

The New Extremism: The Alt-Right, Men’s Rights, Neoreaction, and Other Right-Wing Movements

Special Issue Proposal for *b2o: An Online Journal*

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With the US Presidential campaign and election of Donald Trump, the public has become more aware of what observers of right-wing extremism and digital culture have been tracking now for several years: the rebranding and proliferation of racism and far-right populist conspiracism as “new” political orientations. Loosely grouped together by many (including Hillary Clinton in a campaign speech) as the “alt-right,” these movements thrive on revitalized performances of racism, sexism, and ethnocentrism despite what many took to be the mainstream rejection of these practices—indeed it is hard not to notice that until very recently the idea that we live in a “post-racial” society was taken seriously by many commentators and pundits.

While some critical work, particularly in media studies, political science, and history, has tracked the ongoing strength of right-wing extremist movements such as the militia movement and the Tea Party, and hard-right media outlets like the Fox media conglomerate and its many figureheads, so far there has been relatively less attention paid to this new, profoundly extreme, and overtly hate-driven conjunction of a wide range of social groups. In many cases, connections between these groups have been directly enabled through digital tools that are said to promote social or community values, as if these values would somehow organically exclude community-building by extremists. Indeed it has not yet been stressed enough in critical scholarship how many of the values promulgated as reasons to champion the development of social media and online community have led directly to the rise of extremist movements.

This special issue of *b2o: An Online Journal* provides an opportunity for scholars and writers from a variety of backgrounds to examine the roots, connections, and consequences of the rise of the alt-right, and just as much to reflect on what might be done to resist it. Material may take the form of scholarly essays, brief response pieces, and/or multimedia pieces that take advantage of the affordances of online publication.

Topics for the special issue might include:

- The connections between the new extremism and more moderate forms of conservatism (e.g., the so-called Republican establishment and its role in the development of, and resistance to, the rise of extremism)
- The connections between new and earlier extremist movements (John Birch Society, Liberty League, Tea Party, KKK)
- Examination of the various segments of new extremism (NRx, Dark Enlightenment, Neoreaction)
- Connections between new extremism and critical theoretical movements, especially accelerationism

- Nick Land, Curtis Yarvin/Mencius Moldbug, Richard Spencer, Milo Yiannopoulos, etc. as leaders of this new extremism
- New extremism and/as GamerGate
- “Game,” Men’s Rights (MRA), MGTOW, The Red Pill, & other misogynist movements partly associated with methods to manipulate women into sex and their connections to the new extremism
- The role of public online forums (Reddit, 4/8chan, Twitter, YouTube, and more) in the development and spread of reactionary movements
- Semi-private spaces such as the Dark Web, ICQ, etc. and their role as spaces for extremist organizing
- The idea of “whitelash” and the ways that Barack Obama’s presidency was used as a tool to grow extremism
- The connections between extremism and the “post-fact” or “post-truth” media environment
- The visual and discursive impact of racist, misogynistic, and anti-immigrant memes and their use as extremist contagions
- #notyourshield, Red Pill Wives, and other examples of what might be considered false consciousness
- Historical roots of online extremism and its connection to techno/cyberlibertarianism ideals of free speech and nonhierarchical spaces
- The trope of the “safe space,” “social justice warrior,” and #profwatchlist, and their connections to anti-intellectual thought

IMPORTANT NOTE: because of the controversial topics and the dangers associated with speaking out about them in public, contributors to this special issue of *b2o: An Online Journal* are welcome to publish pseudonymously or anonymously, and will work with authors to provide proof of authorship for purposes of tenure and promotion and so on.

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About the Journal

b2o: An Online Journal is an online-only, open access, peer-reviewed journal published by the [boundary 2](#) editorial collective, and edited by a standalone [Editorial Board](#).

b2o: An Online Journal is published 2 or 3 times each year, with general issues (often featuring pieces on topics of a particularly immediate nature) as well as special topic issues, many of which focus on topics of particular relevance to the online context, and/or feature pieces that take advantage of the affordances of networked digital media. Although collected into 2 or 3 numbered and dated volumes each year, pieces in *b2o: An Online Journal* are, when feasible, made available online ahead of their formal publication date.