

Why so Extreme?: A Critical Examination of Academic Literature  
on the Internet and Canadian Right-Wing Extremism

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## Abstract

The paper examines how scholars study the internet's role in the rise of right-wing extremism in Canada. The coding of thirty academic articles published between 2020 and 2023 reveals that (1) researchers conduct content analyses of social media. They often label people and their posts as “extremist” by association with the post’s page rather than considering what the individuals actually write. (2) Scholars have different definitions of right-wing extremism. (3) While the field is vibrant, scholars consistently fail to engage in a dialogue with extremists to gain a deeper understanding of their beliefs. The results suggest that it is time to adopt a more ethnographic lens to grasp why people fall victim to extremist views. Academic researchers might cause even more extremism with their labelling.

## Introduction

Public Safety Canada released a report in 2018 that stated right-wing extremism constitutes one of the biggest threats to Canadians. Since the tragic events of 9-11, the world has mobilized (especially in airports) to counter Islamic terrorism, nearly twenty years after the attack on the United States of America, the Canadian government is shifting its attention to domestic right-wing terrorism. The report also specified that Canadians who hold right-wing extremist views have an active online presence, using internet forums to exchange ideas and promote violence.<sup>1</sup> This paper critically examines the current research while making suggestions for future research and argues that more research should attempt to understand the motivations of right-wing extremists and that arbitrarily labelling people as right-wing extremists could lead to people dragging their heels and becoming more extreme. To avoid the “errors” of other

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<sup>1</sup> Public Safety Canada, “2018 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada: Building a Safe and Resilient Canada” (Government of Canada, April 2019), 8, <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/pblc-rprt-trrrsm-thrt-cnd-2018/pblc-rprt-trrrsm-thrt-cnd-2018-en.pdf>.

researchers, the section on definitions of extremism precedes the one on findings. After an in-depth explanation of the selection of the corpus, the analysis will then define the methodological approach through multiple sociological theories and suggest how research on extremism can be improved in the future. While a diverse group of researchers have investigated how extremists communicate online, there has been little research to understand their motivations and why they hold their beliefs. The results suggest that it is time to adopt a more ethnographic lens to grasp why people fall victim to extremist views.

### **Corpus and Methodology**

This study analyzed a corpus of thirty articles and coded them for themes using grounded theory.<sup>2</sup> The corpus was selected using the terms “right-wing extremism or far-right or right-wing extremist”, and “internet or online or social media”, and “in Canada” in the University of Alberta’s library search engine which produced 288 results. Limiting results to academic articles published in English since 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic exposed more extreme politics and forced people to interact online rather than in person<sup>3</sup> left the corpus with sixty-six results. Finally, several duplicated articles, a non-academic book chapter, and an article that had nothing to do with the topic<sup>4</sup> were removed leaving the corpus with thirty articles.

Applying Urquhart’s grounded theory led to four variables: (1) Authors background, (2) Type of research, (3) Tone, and (4) Media Analyzed. The first variable looked at the researcher’s background, and included codes based on the researchers’ race, gender, and field of study. The second variable looked at the type of research conducted five codes emerged: “content analysis,”

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<sup>2</sup> Urquhart, *Grounded Theory for Qualitative Research*.

<sup>3</sup> Garth Davies, Edith Wu, and Richard Frank, “A Witch’s Brew of Grievances: The Potential Effects of COVID-19 on Radicalization to Violent Extremism,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 46, no. 11 (November 2, 2021): 2328, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2021.1923188>.

<sup>4</sup> For example, an article about post-WWII Japan that made it through the filters because one of the sources had the words Right-Wing Extremist in it.

“ethnography,” “policy papers,” “comparative analysis” and “case studies.” The third variable looked at the tone of the paper and led to three codes: “villainization,” “neutral,” and “understanding.” The final variable was the type of media analyzed by the authors two codes emerged: “Mainstream Social Media Websites,” and “Alternative Social Media Websites.”

## Definitions

Too often authors assume everyone shares their understanding of right-wing extremism. The analysis of the literature exposes the variations. The Center for Research on Extremism defines right-wing extremism as an ideology characterized by its anti-democratic views towards equality.<sup>5</sup> They also argue that Right-wing extremists typically hold nationalistic, racist, homophobic, xenophobic, transphobic, and authoritarianist views. Randy Blazek, a professor of Sociology at Portland State University argues that American and Canadian right-wing extremists also have anti-communist views, are opposed to diversity and inclusion, and advance nationalistic and hyper-masculine positions.<sup>6</sup> Michael Dimock, President of the think tank The Pew Research Center, points out that in a polarized society it becomes difficult to tell where mainstream right-wing ends and the far-right begins.<sup>7</sup> To counter this, researchers have begun to conceptualize right-wing extremism using an interdisciplinary lens focusing on political, cultural studies, social movements, criminological, and psychological approaches.<sup>8</sup> Through each

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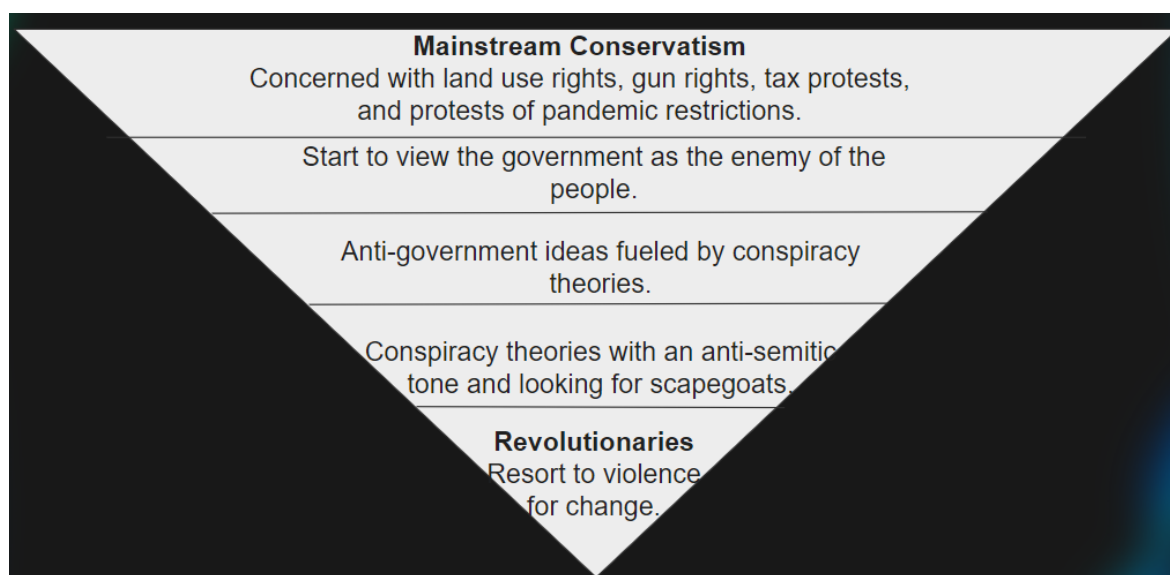
<sup>5</sup> Pietro Castelli Gattinara, and Iris Beau Segers, “What explains far-right mobilization?,” *Center for Research on Extremism* (September 7, 2020), <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/groups/compendium/what-explains-far-right-mobilization.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Randy Blazek, “Understanding Extremism: Frames of Analysis of the Far Right,” in *Right-Wing Extremism in Canada and the United States*, ed. Barbara Perry, Jeff Gruenewald, and Ryan Scrivens, Palgrave Hate Studies (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022), 24, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99804-2\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99804-2_2).

<sup>7</sup> Michael Dimock et al., “Political Polarization in the American Public” (Pew Research Center, 2014), <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2014/06/12/section-1-growing-ideological-consistency/>.

<sup>8</sup> Blazek, “Understanding Extremism,” 25.

discipline scholars agree that right-wing extremism works like a funnel (See Figure 1), with mainstream conservatism being at the top focused on land use rights, gun rights, tax protests, and protests of pandemic restrictions. Individuals closer to the bottom of the funnel frame the government as the enemy of the people. Which creates an environment that fuels conspiracy theories, often scapegoating Jews. Revolutionaries who resort to violence to further their movement find themselves at the end of the funnel.<sup>9</sup> In other words, though people may hold mainstream conservative views, once they penetrate the right-wing funnel, they will likely descend into extremism. This tendency explains why many of the studies done on extremism include mainstream conservatives.



**Figure 1**

## **Findings**

### *Authors Background*

The corpus was composed of seventy-eight authors from diverse backgrounds which allowed them to come at extremism from diverse perspectives. Almost every article focused on

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<sup>9</sup> Blazak, "Understanding Extremism," 40.

more than one minority or oppressed group, whether that is people of colour, sexual minorities, women, Jewish people, or religious minorities. The researchers examine what extremists say about these oppressed groups and how it might affect them. Ahmed Al-Rawi director of the Disinformation Project for instance, in “Political Memes and Fake News Discourses on Instagram,” looks at posts that include hate toward religious minorities, Jewish people, women, and the media, all of which are consistent targets for right-wing extremists.<sup>10</sup> Another example is Kayla Preston a grad student at the University of Toronto who analyses right-wing extremists’ hate towards people of colour, religious minorities, sexual minorities, and immigrants.<sup>11</sup> The only articles that seemed to fail to look at the issue through an diverse lens were the ones that were focused on policy recommendations, this could be due the technical writing style, which focuses on the crime not the victim.

Regarding the gender of the authors, while the difference is lower than expected, male researchers still outnumber their female counterparts (See Figure 2). Though it is encouraging to note that despite the smaller number of female authors, gender issues are still heavily discussed throughout the corpus, one example of this being Zeinab Farokhi, a gender studies professor who wrote about how the 2022 Freedom Convoy affected women.<sup>12</sup> Given that extremist movements are generally misogynistic it seems that gender is consistently brought up even if it is not explicit.

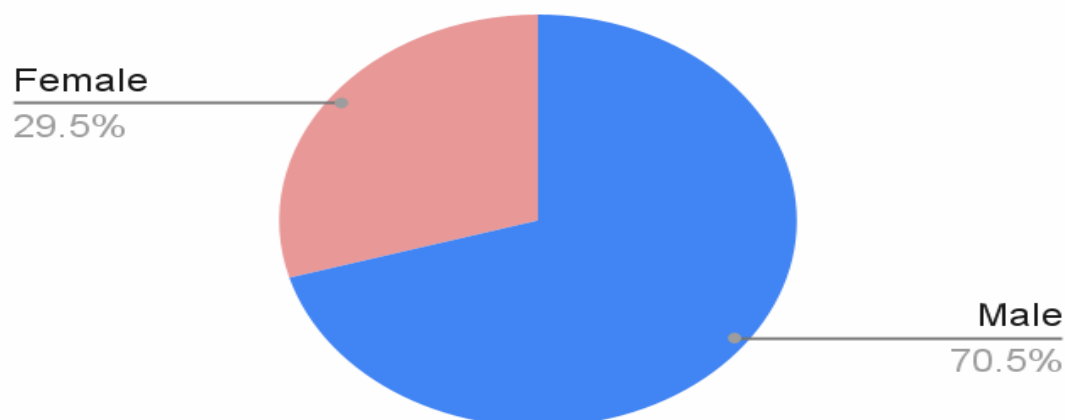
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<sup>10</sup> Ahmed Al-Rawi, “Political Memes and Fake News Discourses on Instagram.,” *Media & Communication* 9, no. 1 (January 2021): 276–90, <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v9i1.3533>.

<sup>11</sup> Kayla Preston, “Justifying Contentious Social and Political Claims Using Mundane Language: An Analysis of Canadian Right-Wing Extremism.,” *Current Sociology*, June 25, 2023, 1.

<sup>12</sup> Zeinab Farokhi, “Making Freedom Great Again: Conspiracy Theories, Affective Nostalgia and Alignment, and The Right-Wing Base Grammars of the #Freedomconvoy.,” *Global Media Journal: Canadian Edition* 14, no. 1 (January 2022): 67–92.

## Gender

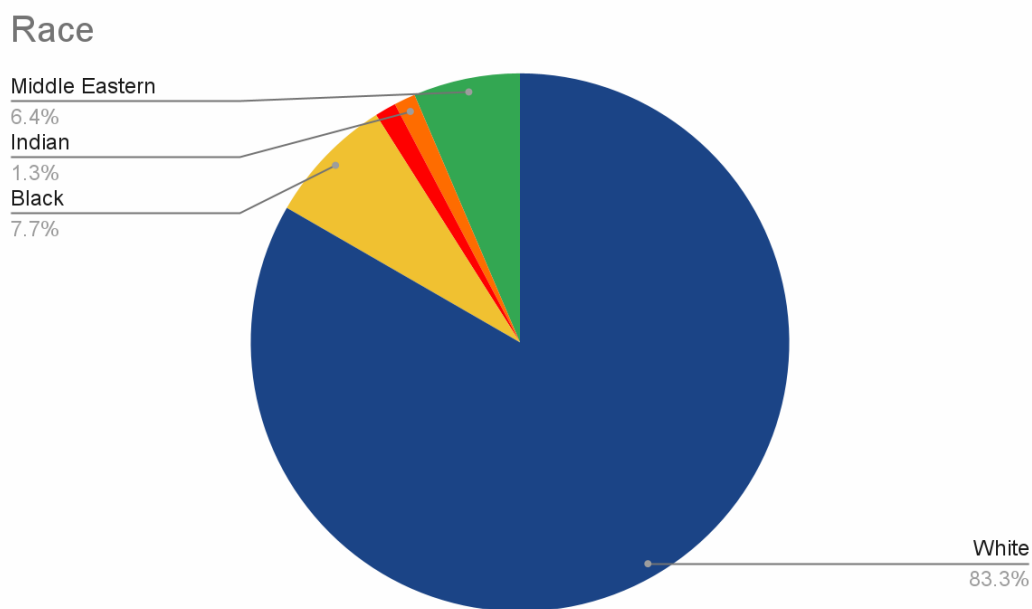


**Figure 2**

Verifying the background of authors led the researcher to visit the personal and professional websites of all authors. Figure 2 shows that over 80% are visibly Caucasian, while Black and Middle Eastern authors make up about 7% each (See Figure 3). While there is a small number of people of colour researching this topic, most of the articles still discuss race as an issue with extremism. Many of the researchers of colour do an excellent job of discussing race, such as Kyler Ong’s “Ideological Convergence in the Extreme Right,” which examines the history of extremism and hate in the United States and its effect on people of colour.<sup>13</sup> On top of that, many of the white authors also do an excellent job of paying attention to race, such as Emillie de Keulenaar’s article “Free market in extreme speech: Scientific racism and bloodsports on YouTube,” which focuses on how YouTube has been used to spread racist ideology in recent years.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Kyler Ong, “Ideological Convergence in the Extreme Right,” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 12, no. 5 (September 1, 2020): 1–7.

<sup>14</sup> Emillie de Keulenaar et al., “Free Market in Extreme Speech: Scientific Racism and Bloodsports on YouTube,” *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* 37, no. 4 (December 2022): 949–71.

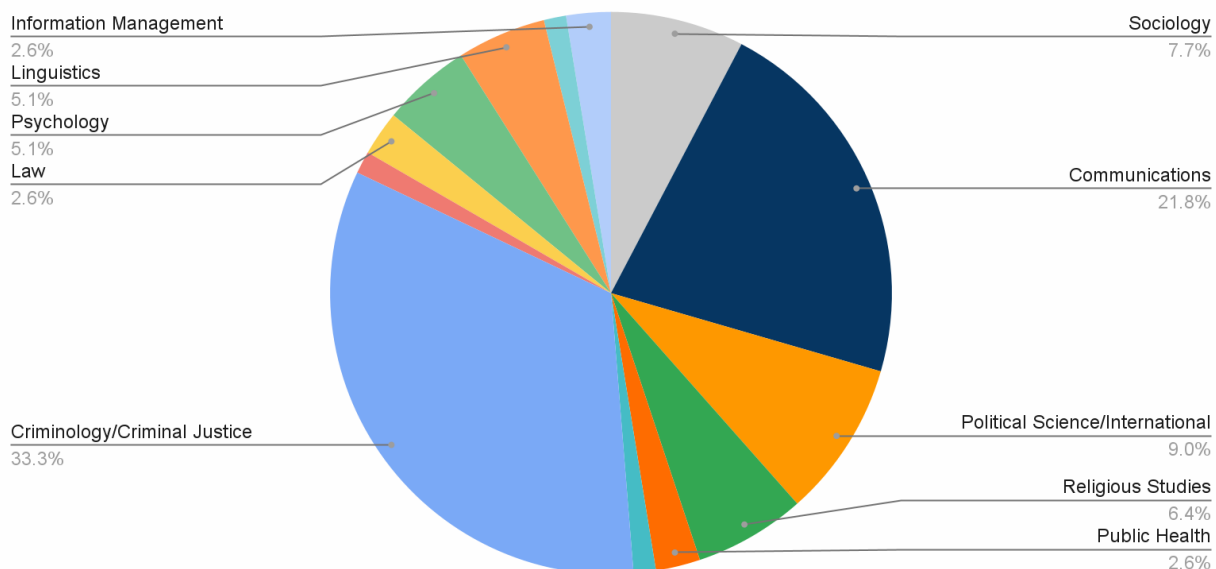


**Figure 3**

Finally, given that there are five theoretical frameworks for researching extremism, it is unsurprising that the corpus contains a very interdisciplinary set of authors. The largest field in this study was criminology, which comprised 33% of the authors. The second largest category was communications at 21%, followed by Political Science and Sociology at about 8% each (See Figure 4). A wide range of fields allows researchers to look at the issue from many perspectives rather than a narrow point of view. Momani and Deschamp’s “Canada’s Right-Wing Extremists: Mapping their Ties, Location, and Ideas,” was an interdisciplinary study in my corpus which used computer science techniques to link right-wing extremist leaders together.<sup>15</sup> This article was great as it showed that a diverse set of skills can give a new perspective on right-wing extremism. The diversity of authors allowed for robust results that can create a strong understanding of right-wing extremism and how it affects minority groups.

<sup>15</sup> Bessma Momani and Ryan Deschamps, “Canada’s Right-Wing Extremists: Mapping Their Ties, Location, and Ideas,” *Journal of Hate Studies* 17, no. 2 (July 2021): 36–46.

### Area of Study



**Figure 4**

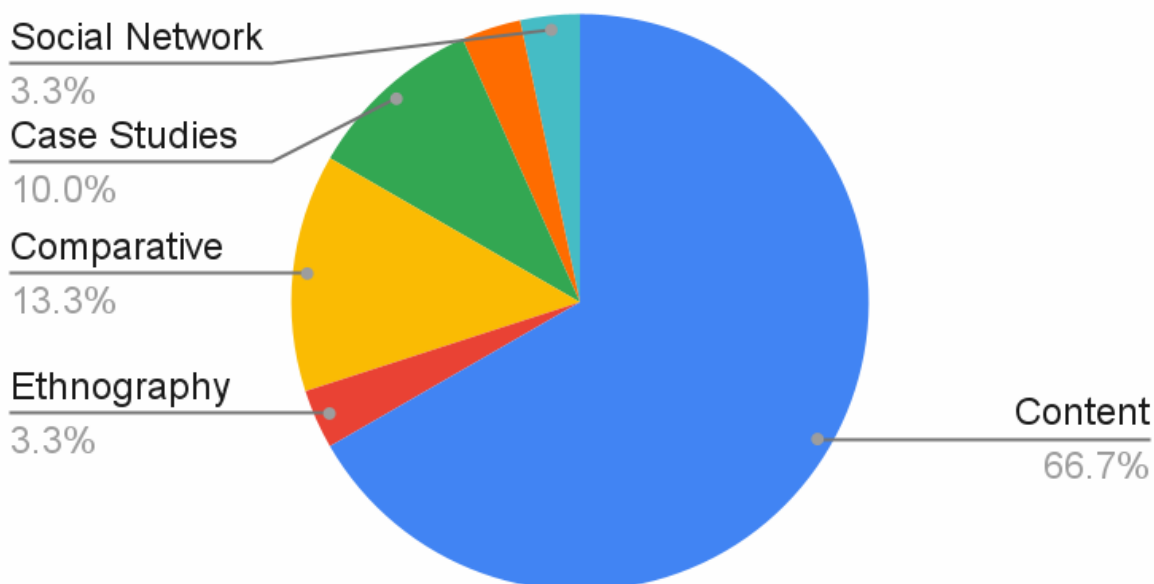
### *Type of Research*

Despite the diversity of authors and fields, there is little variety in types of studies. Two thirds of the authors in the corpus perform “content analysis” via coding. (See Figure 5). A content analysis involves the researcher going through a social media site and coding for what they find. While content analysis shows how people communicate, it fails to answer why people believe what they do. Most of the content analyses involved studying a specific forum for a brief period of time and analyzing what they see. Content analyses fail to give researchers context of the posts they review. Therefore, researchers should use different measures to connect extremists' online and offline behaviors.

Sociologist Justin Tetrault from the University of Alberta advocates for more ethnographic research to understand the roots of right-wing extremist thoughts. He argues that to research extremism and create good policy, one must listen to their concerns.<sup>16</sup> The random

selection of the corpus led to only one ethnographic item. Tiana Gaudette who is a research associate at the International CyberCrime Research Centre at Simon Fraser University conducted a study where she took the time to interview ten former right-wing extremists to see what drew them to the ideology and what impact the internet had on their decision.<sup>17</sup> This ended up being one of the better papers in the corpus as it explained why people joined extremist groups, which was better than a content analyses where you just read what they said without context, it was also great as it took a very understanding tone. The corpus would have been more helpful had there been more ethnographic research alongside the content analyses.

## Type of Research



**Figure 5**

<sup>16</sup> Tetrault, “Thinking Beyond Extremism,” 432.

<sup>17</sup> Tiana Gaudette, Ryan Scrivens, and Vivek Venkatesh, “The Role of the Internet in Facilitating Violent Extremism: Insights from Former Right-Wing Extremists,” *Terrorism & Political Violence* 34, no. 7 (October 9, 2022): 1339–56.

With the rise of the internet, new researchers should develop new techniques. While interviews and content analysis might have their advantages, there are so many new opportunities today. The internet blends the virtual and the real world,<sup>18</sup> and there would be positives for people sending out anonymous surveys on these forums or immersing themselves in the forum to get information. With the internet growing and becoming its own world, researchers should change their techniques.

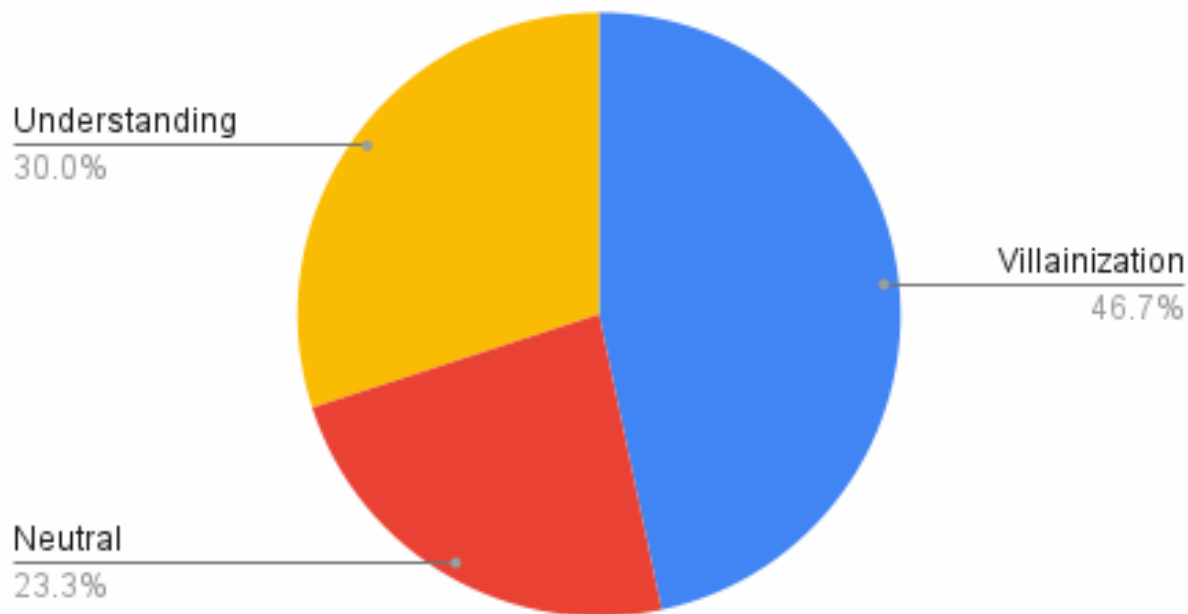
### *Tone*

The last variable used was the articles tone. There were three common tones in the articles: the villainization of extremists, a neutral tone, and an attempted understanding. Articles that simply dismissed right-wing extremists and their concerns right away and labelled any mainstream conservative as a right-wing extremist were labelled as villainization. Articles that only reported the data they found and did not try to push an ideology were labelled as neutral. While articles that recognized some extremists raised legitimate concerns or tried to get, a deeper understanding of their motivations were labelled as understanding.

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<sup>18</sup> Per Hetland and Anders I. Mørch, "Ethnography for Investigating the Internet.," *Seminar.Net: Media, Technology & Life-Long Learning* 12, no. 1 (January 2016): 1–1.

## Author's Tone



**Figure 6**

Villainization was the most common tone used in the articles. Elmer and Burton use this tone in their article “Rebel personalities,”<sup>19</sup> where they labelled many mainstream conservatives as far-right. Doug Tewksbury also used this tone in his article “Petro-Nostalgia and the Politics of Yellow Vests Canada,” where he states, “discourses around fossil fuel extraction and consumption are not just a stepping stone that leads to a far-right politics, but rather, that these discourses advocating for or celebrating fossil fuel extraction expand the scope a highly mythologized conservative articulation of a twentieth-century past.”<sup>20</sup> Given that this villainization tone made up a large chunk of the corpus, it appears that many of the researchers

<sup>19</sup> Greg Elmer and Anthony Burton, “Rebel Personalities: Canada’s Far-Right Media,” *First Monday* 27, no. 9 (September 2022).

<sup>20</sup> Doug Tewksbury, “Petro-Nostalgia and the Politics of Yellow Vests Canada,” *Canadian Journal of Communication* 46, no. 4 (October 2021): 939–59, <https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2021v46n4a3779>.

would like for there to be a consensus view of the right wing being wrong rather than trying to understand what they believe.

The theme that appeared the second most was the researchers attempting to understand what extremists believed and trying to get a deeper understanding. The prevalence of this theme shows that there is no consensus on research on right-wing extremists. This attempt at achieving a more profound understanding allows the researcher to understand their motivations and recommend policies that are not solely based on fear but are based on facts, which is a much better way to create policy if you want to reduce the number of extremists. One of the articles that shows this understanding is Tiana Gaudette's "The Role of the Internet in Facilitating Violent Extremism: Insights from Former Right-Wing Extremists," which goes and talks to former right-wing extremists to learn why they believed what they did while hoping to figure out a way to prevent radicalization in the future.<sup>21</sup>

While many authors took an understanding tone, the author who appeared the most in the corpus, Michigan State University professor Ryan Scrivens, was by far the best at trying to understand motivations. Scrivens wrote seven articles in the corpus all with an understanding tone and avoided scapegoating extremists for the country's political issues; he wrote to get to the root cause of their beliefs. For example, in "Comparing the Online Posting Behaviors of Violent and Non-Violent Right-Wing Extremists," he acknowledges that not all extremists are violent or out to overthrow the government. While he states that extremist ideology is still a threat, he points out that many extremist groups never use violence. Scrivens states, "there is a significant need to focus on comparative analyses and consider how violent extremists are different than non-violent extremists."<sup>22</sup> On top of this, in his article "Examining the Developmental Pathways

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<sup>21</sup> Gaudette, Scrivens, and Venkatesh, "The Role of the Internet in Facilitating Violent Extremism: Insights from Former Right-Wing Extremists."

of Online Posting Behavior in Violent Right-Wing Extremist Forums,” he states about how people do not just wake up one day and decide to become an extremist. They are frustrated with the world, which leads them to political extremes, though in a slow process.<sup>23</sup> While many authors make a big mistake by simply pushing the idea that all right-wing extremists are intrinsically evil, Ryan Scrivens is a reasonable exception and tries to solve the issue by getting to its core.

Lastly, the least common theme was a neutral tone. Policy recommendations and comparative analyses used a neutral tone. Primarily because they were drafting professional reports, where there was no room for them to put in their own tone; they were just stating facts and recommendations. An example of this was Marie Louise Radanielina Hita and Yany Grégoire’s article “Marketing to Prevent Radicalization: A First Attempt at Delimiting the Field,” which made recommendations to tech companies about how they could avoid their sites being used to radicalize people.<sup>24</sup> The American Marketing Association’s *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* published the article trying to keep it apolitical as business and economics are more right-leaning fields.<sup>25</sup> Alberto Montrond’s “Comparative Analysis of CT/CVE Policies: USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Sweden, and North Macedonia,” was a neutral article which analyzed several country’s policies on countering violent extremism. This article was neutral as they compared the country’s policies and how they were working rather than attempting to

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<sup>22</sup> Ryan Scrivens et al., “Comparing the Online Posting Behaviors of Violent and Non-Violent Right-Wing Extremists,” *Terrorism & Political Violence* 35, no. 1 (February 1, 2023): 194.

<sup>23</sup> Ryan Scrivens, Thomas W. Wojciechowski, and Richard Frank, “Examining the Developmental Pathways of Online Posting Behavior in Violent Right-Wing Extremist Forums,” *Terrorism & Political Violence* 34, no. 8 (December 11, 2022): 1723.

<sup>24</sup> Marie Louise Radanielina Hita and Yany Grégoire, “Marketing to Prevent Radicalization: A First Attempt at Delimiting the Field,” *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 42, no. 1 (January 2023): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.1177/07439156221136951>.

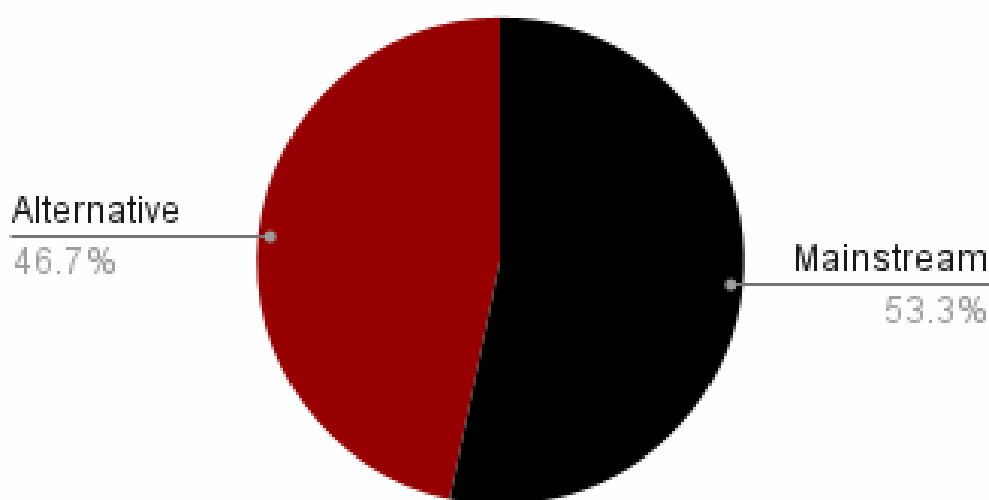
<sup>25</sup> Nakhaie, M. Reza, and Robert J. Brym. “The Political Attitudes of Canadian Professors.” *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie* 24, no. 3 (July 1, 1999): 350.

understand the actions of the extremists.<sup>26</sup> So, the authors only took a neutral tone when looking at making official policy recommendations.

### *Media Studied*

One of the main hypotheses at the start of this study was that there may have been more research done on mainstream social media websites (Top 10 most used social media websites including: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit, and Twitter)<sup>27</sup> rather than alternative websites (Any other website). However, this is not the case as about half of the websites analyzed were alternative (See Figure 7). The fact that studies have focused on mainstream and alternative websites equally is good as it means no website is falling through the cracks and researchers are able to gain an understanding of how right-wing extremists interact on both mainstream and alternative platforms.

## Type of Website



**Figure 7**

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<sup>26</sup> Alberto Montrond et al., “Comparative Analysis of CT/CVE Policies: USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Sweden, and North Macedonia,” *Homeland Security Affairs* 18 (January 2022): 1–16.

<sup>27</sup> “Most Popular Social Media in the US,” Oberlo, 2024, <https://www.oberlo.com/statistics/most-popular-social-media-in-the-us>.

## Implications of Findings

One of the reasons for the lack of ethnographic research and the villainization being an issue is connected to Howard Becker's labelling theory from his book *Outsiders*.<sup>28</sup> Labelling theory is a criminological theory that states that certain groups classify and categorize the behavior of others and that there is a good chance that the label sticks to people in lower classes. Labelling theory says that once that label is applied to a person in a lower class, they are now stigmatized and will more likely than not become what they were labelled as.<sup>29</sup> In other words, if a person is labelled a right-wing extremist, mainstream conservatives might become extremists due to the label attached to them.

Ethnography and labelling theory are intricately connected as doing ethnography might give the researcher a little bit of empathy and explain where the person is coming from. You can get a deeper understanding of what they believe. If you talked to the person, you would be slower in calling a person an extremist, and you would be able to understand the root cause of their ideology and potentially fix that issue. If you call a person an extremist who is not one, they may decide to embrace it; therefore, it would be best not just to take what they say online but to dig deeper and understand their true intentions.

Labelling theory can also be critical when it comes to the villainization of extremists, as, once again, you do not want to have people simply planting their beliefs further. If extremists are treated as unredeemable villains, it will backfire when they feel unredeemable. Once again researchers should try and gain an understanding of what they think rather than just shutting

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<sup>28</sup> Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*.

<sup>29</sup> Aleksandra Gruevska-Drakulevski, "Labelling Theory - One of the Major Criminology Theories: Underlying Principles and Ideas, Main Assumed Mechanisms and Hypothesis, Critical Points.," *Iustinianus Primus Law Review* 7, no. 2 (2016): 2.

down and ignoring them immediately. Immediately dismissing people who are further right will only cause there to be more extremists in the world.

While many scholars such as publisher Nanette J. Davis argue that Becker's labelling theory does not help explain why people commit crimes.<sup>30</sup> Humans and crime are complicated issues. While labelling theory does not do a great job at explaining the cause of some types of deviance, it more likely than not can explain why people get sucked into extreme right ideology. The world constantly changes, and they do not see it changing in a way that benefits them when people call them on it and call them an extremist. They could become more extreme to get welcomed in a community of like-minded individuals.<sup>31</sup> If security experts spent more time hearing people out rather than simply acting as though they were villains the second they said one thing wrong, there would potentially be less of an extremist movement today.<sup>32</sup> While extremist movements are harmful to society, and academics should be careful before they attach a label to a person on the chance a person could be radicalized. Instead of immediately labelling people as hateful, it would be wise to promote proactive counter-measures, such as media and political literacy and community learning programs.<sup>33</sup> In other words, academics should be careful with their tone and try to understand the root causes when writing their articles.

## Conclusion

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<sup>30</sup> Nanette J. Davis, "Labeling Theory in Deviance Research: A Critique and Reconsideration," *The Sociological Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (September 1972): 447–74, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1972.tb00828.x>.

<sup>31</sup> Christina Schori Liang and Matthew John Cross, "White Crusade: How to Prevent Right-Wing Extremists from Exploiting the Internet," *Geneva Center for Security Policy*, no. 11 (July 2020): 1–27.

<sup>32</sup> Aleksandra Gruevska-Drakulevski, "Labelling Theory - One of the Major Criminology Theories: Underlying Principles and Ideas, Main Assumed Mechanisms and Hypothesis, Critical Points.," *Iustinianus Primus Law Review* 7, no. 2 (2016): 5.

<sup>33</sup> Justin Everett Cobain Tetrault, "What's Hate Got to Do with It? Right-Wing Movements and the Hate Stereotype," *Current Sociology* 69, no. 1 (January 2021): 15, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392119842257>.

Future studies on how the internet affects right-wing extremism in Canada should use more qualitative methods like ethnography to understand what leads people to extreme ideologies. This would allow policymakers to fix the root issues and take preventative steps to avoid radicalization. Future research should also use an understanding tone rather than a villainizing tone. Labelling people as right-wing extremists can lead them to dig deeper into their beliefs, and therefore, there will be more right-wing extremists. In the future, researchers need to adjust their writing style to explain better and understand the internet's effect on right-wing extremism in Canada.

The analysis of thirty recent articles on the topic of right-wing extremism shows that though it is encouraging that scholars adopt a diverse lens, they tend to be unable or unwilling of understanding the motivation of right-wing extremists; researchers must be careful before labelling people as extremists. Research on this topic has had mixed results. The research shined in terms of being interdisciplinary. However, the studies could have been more impressive regarding the methods used to find their results. Most studies used content analyses, which are good for knowing how people communicate but not for understanding social context. Future research should use more ethnography, which would allow for a deeper understanding and could get to the root cause of radicalization. Finally, future research should take a tone that treats right-wingers less like villains while trying to understand where they are coming from. Simply calling someone an extremist without trying to understand them could lead them to become more extreme than they would be otherwise. Current research on extremism can and should be improved in the future. With extremism becoming more of an issue, to prevent radicalization, society must understand extremism's underlying causes.<sup>34</sup>

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## Limitations

One area that limited the study was the time period on the articles. Limiting the articles from 2020 to the present caused some articles studying right-wing extremism using ethnography attempting to achieve a deeper understanding to be left out of the corpus (e.g., the exclusion of Quebec professor, Frederick Nadeau's 2019 article).<sup>35</sup> Other studies were omitted because they did not specifically examine the internet's impact on extremism (e.g., the exclusion of University of Alberta professor, Tetrault's articles focusing on extremism at large).<sup>36,37</sup> Expanding the time frame of the corpus would show how research on this topic has changed over time and would give a more accurate picture of what research has already been done. The corpus remains significant despite the current limitations.

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<sup>34</sup> Teresa Völker, "How Terrorist Attacks Distort Public Debates: A Comparative Study of Right-Wing and Islamist Extremism," *Journal of European Public Policy*, October 19, 2023, 1–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2023.2269194>.

<sup>35</sup> Frédéric Nadeau, "Political Voices and Everyday Choices: Aesthetic Modes of Political Engagement in Right-Wing Extremism," *Anthropologica* 61, no. 2 (2019): 270–82, <https://doi.org/10.3138/anth.2018-0043.r2>.

<sup>36</sup> Justin Everett Cobain Tetrault, "Thinking Beyond Extremism: A Critique of Counterterrorism Research on Right-Wing Nationalist and Far-Right Social Movements," *The British Journal of Criminology* 62, no. 2 (February 19, 2022): 431–49, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azab062>.

<sup>37</sup> Justin Everett Cobain Tetrault, "Thinking Beyond Extremism: A Methodological Reorientation to Studying Right-Wing Nationalism and the Far-Right Movement in Canada" (PhD Diss., University of Alberta, 2021), <https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/613f4680-27f0-4557-bb60-4d5a42e6a60f>.

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