

Abstract

Despite women's historical involvement in far-right movements, their motivations, interests, and experiences in these groups remain fairly understudied. What follows from this phenomenon is a mismatch between analysts' expectations and far-right women's behaviors. The lack of substantial research that focuses on women's narratives and recollections of their experiences leads outside observers to project into these individuals their assumptions on women's positions. A recent replication of this phenomenon is seen in analyses of alt-right women, particularly in their support for a movement notably known for its misogynistic stances. To bridge the methodological gap between far-right researchers and far-right women, I analyze alt-right women's motivations in engaging with the group, as well as their explanations of how the movement is aligned to their interests. Additionally, I engage with women's perspectives on accusations regarding misogyny in the alt-right and the lack of space and support for women's involvement.

To access their perspectives, I conducted a non-participative netnography research on 25 alt-right women. I analyzed their social media profiles, websites, blogs, interviews, and podcasts on the subjects of women's interests in the alt-right and discussions on their experiences in the movement. The analysis showed that women actively support and help to construct the alt-right's strict stances on gender, although this does not entail they should be excluded from actively fomenting the movement. I conclude that there is both a need and an advantage in engaging with women's perspectives in women's terms, as such an approach will provide analysts and counter/de-radicalization professionals with a more realistic framework on how women operate within such groups and make sense of their experiences.

Keywords

Alt-right; far-right; gender; women's roles; motivations and expectations; netnography.

Title

Roles Women Play in the Alt-Right: Aspirations and Limitations.