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Far-Right Extremism and Digital Book Publishing

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Executive Summary

Digital publishing, sale and distribution of books have contributed significantly to the dissemination and mainstreaming of far-right extremist (FRE) material in the 21st century. Historical and contemporary books that espouse politically and ideologically motivated violence circulate widely and easily online, in both FRE and mainstream spaces. Such books include, but are not limited to: the speeches of Adolf Hitler, William L. Pierce's *The Turner Diaries*, Theodore Kaczynski's *Industrial Society and its Future* (The Unabomber Manifesto), James Mason's *Siege*, and anthologies produced by the Iron March forum and Terrorgram Collective.

Commercial book publication, sales, distribution and sharing platforms play a significant role in enabling the circulation of FRE material, as this report details through analysis of Amazon, Google Play, Rakuten Kobo, Goodreads, and Scribd and its e-book-platform, Everand. An autoethnographic 'snowball' methodology was used, exploiting the features of commercial book platforms, such as search functions and algorithmically driven recommendations. FRE books were quickly and easily located on all platforms analysed.

There are two principal ways that major e-book sites enable the circulation of FRE material:

1. Distribution: of self-publications by FRE authors (through Amazon Kindle, for example), access for ideologically motivated small presses to large marketplaces, and users' sharing of FRE material including manifestos (on Scribd, for example)

2. Recommendation algorithms on all platforms directing users from one FRE title to another, or from Far-Right material that does not meet the threshold of extremism to that which does.

Recommendation algorithms are particularly problematic because they have the capacity to direct users who have not yet encountered extremist material towards FRE books and to actively reinforce extremist perspectives.

Technology companies have already taken steps to remove some of the most notorious FRE books from sale, distribution and discussion. In the case of extremist novels, such as *The Turner Diaries*, searches typically meet a dead end and return purchasing recommendations of books on anti-racism and de-radicalisation rather than hate fiction.

This report recommends that the companies surveyed extend this practice to other FRE materials documented below, using available techniques to understand and interrupt the formation of a network of recommendations which leads individuals towards publications advocating political violence. The report also recommends the use of available techniques (such as machine learning) to scrutinise

the nature of self-published materials, with the aim of preventing reproductions of materials that are refused classification from being published spuriously under misleading titles or pseudonyms.

The report is agnostic on whether such companies should stock the speeches of Adolf Hitler, for instance, focusing instead on potential problems in the way the affordances of search technologies provide ready-made FRE libraries.

Contents

1 Introduction

The circulation of books is an important and effective FRE communication strategy.[1] Long-form texts that advocate extremist violence appear on accelerationist and ecofascist reading lists.[2] These include fiction, such as William L. Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* and Mike Ma's *Harassment Architecture*, and non-fiction such as James Mason's *Siege* and Theodore Kaczynski's *Industrial Society and Its Future* (The Unabomber Manifesto).

Some of these books have inspired the planning and commission of acts of terrorist violence on significant scales.[3] Others, such as the fascist philosophies of Julius Evola and Carlos Videla, propagandise for the reactivation of the world views of historical German and Italian regimes, through political violence, anti-Semitism and anti-democratic authoritarianism. Still others, such as Jack Donovan's *The Way of Men* and other combinations of militant misogyny and White nationalism, advocate violent action to reclaim masculine supremacy and racial superiority. In general, extremist fiction ventilates grievances about lost privilege, provides ideological legitimacy for aversive prejudices, and articulates imaginative visions of political violence as the means of 'solving' what the authors construct as the problems of modernity.

FRE books act as 'blueprints and templates' for political violence, and provide justifications for discrimination and the rejection of democracy.[4] In the current decentralised context of 'leaderless resistance', in which articulate ideologues script mass-casualty events by publishing incitements that are enacted by 'lone wolf' actors, books have a disproportionate effect.[5] Radicalisation under conditions of so-called leaderless resistance depends on the availability of adversarial interpretations of identity, narratives that valorise political violence, and access to networks of dispersed actors and ideas.[6]

Books in particular contribute to all three of these, in an 'accelerationist' context of highly networked ideological fluidity.[7]

1   Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "From Bombs to Books, and Back Again? Mapping Strategies of Right-Wing Revolutionary Resistance," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, no. 11 (2023), https://doi.org/doi:10.1080/1057610x.2021.1907897.
2   Brian Hughes, Dave Jones, and Amarnath Amarasingam, "Ecofascism: An Examination of the Far-Right/Ecology Nexus in the Online Space," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 34, no. 5 (2022): 997–1023, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2022.2069932; Ilana Krill and Bennett Clifford, "Mayhem, Murder, and Misdirection: Violent Extremist Attack Plots Against Critical Infrastructure in the United States, 2016–2022," *GW Program on Terrorism*, September 8, 2022, https://extremism.gwu.edu/mayhem-murder-and-misdirection.
3   J. M. Berger, "The Turner Legacy: The Storied Origins and Enduring Impact of White Nationalism's Deadly Bible," *Evolutions in Counter-Terrorism* 1 (2020): 19–54, https://doi.org/10.19165/2016.1.11; Jacob Ware, "Siege: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States," *ICCT Policy Brief*, July 2019, DOI: 10.19165/2019.2.05; Bethan Johnson and Matthew Feldman, "Siege: 'Sheer Political Terror'," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (2023): 1–21, https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2023.2195061.
4   George Michael, "Blueprints and Fantasies: A Review and Analysis of Extremist Fiction," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33 (2009): 149–70.
5   George Michael, *Lone Wolf Terror and the Rise of Leaderless Resistance* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2012).
6   Arie W. Kruglanski, Jocelyn J. Bélanger, and Rohan Gunaratna, *The Three Pillars of Radicalization: Needs, Narratives and Networks* (Oxford University Press, 2019).
7   Alex Newhouse, "The Threat Is the Network: The Multi-Node Structure of Neo-Fascist Accelerationism," *CTC Sentinel* 14, no. 5 (2021): 17-25; Matthew Kriner, Meghan Conroy, and Yasmine Ashwal, "Understanding Accelerationist Narratives: 'There Is No Political Solution'," *GNET: Global Network on Extremism and Technology*, 2021, https://gnet-research.org/2021/09/02/understanding-accelerationist-narratives-there-is-no-political-solution/.

Here, instead of the ideational discipline of party formations, lone actors embark on quests for significance that lead to forms of do-it-yourself ideological *bricolage*.[8]

In the 21st century, digital communication technology has revolutionised the capacity of FRE actors and networks to generate and disseminate the hate literature that facilitates forms of radicalisation. The transformation of the publishing industry with the advent of digital self-publishing and print-on-demand distribution can be described as democratisation of access. But it has made it possible to articulate forms of vilification that commercial publishing normally rejects and that major distributors do not normally stock.

E-book formats and portable document files (PDF) can be circulated by FRE networks in ways that were simply not possible before digital publishing. The combination of digital self-publishing of e-books and print-on-demand facilities has the potential to exponentially increase the visibility and viability of low-volume niche titles.[9] This is the case with The Unabomber Manifesto – which was the number one book title in the anarchism category on Amazon.com at the time of writing (May 2024) – and the appearance of a novel, originally written as a series of blog posts by sovereign citizen survivalist James Wesley, Rawles,[10] on *The New York Times* bestseller list.

Digital publishing and distribution have proven to be potent enablers of FRE propaganda and an effective means of mainstreaming extremist views. Publishing and file-sharing sites such as Amazon's Kindle Store and Internet Archive have been identified as enabling the circulation of far-Right, including violent, extremist material.[11]

Meanwhile, the exploitation of commercial platforms has generated income and created closed ideological loops for readers.[12] Major commercial platforms offer specific opportunities for distribution, revenue raising and mainstreaming, as this report details. At the same time, FREs share digital books, typically as PDFs, via a wide variety of sites, through links on social media platforms such as Telegram, Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), and by posting and/or selling directly on their own websites.[13]

Major book publishing and distribution companies have taken some steps to curb the circulation of FRE books in recent years, often (although not always) in response to media coverage criticising their

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8   Jasko Katarzyna, Garry LaFree, and Arie W. Kruglanski, "Quest for Significance and Violent Extremism: The Case of Domestic Radicalization," *Political Psychology* 38, no. 5 (2017): https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12376; Arie W. Kruglanski, Michele J. Gelfand, Jocelyn J. Belanger, et al., "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism," *Advances in Political Psychology* 35, no. 1 (2014): 65–93, https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12163.
9   Geoff Boucher and Helen Young, "Digital Books and the Far Right," *Continuum* 37, no. 1 (2023): 140–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2023.2191905.
10 The unorthodox comma in the proper name probably signifies allegiance to the sovereign citizen movement.
11 Ava Kofman, Francis Tseng, and Moira Weigel, "The Hate Store: Amazon's Self-Publishing Arm Is a Haven for White Supremacists," *Propublica*, 2020, https://www.propublica.org/article/the-hate-store-amazons-self-publishing-arm-is-a-haven-for-white-supremacists; Steven Stalinsky and R. Sosnow, "U.S.-Based 'Internet Archive' Hosts Massive Amount Of Neo-Nazi, White Supremacist, And Holocaust Denial Propaganda – Serving As Major Resource For Recruitment And Radicalization," *MEMRI*, January 28, 2021, https://www.memri.org/reports/us-based-internet-archive-hosts-massive-amount-neo-nazi-white-supremacist-and-holocaust.
12 Boucher and Young, "Digital Books."
13 Stephane J. Baele, Lewys Brace, and Travis G. Cohen, "Uncovering the Far-Right Online Ecosystem: An Analytical Framework and Research Agenda," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism 46*, no. 9 (2023): 1599–1623, https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2020.1862895; Maik Fielitz and Nick Thurston, *Post-Digital Cultures of the Far Right: Online Actions and Offline Consequences in Europe and the US* (transcript, 2019).

selling of titles such as *The Turner Diaries* and the distribution of titles by presses such as Imperium that have public associations with neo-Nazis.[14]

Following considerable criticism, Amazon removed Pierce's *The Turner Diaries*, as well as a range of QAnon and other extremist material in early 2021.[15] Print-on-demand provider Ingram Content Group terminated its contract with French New Right press Arktos Media in 2023, with a significant impact on the publisher's capacity to disseminate books on major platforms, including Amazon.[16] As this report details below, however, FRE books remain easily available through major book platforms, suggesting that case-by-case approaches, which target single instances of well-known extremist material or individual presses, do not address underlying problems.

Commercial publishing and review platforms – including Amazon's Kindle Store, Goodreads, Google Play, kobo.com, and Scribd.com – currently operate in various ways as 'gateways' into the mainstream for FRE material. The commercial nature of such platforms offers the additional potential of raising revenue for FREs to enable the mainstreaming and dissemination of ideological, polemical and political material.

Understanding the nature of material that can be considered FRE in commercial contexts, what FREs use books for, and how FREs exploit the affordances of digital book publishing, sales, reading and review platforms, is essential if technology companies are to contribute to tackling the global rise of violent extremism.

14 Examples of such coverage include: Ariel Bogle, "Recovering the 'Aryan Worldview': The Western Australian Book Publisher under Scrutiny over Far-Right texts," *The Guardian*, January 15, 2024, https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2024/jan/15/imperium-press-western-austarlia-book-publisher-scrutiny-white-nationalist-booktopia-removed.

15 Kofman, Tseng, and Weigel, "The Hate Store"; Leah Nelson, "Amazon Often Rejects Porn, But Helps White Racists Publish Books," *HateWatch*, March 21, 2011, https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2011/03/21/amazon-often-rejects-porn-helps-white-racists-publish-books; Nick Statt, "Amazon Pulls White Supremacist Novel The Turner Diaries alongside QAnon Purge," *The Verge*, January 12, 2021, https://www.theverge.com/2021/1/12/22227049/amazon-the-turner-diaries-q-anon-purge-removal-capitol-attack.

16 Kye Allen, "'Arktos 2.0': Deplatforming and Digital Innovation in Far-Right Publishing," *Global Network on Extremism and Technology*, 2023, https://gnet-research.org/2023/06/16/arktos-2-0-deplatforming-and-digital-innovation-in-far-right-publishing/.

2 A Short History of FRE Digital Publishing

Writing and publishing both fiction and non-fiction books is a long-standing practice of FREs. In the 20th century, this typically happened through FRE-owned niche presses, often linked to a party apparatus. A key example is Pierce's pseudonymous (as Andrew MacDonald) initial publication of *The Turner Diaries* by National Alliance Books, the publishing arm of the National Alliance (which also produced magazines, newsletters, CDs and later video games).

Mainstream publishing, with its potential to reach a mass audience, largely eluded FREs.[17] The democratisation of publishing brought about by digital communication, including print-on-demand and e-book technology, in the early 2000s was a significant turning point in the ability of FREs to publish and distribute ideological and polemical long-form material. The digital revolution gave them access to production and sales platforms with national and international reach.[18]

FREs, including the Terrorgram Collective and Iron March, also use digital technologies such as scanners and standard office software to bypass commercial services, by creating and sharing PDFs of historical extremist material (for example, copies of *The Turner Diaries*) as well as newly made manuals and handbooks. Some are carefully curated, designed and formatted to a high production standard. Often, although not always, such files have the appearance of commercial productions, including title pages with names of (unincorporated) presses and publication dates, lending them a veneer of professionalism and legitimacy. Typically, they contain overt calls for violent action and suggest strategies and tactics. The creation of files independent of commercial services (although they may be distributed through them as noted below), means that profits cannot be generated, but also that FREs advocating illegal acts are not required to supply personal, identifying details to third parties. PDFs enable easy and effectively untraceable digital sharing of extremist books on almost any digital platform, as well as printing of individual hard copies as desired.

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17 Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1978) may have contributed to environmentalist violence, and have had a mainstream publisher, distribution and reviews. It does not, however, overtly espouse hate-filled bigotry.
18 Boucher and Young, "Digital Books."

3 What Are FRE Books and Why Do They Matter?

One challenge facing companies that wish to divest their platforms of FRE books is identifying what constitutes such material. Books with a documented association with historical episodes of FRE terrorist violence, such as James Mason's *Siege*, William Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* and Harold Covington's *Northwest Quintet*, are reasonably easy to identify because of their exceptional notoriety, and can be removed from sale and review.

As the results below show, however, this has not always been achieved. Not all FRE texts are as easy to identify. Moreover, companies are not obliged to meet the stringent legal and ethical thresholds commensurate with the likely consequences when making commercial decisions about inventory and its presentation. Academic definitions based on ideological position, or legal thresholds for 'extremist material', may not be fit for purpose in commercial contexts, especially if this requires analysis of individual texts or an assessment of an author's entire body of work. Increasing fragmentation of extremist ideologies and shifts away from traditional right and left political positions, for example among militant accelerationists,[19] further tests the practical utility of such complex definitions in commercial contexts.

The great majority of the books discussed in this report do align with classical definitions of FRE, in that they espouse positions which are anti-democratic, nationalist, racist and xenophobic, and advocate a strong state.[20] All advocate anti-democratic political violence, either directly, through calls to plan or take violent action, or indirectly, by presenting violence as the only or inevitable solution to social and cultural challenges and divisions.[21] Such violence may take the form of militia activation, terrorist attacks or the imposition of authoritarian political regimes, including praise for historical states such as the Nazi Third Reich or fascist Italy.

FREs use books to make ideological and political arguments, establish authoritative ideas and voices, and present strategies and tactics for achieving their goals.[22] FRE books include anthologies and manuals, in e-book and PDF formats, produced by known FRE networks such as the Terrorgram Collective. The FRE texts considered in this report mainly fall under six categories, which differ in format, genre and content:

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19 Kriner, Conroy, and Ashwal, "Understanding Accelerationist Narratives."
20 For example: Cas Mudde, *The Far-Right Today* (Polity Press, 2019); Cynthia Miller-Idriss, *Hate in the Homeland: The New Global Far Right* (Princeton University Press, 2020), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv20dsbtf.
21 Our characterisation of 'extremism' as advocating, embracing or accepting violence as necessary and inevitable is grounded in influential and syntheses of scholarship. For example: Astrid Bötticher, "Towards Academic Consensus Definitions of Radicalism and Extremism," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 11, no. 4 (2020): 73–77; Cas Mudde, "Right-Wing Extremism Analyzed. A Comparative Analysis of the Ideologies of Three Alleged Right-Wing Extremist Parties (NPD, NDP, CP'86)," *European Journal of Political Research* 27, no. 2 (1995): 203–24.
22 Ravndal, "From Bombs to Books."

(1) Novels that fictionally present 'blueprints and fantasies' for race war

(2) Collected political writings by high-profile FREs such as Covington, David Lane, Mason, Pierce and Colin Jordan[23]

(3) Speeches by and hagiographies of Hitler and Mussolini, and uncritical expositions of regime ideology as 'fascist philosophy'

(4) Historical revisionism, including Holocaust denialism

(5) Neo-Nazi philosophy with overt links to the ideology of fascist regimes

(6) Neo-Nazi theosophy with overt links to the hermetic doctrines of fascist regimes.

In relation to types (5) and (6), for instance, the writings of Evola and Savitri Devi, respectively are extremist because of their praise for fascism, linked to doctrines of strife and supremacy, issues in an ideology of redemptive violence that rejects modernity, democracy and toleration. FRE reading lists and recommendation patterns almost always include these figures because they provide a 'philosophy' and a 'theology' that are recognisably oriented to the valorisation of the swastika and apologetics for the Holocaust.

Reading lists are a staple of the far-Right online ecosystem, including, but not restricted to, its violent extremist elements, they range from the large to the small.

Milo Yiannopoulos's and Michele Malkin's America First alt-right reading list, which initially included *The Turner Diaries* and still includes *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, has 100 titles. It includes fiction and non-fiction, contemporary and historical titles, and books by both mainstream and extremist authors, including Evola and Bronze Age Pervert. The 2021 White Boy Summer reading list circulated on Terrorgram channels included just two titles: Mike Ma's fictional novella *Gothic Violence* and a Terrorgram Collective manifesto and instruction guide.[24]

In longer reading lists in particular, such as the White nationalist Colchester Collection, many books cannot be individually categorised as extremist material because they do not explicitly call for violence. Classical and mainstream works of literature, for example J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and Homer's *Odyssey*, are often included to lend legitimacy by association to fascist and extremist books that advocate violence directly.

However, the main point to be made about these lists in relation to the findings of this report is that you have to know where to find them. A Google search for the Colchester Collection and its associated list, 101 Books Every White Man Should Read, will not reveal its whereabouts, and only dedicated trawling of neo-Nazi websites will reveal its present web address.

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23   Michael, "Blueprints and Fantasies."
24   Nicholas Campbell, "'Gothic Violence' a Second Book by Mike Ma [Mahoney] Made Available on Amazon," *TRAC: Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium*, July 8, 2021), https://trackingterrorism-org. ezproxy-f.deakin.edu.au/chatter/right-wing-extremism-video-ebook-pine-tree-gang-ptg-eco-fascist-gothic-violence-second-book/.

This report does not speculate on whether any individual might become radicalised to violent extremism solely through reading books. Instead, it recognises that engagement with extremist material can influence ideological and political perspectives by providing narratives and ideational associations that support radicalisation. Furthermore, the mainstreaming of FRE material, through ease of availability and its co-location with non-extremist material – as if there were some kind of continuum between pro- and anti-democratic, and pro- and anti-violence stances – functions to corrode political inhibitions, propagate misinformation, and imaginatively groom individuals for potential recruitment to FRE networks and action.

4 Methodology

This research employed an autoethnographic methodology, and a combination of digital humanities and cultural studies approaches, established through a 2021 pilot study.[25] It followed the pattern of a 'quest for significance', which has been identified as one of several pathways into radicalisation to violent extremism.[26] The aim was to determine the extent to which FRE books, and therefore ideas, have been 'mainstreamed' through commercial book platforms, in order to further understand how the features of those platforms can be exploited by FREs.

Searches for long-form texts that are known to circulate widely in FRE communication were conducted using newly created accounts. The starting books were:

- Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* and *Hunter*

- Covington's *Northwest Quintet* (*Hill of the Ravens*; *A Distant Thunder*; *A Mighty Fortress*; *The Brigade*; *Freedom's Sons*)

- Mason's *Siege*

- Ma's *Harassment Architecture* and *Gothic Violence*

- Kaczynski's *Industrial Society and Its Future* (The Unabomber Manifesto).

All have been associated with the planning of violence and/or violent acts themselves, and can be unequivocally considered FRE books. We sought to discover how widely available these titles are, and whether they are systematically associated with other FRE texts, including whether it is possible to go from outlying recommendations back to hardcore FRE texts in a reliable way.

The underlying research question here was whether commercial platforms were providing services that effectively replicated the consciously curated FRE reading lists designed for recruitment and radicalisation. We also sought to discover whether distribution platforms were being used by FRE actors to make visible and then disseminate 'clearly-in' extremist material, in particular by constellating recent advocacy of political violence with these established FRE texts.

The research focused on commercial book platforms that variously allow publishing, sales, review and distribution: Amazon.com, Google Play, kobo.com; Scribd.com and its recently established books and magazine platform, Everand. These were selected as they comprise a significant section of the international commercial distribution and self-publishing market, for example by providing sales windows and promotional opportunities. The sites can therefore be considered representative of current trends in the FRE exploitation of commercial platforms.

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25   Boucher and Young, "Digital Books."
26   Kruglanski, Gelfand, Belanger, et al., "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization"; Nikki Sterkenburg, "Far-Right Extremism: A Practical Introduction," *Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)*, 2019.

5 Detecting the Prevalence of FRE Books on Commercial Platforms

Amazon

Amazon reportedly controlled 37.6% of the e-commerce market in the US in 2023,[27] and between 54% and 71% of the e-book and book markets in France, Italy, Germany, Spain, the UK, Canada and the US in the same year.[28]

According to a report in *The Nation* (amongst many), the corporation uses a range of manipulative techniques available to it through the nature of its algorithm-driven interface to contain the ability of the "big five" commercial publishers (Hachette, Penguin, Harper Collins, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan) to step outside its distribution platform. The report states that, to *The Nation*, "the online behemoth exerts its market-shaping clout to create a profit-fixated monoculture in a publishing industry pushed to maximize short-term returns under successive waves of consolidation".[29]

This has a significant effect on the publishing industry, but it also affects Amazon's own curation and distribution of titles; it has historically turned a blind eye to FRE material despite having the capacity to act against the dissemination of pornography.[30] And according to an investigation reported in *ProPublica* and *The Atlantic*, Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing inadvertently (KDP) inadvertently also provides direct affordances for FRE material, by providing the publisher as well as the distributor in a single location.[31]

Ava Kofman, Francis Tseng and Moira Weigel find that "about 200 of the 1,500 books recommended by the Colchester Collection, an online reading room run by and for White nationalists, were self-published through Amazon", and add that "we tested the recommendations for many far-right texts and discovered several that could lead users down a hate-filled rabbit hole, where the suggested books reinforce a white nationalist worldview".[32] The research that we conducted for this report suggests that this situation has not improved significantly since the publication of that report in 2020, despite the removal of a handful of signature terrorist titles from inventory in 2021.

27 Stephanie Chevalier, "Biggest Online Retailers in the U.S. 2023, by Market Share," *Statista*, May 22, 2024, https://www.statista.com/statistics/274255/market-share-of-the-leading-retailers-in-us-e-commerce/.
28 Anna Fleck, "Amazon Dominates Book Sales Almost Everywhere," *Statista*, April, 23, 2024, https://www.statista.com/chart/28042/share-of-respondents-who-bought-books-from-amazon/.
29 Sandeep Vaheesan and Tara Pincock. "Throwing the Book at Amazon's Monopoly Hold on Publishing." *The Nation*. January 8, 2024. https://www.thenation.com/article/economy/throwing-the-book-at-amazons-monopoly-hold-on-publishing/
30 Nelson, "Amazon Often Rejects Porn."
31 Kofman, Tseng, and Weigel, "The Hate Store" and Ava Kofman, Moira Weigel, and Francis Tseng, "White Supremacy's Gateway to the American Mind," *The Atlantic*. April 27, 2020. https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2020/04/white-supremacys-gateway-to-the-american-mind/609595/.
32 Kofman, Tseng, and Weigel, "The Hate Store."

Google Play

Google Play Books is the e-book distribution arm of Google Play, an online store owned by the search engine and multinational corporation, Google. According to a report on *Good e-Reader*, Google's self-publishing service was initially plagued by piracy, but now uses an AI screen to detect problematic texts.[33] This points to a strategy that publishers and distributors might use to curb extremist publications, as discussed below.

Rakuten Kobo

Rakuten Kobo Inc. and the Kobo eReader, the Canadian arm of Japanese consortium Rakuten, is an emerging publishing and distribution platform (behind Amazon, Apple and Google Play),[34] which offers opportunities for digital self-publishing. The site provides the standard features to support recommendations and evaluations, but our searches on Kobo.com for FRE content discovered very little material and multiple dead ends.

Goodreads

Goodreads, the largest book review platform on the internet, has been owned by Amazon since 2013. Books have a homepage on the site, providing a short description, links to information about the author, users' star-based ratings and reviews, information about different editions, and links to book sales sites.

Like sales platforms, it has a recommendation feature (Readers Also Liked) and allows users to create Groups – for discussion of particular books and topics – and book lists (Listopia). The site is designed to facilitate social connections and discussions, and to help users find books they might be interested in reading. The rating, review and social features suggest active engagement on the site by FRE actors in a number of ways, as discussed in the sections below on recommendations and distribution.

Scribd

Scribd.com is a major digital multimedia publishing and reading platform that hosts digital content including e-books, magazines, PDFs, slide-show presentations and audiobooks. It boasts more than 195 million items of content, and 200 million unique visitors per month.[35] Initially a single platform for all content, it is now divided into three platforms which are accessible with a single subscription: Scribd. com for user-uploaded material, Everand for e-books, magazines and audiobooks, and SlideShare for presentations.

Scribd and Everand are the focus of this report as books are found on both. Partnerships with both small and large media and publishing (including academic) companies – including Simon & Schuster, Wiley,

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33   Michael Kozlowski, "Google Re-opens their Play Books Publisher Program," *GoodEReader*, June 25, 2018, https://goodereader.com/blog/e-book-news/google-reopens-their-play-books-publisher-program.
34   "eBooks – Worldwide," *Statista*, May 2024, https://www.statista.com/outlook/amo/media/books/ebooks/worldwide.
35   "What Is SCRIBD, INC.?" SCRIBD, https://www.scribd.com/about.

The Guardian, Time and The Atlantic – provide most of the content on Everand. Recommendation features appear on all three platforms. FRE content is easily found through user uploads of PDFs on Scribd and, in more limited amounts, as e-books on Everand, as detailed in Table 1 below.

	Amazon.com	Google Play	Kobo.com	Scribd/Everand	Goodreads
The Turner Diaries and *Hunter*	No	No	No	Scribd only (both titles)	Russian language editions of *The Turner Diaries* and *Hunter*, listed as by Andrew MacDonald
Northwest Quintet	No	*A Mighty Fortress*; *Freedom's Sons*; *Hill of the Ravens*	No	Scribd (all titles); Everand (*A Mighty Fortress* and *Freedom's Sons*)	All titles present
Siege	No	No	No	Scribd only	Yes
Harassment Architecture and *Gothic Violence*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Scribd only	Yes
Industrial Society and Its Future	Yes	Yes (listed as The Unabomber Manifesto)	Yes	Scribd and Everand	Yes (listed as The Unabomber Manifesto)

Table 1. FRE Book Availability on Commercial Book Platforms

Even on sites where the most notorious FRE titles are not listed (see Table 1), such as Amazon.com, Kobo.com and Google Play, other books by the same authors frequently are. Covington's many novels, all of which have political messages,[36] as well as a collection of polemical essays, are available to buy on Amazon.com and Google Play, and to review on Goodreads. Pierce's *Gun Control in Germany 1928–1945*, which suggests that Hitler's Nazi regime is an example of "good" gun control and that pro-gun advocates should consider fascism as a political option, is likewise available on Amazon.com and Goodreads. Bans, such as removal of *The Turner Diaries* from sale, are variously circumvented. On Goodreads, for example, a Russian edition of *The Turner Diaries* (reviewed in English) is listed, as is *Hunter*, under Pierce's pseudonym, Andrew MacDonald. Moreover, searches for these notorious texts produce recommendations of closely related material, as detailed below.

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36   For example: Geoff Boucher, "Death Cults and Dystopian Scenarios: Neo-Nazi Religion and Literature in the USA Today," *Religions* 12 no. 12: 1067–1081; Helen Young and Stephanie Downes, "Popular Fiction and White Extremism: Neo-Nazi Ideology and Medievalist Crime Fiction," *Literature Compass* 19, no. 11 (November 2022), https://doi.org/10.1111/lic3.12684; Helen Young, "Political Fictions: The 'Aryan' Medievalisms of Harold A. Covington," in *Political Medievalism (Studies) III*, ed. Karl Fugelso (Boydell and Brewer, 2022), 45–51.

Some particularly prominent titles associated with terrorist violence, notably *The Turner Diaries* and Covington's *Northwest Quintet*, have been removed from distribution and review on major commercial platforms (as Table 1 shows), but not always successfully. FRE books are nonetheless widely and easily available on commercial platforms, particularly but not exclusively when users search for notorious titles and/or authors. There are two ways that major e-book sites enable the circulation of FRE material:

1. Distribution of self-published titles by FRE authors (through Amazon Kindle, for example), access for ideologically motivated small presses to large marketplaces, and users' sharing of FRE material including manifestos (for example, on Scribd)

2. Recommendation algorithms on all platforms directing users from one FRE title to another, or from far-right material that does not meet the threshold of extremism to that which does.

Recommendation algorithms are potentially particularly problematic because they have the capacity to direct users who have not yet encountered extremist material towards FRE books, as detailed below. They also typically create what might be termed ideological bubbles of books that reinforce and legitimise extremist ideologies, even if some individual titles do not directly advocate violence.

6 Distribution

Self-Publishing and Small Presses

Digital self-publishing and print-on-demand publication by letterbox pop-up and niche political presses is a key propaganda and commercial strategy of FRE ideologues, as the history of FRE digital publishing demonstrates. In the 21st century, the line between self-publishing (for example through Kindle Direct),[37] and a vanity pico-press or a partisan micro-press has become increasingly blurred. Small FRE presses such as Arktos Media, Counter-Currents, Castalia House, Antelope Hill and Imperium Press are difficult to distinguish from thousands of similarly sized small presses around the world, except for the ideological uniformity of their fiction and non-fiction lists. Third-party service providers are a critical part of the publishing industry, helping connect small presses and individual authors with production, distribution and sales services.

Digital self-publishing is also an important strategy for FREs using Kindle Direct[38] and other platforms, and via service providers. The three of Covington's books available on Google Play are listed as published by AuthorHouse, a self-publishing service for both print-on-demand and e-books. Ma's *Harassment Architecture* and *Gothic Violence* are self-published as e-books and print-on-demand titles, available through all but one of the sales platforms explored in this report (see Table 1). An independently published edition of Kaczynski's *Industry Society and Its Future* is listed as the "Number 1 bestseller in Anarchism" and is number five in the fascism category and number nine in the radical political thought category on Amazon.com, with 4.7 stars from more than 2,000 ratings at the time of writing (April 2024). On other platforms, editions of the book are published by small presses (some of which appear to have no other title) through third-party production companies.

Moving beyond the core sample of FRE texts listed above, as the recommendation algorithms discussed below encourage questioning individuals to do, reveals the extent to which self-publishing on major platforms shapes the FRE ecosystem. Books that are widely read and recommended in the far-right ecosystem, such as Bronze Age Pervert's *Bronze Age Mindset* and Raw Egg Nationalist's *Raw Egg Nationalism*, are self- or 'independently' published as Amazon.com lists them.[39] The direct self-publishing option suits pseudonymous authors as they do not need to register a publishing company officially.

Small presses such as Arktos Media, Counter-Currents, Antelope Hill[40] and Imperium[41] do not typically publish books that are extremist in the sense of openly calling for ideologically motivated violence.

37   Kofman, Tseng, and Weigel, "The Hate Store."
38   Kofman, Tseng, and Weigel, "The Hate Store."
39   Hughes, Jones, and Amarasingam, "Ecofascism," 997–1023.
40   Hannah Gais, Megan Squire, Jason Wilson, and Michael Edison Hayden, "White Nationalist Book Publishers Revealed," *Hatewatch* (June 13, 2022), https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2022/06/13/white-nationalist-book-publishers-revealed.
41   Bogle, "Recovering the 'Aryan Worldview'."

They are nevertheless an important part of the FRE book landscape because they produce contemporary books associated with political positions that have extremist elements, including White nationalism and Identitarianism,[42] as well as historical fascist material such as Evola's philosophy and other Nazi writings.[43]

The repositioning and development of new strategies by Arktos Media – to generate income and influence, following the termination of the contract with the Ingram Content Group, which had given it access to Amazon.com and other platforms – demonstrates how important access to mainstream commercial sales and distribution platforms is to niche ideological presses. This research confirmed an earlier finding that Arktos Media has effectively been deplatformed from the sales and distribution platforms analysed here, as we were unable to access their books through Amazon.com, Google Play, Kobo.com or Everand.[44] However, Imperium and Antelope Hill maintain their presence on Amazon.com, Kobo.com, Everan and Goodreads. Counter-Currents books are found on Amazon.com and Goodreads.

File Sharing

File sharing of PDFs is a hallmark of FRE digital circulation of books within their communication ecosystem, such as through social media channels and Internet Archive.[45] This enables circumvention of removal from platforms such as Amazon.com. The "Rightwing Book Club" Telegram channel, which is part of the Terrorgram ecosystem , for example, shares links to audiobook and PDF copies of Anders Behrig Brievik's terrorist manifesto. PDF circulation precludes the generation of revenue through sales, but making money is a side-benefit rather than the principle aim of most FRE book production. The release of Ma's *Harassment Architecture* and *Gothic Violence* as free PDFs on Terrorgram Collective channels, in combination with their publication on major commercial platforms, demonstrates this. The dual modes of publication and dissemination also suggest that mainstreaming extremist material through the cultural legitimacy associated with commercial productions, and the much larger audiences that can be reached through commercial platforms, is a key consideration for FREs.

The Scribd.com platform functions effectively as an FRE file-sharing site: users can upload documents which can then be read on the site or downloaded. At the time of writing, user uploads of FRE material that is unavailable on other major commercial sites was common on Scribd.com. Multiple copies of Pierce's *The Turner Diaries*, which

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42   Identitarianism developed from the thought of French new right figure Guillame Faye, originally in Europe and then in the US and other parts of the Anglophone world, after translation of his writings into English and publication by Arktos Media in the early 20th century. Identitarianism constructs identity as formed by ethnic civilisations and inherently linked to culture and society, proposing the separate evolution of ethnic groups in a global 'pluriversum'. It adopts a grievance argument that Europeans (and Whites who understand themselves to be of European descent in other parts of the world) are denied the right to the autonomous development of their ethnic group under a regime of compulsory multiculturalism, mass immigration and encouraged intermarriage.

43   Alongside contemporary works, Antelope Hill publishes English translations of German Nazis including Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels and Richard W. Darre. Imperium Press books include editions of canonical alongside modern and contemporary works that align with far-right ideologies, and include some that arguably cross into extremism. *Why I Am Not A Liberal* by Jonathan Bowden, a leader of the UK new right; the book has Bowden declare himself a "racial nationalist" and for the "Aryan Race" in his own words, and features an othala rune (linked to neo-Nazism and the Blood and Soil movement) on the front cover.

44   Allen, "'Arktos 2.0'."

45   Stalinsky and R. Sosnow, "U.S.-Based 'Internet Archive' Hosts Massive Amount of Neo-Nazi, White Supremacist, and Holocaust Denial Propaganda."

cannot be purchased via Amazon.com, Google Play, Kobo.com, or read on Everand, are freely available, uploaded by different users.

The recommendation feature points readers to other copies of the book as well as other staples of FRE reading lists, including George Lincoln Rockwell's *White Power* and the extremist novels of Covington and British neo-Nazi Colin Jordan, all of which have also been uploaded as PDFs by users.

Mason's *Siege*, arguably the most influential book in contemporary FRE circles, is not currently available in English. Searching for it returned two Spanish translations, a copy of Alexander Slavros' *Zero Tolerance*, which aligns with Mason's approach and quotes *Siege* extensively, an English translation of a Nazi SS Handbook aimed at indoctrination, and Jacob Ware's report for the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism on Atomwaffen Division.[46]

Terrorgram Collective and Iron March manuals are also easily found on Scribd.com through title and keyword searches. Files may be uploaded with alternative, disguising titles, but are found by the search algorithm. For example, the Terrorgram *Militant Accelerationism: A Collective Handbook* PDF is titled 404Zee but is the second result in a search for 'militant accelerationism'.

46   Ware, "Siege: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States."

7 Recommendation Algorithms

Recommendation algorithms are a key feature of all the commercial book platforms surveyed in this report. The commercial purpose of such algorithms is to direct readers to books they may wish to purchase, based on factors such as their own search and purchase histories, and patterns of other users. These very successful commercial features have also been shown to direct readers down self-reinforcing rabbit holes of FRE books, as well as books that resonate with extremist perspectives without overtly supporting them, including a significant number of books by authors associated with the militia movement and right-wing survivalism, that narrativise accelerationist beliefs.[47]

Recommendation algorithms appear to create personalised reading lists for individual users, but their underlying nature – by replicating, centralising and concentrating patterns of collective behaviour – effectively reproduces libraries of FRE books and thinkers, in commercial settings. By doing so in commercial, mainstream settings, they can both amplify and normalise extremist ideologies and narratives.[48] This can occur, as results discussed below demonstrate, whether users begin with searches for overtly extremist material or, even more problematically, if they do not.

Of the core FRE texts used in this research, only Kaczynski's was found on all platforms (see Table 1). Searching for it returned recommendations of other extremist material on Amazon.com and Scribd on the results page of the initial search. On Scribd, searching for *Industrial Society and Its Future* returns anti-totalitarian works of literature and philosophy alongside the racist historical writing of the Comte de Gobineau and writings by pre-fascists such as Spengler and Nietzsche.

A questing reader in the Amazon store who began their search with Ted Kaczynski or Mike Ma, respectively would be recommended the works of the other on the results page. That is, these extremist books lead directly to each other. They would also find fascist books: Adolf Hitler's *In His Own Words: The Essential Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, Benito Mussolini's *Doctrine of Fascism*, Costin Vlad Alamariu's *Selective Breeding and the Birth of Philosophy*, the works of Julius Evola, and Francis Parker Yockey's *Imperium*. It is not even necessary to select a text by Kaczynski or Ma to get recommendations of Hitler, Mussolini, Evola, Yockey and Alamariu – the search alone is sufficient. And these are only the overlapping results provided by discrete searches for Kaczynski or Ma.

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47   Boucher and Young, "Digital Books," 6.
48   Boucher and Young, "Digital Books," 10.

Those who search for Kaczynski on Amazon.com are recommended six military manuals on improvised explosive devices, guerrilla warfare, special operations techniques, wilderness survival and scout recon, and signal intelligence operations. They are also encouraged to explore books on 'rational fascism', the 'failure of democracy', Kevin MacDonald's tendentious book on the Jews, the works of pre-Nazi ideologue Oswald Spengler, Michael Malice's *Anarchist Handbook* and Lenin's *State and Revolution*. Not all of these are FRE texts per se, but rather, they service a lively interest in operationalising the terrorist strategy advocated by Kaczynski. Those who search for Ma encounter a bigger field of FRE texts, but with less explicit direction on how to take action. Instead, these evidence a strong interest in fascist experiences of civil war and pro-fascist experience of modern warfare, with titles by Ernst von Salomon, Peter Kemp, Ernst Junger and Yukio Mishima.

To further explore the algorithmically suggested path, after Ma and Kaczynski plus associated recommendations were placed in the shopping basket, the resulting 'frequently bought with' and 'recommended for you' books were placed in the basket as well. For less than $750 and '1-click' away from the starting points, the trolley now held texts by Adolf Hitler's alongside military manuals on guerrilla warfare, anti-Semitic pseudo-histories, novels and rants of misogynistic violence and masculine supremacy, and primers on the relation between racial eugenics and the master thinkers.

No attempt was made in this research to discriminate between FRE texts and any other sort, which resulted in checkout items that included Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin and Mao Tse-Tung, alongside Hitler, Mussolini and Evola, as well as Aldous Huxley, Delicious Tacos, Bronze Age Pervert and Constantin Vlad Alamariu.

Nevertheless, as the next rounds of '2-click' and '3-click' recommendations show, the tendency was definitely towards far-right thought, with a distinctly extremist inflection. At the '2-click' level, recommendations from Ma and Kaczynski consolidated into a literary stable with FRE material at its core. At the '3-click' level, the recommendations branched into cognate fields of works that could count as right-wing authoritarian, but which displayed a mix of FRE texts which espoused ideological violence, and far-Right books associated with the militia movement and the alt-right.

On Everand, FRE material in recommendations from *Industrial Society and its Future* were principally the writings of mid-century fascists and their precursors, including Hitler and Nietzsche, which have potentially legitimate historical and intellectual interest. Goodreads shows a high level of reader engagement (3.88 stars from more than 9,000 reviews), but apart from a list of other books by Kaczynski, recommendation features, are not present on the book's homepage. User quotes (112) are featured, as is one discussion thread, but no user-generated lists. The book does appear on some lists, including 'BAPism' (Bronze Age Mindset -ism) alongside Ma's novels and other FRE books, but that they are not linked on the homepage of *Industrial Society and its Future* indicates that this feature has been switched off.

Kobo.com and Google Play did not recommend FRE books following a search for *Industrial Society and its Future*, but did suggest mainstream titles that are common on FRE reading lists, such as Edward Gibbons' *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. This is noteworthy because

those two platforms house FRE material that is suggested elsewhere and commonly read alongside Kaczynski in FRE circles, including the writings of Hitler, Mussolini and Evola. Whether this is a design feature of those sites' algorithms or reflects a relative lack of engagement with them by FRE users was a question beyond the scope of this study to answer.

The switching off of recommendation features that might otherwise direct users down FRE rabbit holes points to potential ways of addressing the general problem of networked FRE books, as discussed in detail below. Amazon.com searches for Pierce, Covington and Mason (whose extremist books are not available, see Table 1), for instance, come up against an anti-racist suggestion alongside fictional texts, political works and/or religious speculations of these figures, and a recommendation of Matthew Bracken's *Enemies* series on the search page for *The Turner Diaries*.[49]

Expanding the starting point of the search beyond Kaczynski, Amazon.com and Scribd provided the most striking evidence that recommendation algorithms facilitate the dissemination of FRE texts, although this is evident on all sites to a degree. Scribd.com, which featured all core texts in some form, most concerningly directed readers through feedback loops to other core FRE texts as well as to Iron March forum anthologies, SS manuals, other works by neo-Nazi leaders that circulate widely on contemporary FRE reading lists, and books from Antelope Hill hosted on Everand. Searches on Scribd.com return a mix of FRE and countering violent extremist content.

That starting with an extremist text leads to other FRE material is perhaps not surprising, but nor is it inevitable. This consequence of recommendation algorithms raises the question of whether a reverse pathway would be suggested from titles that have not, to date, been associated with terrorist violence, towards those that have. Our exploration focused on Amazon.com because of the size of its market share, its facilitation of self-publishing with a reported history of enabling FRE voices,[50] and the scale of its offerings. The exploration began with Matthew Bracken's *Enemies* series, Clay Martin's *Wrath of the Wendigo*, Bronze Age Pervert's *Bronze Age Mindset* and Delicious Tacos's *The Pussy*, replicating the process described above.

Once these were added to the shopping cart, these '1-click backwards' recommendations converged on to the '2-clicks outwards' list which had been generated from our FRE core sample, detailed above. These included Evola, historical fascist testimony, pre-fascist philosophy, contemporary misinformation, and lots of US Army field manuals – together with new entrants Alex Jones's *The Great Awakening*, Robert F. Kennedy's *The Wuhan Cover-up* and Constantin von Hoffmeister's *Esoteric Trumpism*. We did not select the military manuals, because this risked prejudicing the result. But our restraint was unnecessary. Within '2-clicks', almost exactly the same FRE-centred list as that described above appeared. The list included Ma, Kaczynski, Hitler, Mussolini, Videla, Alamariu, all Evola titles, and yet more US Army military manuals (sniper tactics make a major appearance in this direction of travel).

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49   Bracken's series has attracted wide interest from the militia movement, in the US in particular.
50   Kofman, Tseng, and Weigel, "The Hate Store."

The social features of Goodreads, including Lists and Discussions, also provide opportunities for the mainstreaming of FRE material and perspectives. Some lists are clear in their intent to collect far-right material, for example 'BAPism'. Others collate books mentioned on 4chan/pol/ and similar sites. Such lists, like most public-facing readings lists from the far-Right, place extremist books alongside mainstream and popular publications, as well as classic works of right-wing philosophy. 'BAPism' lists books by Bronze Age Pervert, Ma and Kaczynski, alongside the philosophy of Nietzsche, Greek plays, medieval history and literary works by Joseph Conrad and Graham Greene. The 'BAPism' List is in the top 20 of the almost 90 lists on which Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals* appears (selected as a classic work not uniquely associated with the far right). There is, then, some potential for readers of a wide range of ideologies to come into contact with FRE material after only a few clicks, and, more concerningly, for those who may be becoming radicalised to do so.

A mainstream interest in politics and political books also has the potential to bring Goodreads users into contact with FRE material, through recommendations from user-created lists. This is of particular concern regarding the mainstreaming of extremist material. The initial placement of and subsequent voting for FRE books on these lists strongly suggests active intent to mainstream FRE books that espouse political violence by placing them alongside books that are commonly recognised as literary and intellectual classics of Western culture. A search for 'right wing' on the site returns not only book titles, but also Groups and Listopia user-created lists focused on right-wing politics, philosophy and literature. The top hit list advertises itself as "Books that tell you what is REALLY going on" and mixes extremist material with mainstream works. The top six books, as voted by users include three by the Unabomber, while Mason's *Siege* appears nearby. The Right Wing Reading List has a title that resonates with mainstream conservative interests and ideologies, and has *Bronze Age Mindset* alongside Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* and Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* as its top three. The combination of classic, popular and philosophical works alongside a mainstay work of the far right puts readers a single click away from extremist material; the *Bronze Age Mindset* page notes that "Readers also enjoyed" *Harassment Architecture*.

8 Conclusions: Addressing the Problem of FRE Material on Commercial Book Platforms

FRE books circulate widely on commercial e-book platforms. As with other kinds of digital communication technology, such as social media and video gaming, FREs have successfully exploited the affordances of digital publishing, sales, distribution and recommendations to help disseminate and mainstream their hateful, violent messages.

The circulation of FRE books on commercial platforms poses two main problems:

1. The mainstreaming of extremist material both conceptually and via greatly increased ease of publication and distribution to large audiences

2. Reiteration and reinforcement of core FRE narratives through the networking of extremist and radical texts by recommendation algorithms and user-generated lists.

Both have the potential to vastly increase the depth and extent of exposure of superficially engaged persons to FRE materials. The presence of FRE materials on commercial platforms poses ethical, moral, legal and technological challenges for the technology companies that own them.

With limited exceptions for material that meets legal thresholds for censorship in different national contexts, this report does not advocate banning books. A significant proportion of the publications that this report considers FRE material has potential legitimate interests – including historical and intellectual – beyond the propagation of support for ideologically motivated violence. Removal of works from sale or discussion on commercial platforms by the relevant companies, moreover, is not censorship.

It is a matter for corporations to decide whether they wish to allow FREs to access and benefit from their platforms; they are not ethically, morally or legally obliged to do so. As commercial entities, however, corporations have a responsibility to manage reputational damage and potential loss of profits, if titles associated with terrorist violence circulate on their platforms. Besides the general social responsibility to limit the spread of political and ideological violence, corporations arguably have a particular responsibility to limit potential access by minors to material that glorifies violence. This report aims to better equip corporations to understand how access to their platforms benefits FREs and to provide recommendations that would support the success of any interventions.

In many instances, online distributors have already taken important steps to contain the extent to which their inventory and recommendations facilitate the dissemination of FRE and hate-based literature. For instance, searches for *The Turner Diaries* on Amazon. com, Fishpond, AbeBooks, Better World Books, Kobe.com and so forth, all led to dead ends. Instead, they generated recommendations of literature offering alternative perspectives to those advocating violence. which an individual actively searching for that notorious title is very likely to have encountered. The same is true of Covington's *Northwest Quintet*, Mason's *Siege*, David Lane's *KD Rebel*, and Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. On Kobo.com, Google Play and Goodreads, similar patterns can be seen in recommendation algorithms resulting from searches for books by Kaczynki and Ma, showing that such an approach can be extended to other clearly extremist works with known associations to terrorist violence and organisations.

Actions taken in recent years, such as the removal of Pierce and Covington's novels from sales platforms, demonstrate a willingness on the part of corporations to act. However, these have had limited effects, as this report demonstrates. Moreover, given the ease with which PDF copies of FRE books are shared online, action taken on commercial sites will not prevent the circulation of FRE material. Technology companies can, however, take action to:

- Limit the mainstreaming of books that advocate or glorify terrorist violence

- Close off income streams of extremist individuals and organisations

- Prevent the creation of reading lists by users or algorithms that lead users to FRE books

- Prevent users who search for FRE books from being algorithmically led down ideologically aligned rabbit holes that reinforce extremist perspectives.

9 Recommendations

As noted above, technology companies that publish, sell and distribute e-books have taken steps to prevent the circulation of high-profile violent extremist material such as *The Turner Diaries*, including removal from sale and closing off algorithm-driven recommendations of other FRE material. Similar approaches could also be taken to searches for and purchases of FRE material that has potential legitimate interest for historical and intellectual exploration, such as the works of Evola and other fascist thinkers. Companies could work with lists developed by experts, such as the Repository of Extremist Aligned Documents developed by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR) at King's College London, as well as law enforcement. This would enable corporations to make informed decisions about published works that would reasonably meet criteria for applying algorithms that interrupt the curation of violent ideological reading lists. Collaboration of this kind would address both historical and self-published material.

Self-publishing and user uploads, such as through Kindle Direct and Scribd.com respectively, pose a different set of challenges from the management of recommendation algorithms to prevent FRE exploitation of commercial affordances. False metadata on user uploads on Scribd, for example, hides extremist material from surface-level control. The current absence of an English-language version of *Siege* on the platform, however, strongly suggests that some moderation is in place. The identification of similarly extremist material, such as through collaborations between technology companies, experts in CVE and law enforcement, as described above, would enable such moderation to be extended.

Self-publishing allows the rapid production of slightly different versions of multiple works with similar views, and circumvents the gatekeeping of extremist material by publishing houses that do not support such ideological positions. As noted above, collaboration with law enforcement and CVE experts with established knowledge of FRE documents, including books that are self-published via Kindle Direct and similar platforms, would enable more appropriate curation of recommendations linked to self-published FRE books. It would not, however, address the issue of new publications quickly.

Proprietary tools used to identify the re-publication of copyrighted material offer the potential to help address this problem. Companies already have technologies in place for identifying and removing material that impinges on commercial copyright. The Scribd BookID system, for example, "algorithmically analyses computer-readable text for semantic data that it then encodes into a digital 'fingerprint', that is then compared to newly uploaded files to identify matches and prevent users sharing copyrighted material".[51] Given that FRE material, particularly when produced quickly for rapid publication, typically uses

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51 "About the BookIDTM Copyright Protection System," SCRIBD, https://support.scribd.com/hc/en-us/articles/360037497152-About-the-BookID-Copyright-Protection-System.

similar language, close and partial matches of semantic 'fingerprints' are highly likely, as are repeated key phrases and topics. Flagging new uploads or publications that have similar 'fingerprints' to previously identified extremist material would enable closer review and faster identification of new FRE material.

Global Network
on Extremism & Technology