like to accomplish with this attack. By using derogatory and satirical terms that overlap with the semantic field of other RWLA manifestos reviewed in this report, he creates a sort of checklist page where he mentions his desire to kill Christians, Muslims, black people and communists (for example, one achievement reads: "Crusty Kebab: Burn down a mosque").

Brenton Tarrant's Manifesto – “The Great Replacement: Towards a New Society”

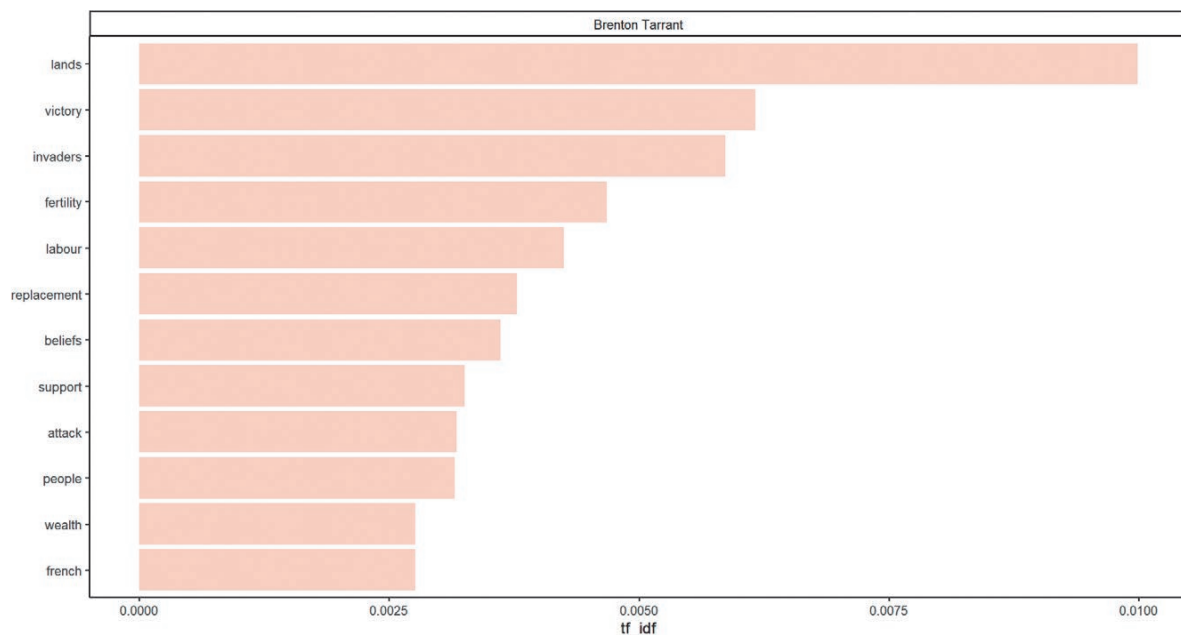


Figure 11: Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency measures (n = 12)

In March 2019, Brenton Tarrant livestreamed on Facebook the attack he carried out against two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. Prior to the attack, he also published a 74-page manifesto (the longest among the ones analysed) on different social media platforms. His manifesto, entitled “The Great Replacement: Towards a New Society”, echoes a very well-known conspiracy theory among far-right groups: the Great Replacement theory, which suggests that non-white migrants are replacing white communities throughout the Western world.

Although one of the central themes of his manifesto and the target of his attack is the Muslim community (making it his far out-group), he vehemently expresses hatred towards mass immigration and any type of immigrant – or “invaders”, as he calls them on multiple occasions – because they are racially, ethnically and culturally replacing white people, a pattern that is evident in Figures 11 and 12. Tarrant explains that he chose Muslims because “they were an obvious, visible and large group of invaders, from a culture with higher fertility rates, higher social trust and strong, robust traditions that seek to occupy my peoples [*sic*] lands and ethnically replace my own people.” He describes himself as an “ethno-nationalist eco-fascist” who believes in “ethnic autonomy for all peoples with a focus on the preservation of nature, and the natural order”.

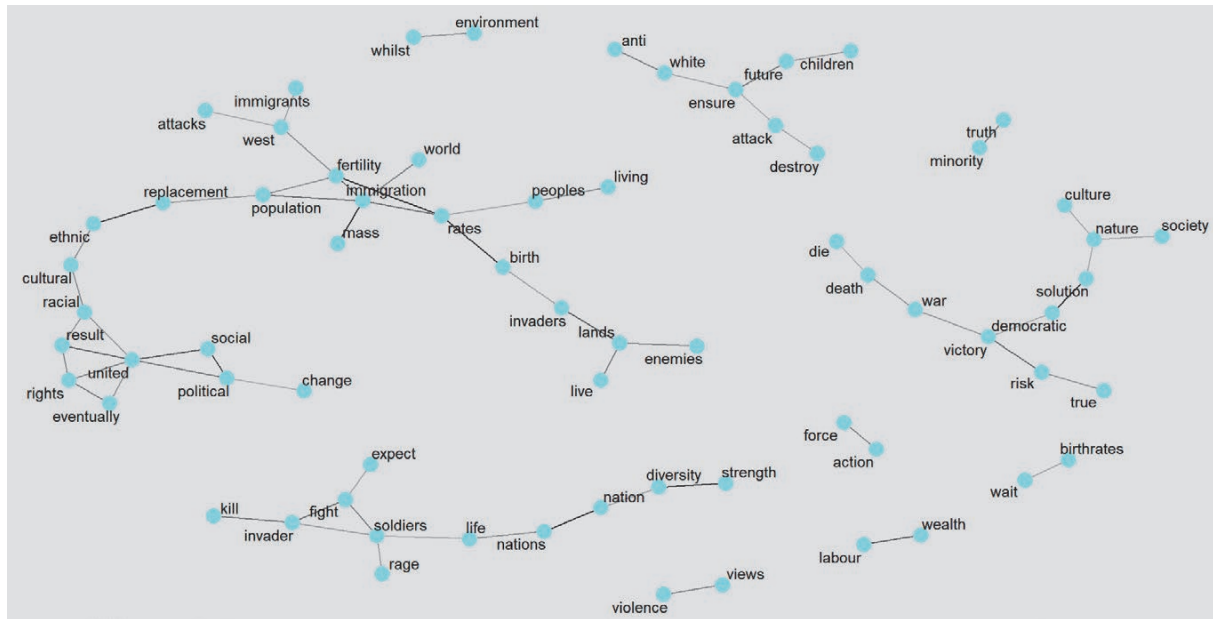


Figure 12: Pairs of words in Tarrant's manifesto (correlation $> .25$, common words: $n \geq 10$)

In his interview-like manifesto that takes the form of questions and answers, Tarrant thoroughly explains his motives, choice of weaponry and plan of action. He believes that violence is strictly necessary in order to stop the genocide of the white/European race, making white European people his in-group. For example, Figure 12 shows that words such as “birth”, “rates”, “fertility” and “immigration” appear close to each other, reflecting Tarrant’s concerns about the replacement of white populations. He also feels the need, just as Roof did, to do something about the current situation; since no one is doing anything, he will take it upon himself to “ensure the existence of [white] people, and a future for white children” (a not-too-coded reference to David Lane’s Fourteen Words).³⁷ Tarrant allowed himself “enough time to train, form a plan, settle [his] affairs, write down [his] views” before carrying out the attack. He also encourages others to do the same and follow his lead, by emphasising the need to make “plans, get training, form alliances, get equipped and then act”. In his manifesto, Tarrant not only blames out-groups but also a number of groups that are described as traitors: these include corporations, states, NGOs and several left-wing groups. In particular, Tarrant’s stance towards Marxists, communists and antifa demonstrates that, alongside groups perceived to be the main cause of problems, groups or individuals that “betray” the in-group can also become the targets of violence in a conspiratorial narrative (Baele, 2019).

Similar to Rathjen's and Roof's manifestos, Tarrant describes his "sense of awakening" that ultimately pushed him to carry out the attack. He talks about three instances that "dramatically changed his views". First, he describes the terror attack in Stockholm carried out by "Islamic invaders". What most struck him from this attack was the death of a child, Ebba Akerlund, who died at the "hands of the invaders". This was the final straw for Tarrant, who could no longer ignore these attacks ("they were attacks on my people, attacks on

37 For more details, see: <https://www.adl.org/education/references/hate-symbols/14-words>.

my culture, attacks on my faith and attacks on my soul"). Second, the 2017 French general election – "french" appearing within our TF-IDF measures – caused "despair" for Tarrant as the "quasi-nationalist" lost to the "anti-white ex-banker". The third and "final push" for Tarrant was "witnessing the state of French cities and towns", in which the French were the minority and the invaders had taken over.

He concludes his manifesto on a final, encouraging note, prompting people to take action and join the "war" against the invaders. For Tarrant, there can only be one victory: "the survival of our people, our culture and our lands isn't enough. We must thrive, we must march ever forward to our place among the stars and we WILL reach the destiny our people deserve."

5 Analysis (II): Key Themes and Terms in Non-Violent Manifestos

Der Dritte Weg, Traditionalist Worker Party,
Nationalist Alternative – Australia First Party:
“Anti-Jerusalem Declaration”

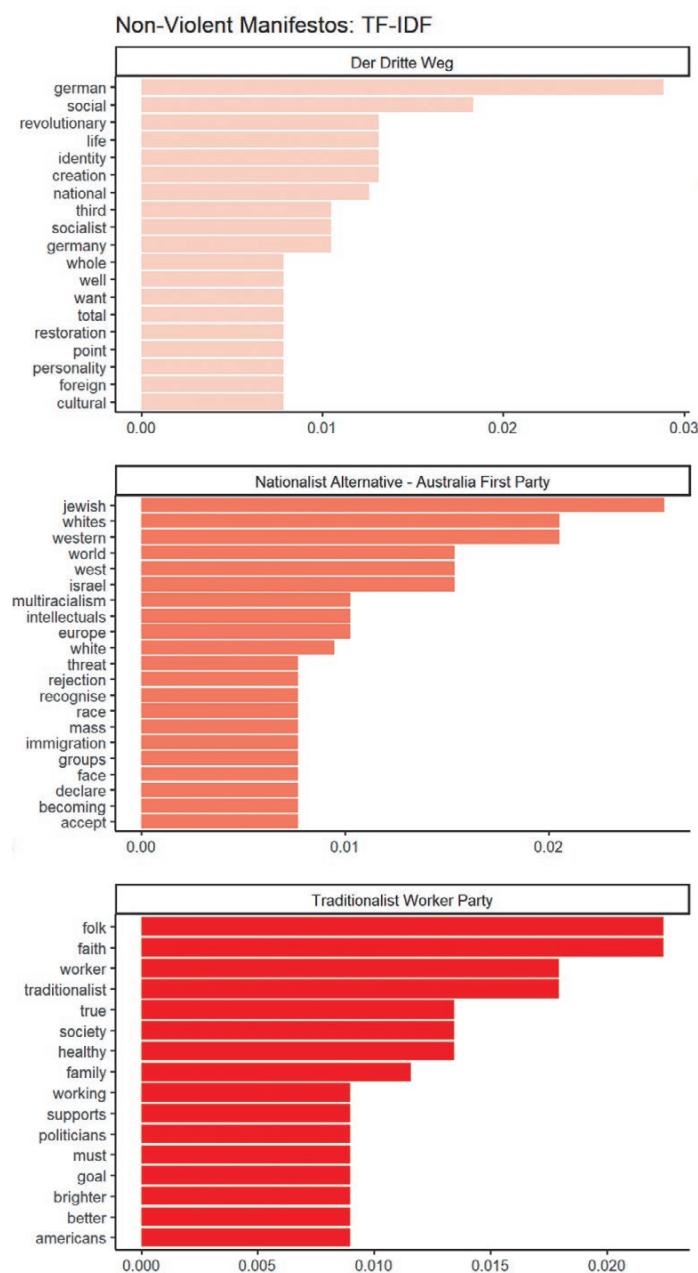


Figure 13: Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency measures ($n = 12$) for non-violent manifestos

Even though the three non-violent manifestos analysed come from three different countries (Germany, the USA and Australia), they all present very similar conspiratorial narratives. In particular, they adopt dehumanising rhetoric, create dangerous ideological ecosystems and encourage individuals to fight for an exclusionary cause vis-à-vis migrant populations.

The first manifesto analysed is the 10-point manifesto written by the German national political party *Der Dritte Weg* (The Third Way), the main focus of which is the preservation of the German people, with the term “German” appearing at the top of our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto. In order to “preserve the national identity of the German people” and “prevent [its] imminent extinction”, the party promises to fund “families with many children”, create and restore a liveable environment for German people and “stop the foreign domination of Germany” (both by closing borders, though this is not directly expressed, and by not taking part in any international affairs). While not mentioned explicitly, the party is very much against foreigners (especially those who are considered criminals or have been unemployed long-term) and immigrants who might replace German identity, with a revolution against the German political system noted as the key means to reverse this. Another conspiratorial narrative within the manifesto, similar to that found in Rathjen’s, is the idea that the German government keeps the German people under surveillance. *Der Dritte Weg* pledges to delete the “ethos paragraphs of the criminal code and [the] surveillance powers of the government ... without substitution”.

The second manifesto was written by the American Traditionalist Worker Party. Even though this two-page manifesto is brief and concise, it presents its fair share of conspiratorial narratives (specifically anti-government ones, with “politicians” appearing at the top of our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto). The party was created with the aim of “building a nationwide network of grassroots local leaders who will lead Americans toward a peaceful and prosperous future free from economic exploitation, federal tyranny, and anti-Christian degeneracy”. While the party’s main out-group is (again) “the politicians and oligarchs who are running America into the ground”, its political party (and in-group) consists of “members of the traditional faiths of the European people”. As a party, it aims to fight for the interests of “white Americans” who have long been “abandoned by the System and actively attacked by globalists and traitorous politicians”. Indeed, “folk”, “faith” and “Americans” all appear in our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto. The party ends its manifesto with a call to action “to secure the existence of our people and a future for White children” (again a reference to David Lane’s Fourteen Words).

The third and final manifesto was signed by the Australian Nationalist Alternative and Australia First Party, entitled the “Anti-Jerusalem Declaration”. Filled with conspiratorial narratives from the very first paragraph, Nationalist Alternative emphasises its commitment to “nationalism within the framework of the white Western European civilisation”, highlighting from the start its belonging to this particular in-group. In the manifesto, Nationalist Alternative explains its rejection of multiracialism and multiculturalism, defining them as dangerous threats that white Western people are currently facing. The movement believes that because of mass immigration, white people are currently experiencing a genocide, becoming “minorities in their homelands” and struggling for the survival of their race. The main out-group,

appearing at the top of our TF-IDF measures for the manifesto, that they blame for all these social ills is the Jewish population (“liberal Jewish intellectuals preach the slow cultured death – the downgoing of the white man through forced multiracialism and multiculturalism, mass non-white immigration and assimilation which is against the will of the white Western peoples”). Nationalist Alternative also admits to rejecting “Zionism, which is a fundamentalist Jewish political imperialist creed” and “the ideology of the State of Israel, and the ideology of the Holocaust”. The manifesto ends with a call to action and a clear will to fight until white territories are restored (“we are fighting to reclaim the lands of the West and ensure the survival and self-determination of our people. We shall not stop until victory is assured and secured”), with such framings signalling an existential threat to its followers.

In sum, even though the manifestos are directed towards different populations (Germans, Americans and Australians), the principal theme remains the same throughout: the common conspiratorial narrative that the white race is becoming extinct and replaced by non-whites. In all three manifestos, the three parties blame the same general political and ethnic out-groups (immigrants, foreigners, other races and their respective governments), with politicians in particular seen as aiding the genocide of the white race. One of the main differences with the violent manifestos is that these non-violent ones do not use explicit or direct violent language, nor do they mention a sense of awakening or an immediate sense of urgency. They do, however, use dehumanising terms to define their out-groups and draw the horizon for people to take action (violent or not) in such a way that outside influences appear an existential threat (what J. M. Berger calls “crisis narratives”).³⁸ These manifestos therefore pose an indirect security threat as they strengthen exclusionary framing and legitimise urgent, existential, anti-democratic action through conspiratorial language.

³⁸ Berger, *Extremism*.

6 Analysis (III): Grievance Dictionary: Markers of Violence, Hate and Threat in Language

Having now looked at the key themes in both violent and non-violent manifestos, we also need to look at the prevalence of specific violent and conspiratorial markers evidenced in such literature in order to complete our analysis. We compare the prevalence of violent, hateful and threat-based markers between the violent and non-violent manifestos surveyed using the Grievance Dictionary. Although there are 22 different categories, we focus for illustrative purposes on three categories that are rather likely to be associated with the markers of violent language (see appendix for a complete list of all values for each category). It is also worth noting that we took a more conservative approach with regard to the version of the Grievance Dictionary we used in this report, since it contains a list of 3,643 words that have a relevance score of seven or higher; if we had relied on the dictionary with a score of five or higher, which contains 7,588, it is possible that more words would have been identified as relevant.³⁹

Unsurprisingly, we find on the whole a greater percentage of violent language in four of the six violent manifestos compared with the language of the non-violent manifestos. Worryingly, in the cases of Roof's and Rathjen's manifestos, the non-violent manifestos have equally violent, if not more violent language.. The Der Dritte Weg manifesto, though non-violent, has more violent language than some violent manifestos. This might be an artefact of the non-violent manifestos being generally shorter and therefore certain words are flagged as more prominent in the text-mining analysis but it also points to the false binary of simply labelling groups on the extreme right as violent or non-violent, as both advocate some violence against minorities and the overthrow of the democratic system itself. The "threat" category, which is associated with (stemmed) terms, such as "imperial", "victim", "harm", "manipul" or "trouble"⁴⁰ and might reflect the concerns of the in-group about the threats posed by hybrid and out-groups, appears again to be slightly more prominent in the violent manifestos; in fact, it is only in the manifestos of Tarrant and Balliet that the word matches for threatening language exceed 2%. Finally, the "hate" category for violent manifestos appears again to include more word matches, whereas only the percentage of Rathjen's manifesto is below 1%, as in the case of non-violent manifestos.

³⁹ van der Vegt et al., "The Grievance Dictionary"

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

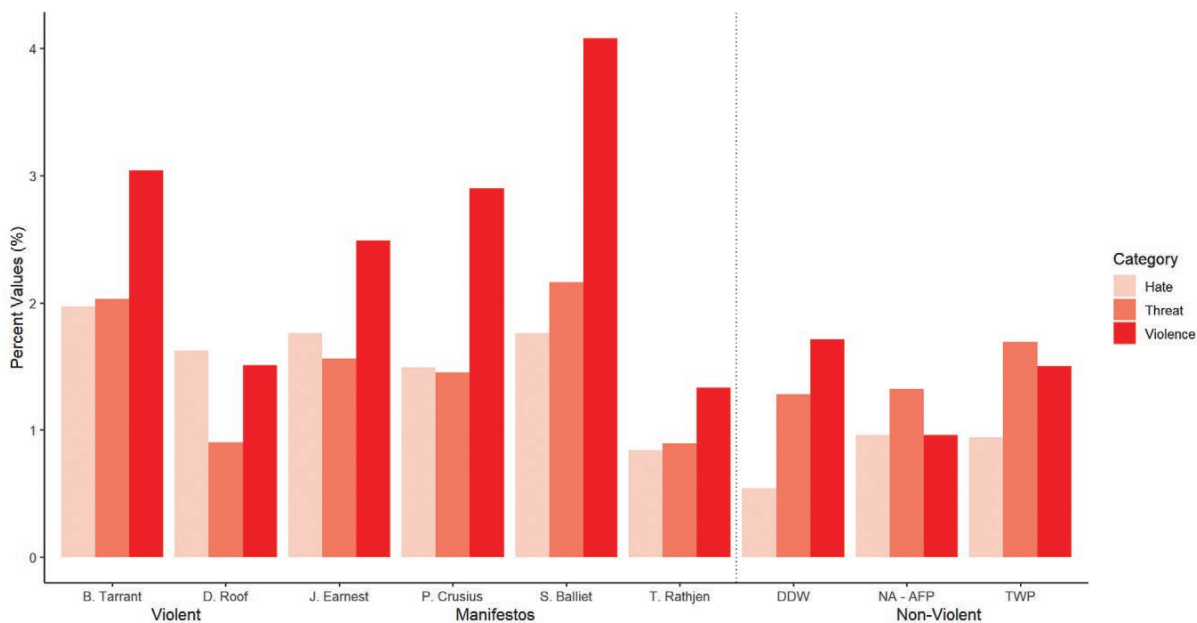


Figure 14: Prevalence of Grievance Dictionary terms (hate, threat and violence) in manifestos

7 Conclusion

The aim of this GNET series report was to add additional empirical evidence and analysis, which should prove useful to tech companies, that further elaborates and elucidates the difference between violent and non-violent manifestos when it comes to conspiratorial and violent language. For, while there now exists an academic consensus stressing the importance of extremist words that sharply delineate, reify and polarise in- and out-group identities,⁴¹ much research remains to be done on the precise qualitative difference between the structures and linguistic markers that are evident in violent versus non-violent language and conspiratorial language, especially on the far right, and how this encourages an individual towards violent action.

What we have found in this report is both striking and, in some cases, unexpected. Looking through the qualitative analysis of all the manifestos, we can find that the common denominator in all manifestos is the common conspiratorial narrative that the white race is becoming extinct and replaced by non-whites, though the timeline for action and the call to action is brought forwards and obviously tilted in a more violent direction for RWLA manifestos. In terms of linguistic features, there are considerable differences within the RWLA and non-violent manifestos as to the targeted out-group, format and solutions prescribed by the authors. For example, while Hispanics are the target of Crusius' ire, it is black people who are the main out-group for Roof and the Islamic population for Tarrant and Rathjen. What is also interesting is the differing levels of conspiratorial language used between these manifestos; Rathjen is the exception in his focus on the paranoid conspiracy of a secret organisation monitoring his every movement.

Using the Grievance Dictionary, what is evident is how similarities overshadow differences between the violent and non-violent manifestos. We found on the whole a greater percentage of violent and threat-based language in four of the six violent manifestos when compared with that of non-violent manifestos. Worryingly, however, we find in the non-violent manifestos language equal to that of Roof and Rathjen, or exceeding in, in the case of the Der Dritte Weg manifesto, which contains more violent and weapons-based language.

To conclude, then, what we have found is a more complex issue than anticipated. Both violent and non-violent manifestos use dehumanising terms to define their out-groups and draw the horizon for people to take action (violent or not) in such a way that defined out-groups appear an existential threat. We hope the charts and tables in this report aid tech companies, policymakers and practitioners to

41 See: Haslam and Loughnan, "Dehumanization and Infrahumanization"; Reicher, S., Haslam, A., Rath, R. (2008), "Making a virtue of evil: A five-step social identity model of the development of collective hate", *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 1313–44; Leyens, J.-P., Rodriguez-Perez, A., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Gaunt, R., Paladino, M.-P., Vaes, J., Demoulin, S. (2001), "Psychological essentialism and the differential attribution of uniquely human emotions to ingroups and outgroups", *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 31, 395–411. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.50; and Savage, R. (2013), "Modern genocidal dehumanization: A new model", *Patterns of Prejudice*, 47, 139–61. doi: 10.1080/0031322X.2012.754575.

appreciate this overlap but also to use the findings herein in terms of the structure, patterns and themes to identify the functionality of dehumanising rhetoric, how it works and how it can be used to create dangerous ideological ecosystems that encourage individuals to action in aid of a conspiratorial, exclusionary cause. In the interest of academic humility, we do not suggest any predictive nature of the modelling but instead throw the gauntlet down to other practitioners to use the Grievance Dictionary and Baele's archetypes to analyse violent, conspiratorial language in other online extremist communities.

Appendix

Grievance Dictionary: Categories and Percentages

Category	Violent Manifestos						Non-Violent Manifestos		
	B. Tarrant	D. Roof	J. Earnest	P. Crusius	S. Balliet	T. Rathjen	DDW	NA - AFP	TWP
Deadline	1.97	1.22	1.44	2.56	0.96	2.18	1.50	0.96	1.88
Desperation	0.90	0.83	0.71	0.83	0.48	0.67	0.75	1.20	0.19
Fixation	0.32	1.12	0.30	0.28	0.32	0.49	0.75	0.00	0.00
Frustration	0.43	0.76	0.16	0.21	0.24	0.34	0.00	0.12	0.00
God	1.31	0.58	2.45	0.41	0.56	0.82	1.39	2.65	4.89
Grievance	0.34	0.97	0.47	0.48	0.36	0.43	0.11	0.24	0.19
Hate	1.97	1.62	1.76	1.49	1.76	0.84	0.54	0.96	0.94
Help	1.16	0.86	1.50	1.00	0.84	1.25	2.03	0.72	1.13
Honour	0.88	1.15	0.93	1.21	0.40	0.46	0.86	0.36	5.08
Impostor	0.09	0.25	0.36	0.10	0.24	0.52	0.11	0.12	0.00
Jealousy	0.39	0.65	0.28	0.28	0.08	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00
Loneliness	0.95	0.83	0.91	0.83	0.88	1.03	0.96	0.96	0.56
Murder	2.90	1.65	3.03	2.90	3.72	1.88	1.93	0.84	1.32
Paranoia	0.47	0.83	0.57	0.35	0.40	0.78	0.43	0.12	0.19
Planning	2.50	2.23	1.60	2.14	1.68	3.37	3.00	1.32	3.20
Relationship	2.27	2.37	2.77	1.97	0.68	2.14	2.78	2.41	6.95
Soldier	3.09	1.22	1.60	3.46	3.76	1.70	4.39	2.53	3.95
Suicide	1.60	0.86	1.80	1.90	2.00	1.09	1.07	0.48	0.56
Surveillance	1.27	1.55	0.81	1.35	1.28	2.40	1.82	2.05	1.50
Threat	2.03	0.90	1.56	1.45	2.16	0.89	1.28	1.32	1.69
Violence	3.04	1.51	2.49	2.90	4.08	1.33	1.71	0.96	1.50
Weaponry	2.05	1.12	1.78	3.42	4.40	1.33	2.03	1.08	1.69
No Match	68.06	74.93	70.74	68.48	68.75	73.72	70.56	78.58	62.59

Policy Section

This policy section has been written by Inga Kristina Trauthig, Research Fellow, and Amarnath Amarasingam, Senior Research Fellow, at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR) at King's College London. It provides policy recommendations and is produced independently by ICSR. Recommendations do not necessarily represent the views of the report authors.

The key findings of this report carry corresponding policy implications for technology companies as this report provides empirical analysis with possible implications for content moderation policies. At the same time, governments around the world are well aware that reaching individuals early on their way to radicalisation has higher chances of preventing violent action. The report's mixed-methods analysis identifies key themes and linguistic pointers that might detect individuals on their way to being radicalised and committing violent acts. The following section seeks to achieve a threefold aim: first, to deliver concrete policy recommendations for governmental stakeholders; second, to outline policy options and strategic foresight for technology companies; and, finally, in hand with [1] and [2], to serve as a reference point for a future evaluation of tech policies in order to assess dos and don'ts of technology legislation.

With this, the policy section ensures that the Global Network on Extremism and Technology (GNET), the academic research arm of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), is academically advising and supporting technology companies and policymakers on how to better understand the ways in which terrorists are using information technology. This is designed to fulfil not only GIFCT's pillar of learning, but ultimately to improve prevention and responses to terrorist and violent extremist attacks.

1. Focus: Policymakers

The linguistic patterns and quantitative surfacing of certain themes raise relevant points that should be addressed and factored in by governmental stakeholders in charge of keeping their societies safe. In addition, national politicians and international and regional policymakers, especially security policymakers and stakeholders working on prevention programmes, could take note and consider incorporating the results of this analysis when discussing prioritisation of intervention efforts in particular.

- As this report has outlined, understanding potential signals in written communication is important for countering attacks, especially for so-called 'lone actor' terrorism. Lone actor terrorism is considered harder to prevent. Hence the fact that linguistic patterns in an individual's online discourse could indicate a pathway towards radicalisation could benefit law enforcement monitoring suspects.

- However, the report also mentions how any argument for a causal relationship between a person harbouring a belief in conspiracy theories and a terrorist attack would be simplistic. Therefore, caution is needed as not every individual would act out in violent ways. Instead, this might be a valid starting point but individual-level risk factors, such as lower self-control, would need to be taken into account when working towards an efficient but also effective counterterrorism policy.
- One significant takeaway from the analysis conducted in this report is the patterns in rhetoric across terrorist manifestos as they identify potential points for intervention. Therefore, local, national and international policymakers would be well advised to follow the well-trodden field of academic research, which emphasises the weight of spoken words even for extremist action.
- Furthermore, the analysed prevalence of discriminatory rhetoric aimed to separate an in-group from an out-group is not only a prolific and powerful rhetorical device for extremists but is also a well-known strategy to solidify internal cohesion of social bodies. In other words, many politicians from across the spectrum are guilty of relying on rhetoric promoting exclusionary identity formation. While this is not an immediate threat for minority groups per se, the infusion of this rhetoric with disinformation, such as described in the report like connecting minority groups with sweeping, wrong characteristics such as lower IQs carries the potential for escalation. As a consequence, the ideals promoted in many CVE programmes should also be reflected in the society around them, including in their politicians.

2. Focus: Technology Companies

In addition to the report findings and their implications for political stakeholders, the analysis is also relevant for technology companies aiming to rein in the exploitation of their platforms for malevolent purposes, including the promotion of rhetoric and narratives that might encourage terrorism.

- The main findings of the report is that the common denominator in all manifestos is the common conspiratorial narrative that the white race is becoming extinct and replaced by non-whites. Nonetheless, there are also considerable differences as to the targeted out-group, format and solutions prescribed by the manifesto authors. This has consequences for tech companies' efforts to rely on algorithms for content moderation (even if only partially). The report delineated structures and keywords of violent versus non-violent conspiratorial narratives that could be helpful. The varying complexity, however, such as who the enemy is against which the in-group defines itself and is threatened by, points to the need for additional human oversight to assess identified cases.
- Furthermore, existing efforts of tech companies to inhibit not only the spread of hate speech but also dangerous speech is supported by these research findings, which argue for probability but refrain from evoking correlation or even causality between certain rhetoric and violent action. Instead, other factors would need to come together for an attack to happen. At the same time, however, this report shows how similarities overshadow differences between

the violent and non-violent manifestos, which illustrates at least the potential towards violent acts based on discriminatory and hateful rhetoric.

3. Focus: Strategic Foresight and Broader Implications

In addition to the policy recommendations derived directly from the above report, broader implications and strategic deliberations are also evident from this study of the differences in outcomes for those relying on similar violent conspiratorial narratives.

- Since this GNET report focused on far-right violent and non-violent extremists and extremist groups, the most pressing big-picture question is how the results of this study would compare to an analysis focusing on, for example, left-wing extremism. For instance, the most prevalent common conspiratorial narrative that the white race is becoming extinct and replaced by non-whites is likely not to feature. However, the replacement of a different narrative that also focuses on exclusionary identity formation with the potential need for action to protect the in-group is likely. The current threat from right-wing extremism is more significant overall. Nonetheless, for analytical purposes, potentially even the identification of more generalisable conclusions that could feed into machine-learning, the analysis of other extremist texts could be beneficial.



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