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Red pill stories: British neo-Nazis' narratives of radicalisation

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Abstract

Patriotic Alternative (PA) is one of Britain's largest fascist organisations. PA members have served prison sentences for terrorism and hate crime offences and MPs have called for the organisation to be proscribed under counter-terrorism legislation. This article employs a cultural and narrative criminological approach to analyse PA activists' accounts of their political journeys into the far right. PA activists' stories are simultaneously personal accounts of conversion and narratives of impending racial apocalypse. The study offers insights into how the internet and social media now facilitate pathways into the far right, and the emotional dimensions of contemporary far-right narratives and beliefs.

Keywords: cultural criminology, far right, narrative criminology, Patriotic Alternative, radicalisation, red pill

Introduction

The far right is undergoing an international resurgence. Far-right movements, parties and politicians, as well as commentators and 'influencers' – and their ideas, narratives and talking points – have entered the political and cultural mainstream. The contemporary far right is not a homogenous blob but rather an interconnected and interacting ecosystem of diverse organisational and ideological forms.[1] The emergence and rise of Patriotic Alternative (PA), now one of Britain's largest fascist organisations, has pulled the country's far right – until recently dominated by Islamophobic, civic nationalist street movements such as the English Defence League and Football Lads Alliance – towards a more overtly racist, ethnonationalist politics. However, PA has almost completely evaded academic scrutiny. Meanwhile, pathways into the far right continue to be understood primarily through the lens of 'radicalisation' – an imprecise, ambiguous and normative concept that is deeply contested even among mainstream scholars and policymakers.[2] Drawing on 34 PA activists' first-hand accounts of their political journeys, the present article dispenses with abstract, clinical and epidemiological understandings of 'radicalisation' in favour of a cultural and narrative criminological approach that tends to the subcultural, storied, emotional and existential dimensions of becoming a fascist. The article proceeds in four parts. By way of introduction, the first part of the article introduces PA. The second part of the article reviews the relevant literature on narratives and radicalisation, theoretical models of radicalisation, and the role of emotions in radicalisation. The third part of the article explains the process of data collection and analysis of PA activists' first-hand accounts of their 'political journeys'. The final part of the article discusses the study's findings. It is suggested that PA activists' stories are simultaneously personal accounts of *conversion* and narratives of impending racial *apocalypse*. The study offers new insights into how the Internet and social media now facilitate pathways into the far right, as well as and the emotional and existential dimensions of contemporary far-right narratives and beliefs.

Patriotic Alternative: British fascism rears its head

> Well, Patriotic Alternative sort of came out of me doing shows on YouTube.[3]

Founded in 2019 by Mark Collett, a former director of publicity for the British National Party (BNP) and protégé of former BNP leader Nick Griffin, PA is an attempt to reunite British fascists within a party organisation for the first time since the BNP's electoral collapse in the early 2010s. PA is an ethnonationalist, fascist and neo-Nazi organisation.[4] PA's leadership attempts to present a moderate and respectable public image. In his introductory speech at PA's inaugural conference, Collett spoke at length about the importance of appearing 'presentable' and being 'well dressed', stating that: 'we're here to start packaging what we do in a way that will make it saleable... to a wider audience'.[5] PA's code of conduct also prohibits the use of racial slurs or 'endorsement or promotion of violence and/or terrorism' at public demonstrations.[6] However, the group's social media channels are 'awash' with extreme racism, Holocaust denial, celebration of Nazi atrocities and veneration of Adolf Hitler.[7] Collett's self-published book extols the virtues of National Socialism, refers to the Holocaust as the 'alleged extermination of six million Jews', and features an endorsement by former Ku Klux Klan leader, David Duke.[8] Key figures within PA are currently serving prison sentences for terrorism and hate crime offences and MPs have recently called for the organisation to be proscribed under counter-terrorism legislation.[9]

The major animating narrative of the contemporary ethnonationalist far right is the so-called Great Replacement or White Genocide conspiracy theory. This is the idea that ethnically homogeneous populations in European nations are being 'replaced' by people of non-European origin – and that this is being orchestrated by liberal, left-wing or Jewish elites.[10] The narrative of White Genocide has directly inspired multiple mass shootings around the world.[11] The perpetrator of the 2019 Christchurch mosque shootings – who published a document titled 'The Great Replacement' on the Internet shortly before murdering 51 people – framed his actions in terms of 'preventative self defence; not as acts of aggression but, as he writes, "a partisan action against an occupying force"'[12]. The White Genocide conspiracy theory, or, what its activists euphemistically refer to as 'demographic replacement' – or simply 'demographics' – is also PA's core propaganda message. A timer on the homepage of PA's website counts down the seconds, minutes, hours, days and years until 'NATIVE BRITISH PEOPLE ARE SET TO BECOME A MINORITY BY 2066'. Leaflets delivered by the group proclaim: 'WHITE BRITONS TO BE A MINORITY by the 2060s – or SOONER'.

PA's deputy leader, Laura Melia, has described inter-war British fascist leader, Oswald Mosley, as her idol – and in some respects PA can be situated within a tradition that extends

back to Mosley's Blackshirts. In other respects, PA is a distinctly modern phenomenon. PA has emerged first and foremost from a milieu of far-right online content creators (live-streamers, podcasters and bloggers), an online subculture that has cohered around them, and the ecosystem of platforms, servers and applications that sustains and animates it.[13] Collett is a key node in an international network of far-right influencers: prior to his bans from both platforms, he had amassed over 100,000 subscribers on YouTube and 60,000 followers on Twitter.[14] Through his weekly live-stream, *Patriotic Weekly Review*, which features guest appearances from other far-right influencers, Collett has adeptly used YouTube to establish himself as a leading voice of the British far right, to bring together a network of content creators and their audiences, and to launch and promote PA. Several former BNP organisers – whose involvement in the far right predates the rise of social media and the emergence of an online far-right subculture – have become organisers within PA.

Another important analogue is National Action (NA): the overtly neo-Nazi youth-oriented groupuscule that in December 2016 was proscribed by the British government and designated a "terrorist" group.[15] PA shares some of NA's genealogy: NA was founded by members of the Young BNP (the party's youth wing), while Collett is a former chairman of the Young BNP. While PA's presentation and strategy differs from that of NA, the underlying politics animating the two organisations are indistinguishable. Several former NA members have gone on to join PA, with some assuming key roles in the organisation. PA leader Collett was also filmed attending combat training with former members of NA following the group's ban.[16] However, whereas NA's membership drew both from real-world organisations such as the Young BNP and the EDL as well as online communities such as the Iron March web forum and 4Chan's /pol/ board, the overwhelming majority of PA activists' journeys into the far right appear to have begun online – often, on YouTube – as this article will demonstrate.

In many ways, PA represents an attempt by Collett to bring activists from the predominantly online 'alt-right' white nationalist movement that emerged in the mid-2010s into real-world political organising.[17] In this sense, PA is illustrative of a broader dynamic within a contemporary far right that is not only *on* the Internet, but *post*-Internet.[18] For Moore and Roberts, the post-Internet is 'not a time after the internet, but a time in which the internet has receded into the background of how life appears simply to be. It is no longer remarkable that politics is mediated through the internet'.[19] Within this context, online activity is no longer an end in itself (as it was with the 'alt-right'), but increasingly, a means to galvanise political

activity *offline*.[20] To this end, Collett has sought to provide – in his own words – a 'safe space' for fascists to meet, network and organise, through offering private, vetted events and activities such as conferences, hikes and camping trips.[21] After three years of building a cadre of committed fascist activists in this way, the start of 2023 saw PA take to the streets as part of a wave of far-right protests against the Conservative government's policy of temporarily housing asylum seekers in hotels. In the summer of 2025, PA members again took to the streets as part of another wave of anti-immigrant protests outside asylum seeker accommodation – some of which turned violent.

Attendance at PA events is only open to activists who have undergone strict vetting procedures intended to weed out undercover journalists and anti-fascist infiltrators. However, PA's leaders, organisers, activists and supporters produce a vast array of publicly accessible online multimedia content in a variety of different formats including livestreams; podcasts; debates; and film and book reviews. Such subcultural media production is part of a strategy of 'metapolitics' consciously pursued by many on the far right, in an attempt to 'disseminat[e] and anchor[] a particular set of cultural ideas, attitudes, and values', and thus lay the groundwork for 'deeper political change.[22] This multimedia content provides a unique window into PA activists' worldview, beliefs and attitudes. The most popular format is an informal, talk show-style panel discussion or interview, where participants discuss topics such as current affairs from an ethnonationalist perspective. One popular topic of conversation is what participants describe as their 'political journeys' or, in the parlance of the contemporary far right, their 'red pill' stories.[23]

'Taking the red pill' is a metaphor drawn from the cult 1999 science fiction film, *The Matrix*. In the film, the rebel leader Morpheus offers the protagonist, Neo, the choice between two pills:

> This is your last chance. After this, there is no turning back. You take the blue pill, the story ends. You wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill, you stay in Wonderland and I show you how deep the rabbit-hole goes. Remember, all I'm offering is the truth. Nothing more.

In the rhetoric of the contemporary far right, to take the red pill is thus to see the world as it really is.[24] The lived experience of becoming a fascist is storied as a process of profound personal transformation, a bold and decisive break from the comforting illusions of mainstream society. Red pill stories offer a rich seam of data, able to furnish us with insights into contemporary pathways into the far right, how its adherents understand their involvement, and the role of stories in instigating and sustaining participation in far-right activism. Here, narratives of racial apocalypse, personal awakening and transformation, and political struggle interweave.

Narratives, pathways and experiences of radicalisation

Three overlapping bodies of literature are of relevance in making sense of contemporary far-right activists' red pill stories: first, existing literature on first-hand accounts of, and the role of narratives in, radicalisation; second, attempts to develop and conceptualise models, mechanisms and pathways of radicalisation – and the role played by the internet and social media therein; and third, literature on the role of emotions in radicalisation.

Narratives of and in radicalisation

Despite the prevalence of research into radicalisation, studies drawing on first-hand accounts of radicalisation are scarce. Those that do exist largely tend to frame radicalisation as a problem of 'extremism' and pathologise radical political thought and activism (including political violence).[25] General problems with the notion of radicalisation – such as a lack of consensus on the term's meaning – are also present, and several studies treat various 'extremisms' as equivalent, ignoring their political content.[26]

Studies drawing on first-hand accounts of radicalisation have relied overwhelmingly on the testimony of ex-radicals – or so-called 'formers' – which 'are always biased and subject to conscious and unconscious distortion' resulting from 'memory loss, changing perceptions and priorities', and 'motivations to portray oneself differently out of either remorse, guilt' or other reasons. [27] Accounts of joining neo-Nazi groups from active members differ substantially from those given by 'formers'.[28] We should not assume that findings based on

the testimony of 'formers' are necessarily valid with regards to others who remain active within radical movements.

Despite these shortcomings, several insights can be gleaned from this body of research and notwithstanding the predominance of 'formers', scholars have also probed the accounts of current and active radicals. While inconclusive, studies among 'formers' have highlighted the role played by biographical factors in radicalisation.[29] Studies drawing on insights from both former and current radicals have emphasised the social nature of radicalisation, [30] as well as the emotional and existential motivations for engaging with radical political beliefs and activism (discussed below).[31]

Numerous studies of first-hand accounts of radicalisation have emphasised the role played by the Internet in providing access to far-right content; a means of communicating with likeminded individuals; and the opportunity to express radical views without the risk of social censure.[32] However, research has struggled to keep pace with the proliferation of the Internet, smartphones and social media use, as well as the development of online radical ecosystems and subcultures in recent years.[33] Gaudette and colleagues acknowledge that their participants now represent the 'older guard' of the far right, having all left the movement by 2013.[34] This limitation extends to several other studies, which likely underestimate the role played by the Internet and social media in contemporary radicalisation.[35]

Two recent studies avoid such limitations and focus on the kind of red pill self-narratives with which the present article is concerned. Lee and Knott have analysed introductory posts made by users of the far-right web forum, *Fascist Forge*.[36] The authors analyse 354 introductory posts made by newcomers to the forum. The posts follow a loose template which invites users to describe their 'ideological journey' or 'political history'. These accounts – which the authors acknowledge are necessarily self-fashioned and retrospective, and which may even be entirely fictitious – nevertheless 'tell us something about how journeys into fascism are told and how newcomers learn from one another to forge their political identities'.[37] The typical story told by users was one of incremental 'radicalisation, not in the sense of grooming but of becoming increasingly extreme, often moving from political liberalism or moderate conservatism through various right-wing positions to their current position as fascists'.[38] These self-narratives drew on 'classic conversion tropes… such as 'searching', 'discovery', 'realization', 'awakening' [and] the 'light bulb' moment''.[39] The

authors also note that various forms of media were cited by users as having played a significant role in their political journeys.[40]

While not an academic study, the open-source investigative organisation Bellingcat has analysed '"red-pilling" stories' drawn from hundreds of thousands of leaked chat messages from white supremacist Discord servers in an effort to understand how 75 fascist activists 'were converted to their extremist beliefs'.[41] As with Lee and Knott's study, several posters whose messages were studied describe their gradual and incremental journeys from so-called 'normies' to committed fascists. 'Many fascist activists cite a multitude of red-pills which were all integral to them arriving at their current beliefs'[42]. Of the 75 posters studied, 39 'credit the Internet with their red-pilling'.[43] YouTube is the single most frequently discussed website in posters' self-narratives of their political journeys. However:

> The specific videos credited… span a multitude of creators […] Fascists who become red-pilled through YouTube often start with comparatively less extreme right-wing personalities […] The users who talk about these creators appear to have watched a great number of their videos. Creators are referenced more often than specific videos.[44]

In addition to these narrative accounts *of* radicalisation, several scholars have interrogated the role of narratives in radicalisation and recruitment to radical and militant groups. For Meier, writing about the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LLTE) and drawing on 30 interviews with former LTTE members, militant groups employ specific narratives or 'interpretative frames' in their propaganda to provoke emotions and facilitate recruitment.[45] Such narratives tend to portray whichever group militants represent as being dominated by another group and emphasise the unjust subjugation of their community. Moreover, militant groups 'use motivational frames, such as stories about atrocities committed against [their] group, to provoke anger and shame which combined with resentment are meant to push people into concrete action'.[46]

McCauley and Moskalenko (2008: 416) have also argued that radicalisation tends to be associated with a certain narrative or framing, or what they call a 'syndrome of beliefs' about 'the current situation and its history'. The basic template of this narrative form can be stated thus:

> We are a special or chosen group (superiority) who have been unfairly treated and betrayed (injustice), no one else cares about us or will help us (distrust), and the situation is dire - our group and our cause are in danger of extinction (vulnerability). (416)

Baele has developed the complimentary concept of ‘conspiratorial narratives’ to refer to ‘stories which integrate a large range of events and archetypal characters from past and present in a single teleological explanation for the alleged suffering of a given social group’.[47] Although conspiracy theories alone do not trigger violence, Baele argues that the presentation of a conspiracy as part of ‘a story coming to an imminent end with the victory of the rightful in-group’, and the suggestion that ‘the solution is within reach in the present or near future’ encourages violence by conveying a heightened sense of urgency.[48] In an analysis of the narratives employed in Islamic State’s *Dabiq* magazine, Ingram argues similarly that ‘gravely acute perceptions of crisis… highlight the urgency with which a more radical solution must be imposed: violence against Others’.[49]

Finally, Halverson and colleagues have undertaken an analysis of the narratives employed by radical Islamists in their propaganda and recruitment efforts and their role in justifying and motivating militant action.[50] Although the authors are concerned with narratives from Muslim societies and culture, their underlying framework and method may also be applied to other cultures and ideologies. Similar narrative forms can be found in, for instance, Christian and Islamic – and fascist – texts. Halverson and colleagues argue that radicals use narratives to generate emotional responses, to ‘establish similarity between the stories that make up... [radical] master narratives and contemporary events’, and to persuade their audiences to adopt personal narratives and understandings of the world that align with a radical worldview, thereby justifying actions and behaviours in service of their goals.[51] Interestingly, Halverson and colleagues explicitly concern themselves with *countering* as well as understanding radical Islamist narratives and offer strategies for doing so.

From pathways to pipelines

Starting in the early 2000s, scholars began to conceive of involvement in radicalism and terrorism as a dynamic ‘process rather than a state’ and to theorise routes or pathways

between incremental phases or degrees of commitment or participation.[52] A second body of literature relevant to the present study thus comprises attempts to conceptualise models, mechanisms and pathways of radicalisation – and the role played by the internet and social media therein.

Linden and Klandermans conducted life-history interviews with activists from organisations 'indisputably perceived as extreme right, but... within the law' although some of these groups had previously 'come close to being outlawed'.[53] Their study addresses how respondents first came to be involved in the movement and their subsequent 'careers' in far-right activism.[54] They identify four ideal types of trajectories of involvement: 'revolutionaries, wanderers, converts, and compliants'.[55] 'Revolutionaries' are true believers for whom 'the movement is an instrument to change the world and to meet with other combatants'.[56] These are the key organisers and ideologues who shape the movement: 'If the organization in which they participate fails, they go on and establish new organizations or take other responsibilities on themselves'.[57] 'Wanderers' are 'looking for others who share their ideology' but are less committed than revolutionaries.[58] 'If the organizations to which they adhere fail to deliver, they disengage and look for other political shelters'.[59] 'Converts' are those for whom involvement in the far right represents a break with the past following some critical event. Converts are driven primarily by anger rather than ideology: their involvement with the movement and its organisations is a vehicle to express anger, meet others who share their anger and to right wrongs. 'They quit when they discover that others in the movement are there for their personal agendas and careers and not to fight injustice'.[60] Lastly, 'compliants' are drawn into the far right primarily following the participation of friends and family members. 'There is little ideology behind such participation', which has more to do with maintaining friendships and relationships.[61]

McCauley and Moskalenko outline 12 'mechanisms' or 'pathways' of political radicalisation, moving from the individual level, through group level to a mass-public level.[62] The mechanisms outlined are not supposed to be exhaustive or even the only important ones. Furthermore, the authors suggest that multiple mechanisms are likely at play in any individual political trajectory and that 'the more powerful the radicalization, the more mechanisms will be implicated', mutually reinforcing one another.[63] We will return to consider some of McCauley and Moskalenko's mechanisms in more detail shortly.

Holbrook and Taylor use data logs of the media consumption of five would-be terrorists in the UK to construct narrative accounts of their radicalisation pathways. The data analysed consists of records made by UK counter-terrorism law enforcement agencies detailing the online activities, social media engagement, and interaction with published media of convicted terrorists in the weeks and months prior to their arrest.[64] Much of the data was retrieved from the individuals' computer hard drives, phones or memory sticks. The authors distinguish between 'belief pathways' (how beliefs were developed and sustained over time) and 'operational pathways' (the preparation and carrying out acts of political violence, e.g. hostile reconnaissance, weapons procurement and bomb-making). The 'belief pathways' charted by the authors consist of consuming and sharing content. In all case studies examined, there is sustained 'engagement with extremist media' throughout both pathways, with two cases explicitly referring to YouTube when describing the development of subjects' beliefs.

Holbrook and Taylor's study of would-be terrorists' media consumption calls to mind the notion of algorithmic radicalisation that posits the existence of a radicalisation 'pipeline' or 'rabbit hole' on social media platforms such as YouTube.[65] The 'pipeline' thesis holds that personalised recommendation algorithms incrementally nudge users towards viewing more radical content. Tufekci, in perhaps the most well-known articulation of this idea, notes how YouTube appears to recommend more and more radical content regardless of topic. YouTube's recommendation algorithm, Tufekci infers, 'seems to have concluded that people are drawn to content that is more extreme than what they started with — or to incendiary content in general'.[66] Such claims are inherently difficult to assess, since YouTube's proprietary recommendation algorithm is 'black boxed' – its complexity and technical opacity functions to obfuscate its inner workings – and can therefore only be indirectly probed by analysing its inputs and outputs.[67] Until recently, there was little evidence to support this thesis. However, several recent studies have produced damning conclusions.[68] In an analysis of over 330,000 YouTube videos and over 72 million user comments, Ribeiro et al. found that 'users consistently migrate from milder to more extreme content'.[69] Whittaker et al. found that YouTube 'does promote extreme content after interacting with far-right materials'.[70]

As of 2025, YouTube is the second most visited website in the world. YouTube's recommendation algorithm drives 70% of watch time on the platform.[71] As such, 'the design of the recommendation algorithm has more impact on the flow of information than the

editorial boards of traditional media'.[72] That recommendation algorithms on YouTube (and likely other platforms) appear to funnel receptive audiences towards far-right content should be cause for concern. As this article shows, it is unlikely that PA would exist without YouTube. YouTube has provided a platform for far-right content creators, including leaders and key figures within, and supporters of, PA and – through its personalised recommendation algorithm – helped them spread their message to receptive audiences.

Although the 'pipeline' thesis is clearly an oversimplification – implying a linear and deterministic relationship between media consumption and political beliefs, and denying any sense of agency to Internet users – the model appears to align with, or compliment several of the mutually reinforcing mechanisms conceptualised by McCauley and Moskalenko.[73] One mechanism, 'the slippery slope', seeks to explain 'individual radicalization in joining a radical group' – which often takes the form of a 'gradual', 'step-by-step self-persuasion' – with reference to the social psychology of self-justification[74]. This mechanism closely aligns with the pipeline thesis: algorithmic recommendations, according to one articulation, 'turn[] radicalization into a stepwise process'.[75] Another mechanism, 'the power of love', describes how individuals are recruited into radical groups via personal connections of friends, lovers and family members.[76] Again, this mechanism can be seen as complimentary to the pipeline thesis: online recommender systems use so-called collaborative filtering techniques that utilise and incorporate the preferences of a user's social connections and the content they share with one another.[77] A third mechanism, 'Group Radicalization in Like-Minded Groups' describes how groups tend toward 'increased extremity on whichever side of the opinion is favored by most individuals'[78]. Once again, there are striking parallels with Tufecki's writing on YouTube discussed above.

To date much commentary on online radicalisation has tended to focus on algorithmic 'persuasion architectures' to the neglect of a more holistic understanding of both the social and psychological processes of political radicalisation, the contemporary far-right as a social movement and subculture, and the online ecosystems that sustain it.[79]

Emotions and radicalisation

Several scholars have called on others to pay more attention to emotional experience in understanding radicalisation, and recent years have seen a sustained engagement with emotion in terrorism studies and adjacent fields.[80] Of relevance to the present study, Meier's research on the LTTE found that narratives are used strategically to provoke specific emotions and thereby facilitate recruitment. Anger, shame and resentment – 'respondents described how they started "to boil inside"' – are precursors for 'mobilization into militancy'.[81] Such findings are consistent with the narratives of Provisional IRA men interviewed by Smith, for whom a sense of injustice – and the emotions experienced as a result – motivated and mobilized them to militant action.[82]

Several commentators have argued that we should also look beyond 'negative' emotions to consider, for example, feelings of nostalgia, pride, community, solidarity and 'brotherhood', hope, enthusiasm and compassion.[83] For instance, Ferguson and McAuley's study of Northern Irish paramilitaries found that their participants' activism became an 'all-encompassing identity' and that they formed 'kin-like bonds' with other militants.[84] These aspects of their experience were important in insulating militants from the stress and trauma of armed struggle and sustaining their participation in political violence.

Methodology

[Figure 1 here.]

From April 2020 onwards, PA's website listed a weekly content schedule of live streams. 'With a number of shows covering a variety of topics and presented by a number of different hosts, we aim to provide a genuine alternative to the mainstream media'.[85] At the start of the present study, regular scheduled live streams alone totalled 11 hours of content each week. In addition to this weekly programming, the PA website's 'Schedule' page also listed a number of content creators that produce less regular livestreams, or who upload pre-recorded video and audio content. Using the Wayback Machine, a digital archive of the Internet, it is also possible to view earlier versions of PA's 'Schedule' page, which feature content creators and

livestreams that, for various reasons, no longer appear on the page.[86] I used an open-source download manager to download the audio from all available episodes of all shows included in PA's current weekly live stream schedule, as well as available archived versions, that were uploaded between PA's inaugural conference in September 2019, and the end of April 2023. (This is when I began the present study began and coincided with a major split in PA, in which several organisers and content creators defected to form the Homeland Party). This sample totalled 398 recordings, running to 1,101 hours and 13 minutes of audio.

Collecting this data was not always straightforward. During this time, some content creators maintained a consistent and regular weekly schedule, other creators' output was irregular, inconsistent and impromptu. Some channels were self-hosted on websites built and owned by their creators; others made use of 'alt-tech' social media and video platforms; and still others managed to evade bans on more mainstream platforms such as YouTube. Some creators' outputs were meticulously catalogued; some were unofficially recorded and re-uploaded by fans and supporters; some were captured automatically by web archives such as the Wayback Machine; others were hastily deleted after broadcast to avoid social media bans or legal ramifications. For these reasons, the sample is not a complete back catalogue of the content creators or their channels, but rather reflects the ephemeral and intermittent nature of much of the far-right media ecosystem.

Once downloaded, I transcribed the audio using Otter, a speech-to-text transcription application. This allowed me to perform preliminary keyword searches across transcripts of all downloaded content. To find PA activists and supporters' red pill stories, I initially conducted keyword searches for 'red pill' and 'journey', before conducting keyword searches for other terms used in these narratives, such as 'awakening' and 'conversion'. Each time I identified a red pill story, I listened to the entire show in which it appeared, manually reviewed the automatically generated transcript, and then coded the transcript using a grounded theory approach. In addition to those themes emerging from the data, I paid particular attention to the foci outlined by Presser and Sandberg in their guidelines for narrative criminological analysis.[87] In total, I identified and analysed 40 red pill stories told by 34 organisers activists or supporters of PA (four women and 30 men), in 25 discussions or interviews, two monologues, one speech delivered at PA's 2022 conference and one song. I analysed a total of 29 audio sequences, running to 12 hours and 57 minutes. I also analysed four written accounts published on PA's website, totalling 7937 words.

In making sense of these narratives, it is important to bear in mind the storytelling context – the setting, purpose and intended audience of the story. As Presser and Sandberg note, ‘narratives vary with the circumstances of their telling. They are tailored to interlocutors’.[88] The majority of the narratives identified and analysed appeared in livestreamed or pre-recorded discussions or interviews. These productions – peppered with obscure subcultural references, in-jokes and euphemisms – are inward-facing, oriented towards existing PA activists and supporters, and functioning to maintain their interest and to cultivate and strengthen a sense of solidarity and community. As such, they differ from PA’s more public-facing propaganda and recruitment material, such as speeches made at public protests or publicly distributed leaflets. However, activists are cognisant that these exchanges are nevertheless publicly accessible and that adversaries – intelligence agencies, journalists, and anti-fascist activists – may be listening (and frequent allusions are made to this fact). The host of one livestream joked that, ‘what I like to do, right, is I like to make it easy for the [anti-fascist] types [and] MI5 … and … just compile a list, and … lots of facts about a lot of our activists’. To borrow from Erving Goffman’s dramaturgical analogy, these are backstage performances, but the backstage here is one into which anyone so inclined can wander.[89]

Findings and discussion

The narratives identified and analysed are remarkably diverse in some respects and strikingly similar in others. Some red pill stories are hour-long monologues, whereas others are expressed in a few throwaway lines; some are matter-of-fact, whereas others are laden with emotion. Consistent with Linden and Klandermans’ findings, activists’ narratives reveal a variety of political trajectories.[90] Some red pill stories begin from complete naivety and disinterestedness in politics, whereas other activists’ journeys begin from liberal or left-wing political persuasions. Others claimed to have always harboured latent ‘nationalist’ sentiments – and described their journeys in terms of self-discovery. While some red pill stories end at the point of the storytellers’ racial awakening, others extend into storytellers’ meeting with fellow travellers and their involvement in activism and organising. Despite this diversity, striking similarities exist across the narratives analysed. Many of the red pill stories identified conform to the narrative structure set out by Labov, for whom a narrative is composed of an

abstract (summary), orientation (context), a complicating action (new event or problem), evaluation (significance), a result or resolution (solution to the problem), and a coda (cue that the story has ended).[91] Beyond this basic narrative structure, further similarities arise from the fact that PA activists' red pill stories typically conform to two different narrative genres: personal narratives of *conversion* occur within the context of a master narrative of impending racial *apocalypse*.

Conversion narratives

PA activists' red pill stories are first and foremost narratives of *conversion* – recounting a process of profound personal, political and even spiritual transformation. Many activists employed metaphors of a 'journey' or an 'awakening' in narrating their political journeys. The sociology of religious conversion – and specifically converts' first-hand accounts of their experience – is instructive here. In a review of this literature, Snow and Machalek note the socially constructed nature of such accounts, which tend to conform to group-specific guidelines for interpreting the experience of conversion.[92] This is not to suggest that converts simply 'parrot the official script when constructing their conversion accounts'.[93] Rather, converts draw on their personal biography, but its interpretation and (re)construction as a conversion narrative is 'colored by the group's universe of discourse'.[94] Thus, while specific groups, subcultures or ideologies 'do not strictly determine the character of converts' accounts', 'they provide the basic algorithms upon which the convert constructs an "appropriate" account of his or her conversion experience'.[95]

PA activists' red pill stories are similarly social and (sub)culturally constructed in nature: many are remarkably similar in form and content. Indeed, several elements of PA activists' stories are also present in red pill narratives from across the broader international far right.[96] However, PA activists' red pill stories also differ insofar as their narratives often present joining a real-world far-right organisation as a Labovian resolution.[97] A typical PA activist's red pill story recounts how the storyteller began from a position of disillusionment and relative political ignorance or naivete, before their (mediated) experience of some world event – the Brexit referendum, the 2016 election of Donald Trump, Black Lives Matter protests, or the migration 'crisis' – or happening upon an online content creator or discussion

set them on a path of discovery. Almost invariably, storytellers describe their introduction to incrementally more radical content through social media. Many storytellers recount learning about white European peoples' impending 'replacement' as a profound and life-altering realisation, and one which ultimately led them to view the world primarily through a racial lens. Several storytellers also describe confronting the 'final red pill': the 'Jewish Question' (or 'JQ') – a term historically used to refer to the 'question' of the political status of Jews as a minority within European societies, but which in the contemporary far right is shorthand for belief in a world Jewish conspiracy and Holocaust denial. These realisations are described by many as difficult to come to terms with; and the taboo and social stigma associated with these beliefs as a source of denial (discussed below). The typical PA activists' red pill story culminates in – and the complicating action is resolved by – the storyteller overcoming this challenge, resolving to 'embrace the struggle' and becoming involved with PA as an activist or organiser. The 'algorithmic' nature of these conversion accounts is further evidenced by the fact that PA activists make frequent reference to other activists' and creators' red pill stories, and comment on the extent to which their own story deviates from convention.[98]

Of particular relevance to the present article is Kathleen Blee's study of women in American white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups during the 1990s.[99] Blee's work underscores the importance of narrative and focusses in part on what she calls 'stories of becoming a racist': accounts of 'dramatic personal transformation' in which activists 'describe moving from racial naïveté to racist enlightenment'.[100] Following Snow and Machalek, Blee notes that conversion stories as a narrative genre typically draw on both autobiographical incidents and ideas from the group to which the teller is converting. In narrating their conversion stories, Blee's participants retrospectively interpreted what they now saw as significant incidents from their past in light of their current racist beliefs.[101] PA activists' red pill stories employ a similar kind of biographical reconstruction with tellers' life stories reinterpreted through a racist and conspiratorial lens. For example, one activist's story begins with his experience of homelessness, which he now attributes to mass immigration and the 'anti-white' prejudice of local authorities. Another activist's story attributes the urbanisation of his idyllic countryside hometown to the local authorities' involvement in a grand conspiracy to demographically replace white British people. In addition to writing on conversion narratives, PA activists' tendency to retroactively interweave their own biographies with racist significance calls to mind Halverson et al.'s claim that radical Islamists aim to 'persuade audiences to align their personal narratives' with a radical Manichean vision of the world.[102]

Before moving on to discuss how PA activists' political journeys are storied as narratives of apocalypse, two further elements of PA activists "red pill" stories *as conversion narratives* are worth considering in more detail.

'The algorithm is real'

As with other far-right activists' conversion narratives, the majority (33 out of 40) of PA activists' "red pill" stories cite the importance of social media – most frequently, YouTube (27 out of 40) – in their radicalisation. What is striking is not only the sheer volume of social media content activists discuss consuming – activists describe 'gorging' on and 'rinsing' content, and the two most frequently cited productions are both over five hours in length – but also how many activists narrate their political journeys almost entirely in terms of their online content consumption.

Consistent with other studies' findings, PA activists' political journeys are also storied as a stepwise process: typically moving incrementally from watching relatively mainstream libertarian and conservative videos, towards consuming outright neo-Nazi content, as their worldview and political beliefs gradually become more and more radical.[103] For instance, 'Horus', a content creator and PA activist from London describes how he discovered and then 'very quickly' became 'disappointed' with civic nationalist content creators such as 'Sargon of Akkad', before moving onto ethnonationalist and neo-Nazi content. Many other storytellers retrospectively derided their earlier consumption of comparatively moderate conservative and civic nationalist ('civ nat') content as an embarrassing, incoherent and immature phase they passed through on their way to adopting a more sophisticated and consistent political worldview. One PA activist from the East of England, 'Hope on the Horizon', recalls that:

> [Y]ou go through all the different Sargon era and the [American conservative political commentator] Ben Shapiro and all that sort of nonsense, you know, the sort of civ nat rebellion sort of rubbish. And then eventually you come across the people like [PA leaders] Mark Collett, Laura [Melia]. And then you find things like [12-hour long, neo-Nazi

> propaganda film] *Europa: The Last Battle*, that sort of stuff. And then, you know, you've hit the bottom of the rabbit hole, there's nowhere else to go.

Other activists describe becoming acclimated to rhetoric they initially considered radical before seeking out more unadulterated or uncompromising content.[104] For example, 'Jacob', a regional organiser for PA in Wales says:

> People say, "Oh, the pipeline [and] whatnot isn't real". No, it is real! Because when you listen, you know, when you listen to the ideas it gets through and through, and it makes more and more sense just logically in your head.

In fact, where PA activists' narratives differ from other first-hand accounts of radicalisation previously considered is that they make frequent and direct references to 'the YouTube algorithm', 'pipeline' or 'rabbit hole'. Furthermore, multiple activists explicitly describe how YouTube's recommendation and Autoplay functions led them to view content that they cite as pivotal in their political journeys. For example, 'Horus' recalls that:

> I started looking ['cultural Marxism'] up on YouTube. And once I did, it autoplayed, because autoplay on YouTube used to be great. And it led me on to Jonathan Bowden… and that was actually on a BNP channel. But the funny thing was that *autoplay was specifically what got me there*. Because the video that I ended up at was on a BNP channel, and I would never have clicked on that. (emphasis added)

'Horus' goes on to cite his algorithmically-facilitated encounter with Bowden – a fringe racist activist, posthumously elevated to cult status amongst segments of the online far right – as a defining moment in his political journey towards neo-Nazism. 'The Ayatollah', a PA activist and content creator from the Midlands, described by *The Times* as 'Britain's most racist YouTuber'[105] recounts a similar light-bulb moment in his own political journey:

> *The algorithm is definitely real* […] I remember one night like, I was, like, folding washing or something like that. And [YouTube] went on to [Swedish white supremacist channel] Red Ice and it was Dennis Wise, the man behind [6-hour long neo-Nazi propaganda film] *The Greatest Story Never Told.* (emphasis added)

'Embrace the struggle'

Many PA activists' "red pill" stories narrate the challenge of overcoming a deep-seated and visceral sense of denial or dread about their developing far-right worldviews and their anticipated implications in terms of social censure and stigma. For a subculture that is homophobic and transphobic in the extreme, there are striking parallels with LGBTQ narratives of 'coming out'. Several activists describe their experiences of guilt or denial as embodied in nature. 'Duncast', a PA activist and regular contributor to the group's website, recalls:

> I listened to [PA-affiliated far-right content creator] Millennial Woes and he was talking about you know, he's like anti-Islam and I was anti-[Islam]… but I remember, like, one video I watched [and] I heard him talking about race! And… I remember pausing and thinking, "Ohhhh…". And I'm thinking of my friends or family, and [thinking], "Should I be listening to this?" You know, it's kind of like I've done something wrong. *It was like a physical – I actually, kind of... yeah, I felt guilt*. (emphasis added)

Likewise, 'Horus', after describing his encounter with Jonathan Bowden on YouTube continues: 'And then I see that this video is on a BNP channel. And *my stomach dropped*, you know? I'm like, "Whoa, whoa, I can't be watching BNP stuff at work!"' (emphasis added).

Activists also narrate the process of coming to accept far-right beliefs as an internal fight or struggle in which they wrestle with and eventually cast aside the comforting illusions of mainstream society. For 'Erberderber':

> To get to where we are, you do you do need to have a bit of trauma, I think, on the way, you know? I had a bit of a hard time, just when I just found out a load of stuff. And then there's all the JQ stuff as well. And that's a whole other thing. And it's just – *you're just wrestling with yourself after that. You're just battling with yourself*. (emphasis added)

Similarly, for 'Michael', an activist writing for PA's website, the journey to becoming a 'nationalist' involves 'navigat[ing] through many mental obstacles'. This process of confronting and overcoming denial, accepting the hard-to-swallow truths of a fascist

worldview and choosing to 'embrace the struggle' constitutes 'a complicating action' according to Labov's framework.[106] Not only does it provide the essential 'spine' of the narrative;[107] in PA activists' red pill stories, the complicating action also provides the protagonist with an opportunity to assert their own agency. Ultimately, this complicating action is resolved with the storyteller becoming involved with PA as an activist or organiser.

Apocalypse narratives

PA activists' personal narratives of conversion are set against the backdrop of a master narrative of impending racial apocalypse: the Great Replacement or White Genocide conspiracy theory outlined in the first part of this article. The far right has long trafficked in apocalyptic fantasies.[108] Most notoriously, William Luther Pierce's dystopian racist thriller, *The Turner Diaries* – which culminates in an apocalyptic race war – has inspired far-right terrorist attacks including the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and the 1999 London nail bombings.[109] However, Pierce's screed is only the most infamous amongst a canon of other fictional works such as Jean Raspail's *The Camp of the Saints*, which together constitute a rich subcultural apocalyptic imaginary.[110] PA activists are immersed in these portrayals of looming racial catastrophe: in 2023, Collett hosted a live-streamed 'book club' discussion of Raspail's *The Camp of the Saints*, and activists make frequent allusions to an anticipated impending social collapse – and what they regard as the inevitable racial conflict that would follow – in their online communications.

In their red pill stories, PA activists make explicit and direct references to the Great Replacement or White Genocide conspiracy theory, often euphemistically referred to as 'demographic replacement' – or simply 'demographics'. 'Horus' describes his reaction to reading an article about the 2011 census, which claimed that the UK was on course to become a 'Muslim majority' nation:

> I started thinking in terms of demographics. So, this is what I mean by the first red pill, right? When you start – when you have it pointed out to you that, you know, your country is becoming non-British. That's radicalising… And I mean, radicalising in the literal sense, you know, I'm not talking about in the counterterrorism sense, right? I'm talking, you

> know, it makes you think of the radix of things, you know, the fundamentals, the basis of things […] *When you realise that what you have is going to cease to exist, that things are dwindling towards an extinction point of some kind… that makes you start thinking in a different way*. (emphasis added)

At other junctures, storytellers' references to impending racial apocalypse are more oblique and inferred. Elsewhere, the exact nature of the looming catastrophe remains unsaid – or perhaps so horrific as to be *unspeakable*.[111] 'Charlie Big Potatoes' – who is currently serving a prison sentence for sharing documents written by fascist mass shooters – recalls that after watching a 6-hour long neo-Nazi propaganda film:

> *I understood the position our people were in and on how dire it really, truly was and is*. And from then on, I felt like I couldn't ever… hold any other position than the one that I hold now because I wouldn't be being true to myself or to my people.

Scholars have shown how such apocalyptic narratives can spur and sustain violence.[112] In his analysis of the narratives used by national leaders to justify their decisions to go to war, Smith finds that the 'narrative foundations' for violence:

> lie in the *apocalyptic* mode of narration... This most powerful of all narrative genres enables the cultural constraints on violence to be overcome and for support to eventuate for the sacrifice of priceless human lives... When radical evil is afoot in the world there can be no compromise, no negotiated solution... In such apocalyptic narratives events are seen as unequivocally world-historical, and as in need of heroic interventions, for the object of struggle is the future destiny of the planet or civilization.[113]

Of relevance to the present study, Nilsson analyses the writings of white nationalist mass shooters.[114] He finds that they share an 'identificatory logic of... "white/us" and "non-white/them,"... locked in an apocalyptic struggle between good and evil, where the rationale for coming to terms with evil is its annihilation; that is, a genocidal imperative'.[115] While I do not dispute that millenarian narratives can incite violence, here I wish to draw attention to two related elements, which contribute to a more holistic understanding of *how* such narratives might take hold. These are, first, the meso-level of mainstream discourse that provides the broader cultural context in which such subcultural narratives can be articulated

and assimilated; and second, the micro-level subjective and emotional dimensions of such narratives among their audience.

Extreme or mainstream?

While the apocalyptic narratives articulated by PA activists may seem fringe when presented as 'neo-Nazi conspiracy theories', they draw on and consolidate several ideas and tropes that circulate in mainstream conservative and right-wing discourse.[116] Expressions of demographic anxiety, narratives of the decline – or destruction – of (white, masculine) Western civilization, and conspiracy theories about 'Cultural Marxists' and a 'globalist elite' orchestrating such developments from behind the scenes are increasingly commonplace within mainstream British political discourse.[117] A growing constituency among mainstream right-wing commentators in the UK, including elected Conservative politicians, is advancing apocalyptic and conspiratorial narratives to make sense of political events.[118] Such accounts are often laden with Islamophobic and anti-Semitic tropes. In February 2024, the former Home Secretary and sitting Conservative MP, Suella Braverman, claimed that 'the Islamists... are in charge now' and that Britain is 'sleep-walking into... a ghettoised society' in which 'British values' are endangered.[119] In the same week, another Conservative MP, Lee Anderson, claimed that the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, who is a Muslim, has 'given our capital city away to his mates', and that 'Islamists' have 'got control of Khan, and they've got control of London.' Mainstream journalists and authors have espoused similar rhetoric. *Times* columnist Melanie Phillips, in her 2006 book *Londonistan* has described multiculturalism as an 'attack on the nation', imposed by 'the revolutionary left'.[120] Conservative commentator Douglas Murray's 2017 international bestseller, *The Strange Death of Europe* advances the thesis is that Europe is dying — or being murdered — by hordes of Muslim immigrants, aided in their task by liberal politicians.[121]

The mainstreaming of such ideas has significant implications for the far right's ability to appeal to prospective adherents. For Munn, radicalisation proceeds in three stages: normalisation, acclimation, and dehumanisation.[122] Normalisation and acclimation describe the processes whereby individuals are exposed to, and through familiarity, conditioned to accept incrementally radical ideas and political positions. Importantly, such stages occur, at

least in part, 'through psychological habituation rather than conscious, rational affirmation'.[123] The circulation of the kinds of ideas described above within mainstream political discourse primes prospective adherents to be amenable to more virulent and integrated articulations of the same ideas. The White genocide / Great Replacement conspiracy theory consolidates a series of often vague and nebulous claims into an altogether more coherent, satisfying – and seductive – unifying theory.[124] Indeed, Collett and other far-right influencers owe much of their success on platforms such as YouTube to their ability to bridge the gap between white nationalist rhetoric and mainstream (conservative) public discourse.[125]

'Black-pilled'

In addition to the meso-level of mainstream discourse that provides the broader cultural context in which apocalyptic subcultural narratives can be articulated – and in which prospective adherents can become habituated to them – we should also consider the micro-level emotional and affective qualities of such narratives. Elsewhere, cultural criminologists have attended to the emotional and existential dimensions of radical political subcultures.[126] A consideration of the emotional dimensions of PA activists' red pill stories also proves insightful. The narratives considered here are shot through with an array of different emotions: hatred, anger, fear, resentment, alienation and anxiety – as well as feelings of nostalgia, pride, community, solidarity and 'brotherhood', hope, enthusiasm and compassion.[127] However, one aspect of these narratives is particularly striking: PA activists' red pill stories are also stories of confronting impending racial and civilisational catastrophe.

Several activists' stories recount the experience of coming to terms with living through racial apocalypse. Within the subcultural vocabulary of the contemporary far right,[128] a phrase has developed to describe the sense of isolation, mourning, despair and nihilism that this realisation precipitates: the black pill. Academic treatment of the black pill has tended so far to focus on the incel subculture.[129] Within the context of the contemporary far right, this term simultaneously describes: a grim assessment of the social, demographic and political conjuncture; the resulting emotional state; and the politics that follow. All three components are succinctly expressed in an exchange between two co-hosts of a PA-affiliated podcast.

Ash	How did you deal with the black pill phase? Because, like, for me… that was really tough for me. I spent a lot of time crying.
Nativist Concern	Yeah, you know, I agree that – that once you find out just how the system works, what we're up against, and the people that control it, and the devious means that they've tried to undermine our people, there is that manic phase that I think a lot of us go through. And it is – it is a dark place. But I was able to get through that without getting arrested or anything like that, [without] doing something stupid and immediate based on emotion… Yeah, it's really back-against-the-wall stuff, and we really have nothing to lose. Literally, our people will be wiped out within a century if we can't undo this system that is basically destroying us by definition.
Ash	Well, yeah, I mean, that is ultimately the black pill realisation that I came up against. "Wow, we're not just a little bit fucked by, you know, global capitalism and stuff. I mean, we're really, really in the shit". You say, "Well, I'm just one guy, how can I do this?" You know, and like, the obvious option for many men is the [Christchurch shooter] route.

In this excerpt the interlocutors share a bleak assessment of their predicament: '*We're really, really in the shit*'; '*Our people will be wiped out within a century*'. The resulting emotional state is '*a dark place*'. 'Ash' (who at the time of writing is serving a lengthy prison sentence following his conviction under counter-terrorism legislation) describes being brought to tears as he came to terms with what he believed to be the looming existential threat faced by white people: '*I spent a lot of time crying*'. There are parallels here with 'ecological grief', a profound sense of anxiety, or hopelessness experienced in relation to the anticipated effects of climate breakdown.[130] Finally, the political implications of such an assessment are spelled out – it is too late to effect any political solution and, consequently, terroristic mass murder is '*the obvious option*'.

Moore and Roberts describe as *black-pilled* a range of terroristic neo-Nazi groups that reject political solutions and desire only to accelerate what they see as inevitable social collapse so that they can build a new order in the ashes of the old.[131] However, for PA activists black-pilled thinking and the politics it implies is to be shunned and overcome. Indeed, those seen as unduly pessimistic are accused of being 'feds': *agents provocateurs* seeking to induce other activists to violence and to discredit their cause. Collett and his followers are acutely aware that their every move is closely scrutinised by intelligence agencies and law enforcement, and that any endorsement of political violence would quickly result in PA's proscription under counter-terrorism legislation. It is perhaps for this reason that the intense urgency of PA's apocalyptic rhetoric seems difficult to reconcile with the political strategy of 'community building' (through neo-Nazi social events) and 'metapolitics' (subcultural multimedia production) publicly prescribed by Collett. For many others on the British far right, such as former BNP chairman Nick Griffin, it is already 'Too late for a political solution to the demographic & social crisis of the West'.[132]

For Awan, Jihadi websites, forums and blogs 'may serve an important function in subsuming… political… dissent, and so providing a conduit and framework for its non-violent expression'.[133] Consequently, this digital ecosystem – and the online subculture it sustains and animates – 'can have a cathartic function, allowing audiences to vent their anger and frustration without resorting to violent means'.[134] To date – at least as far as is known publicly – no PA supporters have attempted to carry out terror attacks, and it seems that for now PA may also be fulfilling such a function on the British far right. However, despite its stated commitment to a political solution to what its activists believe to be an urgent existential crisis, PA finds itself under siege. The group's attempts to register as a political party have repeatedly been stonewalled by the Electoral Commission, its leaders have repeatedly had their personal bank accounts closed, several key organisers are now serving lengthy prison sentences, and activists have had bail conditions imposed preventing them from contacting other PA members. Meanwhile, since 2017, MI5 and counter-terrorism police claim to have disrupted around 40 late-stage terror attack plots, with the threat posed by 'extreme right-wing terrorism' recently described as 'on an upward trajectory'.[135] Furnished with a narrative of impending racial apocalypse, PA activists and their fellow travellers may grow increasingly frustrated with legitimate means of achieving their political goals.

Conclusion

This article has employed a cultural and narrative criminological approach to examine British neo-Nazi activists' first-hand accounts of their political journeys. PA activists' red pill stories offer a rich seam of data that can furnish criminologists and others with novel insights into contemporary pathways into the far right. These narratives convey the lived experience of becoming a fascist – the often overlooked social, emotional and political dimensions of 'radicalisation' – unrestricted by the inhibitions and distortions of reformed and repentant former activists, on which so much research has depended. Racist activists' red pill stories tell us how they understand their own involvement in far-right politics, and the role of narratives in instigating and sustaining their participation. Consistent with other research, this study found remarkable uniformity across 34 activists' accounts of their politicisation. PA activists' red pill stories typically conform to two different narrative genres – with personal narratives of conversion, personal awakening and transformation interweaving with a master narrative of impending racial apocalypse. In sharing these stories with each other, PA activists are also reaffirming and reinforcing their political identities. Further research is needed to understand how mediated pathways into the far right are developing, including in response to changes implemented by social media platforms to their recommendation algorithms. PA activists now claim that YouTube's recommendation algorithm no longer funnels users towards far-right content in the same way it did a few years ago, and recent research suggests that there is some truth to such claims.[136] Further research can also help identify crucial nodes or waypoints along such pathways that might be targeted for intervention by those seeking to disrupt or intervene in far-right recruitment.

Figures

PATRIOTIC ALTERNATIVE LIVE STREAM SCHEDULE	
MON	Tea Time with Sam and Laura: 7pm - 8.30pm
TUES	The White Butterfly: 7pm - 9pm
WEDS	Patriotic Weekly Review: 7pm - 9pm
THURS	P.A. Talk: 8.30pm - 10pm A topical panel show hosted by Si & Jimbo with regular comedy segments, a quiz and a different guest each week. "A show by the activists, for the activists" - Sam Melia.
FRI	
SAT	
SUN	Mood of the Nation: 6pm - 8pm Patriotic Alternative Community Stream: 7pm - 9pm

Figure 1. Patriotic Alternative's weekly live stream schedule.

Notes

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