"The System is Rigged Against Me:" Exploring a White Supremacist Community on 4Chan and Perceptions of White Supremacy at the University of Pittsburgh

by

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Digital technologies have provided people with new tools to interact and build community. With the rise of the internet in the 1960s, and the World Wide Web in the 1990s, people with access to the internet have communicated across large distances at faster speeds than ever before. In the present digital era, people form meaningful communities in chat rooms, online games, and through social media. The web has also provided tools for racially-based communities to grow and thrive. This study examines one such online community: the white supremacist message board "Politically Incorrect" on the website 4Chan.org. I conducted Participant Observation in this community to understand how this community defines membership and belonging, and I analyzed one discursive symbol that is important to them: the "redpill." This symbol represents community members' belief in white genocide, and the way they cope with the negative emotions that are intertwined with this belief. Through my analysis of the redpill symbol, I explore the complex and emotional nature of ideology, and how it works to build our identities and sense of community, while also empowering us to act. This research exemplifies one way that white people are making sense of their whiteness online, especially whiteness centered around white supremacy.

The online portion of my research is supplemented with interviews conducted at the University of Pittsburgh. I interviewed five students and two administrators to gain a sense of how those in my community are thinking about and dealing with white supremacy in their own lives, as well as how the University handles discrimination. I then compare the ways Left-leaning

students and people against white supremacy think about and discuss dealing with white supremacy, with the feelings of social isolation expressed by those on "Politically Incorrect." Through my analysis, I show that the immediate backlash to white supremacy may be fueling the emotions that lead white people to build community through white supremacy. This study concludes with suggestions for future research inquiries in the name of understanding, and ultimately decreasing, white supremacy, as well as an analysis of my own emotional experiences in conducting this research.

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1.0 Introduction

White supremacy has reached another historic moment of visibility, and the presence of the internet is a tool for that rise. This study looks to examine contemporary white supremacy focusing on how and why it maintains community on the web, and how my peers are thinking about white supremacy in their own lives. The site of my research is the message board "Politically Incorrect" on the website 4Chan.org, as well as the University of Pittsburgh. I framed my research and examination of 4Chan using anthropology, feminist theory, critical race studies, and internet studies. With this interdisciplinary lens, my research explores the complex and emotional nature of ideology, and how it works to build our identities and sense of community, while also empowering us to act.

My research on 4Chan was exploratory: I browsed or "lurked" "Politically Incorrect" to get a sense of how this community is formed, maintained, who belongs, and what symbols are important to its members. My data collection focused on gathering posts and images that reflected how the community views itself as well as those who don't belong. In my analysis, I focus on the symbol of the "redpill," as it is packed with both ideological and emotional meaning for the members that use it. For members of "Politically Incorrect," the "redpill" signifies their belonging to this community, as being redpilled means being awakened to the truth of white genocide, which all members understand and discuss openly. In fact, "Politically Incorrect" is one of the only spaces they feel safe discussing this part of their ideological reality. As an anthropologist, symbols are an important means of understanding a group of people, as we strive to show informants in the most human light possible. Of course, this is no easy task when dealing with white supremacy. The "redpill" symbol reveals the emotions and frustrations felt by this community, and how their

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ideologies coincide with these emotions. This works to humanize an ideology that empowers some people to enact violence. Additionally, it sheds light on how different people make sense of the world around them. My research helps build an understanding of a white supremacist community on the web, so that we may understand some of the emotional and ideological motivations for white supremacist action. Additionally, it is a case in understanding how some white people are using the web to make sense of their whiteness.

My research not only investigates white supremacy online, but also in my local community. I conducted semi-structured interviews at the University of Pittsburgh to understand how Pitt students conceptualize white supremacy, where they see it in their lives, and how they think it should be dealt with. I also interviewed two administrators at the University to get a sense of how discrimination is dealt with from an institutional perspective. My research exemplifies that online spaces and the "real world" should not be thought of as separate entities. Rather, cyberspace is an extension of the social relationships that existed before, and thus reproduces race, gender, class, etc. in new ways. White supremacy exists in both the real and virtual worlds simultaneously and are intimately connected.

My research applies an interdisciplinary lens to the study of a white supremacist community on 4Chan. The structure of this paper is organized into nine parts following this introduction, guiding readers through my theoretical standpoint and methodologies before going into the field site and analysis of my data. The first section, "Theoretical Standpoint," outlines the theories I apply to my data and research, starting with a discussion of how the structuring of the early internet and web facilitated white supremacist communities to thrive online. This includes an analysis of how ideologies such as democracy were built into the web, and I use Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* to explain some of these effects. This section also discusses

what goes into community building, using Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, which helps me explain how the web facilitates community building. The second section, "Contemporary White Supremacist Action in America," gives a brief overview of the contemporary context of my research, including a discussion of recent white supremacist action in America and how the U.S. government views domestic terrorism. This discussion includes events such as the 2008 presidential election of Barack Obama, the 2016 presidential election of Donald Trump, the Charleston Massacre, and the Tree of Life Massacre.

The following sections, "Doing Methodology Online" and "Doing Methodology at the University of Pittsburgh," outline my interdisciplinary methods of doing research in my field sites. Section five, "Field Site: "Politically Incorrect" (4Chan.org/pol)," is an ethnographic overview of the research site, explaining the organization of 4Chan and some of the basic aspects of the "Politically Incorrect" community. This is also where I discuss navigating the website as a researcher. This section is followed by "Analysis: The Redpill," where I critically examine the repdill symbol and its importance to this community's ideology and sense of well-being. This symbol humanizes members of "Politically Incorrect," allowing us to see the emotions involved in an ideology that empowers people into violent action. An analysis of my interviews at the University of Pittsburgh follows in section seven. This section, "Analysis: Interviews at the University of Pittsburgh," is broken up into ten sections, each centered around one of my interview questions. Since I interviewed both students and administrators, I begin with my student responses and then include a separate section for my administrative responses. This section makes critical connections between how students and administrators think we should be dealing with white supremacy, and the feelings of social isolation felt by members of "Politically Incorrect," as

exemplified by the "redpill." Additionally, I pose possible future research inquiries through looking at my interviews and data from "Politically Incorrect" together. Finally, this paper ends with a conclusion that summarizes everything above, as well as a final section where I reflect on doing this research and how it affected me personally.

My research is inspired by asking what can be done about white supremacy, what should be done, and what the internet and web tell us about the larger system of white supremacy. The data I collected in this study is not easy to look at. I include images of posts that I collected on 4Chan in the following study, and I did not censor the racial slurs, the anti-Semitic slurs, nor the misogyny. As this data evokes emotions that are just as important as the texts themselves, it is only right that I show it in its purest form. I state this to alert the reader to content that is both visceral and hurtful but reflects the realities of the community this research discusses. My hope is that this project inspires researchers to continue to look critically at white supremacy, especially through a humanizing lens. Additionally, this research should act as a starting point for opening discussions about white supremacy, and how we as individuals and as communities are reacting to it.

Before I start, I will give a brief overview of the key words in this study. To start, the *internet* is the physical network that holds the data we connect our computers to. It is the cables and machines that allow us to communicate between computers. This is different from the *web* (the World Wide Web), which is the system we use to access the data on the internet.[i] The web uses browsers, such as Firefox, Google Chrome, Internet explorer, etc., to access the data and translate it for our reading pleasure. While the internet itself has existed since the 1960's, the web was created in 1990, which is when it started its popular use.[ii] The internet was also privatized in the 1990s, which is why websites such as Facebook and Twitter are company-run today.[iii] *Cyberspace* is the virtual world created by the internet: the nonphysical spaces we inhabit when

we use the internet via the web.[iv] Next *white supremacy* refers to the belief that all white people are inherently superior to all other races. *White Nationalism* is the push for a white ethno-state, or a country solely inhabited and run by white people. White nationalism is a separatist movement rooted in white supremacy.

1.1 Theoretical Standpoint

The birth of the internet, web, and cyberspace gave rise to a new set of possibilities for social researchers. The web is an immersive technology and offers a range of (field/web)sites that researchers can enter and explore from the comfort of their own homes (Hine 2005). The internet has produced new fields of research and theoretical frameworks such as virtual field methods and virtual ethnography and impacts the ways researchers go about asking questions (Boellstorff et al. 2012; Hine 2005). There is less research, however, that investigates how ideologies built into the fabric of the internet and web facilitate white-based online communities. This section starts with explaining what it means to investigate communities themselves, and follows by engaging what internet studies is and what brings white supremacy to the forefront, as the internet and web contextualize racial and gendered virtual cyberspaces, and thus my (field/web)site. Jessie Daniels, in her article, "Race and Racism in Internet Studies: A Review and Critique," calls for "a more thorough critical interrogation of whiteness on the internet and in internet studies" (Daniels 2013, 712). It is only right that I include this interrogation, as my research focuses on a white supremacist community on the web.

To start, I will explain what it means to investigate communities, as my research focuses on the online community "Politically Incorrect." It may seem hard to believe that anyone could

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feel deeply connected to someone online that they've never personally met, but that is actually built into the nature of communities themselves. Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities: Reflections of the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, defines the nation as, "an imagined political community . . .. It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion," (Anderson 2006, 6). On the same page, Anderson stresses that *imagined* does not mean *false*, but rather *created*. Thus, "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined," (Anderson 2006). In essence, communities are groups of people that create and maintain deep connections with each other, even if they've never met. What's important, then, is not how "real" the community is, but what drives its formation. Thus, the importance of understanding what builds a community/nation if we are to examine it. If we are to investigate communities built on the web in cyberspace (such as "Politically Incorrect"), then they must first be contextualized by the ideologies of the tech industry, as the tech industry provides the online space and tools used to build these communities.

Power structures such as race and gender were built into the internet and web by the tech industry (Daniels 2013, 696-97; Salter 2018, 10). Ironically, this was facilitated by the "race-free" ideologies held by the creators of the web, as well as the social climate of the tech industry. For instance, Daniels, in "The Algorithmic Rise of the Alt-Right," points to the fact that John Perry Barlow, co-founder of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, wrote *A Declaration for the Independence of Cyberspace*. In this, he paints cyberspace as a "utopia" separate from control by 'governments of the industrial world,' and imagines it as a place where all can be equal ('a civilization of the Mind in Cyberspace') (Daniels 2018, 62). This reflects the mindsets built into the web by the teach industry, one that imagines technological creations as "race-less" and free of

other identities such as gender and sexuality. Cyberspace was imagined, essentially, as a place where only minds speak, and the rest falls back into the "real world" (Daniels 2018, 62). This is reflective of democratic ideologies, which, according to Alexis de Tocquville in *Democracy in America*, imagines all citizens to be equal through a horizontal political structure (Tocqueville 2010, 700). Cyberspace was imagined to be democratic, as is evidenced by the hopes of John Perry Barlow. In fact, it was imagined to be *even more* democratic, than the "real world" because it erases social barriers. Thus, anyone who has access to the internet is equal in cyberspace.

Brenton Malin complicates the idea of online democracy in his article "A Very Popular Blog: The Internet and the Possibilities of Publicity." He points to previous studies by Downey and Fenton that say, "'the mass-media public sphere will become more open to radical opinion as a result of the coincidence of societal crises and the growth of virtual counter-public spheres' The openness of the internet seems to have created a range of democratic and even radical possibilities" (Malin 2011, 189). This suggests that the ease of access to the internet and the web allow people to share their opinions to a wider audience than ever before, thus exemplifying the democratic potential of the internet and web to show more radical opinions than previous technology (such as broadcast television). Malin says that this isn't the only way to understand "publicity," or the public access to information. There is also a "publicity" that means the "promotion" of ideas that are pertinent to public debate (Malin 2011, 189-190). According to Malin:

> These two understandings of publicity, as openness and as promotion, capture two problems of democratic communication. The more open a channel of communication, the more diverse opinions it can include, but the less clearly it can focus attention on any particular topic . . .. On the other hand, the more a channel focuses on some defined set of voices, the more it promotes the community of attention necessary for shared deliberation and debate. However, such focused communication risks flattening discussion into a homogenized message that excludes alternative points of view. (Malin 2011, 190)

Malin explains that online democracy is complicated through this issue of publicity, as more information doesn't necessarily mean more democracy when considering both definitions of "publicity." For instance, Malin explains that search engine algorithms, such as those used by Google, tend to promote already-popular websites. This means that popular websites will continue to receive more publicity than less popular websites, which hinders user access to diverse information (Malin 2011, 193). Thus, "the internet is not simply neutral. It exists in an economic, legal and cultural context that includes the mainstream media, and online communication is not immune to the powerful influences of these well-established sources" (Malin 2011, 197). This means that the web is not as democratic as it is assumed to be and is influenced by other technologies like broadcast television. Although the web allows a range of opinions to be shared, the way it promotes content also needs to be taken into consideration. If search engines only promote websites that are already popular, then that hinders the visibility of other websites, thus complicating the idea of online democracy. Malin says that "discussions of the democratic possibilities of the internet need to explore the ability of particular sites to build publicities of both openness and promotion and to analyze these within the context of the wider media environment" (Malin 2011, 198). In other words, those who imagined cyberspace to be a democratic utopia may have been failing to take these issues into consideration. It is easy to see the internet and web as democratic when considering the ease in which people can share their ideas through these mediums. Online democracy is complicated, however, when we see the ways in which algorithms create bias towards opinions that are already popular.

Democracy online is further complicated when considering the issues of equality in the tech industry itself. Lauren Aflrey, in "Gender-Fluid Geek Girls: Negotiating Inequality Regimes in the Tech Industry," points to the "corporate discourses" in the tech industry that "give the

appearance of being democratic and progressive," while simultaneously excluding women from leadership positions (Alfrey 2017, 30). In this study, Alfrey finds that "women who belong to the racially dominant groups in the tech industry [white and Asian], and who present as gender-fluid and identify as LGBTQ, are better able to manage their status on male-dominated teams" (Alfrey 2017, 30). Black women, on the other hand, are less likely to be advantaged by downplaying their femininity, because of their specific racialization in this space (Alfrey 2017, 45). In short, LGBTQ women who presented more masculine garnered more respect in this masculine space, but only if they were already in a dominant racial group. This exemplifies how race, sexuality, and gender all affect how well one fares in the tech industry, which is dominated by white and Asian cisgender heterosexual men. While the tech industry speaks of its products using the rhetoric of democracy and equality, the social climate of working for the tech industry is steeped in racial, sexual, and gendered inequality (Alfrey 2017). Additionally, when white and Asian women in the tech industry downplay their femininity to better fit in, "their conditional inclusion leaves male supremacy intact" (Alfrey 2017, 45). This exemplifies how an industry can speak of its products using the language of equality, while fostering an internal culture of deep inequality. Similarly, talking about cyberspace as equal and democratic does not necessarily reflect the reality of its use and organization. These hypocrisies are important to keep in mind: how can an industry create equality through its products when it does not itself practice equality?

Even as tech giants were espousing democratic-utopian ideals about the internet, they were building race into its codes. The Disk Operating Systems (DOS) included commands that referred to the "master disk" and the "slave disk," thus inscribing slavery into code, and "digital surveillance technologies draw much from pre-digital technologies developed to control enslaved peoples," (Daniels 2018, 62). This means that remnants of slavery were built into the hardware of

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the internet, which directly puts race into technology. Even the rhetoric surrounding the internet and cyberspace in early literature "evoked the language of exploration and discovery . . .. This rhetoric was consistent with the then-current descriptions of the internet as an 'electronic frontier' and suggests the gaze of the colonizer," (Daniels 2013, 708). This means that users of the internet and web were already imagined to be white explorers ready to exploit all cyberspace has to offer. Using the language of colonization means the creation of these technologies were embedded in a history of racial violence and exploitation. The users reproduce colonization in the new technology. This is how race (specifically the white colonizer/enslaver) was built into the internet and web, even as the tech giants were hopeful that cyberspace would provide a way out of the race and gender barriers that exist "in the real world."

In his article "From geek masculinity to Gamergate: the technological rationality of online abuse," Michael Salter critically examines how ideologies built into the web help facilitate online abuse. He says that "the material aspects of technology embody and reproduce social relations and hierarchies to the point of being inseparable from them, particularly in contemporary settings where sophisticated technology has become central to social, political and economic relations," (Salter 2017, 10). In other words, there is no separation between what is done in cyberspace and what happens in "the real world" because the "real world" has been built into the web. To say it another way, the internet exists in the real world, and thus the virtual spaces we enter through the web are also the real world, even if they aren't physical. Cyberspace is an extension of the social relationships and ideologies that already existed beforehand, and the culture of cyberspace is one where abuse is tolerated. For instance, the governing bodies of the web are often more worried about protecting freedom of speech within the web, than with protecting those who are harassed, especially within the United States (Daniels 2013; Salter 2017). This suggests that these governing

bodies were more worried about equality than liberty, further exemplifying the reproduction of democracy. Tocqueville says that democratic citizens "want equality in liberty, and if they cannot obtain that, they still want equality in slavery. They will suffer poverty, enslavement, barbarism, but they will not suffer aristocracy," (Tocquville 2010, 878). On the web, users will (and do) suffer harassment if that means they have equal opportunity to have a voice online. Protecting those who are harassed means denying others their freedom of speech, which denies them their equality.

Dreams of making cyberspace a race-less, gender-less utopia are further shattered as users bring these identities into the web. "People use the internet to both form and reaffirm individual racial identity and seek out communities based on race and racial understandings of the world," (Daniels 2013, 698). This becomes even more true in the wake of globalization and changing demographics. Sophie Bjork-James and Jeff Maskovsky, in their article "When White Nationalism Became Popular," mention that "as whites face their impending minority status due to demographic changes, many now perceive white Americans as a persecuted group" (Bjork-James and Maskovsky 2017, 1-2). Even if a white person doesn't feel this way, they can easily find these sentiments amongst other white people on the web, and begin to agree with those sentiments. The web thus allows white people to build community online based around this feeling of persecution. It is also a way for white people to learn about and make sense of their whiteness. Their use of online spaces is thus *defined* by their race, rather than a negation of it. This sets up a basic understanding of how and why "Politically Incorrect" exists in the first place. The ease of access to this white space, as well as the feelings of social persecution discussed there, show how easy it is to find white communities that openly discuss the persecution of the white race. If a white person goes to "Politically Incorrect" without having strong feelings towards their white identity, it would be easy to get swept up in the strong solidarity that exists there. Thus, the web has opened a space

for people with strong racial identities to find each other and build community with each other in a racially-shifting world, as well as recruit other people to their ideologies. Not only does the web provide a space for white supremacists to speak freely, but it is one of the only places they can form and maintain community as more non-white people move into their physical environment.

Thus, the web provide the tools for the construction and survival of white-based communities. This is because it serves a similar role as newspapers and novels, according to Anderson's analysis. Anderson explains that newspapers and novels "provide the technical means for 're-presenting' the *kind* of imagined community that is that nation" (Anderson 2016, 25). This is because these mediums allow us to understand ourselves as part of a larger community in which other people are living complex lives at same time as us, even if we will never meet those people face-to-face (Anderson 2016, 25). White people who feel persecuted can turn to the web and find other white people sharing similar stories, and build community with them, as well as recruit others. As refugee crises and immigration continue, white nationalism is threatened because the racialized "other" is moving onto their land (Anderson 2016, 143). These demographic changes threaten the white national identity, because white communities are losing their white majority. To maintain their identities and sense of self, white supremacists and nationalists turn to the web to create/maintain white communities and make sense of the world around them, because others are experiencing the same things they are. The web allows white supremacism and nationalism to persevere and grow when the racial landscape changes. Since the creators of the internet imagined cyberspace to be a utopia, they may not have imagined it would be used to create these kinds of communities.

The web also helps pre-existing white supremacist communities/movements find a new platform for recruiting members. Daniels mentions that former KKK Grand Wizard David Duke

posted on his website in 1998, "'I believe that the internet will begin a chain reaction of racial enlightenment that will shake the world by the speed of its intellectual conquest,'" (Daniels 2018, 63). This directly contradicts the utopian dream held by the creators of the internet. Although I wouldn't describe our current state as "racial enlightenment," there is growing evidence to suggest that the web has helped white supremacy and white-based movements to gain a larger platform and following (Reitman 2018). This shows that the "ideology of color-blindness in technology . . . serve as key mechanisms enabling white nationalists to exploit technological innovations.[v] By ignoring race in the design process and eschewing discussion of it after products are launched, the tech industry has left an opening for white nationalists," (Daniels 2018, 63). My research on 4Chan exemplifies this phenomenon, as many users come to "Politically Incorrect" to discuss racial anxieties. Since cyberspace democracy assures they can speak without persecution, this is one of the only places they feel safe to share their ideas, as they face greater social persecution in the real world.[vi] In fact, it is one of the only spaces in their lives where they know they can speak freely, and the ideologies built into the internet have facilitated that. The fact that white movements are using the web to recruit members also increases the chances that a white person questioning their racial identity/community will find these movements and gain a sense of meaning to their daily anxieties. The web is thus a safe haven for members of the white supremacist movement. It is also a space in which people are making sense of their whiteness through interacting with these communities.

The use and regulation of new technology reflects the ideologies that went into its creation. If tech giants and social media platforms view their "users as free-floating, atomized and largely interchangeable agents to whom the platforms do not owe any particular duty of care," then there's no real incentive to protect users from harassment, especially when tech giants favor freedom of

speech (equality) over censorship (Salter 2017, 11). Ultimately, "communication on social media platforms is envisaged by their owners as an exchange within the 'marketplace of ideas' rather than a situated interaction vitiated by underlying inequalities or manipulated by vested interests," (Salter 2017, 11). In this way, white nationalism and white supremacism has an equal place within that "marketplace of ideas" in cyberspace. This is how the tech industry provides a haven for white supremacists to communicate freely, and to form community online. Additionally, the web serves a similar purpose as newspapers and novels do in allowing us to imagine being part of a larger community, which further makes it the ideal medium for constructing new/maintaining old communities. The fact that people can be anonymous on the web also makes it ideal for joining controversial communities.

My research on 4Chan looks at one unifying symbol within an online community of white supremacists. In my research, "white supremacy" refers to the belief that white people are inherently superior to all other races, and this belief often produces white nationalism/the push for a white ethno-state. These movements are intertwined, especially in the context of this research. Many users on "Politically Incorrect" stated their desire for a white ethno-state, which makes white nationalism just as key as white supremacy. While users do not often refer to themselves as white supremacists, they make their white supremacist ideology known in their discussions surrounding other racial groups. In this way, users on "Politically Incorrect" *practice* their white supremacy through discussing their racial superiority, as well as their anxieties surrounding white genocide. As I will show later, this is one of the only spaces they feel that they can have these discussions, which makes it one of the only spaces they can enact their white supremacy together. In this way, the "Politically Incorrect" community is a virtual community that represents the white-majority world these users want to live in. It could even be considered a white ethno-state in and of itself,

just one that exists online. The "redpill" symbol represents entrance and belonging to the community as it reflects some of the core beliefs held by the community. Namely, this is the belief that Jewish people are organizing and executing a white genocide. The web facilitates the imagining of this community by giving members a platform to find each other on 4Chan, which is the site in which they communicate freely. The tech industry's ideologies outlined above make this a "safe space" for these members to build community, especially as 4Chan is completely anonymous by nature. Thus, their imagined community can be entered by using the message board they use to communicate.

The tech industry and its formative ideologies has provided a "safe space" for white supremacists to maintain their sense of community as globalization and demographics continue to contribute to their belief in the threat to white identity. This has also helped these groups gain exposure and a larger following, when before the internet and web, they may not have been able to reach as many numbers so easily/quickly (Mitra 1996, 50). It also exemplifies that the web is a space in which white people discuss and make sense of their whiteness. Daniels says that in this context, "online spaces of connection based on racial and ethnic identity become increasingly important mechanisms for sustaining imagined communities," (Daniels 2013, 699). "On the internet, and in internet studies, this 'imagined community' is constituted by whiteness," (Daniels 2013, 710). This is the ideological context in which my research takes place, as I enter a white supremacist message board on 4Chan.org. The tech industry, in striving to make cyberspace an equal place while not recognizing its own inequalities and blind spots, has given white supremacists the tools to create and maintain meaningful bonds with each other. In understanding this context, it is easy to see how meaningful "Politically Incorrect" is for people who feel

persecuted in their daily lives. This exemplifies how the web is key in helping us understand contemporary white supremacy and the formation of white-based identities.

1.2 Contemporary White Supremacist Action in America

While white supremacy is not a new phenomenon, my research is framed within a contemporary context. According to a *New York Times Magazine* report by Janet Reitman, titled "U.S. Law Enforcement Failed to See the Threat of White Nationalism. Now They Don't Know How to Stop It," "white supremacists and other far-right extremists have killed far more people since Sept. 11, 2001, than any other category of domestic extremist." This exemplifies how some white supremacists are empowered to fight and die for their community/identity. Additionally, "the Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism has reported that 71 percent of the extremist-related fatalities in the United States between 2008 and 2017 were committed by members of the far right or white-supremacist movements," (Reitman 2018). This violence seems to be evidence of the resurgence of white nationalism today. Anderson says that "nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love," (Anderson 2016, 141). The self-sacrificing nature of these hate crimes (risk of imprisonment or death) exemplify the self-sacrificing love these extremists feel towards the white community. White nationalists and supremacists are inspired to fight and even die for the white community. Perhaps the internet allows them to see that there is still a community worth fighting for, they aren't lost yet, and can still fight back.

The white supremacist/nationalist movement saw heightened support during the 2008 presidential race, where America faced the reality of having its first Black president. When Daryl Johnson, an analyst for Homeland Security's domestic-terrorism unit, heard that Barack Obama

was running for president, he predicted that it would be a catalyzing event for a resurgence of the white supremacist movement (Reitman 2018). It appears that his prediction was correct: there were two intercepted assassination plots against Obama in the final months of the campaign, and the white-nationalist website "Stormfront" added 32,000 new members right after Obama's election, which was double the number it added in 2008 (Reitman 2018). This is proof that a significant number of white supremacists are using the web to maintain their community, further exemplifying how internet sites are key places to investigate white supremacy. This is one factor that motivated me to investigate white supremacy on "Politically Incorrect:" we cannot stop these violent attacks without understanding what drives them. With these events, "we are faced with the dismal reality that the first African American presidency ended not with a movement towards racial progress but towards an overt racist backlash," (Bjork-James and Maskovsky 2017, 2). "The difference this time is that the 'Whitelash' is algorithmically amplified, sped up, and circulated through networks to other white ethno-nationalist movements around the world, ignored all the while by a tech industry that 'doesn't see race' in the tools it creates," (Daniels 2018, 65). 4Chan is one website where users from all over the world communicate, thus bridging the geographic barriers between white nationalists/supremacists, and allowing them to create new nationalist borders through the medium of the internet.

One of the alarming features related to this online white-supremacist movement is in the ease that it can be found. For instance, "Dylann Roof [of the Charleston Massacre][vii] searched for 'black on white crime' and Google provided racist websites and a community of others to confirm and grow his hatred," (Daniels 2018, 62). The accessibility of the movement makes it all the easier for those questioning their racial stance to find and then be swept away by the literature related to white supremacy on the web. Not to mention there is virtually no government monitoring of white

supremacist websites (Reitman 2018). Given the internet-fueled resurgence of the white supremacist movement, this could be an important factor in the results of the 2016 presidential election. The number of people who mobilized on the internet in the name of white nationalism following Obama's election is something to consider when investigating the election of Donald Trump in 2016. "Trump did not just run on an anti-globalist and anti-immigrant platform; he took an explicitly white nationalist-friendly stance. In fact, his version of right-wing populism is noteworthy for its overt elaboration of white racial resentments that have long been exploited, *sub rosa* by the Republican Party," (Bjork-James and Maskovsky 2017, 4). Further research that combines internet studies with white supremacy could offer more understanding towards the section of the American population that was drawn to Trump's message.

If the department of Homeland Security was rarely investigating domestic terrorism before the 2016 election, the efforts it puts forth now are dismal (Reitman 2018). Additionally, the FBI is reluctant to call mass-murderers such as Dylann Roof "terrorists," as the government views terrorism as more of a "political act" than a hate crime (according to James Comey) (Reitman 2018). Thus, there is both a technological industry exacerbation of the white supremacist/nationalist movement, along with a government blind-eye to the terrorism it produces. This has given the white supremacist/nationalist movement an even larger ability to enter the political spotlight, especially as some of its members have reframed themselves as the "alt-right." ("Individuals holding neo-Nazi views were suddenly granted extensive interviews in the mainstream press, so long as they identified as alt-right," (Bjork-James and Maskovsky 2017, 3).) This further allows the white nationalist and supremacist movements to reach a larger audience, and feel empowered to act in the name of white nationalism or white supremacy.

Using white supremacist message boards, or taking part in white supremacist discussions online, does not immediately mean someone is going to go out and kill people. But that these ideologies can *empower* people such as Dylann Roof to take matters into their own hands is what is important. This kind of example helps demonstrate the impact that online communities have on the creation of social identities that then lead to action, as well as the deep political love these actors feel towards their white identity. The lack of effort on part of the government to even monitor these sites hints at the privilege the white movement gets, even if it's one steeped in white-nationalism. For instance, there is a stark contrast between the government treatment of white supremacists/nationalists and the Black Panther Party. In 1969, the FBI "declared the Black Panthers a communist organization and an enemy of the United States government" (History.com editors 2017). Additionally, the FBI ran a counterintelligence program specifically targeting the Black Panther Party. As the Black Panther Party was created to "challenge police brutality against African Americans," as well as promote more elected African American officials, it is disturbing to consider such a strong government backlash, especially in light of the lack of government response to terrorism committed by white supremacists and white nationalists (History.com editors 2017). This is what I mean by the "privilege" of the white supremacist movement: it has more political freedom in that it is not being actively monitored, or even declared a danger to the United States. This is contradictory to the amount of violence that has been enacted in the name of white supremacy on American soil.

Even more recently, the Tree of Life Massacre that occurred in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on October 27, 2018 is yet another example of the role the internet holds in fueling white supremacist ideologies. A gunman, shouting anti-Semitic slurs, entered a synagogue in the historically Jewish neighborhood of Squirrel Hill killing 11 Jewish congregants (Robertson, Mele,

Tavernise 2018). As will become evident in this research, many holding white supremacist views do not see Jewish people as white, and in fact see Jewish people as one of the largest threats to the white race. White supremacy isn't only directed at Black, Latinx, and immigrant communities, but it also creates a definition of "white" that excludes those who may themselves identify as white. This is also a facet how white supremacists and white nationalists create community: they determine the boundaries of what it means to be white, and thus a member of the white nation.

There have been some online efforts to combat violent extremism and hate speech using technology. For instance, Moonshot CVE[viii] has partnered with Google to use advertising to intervene in terrorist organization recruitment. If someone were to use Google to search "how to join the KKK," Google will first provide content with outreach information curated from around the world to disrupt this person finding the answer they're looking for. Instead, they see content that is geared to help people who are vulnerable to terrorist recruitment.[ix] This is just one way that the tech industry has started to combat the use of the web for terrorist recruitment. Additionally, social media websites such as Twitter have hate-speech bans, but often have difficulty enforcing them. Twitter reported in 2017 that it would create internal tools to help find and remove hate-speech.[x] Bans like these may help to push white supremacists and white nationalists off the platform, but it does not stop them from finding each other and building community online. This complicates the issue of banning, as on one hand it may reduce hate speech in a single web space, but on the other it can push people into other online spaces, such as 4Chan, where they won't see differing viewpoints.

These are some of the key contemporary events that frame the present context of my research. Knowing that violent white supremacist extremists, such as Dylann Roof, use the web to solidify their racial ideologies proves that the internet is a key place to investigate white

supremacy. Presently, cyberspace is an ideal place where white supremacists can freely and safely communicate with each other in large numbers, as well as recruit new members. Using internet studies in conjunction with critical race studies on white supremacy allowed me to enter a white supremacist space on 4Chan to further understand the persistence of the white supremacist movement. The following section will explain the methodology involved in this investigation.

2.0 Doing Methodology Online

2.1 Introduction

The following sections describe my methodology as I conducted research on "Politically Incorrect" on 4Chan.org. This includes explanations of multiple disciplinary perspectives, protections I took while conducted research online, and how my own emotions relate to this research. The first section discusses feminist research methodology and how it relates to my research on 4Chan, especially masculinity studies. The next section discusses applying emotions to research, especially research on communities that we do not agree with. This section also discusses the complicated nature of creating a sympathetic view of communities that we are opposed to. The third section talks about the anthropological method of Participant Observation that I conducted online, as well as the specifics of my data collection strategies. Finally, the last section describes 4Chan and "Politically incorrect," as well as the details of the data I collected there.

This research was fueled by my initial interests in deconstructing whiteness and white supremacy, that then became interwoven with internet communities as I encountered white supremacy's presence online. I feel strongly about understanding white supremacy, and I want to put my voice into the academic conversation about contemporary white supremacy. My hope is that others will expand upon what I've done here and continue to look at white supremacy and the formation of ideology. In the end, everyone just wants to feel like they're not alone, and we can only make sense of the world in the best ways we can. My methodology outlined below thus reflects both my academic training and my goals as a researcher.

2.2 Feminist Research

As someone trained in both feminist research and anthropological research, it is necessary to give a brief overview of how I provide a feminist lens to this study of "Politically Incorrect" on 4Chan.org. This section will discuss what it means to do research through a feminist lens, how I am providing a feminist lens to this research, as well as my own standpoint on white supremacy.

According to Sharlene Hesse-Biber in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*, "feminist researchers use gender as a lens through which to focus on social issues" (Hesse-Biber 2014, kindle ed. 447). As I will show in my analysis of "Politically Incorrect," gender plays a key role in the construction of this community, as well as race. In fact, masculinity plays a role in construction nations and communities, which is why it ought to be considered when looking at how communities are formed (Reeser 2010). This means that gender cannot be overlooked in my analysis. Feminist theory, and masculinity studies within feminist theory, provide me with the critical tools needed to investigate how masculinity and whiteness both tie into the community of "Politically Incorrect." As this is a space in which women are explicitly attacked through misogynistic claims, the investigation into the masculinity in this space shows how borders are created and maintained with both masculinity and whiteness. Thus, an intersectional lens is applied, which considers how identities overlap and interact to create space (Crenshaw 2005).

Additionally, feminist research is also concerned with using "strong objectivity," which acknowledges that "the production of power is a political process and that greater attention paid to the context and social location of knowledge producers will contribute to a more ethical and transparent result" (Gurr and Naples 2014, kindle ed. 816-821). In other words, by assessing and acknowledging my own position and bias as a researcher, I create a stronger objectivity in my data analysis. An aspect to feminist "strong objectivity" is self-reflexivity, "a process by which

[researchers] recognize, examine, and understand how their social background, location, and assumptions can influence the research" (Hesse-Biber YEAR, kindle ed. 453). To this end, I will provide a short overview of my personal views towards white supremacy. As a queer working-class person who is also white, I have identities that both marginalize and privilege me. I may not be disadvantaged due to my race, but I am due to my social class and gender/sexual identity. As the white working class is one social group that explicitly adopted white supremacy during Reconstruction, I also personally understand how working-class anxieties can cause a deeper dedication to the white identity, as it provides support in an economic situation that is fraught (Roediger 2007, 14, 20). Although I am politically, ethically, and emotionally opposed to white supremacy as an ideology, I also understand some of the anxieties that drive white people towards white supremacy. As an outsider, I can look into "Politically Incorrect" with fresh ayes. As a white person, I can consider how my whiteness is different than theirs, and how their whiteness affects my own.

In these ways, feminist theory is one lens that I am applying to my research as I consider the deeper personal implications of my data. Through considering the role of gender, as well as applying "strong objectivity" to my research, I provide nuance to my data analysis that considers my own personal biases. With these analytical tools, feminist methods help me exemplify how the researcher is affected by their data and vice versa.

2.3 Emotional Affect and Research

This section will briefly describe how emotional affect and research go together when attempting to create a sympathetic view of lives that we may not agree with. I will briefly discuss

how other researchers have analyzed their emotional responses to their own research, and how these emotional responses affect the research process itself. Additionally, I will discuss what it means to give a sympathetic view of lives that we may not feel comfortable sympathizing with.

Tiffany Page, in reflecting about her feminist methodology, tells us that affect can be used as epistemology (Page 2017). In other words, the emotions we feel are also a way of knowing and understanding the world. In my research, the emotional responses I had when immersed in "Politically Incorrect" are equally as important as the data itself. For instance, I couldn't spend more than an hour and a half on "Politically Incorrect" at a time without feeling emotionally drained. As many posts discussed hateful, or even violent, views against communities that I myself am a part of, it took a toll on me. Viewing the casual use of slurs was also deeply upsetting. In light of these emotional reactions, it is hard to believe that anyone who spends significant amounts of time on "Politically Incorrect" can feel positively afterwards. It is interesting to consider how members and frequent users of "Politically Incorrect" respond to this environment themselves. These emotions also drove the data collection itself, because I explicitly avoided threads that I knew would cause me deep emotional discomfort, such as threads about transgender people.

It was also interesting to notice that some of the photos that appeared on "Politically Incorrect" made their way to the social media sites that I frequent, such as Twitter. Recognizing content that originated on 4Chan on other websites was even more disturbing, as it revealed not only the influence of 4Chan, but the fact that "Politically Incorrect" users also use websites that are less anonymous. They use websites that I use and post on, which made me worry about talking about my research topic in those settings, even in the most general of terms. Fearing for my own safety, both emotional and as an internet user, constantly weighed on me through this research.

Kathleen Blee, who has conducted studies on organized racism, speaks about the "emotional work" she had to do in conducting her research (Blee 2007, 60). Although she interviewed women members of organized racist groups, I understand some of the difficulties she discusses in writing about these groups. For instance, she says "writing from, and about, the stories of racist women runs the risk of personalizing them too much, making their ideas more sympathetic or less odious . . .. These are dangerous outcomes – but the consequences of not learning from and about racists are worse," (Blee 2007, 60). Although I am writing about a virtual white supremacist group, the same fears are present in my depiction of this community. I also feel strongly about learning from and about the organization of white supremacy, which requires some level of sympathy to understand the drives behind white supremacy. Of course, depicting any group as sympathetic does not mean they are ethical. As researchers in such difficult communities, it is important to remember the consequences, good, bad, personal, and otherwise, of reporting on these groups.

While conducting research on a community full of hateful speech is emotionally challenging, Boellstorff et al. say that in online research (and any anthropological research), "the general principle is to forge a sympathetic depiction of informants' lives, even when discussing aspects of informants' lives that some might find troubling," (Boellstorff et al. 2012, 149). In this research, I focus on a symbol in the community (the "redpill") that ties ideology with emotion, which opens space for this sympathetic view. Instead of demonizing their beliefs, or proving why they're wrong, I strive to understand how these beliefs are tied with their emotions. Saba Mahmood does similar work in "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival." In this, she says that she wants to "focus quite squarely on the conceptions of self, moral agency, and discipline that undergird the practices of this [the Egyptian

Islamic revival] nonliberal movement so as to come to an understanding of the desires that animate it" (Mahmood 2001, 203). In other words, she focuses directly on what inspires nonliberal action amongst a group of Islamic women, even if that action goes counter to liberal feminist ideals. In doing so, she uncovers what inspires this movement to understand it on a more emotional level, rather than critique it. This is my goal with this research. Rather than directly critique white supremacy (even though I am personally against it as an ideology), I want to understand the drives that "animate it," which is what brings me to the redpill symbol. In doing this work, I hope to forge a more sympathetic view of the community members of "Politically Incorrect," even if their beliefs are also tied to violence. This does not mean that their beliefs and actions are acceptable, but that we must understand them on a more emotional level to see the deeper drives of individual white supremacists. In the end they are people too, and they must be understood as people living within contexts. We as researchers are "laboring to grasp informants' own visions of their worlds," even if those visions are dangerous (Boellstorff et al. 2012, 149). If anthropologists are dedicated to understanding their subjects in sympathetic ways, then it has to be so no matter what community we study.

2.4 Participant Observation and Data Collection Online

This section will give an overview of how I conducted my research online, using anthropological methodology. Additionally, I go over some of the basic protections I took to ensure my anonymity online, as well as what online data collection means in this study.

Before I ever entered 4Chan.org/pol, I used a VPN (virtual private network) to hide my computer's identity. I spend $35 a year on the program "Private Internet Access VPN." The

purposes of using a VPN are multiple, but one reason is because it connects your computer to another computer on the internet, thus hiding your computer's identity.[xi] For instance, if I tell my VPN to connect me to Japan, then websites that collect data will see my location as being in Japan, and not in the US. This means that even if someone were to steal data connected to my computer, it will be harder to trace it back to me personally (Hoffman 2018). I also used the "private browsing" option on Firefox, to ensure that my data on 4Chan wasn't being stored. This means that my browser (Firefox) didn't collect my website data, thus keeping advertisers and other data purchasers from knowing I was on 4Chan. These things can also be used by 4Chan users to hide their own identities and locations, as many of them feel that "Politically Incorrect" is the only place they can truly be themselves. The desire to be 100% anonymous in this space can be a reality for both me as a researcher and the users themselves. Of course, these steps are precautions, and cannot ensure perfect anonymity.

My research method itself is characterized as observation-only Participant Observation, as I did not post or interact with members of "Politically Incorrect" during my data collection. This is a method in which a researcher completely immerses themselves in a community to look at it with fresh eyes from within. This process includes learning the language of the community, and picking up on patterns that community members themselves may overlook (Bernard et. all 2017). Thus, my existence in this community was the same as any other user, except that I didn't post or communicate with community members.

To collect my data, I took screenshots, or photos of webpages, which became my data points. In *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Methods*, Tom Boellstorff, Bonnie Nardi, Celia Pearce, and T.L. Taylor warn that "we should keep in mind the same cautions for screenshots as photographs – that they are 'most usefully treated as representations of aspects of

culture; not recordings of whole cultures or of symbols that will have complete or fixed meanings'
(Pink 2007: 75)," (Boellstorff et al. 2012, 115). As all my data is comprised of screenshots, I had
to keep this in mind during my data analysis. The screenshots that I collected do not hold inherent
truths about the community, but rather representations of what users believe to be true. These
representations are fixed in time, as a screenshot captures a single moment. Thus, my research
looks into the patterns that emerge within the posts in a specific period of time. For instance, during
my time on "Politically Incorrect," I noticed a pattern in which members referred to learning about
white genocide as "being redpilled." I began to focus on any post or comment that included
discussions of the redpill, to understand the importance of this symbol in "Politically Incorrect."
Taken together, texts that repeat similar messages (such as discussions around the redpill), can
represent beliefs held by the members that participate in these discussions. This means that the
redpill may not be meaningful to all members, nor can it be applied to the entirety of the
"Politically Incorrect" community. The recurrence of "redpill" on 4Chan.org/pol is one of many
unifying symbols within the community, but it cannot be assumed that everyone in this community
engages with the "redpill" as a meaningful symbol. It is just one symbol that appeared often during
the short duration of my time on 4Chan.org/pol, but is still a symbol packed with emotional and
ideological meanings. As this symbol is rich in meaning, it helped me humanize members of
"Politically Incorrect," not make broad claims about all white supremacist beliefs. In this way, my
research exemplifies how some white people make sense of their whiteness online, and symbols
help them communicate their beliefs affectively.

2.5 Politically Incorrect

The choice to browse 4Chan.org/pol ("Politically Incorrect") was in part due to the anonymous nature of the site, as well as how easy it is to access. There are no accounts on 4Chan, so every user is virtually anonymous. This also means that the content on 4Chan is accessible to anyone uses the web, which made entry into the space that much easier. This is also significant because the ease of access to this site means that white people seeking a white-based community can easily find it on 4Chan. 4Chan is organized into different boards with a range of topics, from video games to Japanese anime. When you go to 4Chan.org, the boards are listed, and you simply click on one to enter. Then, you can go through the threads, post, start your own threads, etc. Joining these virtual communities is as easy as having access to the web.

There were also concerns for my own safety involved, as physically entering white supremacist spaces could be dangerous for a queer-identifying researcher such as myself. The fact that I could browse posts without making an account meant that my presence there was virtually undetectable. Of course, doing research in virtual communities can be dangerous as well, as thousands of people can quickly start a harassment campaign, find my social media accounts, figure out where I go to school, etc. Making sure I stayed hidden was one of my main goals, and 4Chan allowed me to do this. Additionally, 4Chan is one of the oldest English message boards on the web (created by a 15-year-old in 2003), and has been kept alive by the users when it faced multiple bankruptcies.[xii] The fact that 4Chan has been on the web for so long ties it to the history of the web itself, which made this site even more appropriate to conduct research on white supremacy on the internet. It also exemplifies how important it is for those who use it.

In total, I spent 13.5 hours browsing 4Chan.org/pol between 24 July 2018 and 16 September 2018. The amount of data produced on this website in 13.5 hours is immense: I

collected photos of 54 threads, encompassing over 1,000 posts, as some threads had over 200 comments underneath. The threads I analyzed did not encompass even half of the content available to me in that time, which exemplifies that a researcher does not need to spend a lot of time on this website to encounter and collect a significant amount of data. In browsing, I selectively chose threads to read that appeared to reveal something about the community. This could be commentary on current events, attitudes towards the Left, or questions community members posed to each other. One of the patterns that I noticed was that there was usually a thread or two pointed at white women, the Black community, or the Jewish community. These posts revealed the attitudes community members had towards outsiders. The threads about white women were particularly interesting, because many community members expressed frustration that white women were motivated to leave the home or have inter-racial relationships.

I avoided analyzing threads that were made explicitly to express hatred towards racial groups or women, because those were organized around users bonding over hatred rather than self-reflection. Additionally, reading white supremacists talk about their hatred of other races may not reveal new information about white supremacy, as opposed to them discussing how they cope in their day-to-day lives. While on "Politically Incorrect," I quickly noticed a pattern emerge where users mentioned the "redpill" in reference to their belief in white genocide. This is the symbol I chose for my analysis, as it held something more than hatred or frustration. When I encountered a thread that discussed the redpill, politics, or the Left, I captured a screenshot of the webpage. After my data collection was over, I used the qualitative data software NVivo to open-code my data based on topics that appeared most often. This is a process in which re-occurring themes in qualitative data are noted, and given a code name, such as "redpill" (Bernard et. all 2017). Thus, all posts that mentioned the "redpill" could be viewed together and analyzed as a group. In the

end, I coded 32 out of 54 posts, as I began focusing on specific topics during the coding process. I ended up with 29 codes, or re-occurring themes within those 32 posts, but focused on the following during my analysis: "About /pol/;" "Coping;" "Defining White;" "Jewish People;" "Redpilled;" and "White genocide." I focus on these codes because they are strongly connected. For instance, there was a strong focus on Jewish people in the "Politically Incorrect" community. This focus had to do with the belief that Jewish people were behind white genocide, which is a major ideological belief in this space. This meant that I also had to investigate the community's definition of whiteness, because there are Jewish people who identify as white. This investigation exemplified the way the boundaries of whiteness were defined in this community. Additionally, the way they cope with these beliefs is tied into their discussions of the redpill symbol, which made it key in understanding some of their emotions. Finally, their reflections on what "Politically Incorrect" (/pol/) means to them in relationship to these ideologies/emotions sheds light on the role this community has in these users lives, and its importance to them.

Now, I will define some of the words I will be using in my analysis of the redpill. First, a "post" is content posted on 4Chan.org/pol by a single user, either as a comment or as the beginning of a thread. A "parent post" is the post that begins a "thread," or the top post that others can respond to. A "comment" is a response to any post. To give an example, I could start a thread that asks, "What is your favorite thing to do on vacation?" That would be the parent post. Others can respond to that post with their replies, or comments. The parent post (my question) with all of its comments underneath (other's responses) is a full thread. These are basic ways to refer to content on a message board or forum-based social media.

3.0 Doing Methodology at the University of Pittsburgh

To supplement my online research, I conducted semi-structured interviews with University of Pittsburgh students and administration to understand how those in my immediate community are conceptualizing and dealing with white supremacy in their lives. My goals in conducting these interviews were to explore the presence of white supremacy in students' lives, as I expected some would have thoughts or feelings about white supremacy since it has become politically visible. I also wanted to know how my peers who are not in the same field as I think about white supremacy. Additionally, some of the students felt very strongly about the University of Pittsburgh's rhetoric of diversity and inclusion, which led me to seek an administrative take on what the University is doing for its minority students.

For the student interviews, I created a basic interview schedule with questions such as "what does 'white supremacy' mean to you?" and "where do you encounter white supremacy in your life?" (Appendix A). I also look at what they understand white supremacy to mean, where they think it comes from, and how they first learned about it. Additionally, I inquired about their thoughts on internet censorship of white supremacy, and white supremacy in the media. These questions guided the interviews, but I also left room to diverge from the interview schedule. For instance, one student spoke in length about why they wanted to be interviewed by me, which included an in-depth explanation of the relationship between Hispanic and Latinx identities. It was important for me to leave space for students to talk about what they felt they needed to, as white supremacy is a difficult subject to discuss.

Before I conducted my interviews, I applied for and received IRB approval to work with human subjects. This process ensured that I evaluated the risks of conducting this study, and

understood how to protect my interviewees' confidentiality. All of my interviewees came to me on a volunteer basis and I verbally informed them of all risks before the interview began. The biggest risk was a breach of confidentiality. I protected interviewee's confidentiality by not using their names on any interview documents and keeping the interview recordings password protected.

I found my informants through a variety of ways. First, I contacted student organization leaders and asked if I could come to their general body meetings to talk about my research, provide some written information (Appendix D), and give members my contact information. At these meetings, I said that I was looking for people to interview, and anyone who would be interested can contact me with the information I provided. I also insured that they knew the interviews would be anonymous. Other than that, my student informers were people I had met through friends or people who I knew had research interests that were similar to mine. In total, I interviewed five students, three identified as white, two identified as Hispanic. Each interview lasted anywhere from half an hour to an hour and a half, and everyone was interviewed once. Interviews took place either on campus or in an informant's home; wherever the interviewee was most comfortable.

I also interviewed two of Pitt's administrators that directly deal with the anti-discrimination policy at Pitt and provide resources for those that experience discrimination. I learned of these administrators through friends that had worked with them before, and contacted them by email to request an interview. I made sure they knew the purpose of my research study, and that I would protect their confidentiality as well. Before conducting any interviews, I received verbal informed consent after explaining their rights as an interviewee, such as the right to end the interview at any time, the right to not answer my questions, or the right to opt out of the research after the interview. This ensured the protection of my interviewees, as per the IRB requirements. Since my research

deals with sensitive topics that may be distressing, making sure interviewees knew they could opt out at any time was an important step in ensuring their emotional safety.

My interview schedule for the students focused on where they see white supremacy in their lives, when they first learned about it, and how they deal with it now. My first interview schedule was tweaked as I thought about better ways to ask my questions after my initial interview, and some questions that I wanted to add. The interview schedule I used for most interviews can be found in Appendix A, and my original interview schedule in Appendix B. For the administrators, I inquired about the processes involved with dealing with cases of discrimination at the University of Pittsburgh, rather than their personal experiences with white supremacy (Appendix C). I also asked about the administrative goals for diversity and inclusion at the University of Pittsburgh.

After my student interviews, I open-coded for recurring themes that appeared in the interviews, using the qualitative data software NVivo. Open-coding is a process in qualitative data analysis, in which textual data is analyzed for recurring themes. Each theme gets a "code," and the process of coding allows researchers to view all data relevant to a particular theme all at once. This helps researchers make key connections within and between thematic content in textual data (Bernard et. all 2017). This process entailed reading through my interviews to find what topics appeared most often, and then creating a code for that topic. This process was both inductive and deductive: as I asked my interviewees the same questions, I already expected certain themes to arise, such as definitions of white supremacy. Other themes arose out of stories that interviewees told that I did not explicitly ask for, which were coded for when I read my transcripts. For example, almost every student brought up events in their life prior to college, even though I never explicitly asked them about their childhoods. As this was something every student brought up, I created a code for "childhood" so that I can compare their stories and analyze the importance of these

memories. I did not code the administrative interviews because my purpose for those interviews was to seek out information regarding the University of Pittsburgh's goals for diversity and inclusion, and how the university handles instances of discrimination. This information was meant to supplement the student interviews; thus, I spend less time analyzing the administrative interviews.

4.0 Field Site: "Politically Incorrect" (4Chan.org/pol)

My research took place on an online message board on the website 4Chan.org. This site has been on the web since 2003, and is owned by Hiroyuki Nishimura, who purchased it from its original creator in 2015. Nishimura happens to be the creator of the Japanese website 2channel that 4Chan was based on.[xiii] The headquarters of 4Chan are in New York, New York.[xiv] 4Chan is one of the first English message boards to appear with the early web, and is similar to other forum-based websites. These websites focus on online discussion with topics generated by the users. On 4Chan, there are different boards for different topics, and users can go to a board to see the discussions related to the board's topic. For instance, one of the boards is for discussion of video games, so a user would go there if they wanted to read and join discussions related to video games. Since there are no personal accounts on 4Chan, it's one of the best places on the web to remain completely anonymous while still interacting with other users. "Politically Incorrect" (/pol/) is a board the original creator made in 2011 to move racism out of the news board.[xv] Now, Politically Incorrect is predominantly a white supremacist message board, where people with white supremacist beliefs come to discuss politics, pop culture, news, and more personal topics. I chose to "lurk" this message board for my research as it was a place I could immerse myself in a white supremacist community without the danger of being physically surrounded by white supremacists.

Another term for 4Chan forums are "image boards," because every new thread must also be accompanied by an image. Figure 1 shows the front-page catalogue of "Politically Incorrect" (again, I want to warn that images from "Politically Incorrect" may contain content that many find offensive or disturbing). This displays the current active threads with their image and the caption, plus the beginning of their text. The two numbers below each image indicates the responses to the

thread (R), and the images that have been posted underneath (I). While I was browsing Politically Incorrect, I scrolled through the active threads using this screen and clicked and read the ones that discussed the /pol/ community's ideologies, the "redpill," posts that talked about the Left, or involved users talking about their personal hardships. I also paid attention to which posts had the most responses, as those would hold more information than posts with only two or three responses. For example, in Figure 1, I would probably choose to read the thread titled "The Decay of American Since the 1950's" (second row third, from the right). Just from the title and text alone, this thread would involve users discussing how/why they think America has declined since the 1950's. Additionally, the high number of responses to this thread indicates the community's interest in discussing this topic. This historical discussion would most likely reveal some of the community's ideologies, as a shared understanding of history is part of what binds a community (Anderson 2006). This would potentially reveal more information about the community and white supremacy than the post discussing miscegenation (third post), as that one only has twenty responses and discussions on miscegenation may not reveal anything new.

During my time on "Politically Incorrect," I never noticed active moderation of the board. Any moderation was within the community, as they would notice and call out people who didn't belong or were obviously from the Left trying to get a rise out of them. For instance, sometimes there would be a thread that asked the community "how am I not white?" and the user would explain their ancestry, to which members of "Politically Incorrect" would respond with an explanation. This shared understanding of whiteness was one of the ways members could be differentiated from non-members. Users would also talk to each other using words from Hebrew, such as "goyim," which is an informal and derogatory word for a non-Jewish nation/peoples. This appropriation of the Jewish language is interesting, as members of "Politically Incorrect" believe

that Jewish people are executing a white genocide. By appropriating Jewish words and symbols, members of this community take these words on as their own.

Figure 1: Photo of 4Chan.org/pol Catalogue of Posts

Figure 2: Example thread, posted on August 17, 2018

Figure 2 is one of the posts that I collected on "Politically Incorrect." Every post is assigned an ID, which can be clicked on to see other posts by that poster during the timeframe they have this ID. I hid these ID's in each response to ensure complete anonymity, even if these individuals have different ID's at this time. Additionally, each post is assigned a number. If a person wants to directly respond to another's comment, the number of the post they are responding to will appear in dark blue above their text. A blue number followed by "(OP)" means this person is responding to the original post that started the thread. Every post also includes a flag to designate the country location of the person posting. Although this thread has a lot of American responses, there are posts that have a host of different countries, from Canada to Poland. It is very easy for a user to have a VPN to change the country location that appears, or to use simple coding to use a custom flag. One reason users may want to do this is to increase the validity of the things they post to "Politically Incorrect." For instance, people posting from Canada have the Canadian flag, which has a leaf on it. Other 4Chan users sometimes refer to these posters as "the leaf." If someone from Canada posts something that another user disagrees with, they may something like, "Of course the leaf would say something like that." Thus, "the leaf" is a reference to Canadians, and can be used to take away from the posters' contributions, since "the leaf" is less respected than other countries. Similarly, people from America are referred to as "burgers," which can act as an insult as well. In my research, flag indicators don't play a large role in my analysis, since the community of "Politically Incorrect" spans borders. Flags may change how users interact with one another, but that is a facet of the community itself. Members of "Politically Incorrect" frequently tear each other down in reference to the country flag on their posts, which is part and parcel of the community, and something no member is truly immune to.

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Before I get into the analysis of the "redpill" symbol used on "Politically Incorrect," I will give a brief overview of the general ideas about race held by this community, to better contextualize the space. The first thing I want to highlight is how some members of this community define what it means to be white, and how there isn't a consensus on what a white identity means. The only thing that is agreed upon is "white" involves European ancestry, and Jewish people are not white. The following figures highlight these ideas. Figure 3 begins a thread, and figures 4-7 are comments on that thread. Figure 8 begins another thread, and the following two figures are comments on that thread.

Figure 3: Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Define White"
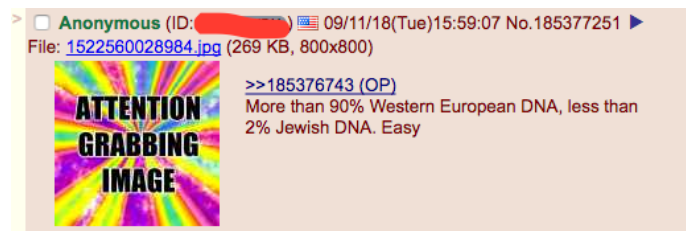
Figure 4: Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Define White"

Figure 5: Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Define White"

Figure 6Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Define White"
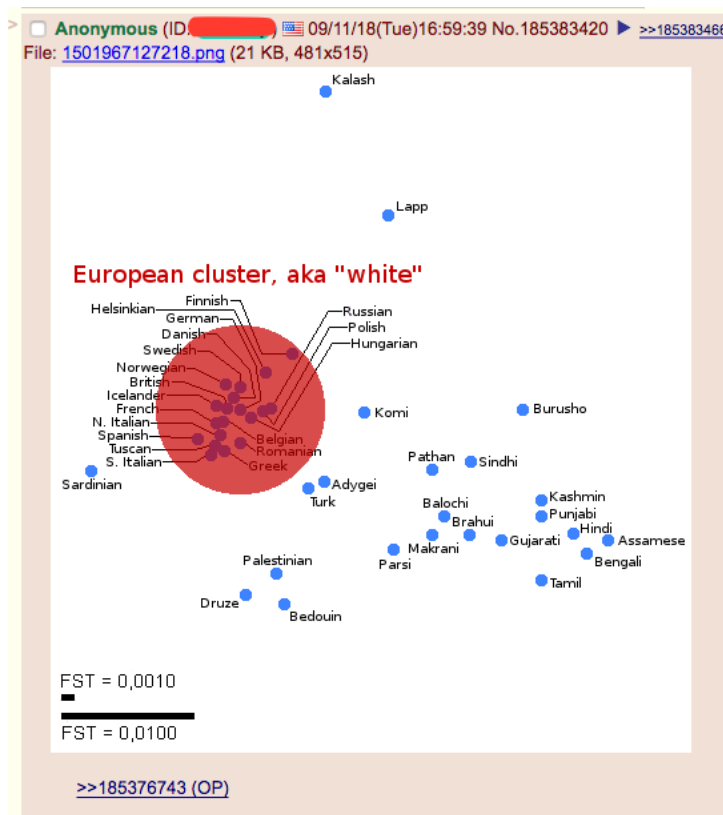
Figure 7: Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Define White"

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Figure 8: Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Part Jew Here. Could /pol/ Explain How I'm Not White?"
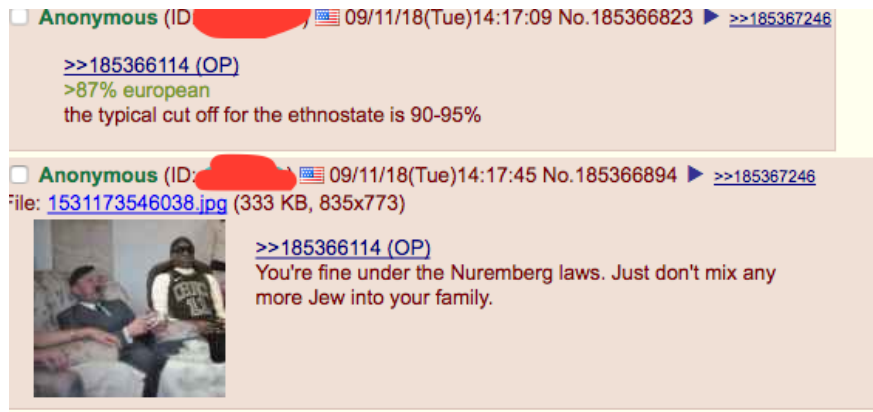
Figure 9: Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Part Jew Here. Could /pol/ Explain How I'm Not White?"

Figure 10: Posted on September 11, 2018. Thread Title: "Part Jew Here. Could /pol/ Explain How I'm Not White?"

As you can see, some users of /pol have a strict definition of what white is, while others are only worried about "white" features. Some use charts to explain, while others simply answer,

"you know em when you see them." It is no surprise that white is such a tough category to define, as it was never a strictly defined category from its inception (Wright 2005). Overall, how one defines white depends on the culture one grows up in. No matter how one defines white within the /pol/ community, it is accepted as the dominant race. The definition itself plays less role in tying the community together than the general idea of white supremacy.

Additionally, Jewish people are not white, and are one of the biggest threats to the white race to the users of this community. This speaks to the power of whiteness to determine the boundaries of inclusion (Lipsitz 2006; Wright 2004). In fact, to many members of this community, Jewish people are organizing a white genocide. The following two comments are just two examples of this belief, and more will be shown in my analysis of the "redpill" symbol.

Figure 11: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "Would a World with No Nations Really be that Bad?"

Figure 12: Posted on September 9, 2018. Thread Title: "Look at You All, So Little Faith Left in Your Own Race"

The green text in these figures indicates the poster is repeating the text of the comment they are replying to. Sometimes, the green text is blatantly making fun of the comment it is copying, and other times it's to indicate the exact part of the comment they are responding to. In Figure 11, the green text is saying that the post No. 18592488 implied that "the Jews aren't planning to rule over their new mud race world like the gods they think they are." In the context of the parent thread ("Would a World with No Nations Really be that Bad?"), they are saying that a world with no nations would be bad because the white race would no longer exist (through miscegenation), and Jewish people would rule the world without nations. This commenter believes that this is what the Jewish people want, because they would be the rulers and there would be no more white people. In Figure 12, on the other hand, they are saying that the original post is being too optimistic towards the fate of the white race because Jewish people and Muslims are working together to "conquer the west." These two comments indicate the belief that Jewish people are plotting against the white race, which is widely held by many users of /pol/. This belief works to explain much of the fear that is present on "Politically Incorrect," as well as how this community determines the borders of inclusion.

One of the things that I saw users disagree upon is having a religious belief. Some users tied their white supremacy directly into their belief in Christianity. For instance, since Jewish people don't believe that Jesus is the messiah, that makes them the anti-Chris, and thus evil. Other users described themselves as atheists and saw users that believed in Christianity as less-intelligent. Forms of Christianity and atheism were some of the few religious beliefs that I saw discussed in this space, as people who are Jewish or Muslim are not welcome. This shows that users may differ in their religious beliefs, but some explain their white supremacy through religion. On the other hand, the religions that exist in "Politically Incorrect" are indicative of who gets to

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belong in this community and who is an outsider. Diverse religious beliefs are welcome as long as they are considered "white" beliefs. Gabby Yearwood, in "Heritage as Hate: Racism and Sporting Traditions," employs whiteness as a "culturally constructed yet socially relevant system of practices imbued with values and behaviors that privileges lives that align themselves with the principles of white values" (Yearwood 2018, 679). In the case of religious beliefs in "Politically Incorrect," the ones that align themselves with "white values," such as Christianity and atheism, are welcome and reflect user's whiteness. Religions that do not reflect "white values," such as Judaism and Islam, are not welcome. This shows that "white values" can fit within a diverse set of beliefs and experiences, but still work to construct borders around whiteness.

5.0 Analysis: The Redpill

One of the unifying symbols for the /pol/ community is that of the redpill. This is a reference to the Matrix plot point of the red pill versus the blue pill: the red being the pill that awakens you of the painful truth and the blue pill leaving you in blissful ignorance (*The Matrix* 1999). Being redpilled can be likened to the left-wing use of the word "woke," as in being awakened to larger social issues and systemic structures that produce oppression.[xvi] The difference is who can consider themselves to be "redpilled." I have never seen 4Chan users refer to themselves being "woke," only "redpilled." This suggests that to these users, being redpilled is different than being "woke" because it refers to this community's specific truths about the world. The "redpill" may have similar connotations as being "woke," but the Left is not "redpilled." This is part of the vocabulary of "Politically Incorrect" that designates membership in the community, and separates itself from the outside, especially the Left. For the users of /pol/, taking different "pills" will awaken you to different levels of truth. For instance, I've seen the use of "blackpill" to refer to even harder and deeper truths than those of the redpill. Out of the 13.5 hours I spent on 4Chan /pol/, I collected at least eight threads that mentioned the redpill either in the title, the parent post, or in the comments. This section analyzes the meaning behind the redpill, the emotions that come out of swallowing the redpill, and the way users cope with those emotions. The importance of this community for users is highlighted through this analysis, as it exemplifies that they only feel comfortable being themselves when they are on /pol/. One user states that this is a place where users can "truly shed their masks," which shows how meaningful this community is to users, and how deeply estranged they feel in their day-to-day lives.

Some threads asked users when/how they became redpilled, as in the two examples below (Figures 13 and 14).

Figure 13: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What's the Most Difficult Red Pill You've Ever Swallowed?"
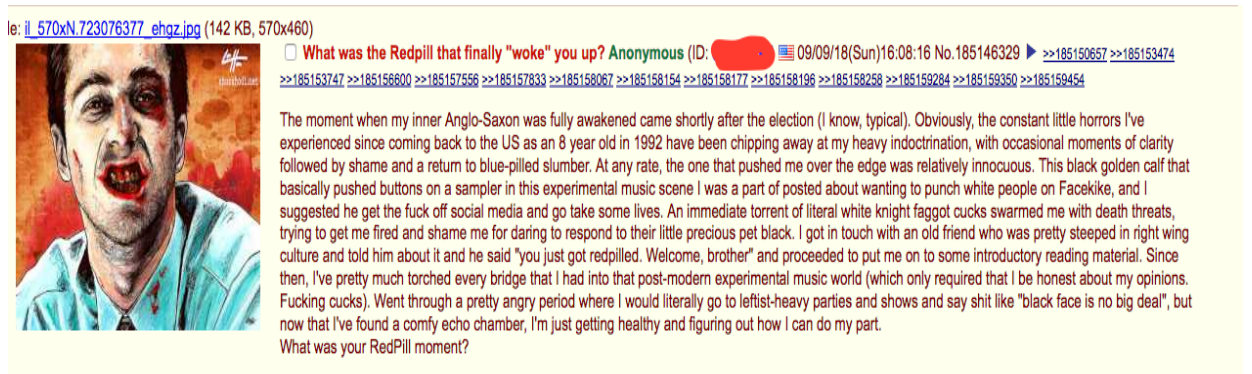
Figure 14: Posted on September 9, 2018. Thread Title: "What was the Redpill that Finally 'Woke' You Up?"

Both users are American, as is evidenced by the flag they use next to their user ID. In Figure 13, the user indicates that "race realism" was the most difficult redpill. Race realism is a form of "scientific racism," and indicates the use of statistics and empirical evidence to justify racial bias (LeTourneau 2018). For instance, if a /pol/ user sees a study that states 70% of crimes are committed by non-white people, they will use that statistic to justify their push for a white ethno-state, stating that it is out of race realism, and not simply racism alone. Race realism is also reflected in present day white reactions to reparations and affirmative action. For instance, George Lipsitz in *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness* says, "the belief among young whites that racist

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things happened in the distant past and that it is unfair to hold contemporary whites accountable for them illuminates broader currents in our culture" (Lipsitz 2006, 21). This is a form of race realism because white people alive today, because they had no personal hand in slavery, believe that they hold no responsibility for the racial discrimination that still exits. This form of race realism sees "innocent" white people today as having no responsibility towards those who have been oppressed, which means the system should not make them "pay" for what their ancestors may or may not have done. This exemplifies that race realism isn't only something utilized to uphold white supremacy and racism, but also a way for individual white people to see themselves as separate from racial issues altogether.

In Figure 14, this user indicates that the 2016 Presidential election was the redpill that led them to the truth when they reached out to their friend "steeped in right wing culture." Some of the language use in Figure 14 is also key, as in "black golden calf," "Facekike," and "faggot cucks" (the Left). The golden calf is a reference to a moment in Jewish history, in which the Jewish people created an idol out of the golden calf when they thought Moses to be dead. As Moses wasn't dead, this golden calf was a false idol, and thus sinful.[xvii] Thus, this /pol/ users is saying that the Black man the Facebook users stood up for was their "golden calf," or false idol, which makes them sinful and wrong to the eyes of this user. The Black man is not who they should be standing up for, because it is morally wrong. Additionally, the use of a Jewish slur paired with the "face" in "Facebook" indicates the belief that Facebook, as most popular social media, is a Jewish-run company, and thus not a safe social media sight for the white movement. This implies that other white supremacists should not use this site, as they will just be bullied and attacked. The word "cuck" to denote the Left refers to sexual cuckolding, or watching your wife have sex with another person while you watch. It also refers to a lack of dignity on the part of the Left, for they are so

desperate for women's approval, that they let women do whatever they want.[xviii] This suggests that the Left are sexually submissive, or not sexually in control of their wives. This also indicates that the men in the Left are not masculine, as they are dominated by women. Calling the Facebook users "faggot cucks" is thus a double insult, as it refers to their inferior sexuality and their submissiveness, or willingness to let other people have sex with their partners. The immediate backlash this user received after telling the "black golden calf" to "go take some lives" was the redpill moment, as he realized Facebook was not a safe place for him to post his thoughts, and he sought out advice from a friend, who told him he was "redpilled." The sharing of information from this friend is what sealed his entrance into the community of those who are "redpilled," as he gained access to the literature they share amongst each other. The use of /pol/ language to tell this story (as in the slurs and references to Black people, Jewish people, and the Left), is more evidence of the shared language and emersion in this community. The significance of sharing such a story shows an understanding of the common enemies these community members have. Matthew Hughey in his book *White Bound* says that "people are bound to meaningful categories and stories to establish group membership, to cope with their lives, and to provide strategies for resisting and reproducing aspects of society they find troubling and pleasing" (Hughey 2012, 5). This user's story establishes his membership in the "Politically Incorrect" community as a white person, while also providing a warning for other users to stay off Facebook because they will likely be attacked there for sharing their beliefs. Additionally, sharing this story may have been a way for this user to cope with the negative emotions associated with being harassed online. This user recognizes who the enemies are and uses proper slurs to indicate his knowledge. This also works to construct borders around this community, as those who are referred to with such hostile language are not welcome in "Politically Incorrect," and instead live on sites like Facebook.

To highlight some of the beliefs associated with the redpill, I'll pull some examples from comments that fall under these posts. Figure 15 is the first response to Figure 13:
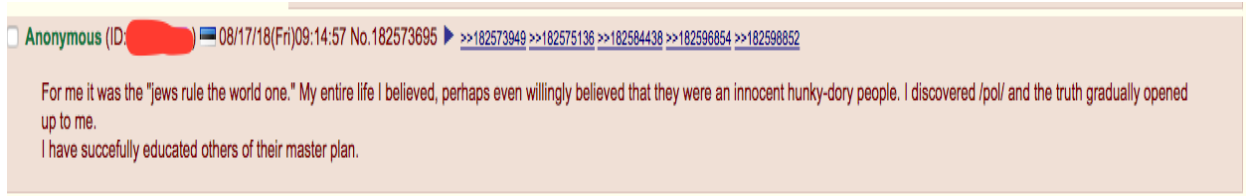
Figure 15: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread title: "What's the Most Difficult Red Pill You've Ever Swallowed?"

This is one of the most important beliefs behind the redpill: there is a secret society of Jewish people that run the world and are behind white genocide ("their master plan"). Other ways to refer to this Jewish population are the "globalists" and "(((them)))," seen in other posts. This comment is also an example of the role that /pol/ plays in offering the redpill. Some users are redpilled and then find their community in /pol/, others find /pol/ and are slowly redpilled through interacting with the community. Thus, /pol/ and the redpill are bound through their ability to lead people to the "truth."

Another example comment found under Figure 13:
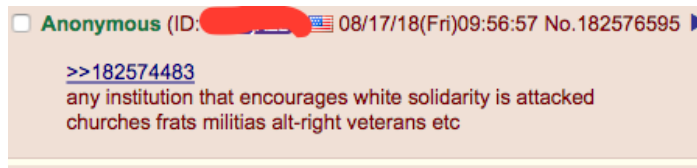
Figure 16: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What's the Most Difficult Red Pill You've Ever Swallowed?"

This indicates the fear of white-majority spaces being broken up because that is also a breaking up of the white community/nation, and thus evidence of white genocide. The attack on

white solidarity contributes to the white genocide and is indicative of the white racism they see taking place in popular culture. For instance, larger minority representation in advertisements and politics is evident that non-white people are beginning to encroach on historically white spaces, thus threatening white nationalism. Seeing these spaces being attacked has been a difficult redpill for this user to swallow because it is proof of the larger attack on white people. Although the user does not state being afraid, it is apparent that the difficult emotions associated with this realization makes it a difficult pill to swallow.

Figure 17 also indicates the realization of white genocide through the redpill, posted under Figure 14:
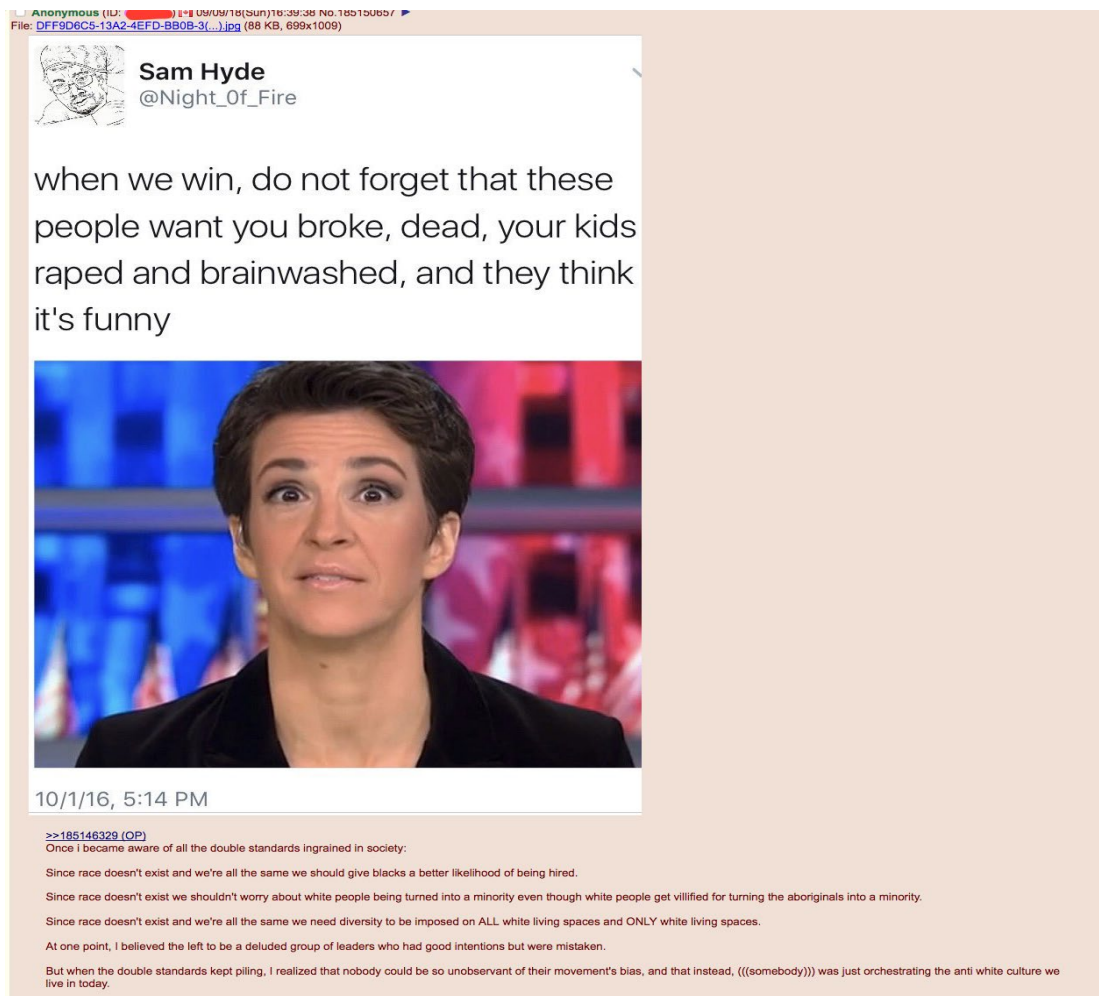
Figure 17: Posted on September 9, 2018. Thread Title: "What was the Redpill that Finally 'Woke' You Up?"

This is a key post in understanding some of the feelings and beliefs associated with white genocide. First, Rachel Maddow's photo in the Twitter post that accompanies the /pol/ comment is used as a figurehead for the Jewish media. The fact that Rachel is a known lesbian should not be overlooked in this decision ("these people want . . . your kids raped and brainwashed," indicates both the stereotype that gay people are also pedophiles, and the belief that the Jewish-run media is out to brainwash the non-Jewish public, often referred to as "goyim" on /pol/). This /pol/ user is directly interacting with the emerging literature that states race is a social construct, which comes from the social sciences.[xix] We in the social sciences know that the existence of a social construction does not make the phenomenon any less real, but this user does not make that ideological jump (can we blame them?). If the emerging literature/discourse is read as saying "race isn't real," it is no surprise that many feel affronted by the statement. Of course, race is real, it is felt in day-to-day interactions for many people, so the idea that "race isn't real" is part of a brainwashing scheme to hide white genocide. This user isn't wrong when they say only white spaces are pushed to diversify, as that is what has been happening in institutions through affirmative action and other pushes for diversity ever since Desegregation. The University of Pittsburgh itself has an office dedicated to diversifying the institution, as it is majority white. Diversity is directly tied to white genocide for /pol/ users, as it encourages miscegenation and the tainting of white blood. For instance, in the United States, "any racial intermixture makes one 'nonwhite'" (Michael Omi and Howard Winant 2015, 15). This means that intermixing immediately ends the white bloodline, which works to erase the white race from existence. As white nationalists and supremacists only recognize other whites as part of their community, the fear of miscegenation is the fear that their community will end. In this way, the redpill awakens users to both the Jewish-control of media, and how this is connected to white genocide. When

viewed in this light, it is no surprise that an entire white movement can arise out of the swallowing the redpill.

To further exemplify anthropology's relationship to the redpill for some users, I turn to another comment under Figure 14:

☐ Anonymous (ID: ▬▬▬▬) 🏴 09/09/18(Sun)16:53:29 No.185152621 ▶

My anthropology professor told the class that race isn't real and all humans are the same biologically. Didn't sound right so I did research and there's no turning back

Figure 18: Posted on August 9, 2018. Thread Title: "What was the Redpill that Finally 'Woke' You Up?"

If nothing else, this indicates that anthropology can lead some /pol/ users to the redpill through teaching that race isn't real (a social construction). At the very least, this should be something the social sciences take into consideration. This also exemplifies how white supremacists exist even in spaces that are associated with liberalism. There is a general belief that taking social science courses, or receiving a liberal arts education, will automatically make someone politically Left-leaning. This comment shows that this is not the case, and these courses can in fact drive people towards white supremacy in their attempt to show race is a social construct. This may also highlight white anxieties surrounding being told race isn't real. What does it mean for white people to be told race is a construction? For white people with a strong sense of their white identity, this can be frightening to hear.

I will now turn to the thoughts/feelings, or "side effects," that the redpill produces within the /pol/ community. It's one thing to recognize a community's ideologies, but ideologies also are intertwined with emotional meaning. You cannot get a whole picture of what an ideology means for a community without seeing the emotions that are connected to it. Ideologies are more than just our world-view, but the way we feel in our day-to-day lives. The emotions that are produced from taking the redpill exemplify the humanity in this community. One thread starts as follows:

Figure 19: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What Side Effects Do You Have from the Redpill, Anon?"

This shows both the parent post and the first comment. To start, most news media becomes obsolete to these users, as they see all major news sources as being run by Jewish people. "It is difficult for me to believe anything published by media," is a common feeling in /pol/, and indicates they have separated themselves from the audience that this media is intended for. Another way to view this separation is the active creation of borders around the community. Since reading the same news sources is tied to community building, it's important to distinguish what news sources and media are reliable for this community (Anderson 2015, 25).

Another comment further exemplifies the connection between /pol/ and the redpill:
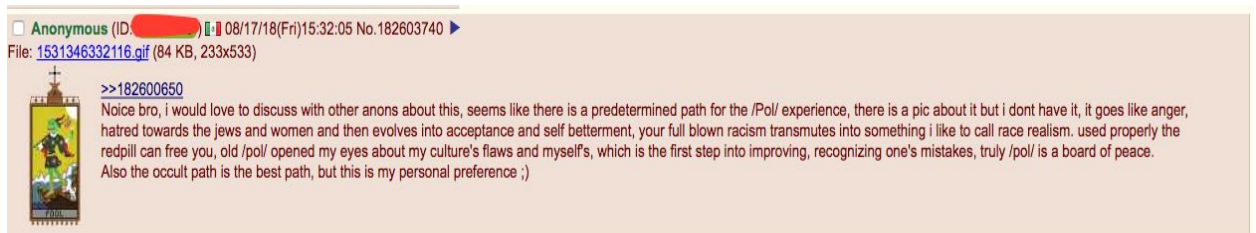
Figure 20: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What Side Effects Do You Have from the Redpill, Anon?"

In this comment, the user is making a direct connection between using /pol/ ("the /Pol/ experience") and the redpill. This post summarizes the points I have made so far, as well as going

into the emotional dedication users have towards /pol/ and the redpill. It also indicates the care community members have for one another. They are paying attention to what the redpill does to each other and sharing these stories to better cope with their realities. Knowing they aren't alone is a way to cope. "Used properly the redpill can free you" and "truly /pol/ is a board of peace" are key statements that indicate the appreciation for the /pol/ community and the truth it reveals through redpills. These are more positive side effects of swallowing the redpill: finding and forging community bonds.

However, the redpill does not always produce such positive emotions. The following posts indicate the negative side-effects of the redpill:

Figure 21: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What Side Effects Do You Have from the Redpill, Anon?"

Figure 22: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What Side Effects Do You Have from the Redpill, Anon?"

Figure 23: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What Side Effects Do You Have from the Redpill, Anon?"

Figure 24: Posted on August 17, 2018. Thread Title: "What Side Effects Do You Have from the Redpill, Anon?"

Figures 21 through 24 indicate some of the most common side effects of the redpill that I encountered in /pol/. As is evidenced, lack of trust and ability to open up to others are common, as well as anger and unhappiness. Although motivation to self-improve and work out more can be interpreted as positive side effects, the emotions involved with the redpill are almost wholly negative. The truth for /pol/ is hard to swallow because the realization that there is a genocide

being organized against your race is emotionally crippling. In this way, their shared whiteness and understanding of their whiteness is also a form of support and protection in a world that is against them. These posts also serve as examples of moments this community diverges from hatred and turns to fear and despair. While I was collecting data on "Politically Incorrect," the posts overwhelmingly held hatred and anger towards minority communities and other white people for being complicit in the white genocide or falling for the Jewish brainwashing media. Posts like these exemplify that white supremacy doesn't only involve hatred and anger, but also fear and despair. This shows that white people, especially white men, who make sense of their white identity through white supremacy often find themselves socially isolated, especially because they see other white men as the only other humans they can forge bonds with.

I would thus argue that these community members bond in a shared masculinity, along with whiteness. For instance, the user in Figure 23 mentions his relationship to women in his life, which indicates the majority-presence of men and masculinity in this community. In fact, almost all users appear to be men, as they often engage in misogynistic dialogues and expressed their frustrations with white women. That isn't to say that women don't exist on "Politically Incorrect," but the high presence of masculinity hints at part of this community's construction. Additionally, women may be encouraged to hide their gender due to the misogyny that exists on "Politically Incorrect." Todd Reeser discusses the role that masculinity plays in nation building in the eighth chapter ("Masculinity and the Nation") of his book *Masculinities in Theory*. In this, he discusses the "cultural associations made between masculinity and the nation," which includes "proto-nations that do not have a firm national identity or a government in any modern sense but are instead unified through the figure of a sovereign or through cultural factors," (Reeser 2010, 172-173). In this case, I would characterize the community (or nation) of "Politically Incorrect" as one

unified by the cultural factors of both whiteness and masculinity. Reeser says that "the nation is coded as masculine metonymically because it is considered to be composed of male bodies or of physical elements coded as masculine," (Reeser 2010, 174). In the case of the above posts, ("new goals which include self-sufficiency, self-discipline and self-improvement," "only women that are human to me are my wife and daughters," and stating going to the gym) exemplify the coded masculinity present in this community. Reeser says that a "ruling analogy can be linked to the male self: the man who is able to dominate or control the self, to remain moderate and to control his passions and desires has historically been considered to transfer that self-rule to others," (Reeser 2010, 181). In Figure 21, the user that mentions anger management issues and going to the gym exemplifies this issue of self-rule. Going to the gym is one way to exert control over one's body and physical appearance, but the anger management issues that stems from being redpilled hints at the disruption in his masculinity. Of course, he has trouble controlling his anger because of the realization of the threat to his community that comes from swallowing the redpill (and seeing the truth of white genocide). In this case, the affective influence of white genocide disrupts both the masculinity and the white community for this particular user.

A key element of both the nation and the male body "is that both are imagined as limited and bordered," (Reeser 2010, 176). "The borders of the male body are routinely and frequently established and reestablished as solid, and we might assume that masculinity ends at the edges of the male body" (Reeser 2010, 176). Additionally, one of the shared characteristic of both whiteness and masculinity is the power to determine those borders. Thus, when it comes to constructing a community around both whiteness and masculinity, the borders are controlled and defined by the men who make up this community. The way users of /pol/ understand their masculinity ties into how they understand the threats to the white community. If we look again at the miscegenation

example, this can now be understood as not just the threat of non-white blood ending the white bloodline, but also the threat of white women willingly tainting that blood through relationships with non-white men. As white men carry white blood, they cannot end the white race because they can implant it into a white woman, and if they have sexual relations with a non-white woman, they still have the power to continue the white bloodline by simply procreating with a white woman in the future. White women, on the other hand, immediately end the white bloodline through relations with a non-white man and have little room for redemption because their bodies themselves have been tainted. Plus, they have already proven disloyalty to the white race through this sexual relation. This may also explain the misogyny present in the /pol/ community, as the lack of control these men have over white women's sexual relations threatens the community at large.

Both masculinity and whiteness are tied into the creation of the /pol/ community, which explains some of the anxieties that arise from swallowing the redpill. Still, what is one to do when the truth tells them that the system is rigged against them, and secludes them to anonymous internet spaces to find community? How does one cope? The following thread discusses what users do to deal with the redpill and its effects. The way users deal with the redpill can also shed light onto their emotional bonds to this community, and the fact this community is the only place they can share these vulnerabilities with each other. The following are comments under a thread that asks, "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?" posted on September 16, 2018:
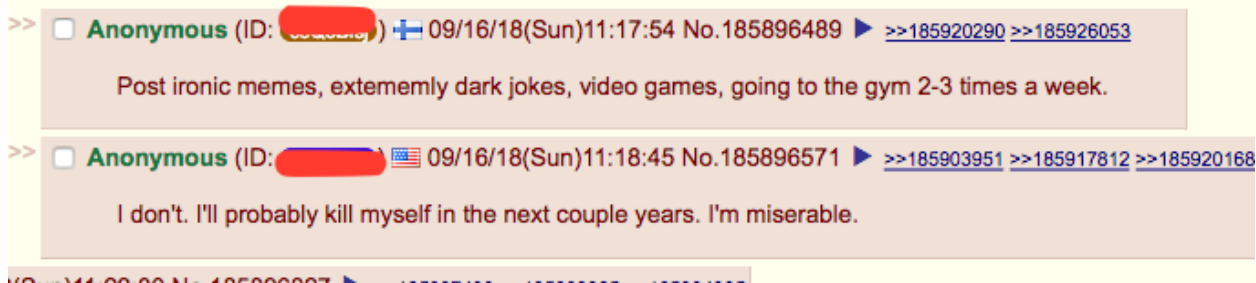
Figure 25: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?"

Figure 26: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?"
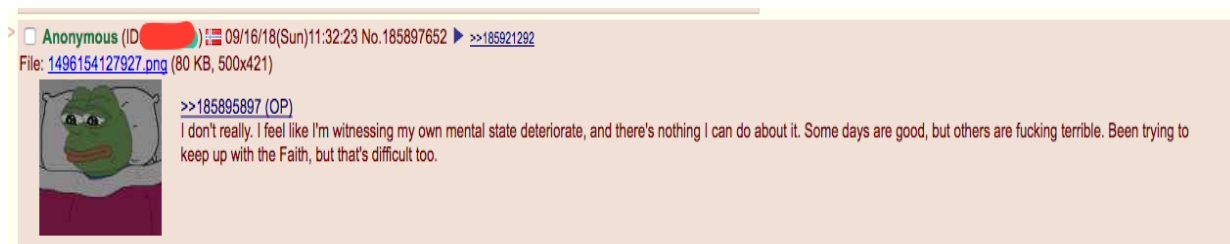
Figure 27: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?"

Figure 28: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?"
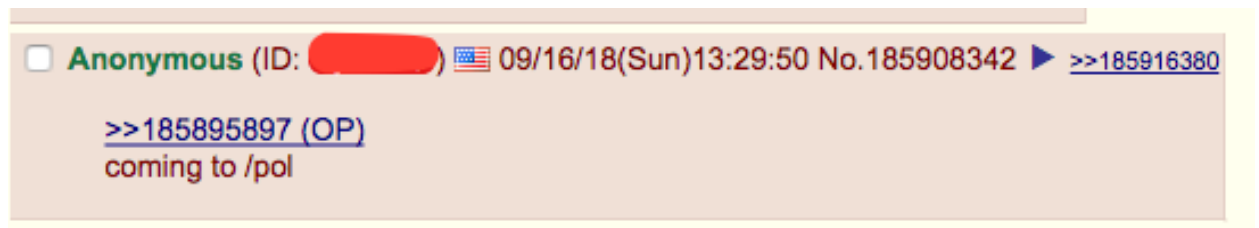
Figure 29: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?"
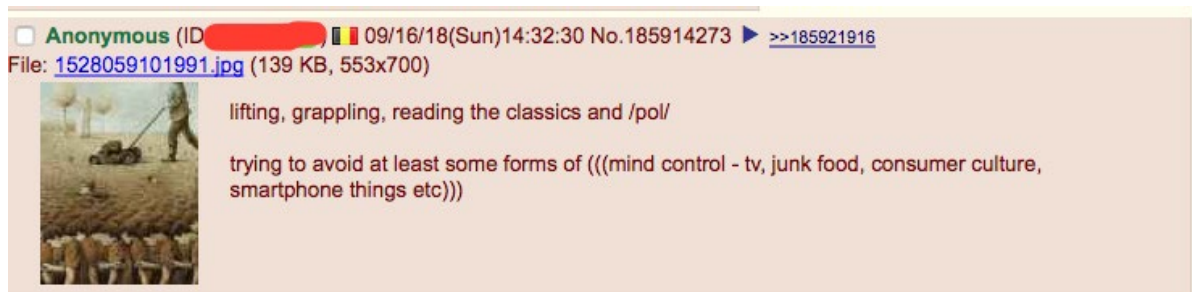
Figure 30: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?"
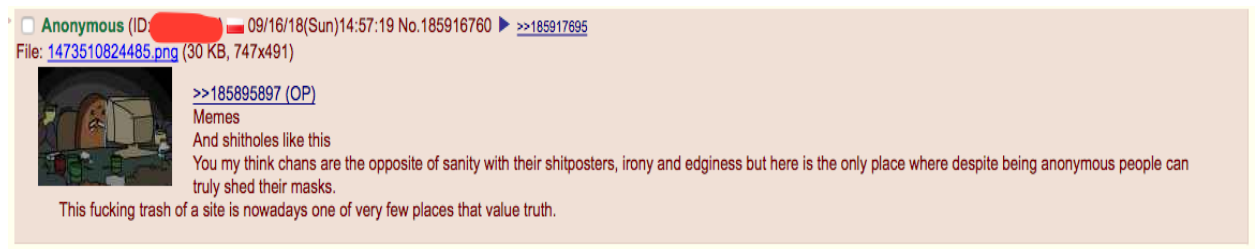
Figure 31: Posted on September 16, 2018. Thread Title: "How do You Keep Your Sanity in this Godforsaken World, /Pol/?"

Many of these users say that they cannot connect to people "in real life" due to their beliefs, which means "Politically Incorrect" is one of the only spaces they can express this part of their identities. In *Sexual Discretion: Black Masculinity and the Politics of Passing*, Jeffrey McCune discusses the importance of anonymous online spaces in allowing people to express parts of their identities that they may have to hide in everyday interactions (McCune 2014, 123). Although he was talking about Black men expressing homosexual desires, the same theoretical thinking can be aimed at "Politically Incorrect." This means that anonymous virtual spaces can be used to cope with the stress of having to hide parts of oneself in everyday life. One of the themes highlighted in these replies is the use of /pol/ to cope. While some users cope by working out and reading, others feel as though they are not coping at all. /Pol/ becomes the only haven for them where they can share how they truly feel, as is evidenced in Figure 31, where the user says:

> you may think chans [4Chan, 8Chan, etc.] are the opposite of sanity with their shitposters, irony and edginess but here is the only place where despite being anonymous people can truly shed their masks. This fucking trash of a site is nowadays one of the very few places that value truth.

The importance of using /pol/ to cope in and of itself shows how meaningful this community is for those who use it and are redpilled. To /pol/ users, /pol/ is one of the few places where they find their truth and make sense of the worlds they live in, as well as deal with that truth together. In many ways, it's the only place some users feel truly themselves. From this perspective, the importance of the /pol/ community for these users is that it provides a haven for them to build community in a world that is increasingly hostile to them. In fact, the hostility they face pushes them towards this community, and makes their bonds stronger, as exemplified by the bullying one user experienced on Facebook. The anxieties and fears they all experience are produced not only from their belief in white genocide, but the fact that no one else believes them but each other. The

fact that they can "shed their masks" here shows how personal and powerful this community is for them.

To summarize, a unifying symbol in the /pol/ community is the redpill. When swallowed, the redpill reveals the truth about the world (that a secret society of Jewish people run the media and control the world, and work to brainwash the general public to hide their master plan of white genocide). The redpill is found by many means, sometimes being swallowed before ever going on /pol/, and other times as a direct result of using /pol/. The reactions to the redpill in the /pol/ community are mostly negative, producing fear, isolation, distrust, and anger. One of the only ways users cope with these feelings is continuing to use /pol/, as it is one of the few communities where they can "truly shed their masks."

This analysis exemplifies one way that white people can use the web to make sense of their whiteness. As not all users of "Politically Incorrect" believe in white genocide before using this site, it is a way to learn about their race and their experiences as a white person. Those who already believed in white genocide and white supremacy can come to "Politically Incorrect" and feel safe, because no one there will tell them they are wrong or bully them about these beliefs. This desire for a white space to comfortably discuss white supremacy is key, as it shows the boundaries of this space, as these particular white people/men do not want to hear other opinions or beliefs. As a white person in this space, I felt a lot of fear and frustration myself, as I do not believe in white genocide and am opposed to white supremacy. I also felt anger from seeing women and minorities attacked so relentlessly. This also made me feel despair, as it is easy to feel like nothing can be done about these beliefs that exist amongst other white people. It is interesting to think of how my emotions reflect those felt by members of the community towards white people like me.

Hughey says that "whiteness appears to shift in response to changes in the social, political, and cultural terrain" (Hughey 2012, 11). The presence of the internet and the web has given white people new tools to form racial meaning online, as well as forge communities based on the white identity. Investigating a white supremacist community such as "Politically Incorrect" reveals how important these communities are for their members, as well as the emotions that are tied into feelings of whiteness and white supremacy. Understanding these deeper drives for white supremacist action is key if we want to reduce white supremacy. The next section looks at how some Left-leaning students think about white supremacy, and what they feel should be done about white supremacy. Looking at these interviews next to the data on "Politically Incorrect," I show how current strategies for combatting white supremacy may not be the best ones and suggest further lines of inquiry for investigating white supremacy.

6.0 Analysis: Interviews at the University of Pittsburgh

6.1 Introduction

The second component to my research was to interview students and administrators at the University of Pittsburgh to investigate possible ideological differences towards white supremacy and white supremacists' motivations amongst those opposed to white supremacy/white supremacists. Additionally, since I am an undergraduate investigating white supremacy, I wanted to know how my peers are thinking about it, especially since many are not doing this kind of research. Understanding how others see white supremacy is key in creating a collective consciousness around white supremacy and coming up with new ideas on how it should be handled. Putting students' ideas towards white supremacy next to the redpill analysis on 4Chan can also offer some key connections and insights between those who are against white supremacy, and the anxieties of those who are part of a white supremacist community.

In total, I interviewed five undergraduate students and two University of Pittsburgh administrators. I found three of my student interviewees through student organization meetings where I visited to talk about my research and seek informants. I visited two student organizations around left-leaning politics, and two organized around ethnic identities. This affects my results as everyone I interviewed was politically left-leaning, which only gave me a certain set of perspectives on white supremacy. In each meeting, I provided contact information so that students interesting in being interviewed could reach out to me (Appendix D). Three students from one student organizations reached out to me to be interviewed because of these meeting visits. Another information I met through a mutual friend. Knowing he had similar research interests as me, I

asked if he would be willing to participate in an interview. The last student I interviewed was someone I had already known, and they were very interested in my research and wanted to participate, so I interviewed them. I would characterize this as a convenience sample, as I found interview informants where they were most easily accessible to me (Miner and Jayaratne 2014). Although I can't generalize these interviews to the entire University student body, they give key insights as to how a few others are thinking about white supremacy. Additionally, these interviews give a different angle to the anxieties felt by 4Chan users, as those I interviewed are Left-leaning and are ideologically against white supremacy. The fact that only three students volunteered from the student organization meetings also suggests that this is a difficult topic, as it is hard to find participants willing to discuss white supremacy.

My decision to interview administrators was a result of some of the student responses to interview questions. A few students were actively frustrated with the University (its minority representation and its silence on particular racial issues, such as the murder of Antwon Rose by a former University of Pittsburgh Police officer)[xx]. Getting an administrative perspective on how the University handles discrimination and its goals regarding diversity and inclusion helped me understand the larger systemic context students are living in. Plus, the University is a larger system that has the power to both protect and punish students, so understanding how the University system handles white supremacy is a key insight to the racial culture at the University of Pittsburgh.

All interviews lasted anywhere from thirty minutes to an hour and a half, and six out of the seven interviews were recorded. In all interviews, extensive notes were taken. All informants were told of their rights as participants (that they could leave the interview at any time, they could decide not to answer my questions, and they could exit the study at any point in time and their data would be deleted). As my research received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, all interviews

stayed within the human protection rights as stated by the IRB. The following subsections explain questions asked to students and analyzes their respective responses. The administrative interviews are under their own subsection after the student interviews. This section will conclude with a short summary and possible further research inquiries researchers can take up.

6.2 What do the words "white supremacy" mean to you?

After initial introductions and collection of demographic data, I asked informants what the words "white supremacy" mean to them. This allowed me to see where students were in their understanding of white supremacy, because I didn't tell them how I was defining white supremacy or how I think about it. This kept my opinion from influencing students' answers, and allowed them to think through their ideas in a way they may have never had to before. Table 1 shows each students' answer to this question. As is evident, some had longer responses than others.

Table 1: Student Responses to "What do the Words 'White Supremacy' mean to you?"

Pseudonym	Race	Year	Response
Mark	White	5th Year	I have a lot of understanding from coming up in America. So, white supremacy in America . . . it's very racially targeted. White supremacy does originate from colonialism and imperialism, because it originates from Social Darwinism. . . when [whites] arrived in Africa and saw all these people that they saw as nowhere near as advanced as they were and "barbaric," then they had the duty to civilize them.

Hannah	Hispanic	First-year	I associate white supremacy with white superiority. So, I guess, racial inequality in the terms of majority power.
Aaron	White	First-year	I would say that it just means thinking the white race is superior to all others.
Franklin	Hispanic	Junior	Oppression, control, insecurity. It comes from a place of insecurity and being unsure of what you do in life. People don't naturally feel superior to others. It exists because people aren't sure how to live their lives.
Sydney	White	Senior	White supremacy, to me, means a collective, purposeful ignorance. Because I think a lot of people when they think of "supremacy," they think of the overtly racist stuff. But I also think that goes along with the ignorance, and especially purposeful ignorance. And I think the purposeful ignorance also encapsulates the people who enact white supremacy without being "overtly racist."

* For Student 1, this question was worded as: "When you hear the words "white supremacy," what do you think of? What associations do you have?"

Mark's responses were telling, as he identified growing up in America as a reason for his insights into white supremacy. He saw white supremacy as nationally dependent, as American white supremacy has its own history and origins. Although he mentioned American white supremacy, he explains that the origin of the ideology itself is from colonialism and imperialism. He did not give an origin specific to American white supremacy, but he did contemplate the origins of white supremacy as a general ideology. Hannah and Aaron on the other hand both had shorter explanations. Hannah understood white supremacy as a reflection of "majority power," which hints at a demographic-based white superiority. This was less about the ideology than the reason it manifests so powerfully. Aaron's answer was straightforward: "it just means thinking the white race is superior to all others."

Franklin talked about white supremacy through its emotional origins within individuals. He said that it comes from a place of insecurity and that "people don't naturally feel superior to others." This suggests that people turn to white supremacy when they are feeling insecure. He also says that "It exists because people aren't sure how to live their lives." This contrasts with how 4Chan users conceptualize their own ideology, because white supremacy gave them meaning to the anxieties they were feeling. It exists because it helps people understand how they want to live their lives. White supremacists find ideological security in their beliefs, which is part of the reason the white supremacist community is still so strong. These white supremacists are sure how to live their lives, because the white nationalist community gave them identity and meaning.

Sydney characterized white supremacy as both a "collective" ideology and an "ignorance." She also makes a distinction between being a white supremacist and being racist, or enacting racism. To her, white supremacy is an ignorance built into a larger ideological system, even if it's one that isn't always overtly racist. When I asked her to further explain the "purposeful" part of her conception of white supremacy, this is what she said:

> "Purposeful" to me means every single day, despite seeing or hearing about, because in this day in age it just happens that you will hear about the horrifying things that happen to non-white people in this country. It's the purposeful kind of reorganization of that information into something that upholds your whiteness and your privilege. So, it's like purposeful because you're deciding not to learn, and you have to decide not to learn in order to reorganize that information in that way. It's not accidental. . .. But I also think it goes into the systems approach where the purposeful ignorance is the [individual] one and then the system of white supremacy is just, how all of our institutions and systems in America and in a lot of European nations, people who are predominantly white in some places, uphold whiteness as the norm and the favored group. So, the personal thing is the purposeful ignorance. That's on the personal level of white supremacy. And then the institutional one and systematic one upholds that purposeful ignorance by giving privileges to people who are white.

This explanation complicates her answer, because it separates white supremacy into two dimensions: one that is held up by individuals, and one that is built into systems. To Sydney, white

supremacy in individuals stems from a "purposeful ignorance," meaning that despite the violence that happens against non-white bodies in America, they continue to uphold their own whiteness and privilege. This is interesting because it seems as if white people would "just learn" about the injustices that happen to Black people, Latinx people, non-white immigrants, etc., then they would no longer be white supremacists. On the contrary, white supremacists are very aware of the violence that happens to non-white people and knowing that this violence happens does not inspire them to do anything about this violence. As white supremacist individuals are sometimes even empowered themselves to enact violence against non-white people, this information would not change their ideologies.

Sydney's understanding of white supremacy as built into larger systems, on the other hand, shows that her definition includes the ways white supremacists as individuals are sanctioned by the systems they live in because those systems are also based in white supremacy. This ties back to my explanation of how the US government not monitoring white supremacy gives it political protection to exist. Of course, this contrasts with "Politically Incorrect" user's understanding of their own political safety, as they understand themselves as endangered by the current system's acceptance of diversity. This is especially true in light of their view that Jewish people secretly run much of contemporary media and government, which produces their understanding of themselves as a persecuted group. They see themselves as *targeted* by the system. Again, this complicates the relationship between white supremacists and the Left, because they have fundamentally different understandings of how the system of government and society promote ideology.

These five definitions of white supremacy range from ideological roots to individual drives. The different answers given may suggest that the Left doesn't really have a formal definition of white supremacy and what it means, because it has such a complicated history. No matter what,

these definitions either agree with or completely contrast with the ways that users of "Politically Incorrect" on 4Chan understand their own world views. In fact, users of "Politically Incorrect" may vehemently disagree with the claim that the system upholds white supremacy, especially when they feel so endangered by the current order of things. The questions this raises for me are: How can we bridge this ideological gap between the Left and white supremacists? Is it one we need to bridge? What is the Left working to accomplish when they understand the identity of white supremacists completely differently than how white supremacists understand their own identity?

6.3 Where do you think white supremacy comes from?

I followed up my first question by asking where students believe white supremacy comes from. This gave me information as to how students understand white supremacy in a historical context. Suggesting that white supremacy has a history helped build up to a question that I ask later, which is how students believe white supremacy should be dealt with. Understanding it as rooted in history can lead to a conversation about how we want it to fit into history going forward.

When asked about where they thought white supremacy comes from, four out of five respondents referred to historical events rooted in colonialism. Hannah, even if she didn't mention colonialism, said, "I think it goes back to instances where people started associating victory [with white people]," which hints at an association of whiteness with dominance. Sydney said that white people made a collective identity through colonialism by pointing out differences in people that weren't white. Most of my informants had a general sense that colonialism holds the roots of white supremacy. The one student who didn't mention history or colonialism was Franklin, who said it comes from a place of insecurity (reflected in his answer to my first question). In this sense, he

was referring to present-day mindsets of white supremacy, not necessarily its historical roots. To me, it seemed as if the students had a general sense of the production of white supremacy, even if they lacked the language to go in-depth.

In her explanations of the origins of whiteness, and thus white supremacy, Michelle Wright says that white people had to construct racialized "Others" as inferior to justify their dominance over them. She says that this created an "interdependent dichotomy" in which whiteness can only be understood as it relates to Blackness, even as it claims independence (Wright 2005, 9). In this way, whiteness and white supremacy are both based in "insecurity" surrounding one's social status. To hold a "secure" and dominant position in society, white people had to construct, and thus be dependent, on their racial opposites. This means my respondents were all partially correct in their characterization of white supremacy. Michelle Wright makes the distinction that whiteness *began* with white supremacy, as it was based justifying dominance of Other racial groups.

6.4 Where did you first encounter white supremacy in your life?

I inquired four students as to when they first encountered white supremacy in their lives, which naturally came up during the interview. I asked this question because understanding where people start learning about race, either implicitly or explicitly, reveals some of the places racialization happens. As white supremacists have a strong understanding of their white identity, it is important to see where people begin forming their own racial identities or understandings of race. All four respondents mentioned their childhoods.

Mark recalled noticing that the buses in his school district picked up the wealthier white children a quarter of a mile from the school but wouldn't drive a couple miles out to the Black-

majority neighborhood, even though they had to travel a farther distance. He thought something was off about that. This speaks to the neighborhood and housing discrimination enacted against Black communities as outlined by Lipsitz (Lipsitz 2006, 6-8). Additionally, Mark said his mom had racially-biased views, and would warn him of inviting his Black friends over when other family were around because his grandfather "might not get along with them." Since he went to a Black-majority school, and had a lot of Black friends, he thought it was strange that she would make comments like that. Although this doesn't necessarily reflect white supremacist views in Mark's family, it does exemplify how some white families accept racial prejudice in other family members. Instead of questioning his grandfather's views, Mark's mother said that it was best to simply not bring Black friends around him to avoid any uncomfortable situations. Although this could have been a way to protect Mark's Black friends from his grandfather's racial prejudice, it does not appear as if that is what Mark's mother had in mind. On the contrary, it was about protecting his grandfather's comfort. The way white people deal with racial prejudice within members of their family and community can be telling in this way. Additionally, this may reveal the complicated nature of how racially biased views are passed down from generation to generation.

In contrast, Sydney's father has a degree in African studies, so she learned about racial prejudice from a different perspective. Her father would teach her about Black history because he felt that it was important, and she developed an awareness of Black history from a young age. These two white students had starkly different experiences in their household regarding race, but both of them first encountered their first racial educations during their childhood growing up. It also exemplifies that some white families think it's important to understand the history of racial violence, while others may want to keep racial prejudice hidden.

Both Hispanic interviewees also learned about white supremacy from a young age, but it was because they encountered it more directly. Hannah shared a few stories about growing up in the South in a white-majority neighborhood. For instance, some of the white children at her school would play games that were racially coded, such as pretending to be kings and having the minority students play as their servants. Not having a TV growing up also affected her experiences, since she wasn't exposed to mindsets outside of her immediate local and social circles. She said that her and her father were even denied service at a restaurant once, and that is what drove her to leave her hometown to come to the University of Pittsburgh. Stories like this not only show the prevalence of racial bias today, but how having access to technology is seen as a way to learn about different perspectives. At the same time, other kids at her school may have had more access to TV and other forms of media, and still enacted racially-coded games at school. Wanting access to different perspectives may be affected by race and social status, which may be something worth investigating.

Franklin was a Hispanic immigrant and said that in his birth country his father was considered Black, which tied them to the working class. That produced the discrimination he experienced growing up. This also highlights the importance of taking class into consideration when analyzing race. All four of these four interviewees had strong childhood memories that stuck out to them when I inquired about where they first encountered white supremacy. These findings are sadly unsurprising, as most of us begin to learn about race either implicitly or explicitly from a young age. Hannah in particular mentioned that this was the first time she's ever had to articulate these experiences, which touched me deeply as a researcher. The stories these interviewees shared speaks to the importance of family, school, and geographic location in affecting how we view ourselves and the world around us, especially regarding race.

In relation to my work on "Politically Incorrect," this drives me to inquire what individual experiences white supremacists may have had growing up that contributes to their feelings of white supremacy. What makes white people aware of their race from a young age? How does class play a part in white racialization? How do well-meaning white people pass down racial prejudice? I didn't see many childhood stories on "Politically Incorrect," which makes this line of inquiry even more interesting for me. Other researchers in white supremacy may want to consider these questions.

6.5 Where do you encounter white supremacy online?

I spoke with all five interviewees about their experiences with white supremacy online, since that is the focal point of my research. Two interviewees reported that the internet and social media/the media was where they encountered white supremacy the most, although all of them reported seeing white supremacy online. Mark, one of the white men whom I interviewed, said that he had even been personally contacted by white supremacists through email:

> I got a recruitment email from the Ku Klux Clan [in high school], and I found it comical that they still existed. They have a gift shop website where you can buy t-shirts that say 'white power' and everything like that. And there was a phone number where you can call and get information about joining the Ku Klux Klan, and fighting towards the cause.

He reflected on this experience by saying, "it's interesting how we historically consider it a thing of the past – while they're not going around lynching and killing Blacks anymore – they're still semi-prominent – they have a semi-prominent social presence." Although it's good that this student immediately recognized that he didn't want to be "part of the cause," I wonder how many people did enter white supremacy through receiving such emails. Additionally, associating white

supremacy with lynching in the past is interesting. Earlier, I pointed to multiple cases where white supremacists have committed acts of violence within the past few years. The massacres committed by single white supremacists is exactly "going around and killing Blacks." This would lead me to want to investigate what white Left-leaning people think the organization of white supremacy looks like. Although this isn't something I asked in my interviews, it could be a fruitful line of inquiry when trying to build a social consciousness around white supremacy.

Three students made direct reference to the comment sections on websites like YouTube and Twitter. The fact that they see white supremacy in these spaces again exemplifies how easy it is to find on the web. White supremacy doesn't only exist in anonymous message boards like "Politically Incorrect," but on social media sites where profiles are required to leave comments. These are also sites that young people and teenagers use, which makes this exposure of white supremacy frightening.

I followed this inquiry by asking if students felt like social media should play a role in censoring white supremacy. Three of the respondents said yes, that there should be more monitoring of white supremacy online. For instance, Mark said, "yeah, it's a human problem. I think it would be better to hire more people to look at posts . . . instead of creating a computer algorithm to search for the word like 'racist' or the n-word or some kind of thing." This answer highlights the fact that the tech industry often uses tech to fix its own problems, instead of hiring more humans to actively monitor their sites.[xxi] This brings into question how the tech industry itself responds to white supremacy, and if that response is really working.

Franklin mentioned that the internet allows white supremacists to be anonymous, which means they won't experience as much social backlash, and thus it "washes their hands of guilt." He also agreed that there should be more human monitors. This is interesting because the users on

"Politically Incorrect" see themselves as subject to social backlash, which leads them to create strong bonds with each other on the internet. The social backlash to white supremacy contributes to white supremacists' feelings of social persecution. If they are further kicked off the internet, then they can create communities that may be harder to monitor. This is a complicated question: do we allow white supremacists to communicate online where they can be monitored, but others can easily find them, or do we kick them off entirely, which makes the community build and maintain stronger bonds amongst themselves in the face of backlash? It seems that some websites may benefit from more human monitoring, such as YouTube and Twitter, while 4Chan may be better left alone. The question becomes, what differentiates sites that should be more monitored than others? How does company ownership play a part in this?

There was one student that said no, white supremacy shouldn't be censored, citing that it's within users' rights to be able to say what they want to say. She continued, "I do think that social punishment will also take its course, and the fact that awareness will spread that this is happening and they'll get a backlash of negative comments and, you know, it might eventually push them down." Again, this "pushing down" may in fact cause white supremacists to maintain strong bonds amongst each other in their communities. Sydney was on the fence, saying, "I feel very satisfied when they are blocked but I understand the implications of pushing them to the margins in a way where they will all find each other." These responses speak to the larger debate surrounding media censorship of white supremacy. Often, it boils down to a freedom of speech conversation, especially in America. For many, it's hard to find where to draw that line. These answers also reveal the disconnect between how users of "Politically Incorrect" understand their lives, and how Left-leaning individuals understand white supremacists. It seems that direct social backlash has been the modus operandi for the Left to deal with white supremacy. As white supremacists on

"Politically Incorrect" maintain bonds in part because they believe the white race is being persecuted, responding to white supremacy in this way may have the opposite effect than the Left is intending.

6.6 Where do you encounter white supremacy in your life?

Other places that students reported experiencing white supremacy were in bureaucracy and in their classes. Franklin said that he experiences white supremacy everywhere in the form of microaggressions. He said that, "People don't say, 'I'm white, obey me.' That's why I like Pittsburgh." In his view, microaggressions come from a place from ignorance more than malice. That same student also saw white supremacy in one of his classes. The professor asked, "Is America exceptional?" and some students said yes, and cited America being white and powerful as one reason. This respondent was surprised because some of his classmates were equating whiteness with America's greatness. This again reveals that white supremacist beliefs still exist within institutions that we associate with Left-leaning politics. Even if these students don't identify as white supremacists, they are still understanding whiteness as a form of power and dominance.

Sydney said that she noticed her psychology professors not questioning things that she recognized as biological racism and essentialism, which bothered her. She also said that she would expect white supremacy to be reflected within the school system and the University of Pittsburgh's Police. She spent a significant amount of time outlining some of her frustrations with the University of Pittsburgh, which were echoed in part by another interviewee. Specifically, she was unhappy with the fact that the University doesn't have an anti-racist policy. The University does have an anti-discrimination policy[xxii] that outlines its commitment to affirmative action, but that is

the only one that deals directly with discrimination of any kind, besides the Title IX policy and the law for accessibility. This student was frustrated because the University of Pittsburgh pushes diversity and inclusion (2016 was the year of diversity), but she felt that minority students won't come to this school if they don't feel protected by the policies in place. For Sydney, it is also important for the University to take more explicit action against racism. For instance, after the 2016 presidential election, there was a pro-gun rally on campus and some members of that rally called her friend a racial slur as they were walking by. Sydney feels that the University should make announcements about instances like that happening on campus. Additionally, the fact that the University never released a statement after a former Pitt police officer killed Antwon Rose[xxiii] made her angry as well.

Mark mentioned Pitt's claims to being diverse even though the school is majority white.[xxiv] There were pamphlets in the room where I interviewed him, and he mentioned that they featured the "token" African American person. In other words, the University often hands out pamphlets featuring photos of diverse groups of students, which uses the images of marginalized students to make it seem more diverse than it really is. When it comes to Pitt's relationship to white supremacy, Mark said this: "I do think while Pitt may claim that they're diverse when they aren't, I think they're very good about trying to shut down acts of white supremacy. And I have a weird feeling that it's not necessarily because they care, like it's for their own public image." He was thus skeptical as to whether or not the University actually cares about minority students, or if it's simply upholding an image so that more students will come to school here. This suggests that a campus climate survey may be in order, in which the University assesses how well its diversity and inclusion efforts are working, and if minority students feel as if they are being served by these efforts.

Another interviewee had more positive things to say about the University of Pittsburgh's diversity. Hannah said that she doesn't experience white supremacy in Pitt's community: "I think the community here is so much more diverse and balanced [compared to where I grew up]." This is interesting because even though Pitt is still majority white, it is more diverse than Hannah's hometown, which is why it's better for her. Students who grew up in areas that are more diverse than the University may feel differently.

Franklin said that he thinks white supremacy should have a place to speak on campus, because that allows a dialogue to take place. "White supremacy should have a place to talk because then someone else that differs in beliefs can talk to them," he said, explaining why Pitt shouldn't censor white supremacy on its campus. This sentiment is also highlighted in one of my administrative interviews below. Although some Left-leaning people feel that a dialogue with white supremacists is what's in order, it's hard to find people who are willing to start that dialogue. Additionally, the comment on "Politically Incorrect" that mentioned an anthropology class being the reason the user was redpilled complicates this idea. Being in an anthropology class surely introduces white supremacists to beliefs that different from theirs, but that doesn't mean they'll change their mind. The question becomes what contributes to changes in white supremacist beliefs? To answer this question, it would be useful to collect oral histories from people who used to be white supremacists, and how they reflect on what it took for them to change their minds. By collecting these histories, we may be able to understand how big of a role hearing different beliefs play in decreasing white supremacy.

6.7 How do you personally deal with white supremacy? How do you think we should deal with white supremacy?

When it comes to dealing with and reducing white supremacy, I received a variety of answers. Two respondents mentioned the importance of education. For instance, Franklin said, "America needs a crash course on Ethics and respect – how to tolerate people." He said that trying to understand white supremacy is one of the best ways to try to deal with it because "by denying someone the right to talk, you're creating a mysticism around them." This is something that ought to be discussed in spaces, such as Universities, that try to foster an environment where all students feel like they can share their beliefs. Do we want white supremacists to be comfortable sharing their white supremacy, and on what grounds? Additionally, this comment speaks to the social isolation felt by those on "Politically Incorrect" because they don't feel like they can share their beliefs outside of 4Chan, which increases their reliance on that community for support. What would happen if they didn't have to rely on that community and could branch out? Would they still hold strong white supremacist views if they forged ties with people who aren't white supremacists? These are inquiries worth investigating.

Hannah also mentioned education in her answer. She said that by teaching people there isn't a better race, then that could help reduce white supremacy, "but then you would have to change a lot of unconscious ideals in a lot of America, which is hard." This speaks to the issue of dealing with white supremacist individuals versus white supremacy in the system at large. Aaron said that talking to a more diverse group of people and being exposed to diversity will help reduce white supremacy. This is a method that deserves inquiry and can again be investigated through collecting oral histories of former white supremacists to see if diversity had any role in decreasing their white supremacist beliefs. This is also complicated because organizations such as the

University of Pittsburgh that want to increase diversity need to make sure their minority students are protected as well. This reflects Sydney's answer, which reiterated the importance of dealing with white supremacy at the level of policy and making it explicitly clear that white supremacy is not acceptable. This may be a necessary step when working towards diversity, but it might also discourage white supremacists from entering diverse spaces to begin with, which means they wouldn't be exposed to that diversity.

Finally, Mark said that one of his career goals is to change the way the military handles aid in other cultures and wants to push the US to have a greater focus on respecting other cultures as we seek to aid them. He said it's important to recognize and compromise when it comes to the boundaries of other cultures, which can reduce the perpetuation of white supremacy from this perspective.

As everyone had their own thoughts as to how white supremacy should be dealt with, these answers exemplify how complicated the answer to this question is. This indicates that Left-leaning people and others who wish to decrease white supremacy should be talking about it more, and creating a collective consciousness on how we should think about and deal with white supremacy. Without a community effort, or active dialogue about what should be done, the issue of white supremacy remains on the individual level. Additionally, institutions such as the University of Pittsburgh should at the very least monitor the campus climate as diversity increases, to ensure that minority students' voices are being heard.

6.8 If you could attribute one emotion to white supremacy, what would it be?

When asked about the emotions respondents associate with white supremacy, they responded with anger and disgust; fear; confusion; frustration; and irritation. It is interesting to note that my respondents feel negatively towards white supremacy, but the beliefs that white supremacists on "Politically Incorrect" hold also produce negative emotions. No one seems to feel good about white supremacy, or the nature of the "truth" that white supremacy subscribes to. Believing in white genocide for members of "Politically Incorrect" is something that fosters isolation and distrust. For these Left-leaning students, knowing that others believe in white supremacy also produces negative emotions. Questions this leads me to ask are: to what extent can our shared human emotions build bridges across ideologies? If we start with the understanding that many people feel fears and anxieties about the nature of the world, including white supremacists, can that be a space that can foster emotional solidarity? If so, can that emotional solidarity decrease white supremacy? How can we utilize our collective anxieties to make a world we all want to live in?

6.9 Administrative interviews

Now that I've discussed my student interviews, I will turn to my administrative interviews. In total, I interviewed two administrators at the University of Pittsburgh. Both worked in different departments, but had a hand in dealing with diversity and inclusion at Pitt and cases of discrimination. I reached out to these administrators directly, told them about my research, and set up meetings with them in their offices to hold the interviews. One interview lasted an hour, and

the other half an hour. To ensure the anonymity of the administrators, I use gender-neutral pronouns to refer to them.

The first administrator, who works in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, stated that their goal for the University is for discrimination cases to be handled similarly as Title IX cases. In other words, for there to be a more centralized focus on dealing with discrimination, and have all reports go to the same office, so that they can collected in a single data base. As of now, discrimination cases can be handled by anyone, whether it's a department head or the office of Diversity and Inclusion. This means that there is no way to track the consistency of discrimination cases at the University, and some cases may never be heard about outside of departments at all. When a discrimination case does end up at the office of Diversity and Inclusion, they investigate and write up a report with suggestions to handle the case, which then goes to the Dean of Students (if the case involves students). The outcomes of such cases usually involve a mandatory diversity training. I agree that this office should become the centralized space where all instances of discrimination go to, because it is imperative to keep track of the discrimination that happens at Pitt. Transparency should be a main priority, especially when it comes to discrimination. This will allow the University to see where it is regarding fostering an inclusive environment, as well as show their dedication to decrease discrimination that happens at Pitt. Additionally, if students who believe in white supremacy feel that they are being discriminated against, their voices ought to be heard by this office to. Hearing how they respond to the University's efforts to foster racial inclusion may provide insights into how and why white supremacists are feeling persecution.

In my interview with the second administrator, I learned that the current anti-discrimination policy at the University was last updated in 2016 by a committee of both staff and students. This policy outlines both the University's commitment to affirmative action, as well as making this a

safe institution for anyone regardless of race, gender identity, physical ability, sexuality, etc. The second administrator that I interviewed was confident that it was a solid policy, but it "relies on people." They said it's important for people who have experienced harassment to be able to report it, and that feeling safe enough to report it is a culture issue. "The policy does attempt to address fears that can arise from reporting discrimination," according to this administrator. In the end, this administrator's goal is for people to feel like they belong at Pitt, but to also be unafraid to share views that others may find upsetting, because then there can be a conversation. They don't want anyone to fear backlash for the things they believe in. "You have to tell people when they become part of a community, wherever that exists, that [diversity and inclusion] is a value . . .. I think talking about it at the highest levels, and walking that talk, is really important. You also have to create an environment where people feel like they can be brave and courageous to make mistakes." They say that exposing ignorance should be okay, and people with differing views shouldn't be afraid to speak them, which means fostering an environment where we encourage people to speak even if it reveals ignorance. This is their goal for the University. This answer is semi-contradictory, because this administrator only wants students to share their "ignorant" beliefs if they will accept a re-education of sorts. Is it only okay to share ignorance if you're also willing to change? Although this administrator doesn't want students to fear backlash, they may experience pressure against what they believe as others try to change them. Again, this reflects the social isolation felt by those on "Politically Incorrect." Some of those users mentioned not wanting to talk politics with anyone outside of 4Chan because they expect negative reactions to their beliefs. Again, this highlights the importance of starting more of a dialogue about how we should collectively deal with white supremacy.

My interviews with administrators revealed that those who handle discrimination cases and discrimination policies at Pitt are doing their best with the policies they already have. No one wants discrimination at Pitt, but no one wants people to feel ostracized for their beliefs either. The frustrations that some of the students I interviewed expressed were valid, but at the same time those working for the university also want the best for everyone here. To me, this shows that politically intense times complicate the relationship that students have with their administrations, because they may not agree with everything the administration does to handle cases of discrimination, or whatever else may arise. This shows that there should be more transparency when it comes to how the administration strives to deal with harassment and discrimination at Pitt, so that students can be more aware of what the University is trying to do on a human level. Additionally, there should be a greater dialogue between the University and its students regarding these tough issues.

6.10 Conclusions

My interviews with students and administrators highlight the diversity in opinion on how Left-leaning people feel that white supremacy should be dealt with. The range of responses that I received, even from a small number of people, suggest that we don't currently have a collective consciousness around white supremacy and how it should be dealt with. This makes it harder to confront white supremacy as a collective. The importance of discussing white supremacy and its presence is key, because we can start to create a collective understanding of what white supremacy is, our goals in facing it, and the methods with which we want to deal with it. My suggestion is that the University of Pittsburgh conduct more climate surveys regarding diversity and inclusion

and have more open dialogue and transparency with its students about its efforts and goals. Some students distrust the University and its methods, as highlighted in the comments from Mark and Sydney. If the University wants to foster a safe environment where all students feel welcome, then it should put more efforts into listening to how students are critiquing it. On the other side of that, students ought to remember that administrators are working with the system in place, and the process of changing policies is complex and slow.

A major point of tension appears to be in how much of a voice we want white supremacists to have in our community, and how we deal with them when they do speak up. This is something that can start to be answered with more community dialogue and research on white supremacy. My time spent on "Politically Incorrect" has been fruitful in that it has allowed me to humanize white supremacists and has opened further inquiries that can be taken in investigating white supremacy. In conversation with my interviews, this data shows that Left-leaning people who wish to decrease white supremacy are potentially contributing to the social isolation felt by those on "Politically Incorrect," which fuels their commitment to the white supremacist ideology and community. This is something to keep in mind as we continue to face white supremacy in our lives. Continuing this dialogue outside of an academic setting is also important, as it is something that needs to be dealt with on a community level, especially when it comes to working through our collective negative emotions. It pays to remember that Left-leaning people aren't the only ones with fears and anxieties, as white supremacists share those emotions as well.

7.0 Conclusion

The contemporary visibility of white supremacy has given us an opportunity to understand the ways that technology and its ideologies provide white supremacy with the tools to form and maintain community online. Additionally, websites such as 4Chan can give us insights as to how people are making sense of race and whiteness in the current digital era. My study starts with an overview of how ideology is built into technology, and how that creates a space for white supremacy to thrive on the web. Thus, I begin with the expectation that race and racism are going to exist on the web, as cyberspace is an extension of our social relationships and identities. The web and what we do on it is not separate from the "real world," but rather an extension of it. The difference is that the web allows us to be anonymous in new ways, and thus changes the manifestations of social relationships in complicated ways. I also provided a short contemporary context of white supremacist action in America because it is important to acknowledge that white supremacy is an ideology that empowers people to commit violence. This was one of my drives to understand how individuals build community around white supremacy, as violence enacted in the name of white supremacy is a pressing concern.

I chose to analyze the "redpill" symbol on "Politically Incorrect" because it is packed with ideological and emotional meaning for the members of the community that use it. The discussion of the redpill humanized members of this community, because it revealed their insights into their own pain and suffering. The redpill acknowledges the real anxieties are intertwined with the white supremacy ideology, even if it's an ideology that empowers some individuals to commit violence. For the users that engage with the "redpill" symbol, it represents the hard truth of their ideologies, and the pain that coincides with these ideologies. It is also a way for them to express care amongst

each other and cope with a system that they see as being rigged against them. Understanding how ideology is embedded within a movement is important, because it reminds us that there is a logic that goes into people's actions, even if it is a logic that we do not subscribe to ourselves. The human experience is diverse, and nothing can be waved off as simply ideology, or simply something bad that should be stopped. The hardest part about studying white supremacy is allowing it to be human and acknowledging that it is something people want to uphold because it makes the most sense for them in their own lives. Additionally, investigating white supremacy on the web reveals one way that white people make sense of their whiteness, and how easy it is to find information on white genocide and white supremacy online. The way whiteness exists in cyberspace is a key way to understand contemporary whiteness.

Often, people who are against white supremacy, especially those on the Left, characterize white supremacy as ignorance that can be defeated if they just had more information. This research exemplifies that information itself is not going to stop people from becoming white supremacists. Nobody wants to be told that their whole world-view is "ignorant," and if they would just learn or change then they would be accepted. Our ideologies shape our identities and telling someone that their identity is "ignorant" is not going to make them want to listen to or create community with outsiders. This suggests that we need to take a new approach to what diversity really means to us, and how we want to treat white supremacists. Right now, it is apparent that the Left isn't decreasing white supremacy but is possibly fueling its continuation through its social isolation. This highlights the importance of continuing to discuss and acknowledge white supremacy within communities, so that a collective consciousness can form and new strategies can be made.

The interview portion of my research was in part to understand how my peers are thinking about and dealing with white supremacy, but also to exemplify how its presence affects individuals

in my own community. I also wanted to understand how the University deals with discrimination from the perspective of administrators, as a few of my student informants were distrustful of the University and how it handles diversity, representation, and discrimination. Overall, my informants had a general understanding of white supremacy, and differing views on its online and community censorship. This reflects the larger debate that is seeking to understand how freedom of speech and white supremacy are interconnected. The fact that all my interviewees were politically Left-leaning also shows the different ways people with similar political ideas think we should deal with white supremacy. Many people feel that white supremacy should be visible so that it can be publicly critiqued, while others want more censorship, especially on the web, to protect online users. If the web was created with the idea that it should be a "utopia," then perhaps protecting its users should play a larger part. On the other hand, "Politically Incorrect" users can be themselves on 4Chan, which allows them to maintain identity and community through the internet. Should some websites censor white supremacy more than others? How do we differentiate which ones? These are some questions we can work to answer going forward.

Pushing white supremacy to the absolute margins makes it harder to find, understand, and critique. Additionally, it contributes to its growth because those who do feel pushed to the margins find their community there, and the shared experience of social persecution strengthens their bonds. The growing violence committed by this community exemplifies its growing presence. These are complex ideas, but can provide researchers direction going forward. The internet can help researchers understand how white people are making sense of whiteness online, and how communities are forged around a shared white identity. Investigating these ideas on the internet gives us new ways to understand the present-day existence of white supremacy.

My desire is that those who read this study can use it to see the more human side of white supremacy and be inspired to turn their analytical lens towards its existence. Additionally, I exemplify that we need to have dialogues within our own communities, especially white communities, as to how we want to collectively handle white supremacy. As anthropologists (people dedicated to the science of studying human beings), it is key that we continue to see ideology as something more than beliefs, but also emotions, drives, and identities. As a feminist researcher, my desire is to create a more just and equal world for all members, but this also means we must look at the systems and ideologies that perpetuate harm and oppression. White supremacy isn't just about racial bias, but also homophobia, misogyny, and classism, which reveals the intersections in identity that create the white supremacist community (Crenshaw 2005). White supremacy cannot be separated from the context it exists in, nor its historical roots. As researchers dedicated to making the world a better place, looking at white supremacy should not be avoided.

Some limitations of this project were that it was strictly exploratory. I did not speak with white supremacists, nor was I able to speak to the members of the "Politically Incorrect" community. I chose not to pursue these avenues as it was both dangerous and impractical. My goal was to examine virtual spaces, and that can always be enhanced with a dialogue between the postings themselves and interpretations/explanations provided by the people that post. Given that "Politically Incorrect" users could be anywhere in the world, I did not have the time nor the resources to pursue this line of inquiry. Additionally, interviewing more students at the University of Pittsburgh, especially more Right-leaning and conservative students, would have added to the analysis and given a broader understanding of white supremacy on campus. Given the topic, not many people are willing or able to engage in these conversations easily. Building trust in

informants takes time, as they must feel safe to share openly and honestly, especially if they hold views that counter the University's values and goals of diversity.

There are plenty of other internet spaces that this research could be done and expanded upon. This could be in comment sections, Twitter debates, YouTube algorithms, Reddit, and white supremacist media websites such as "Stormfront." The web is an important extension of the social world, and the ease of access means it is rich with data to be collected. This research can serve as a jumping point to further pursue lines of inquiry related to white supremacy community building online, white identity formation online, and engaging with the Left and those who are against white supremacy as they work through the best way to deal with white supremacy.

8.0 Personal Reflections

Tiffany Page, in reflecting about her feminist methodology, tells us that affect can be used as epistemology (Page 2017). In other words, the emotions we feel are also a way of knowing and understanding the world. Conducting this research was easily one of the most challenging things I've ever done, and not just because I took it on as an undergraduate. In collecting my data, I couldn't spend more than an hour and a half on 4Chan at a time without being emotionally worn out. These emotions (pain, fear, frustration, anger, numbness, etc.) were as much a part of this research as the data and analysis it produced. It changed the way I feel in all-white spaces, it made me recognize white supremacy in new ways, and it made me consider how I myself contribute to the perpetuation of white supremacy as a white person. It also helped me understand a little bit more about the emotions and drives behind white supremacy, which is what I personally wanted to know.

When I went out to conduct this research, I expected to spend a lot longer on 4Chan. I found that I mentally could not. When I brought up this research in one of my classes, a classmate told me, "I admire your mental strength. I don't think any of us could spend 13 hours on 4Chan." These words meant a lot to me, and I immediately wrote them down. I did not feel strong when conducting this research. It even felt like self-harm at times. I felt like I wasn't cut out for this research and vowed I would only conduct studies that brought me joy in the future. I do not know if that will be the case. I am also proud of myself for doing this research, because I genuinely contributed to our understanding of whiteness and white supremacy. I went into one of the darkest corners of the internet and I came out knowing more because of it. There were times that I recognized experiencing internet harassment myself made me better equipped to read the content

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on "Politically Incorrect." The web is something many of us can't live without, but it also causes great mental stress. What are we doing about that? Why aren't we demanding more out of our online experiences? Why have we accepted harassment as the norm in cyberspace? Perhaps these are questions other researchers can take up on their own, or we can reflect on as a community.

I feel strongly about understanding white supremacy, and I wanted to put my voice into the academic conversation about contemporary white supremacy. My only hope is that others will expand upon what I've done here and continue to look at white supremacy and the formation of ideology. In the end, everyone just wants to feel like they're not alone, and we can only make sense of the world in the best ways we can. I encourage researchers to be resilient and believe in themselves when investigating topics such as white supremacy. Don't be afraid to ask for help, and don't fall into despair. Everything we do is part of the human experience, and there are always things that bring joy, even in the midst of such pain.

Appendix A - Interview Schedule for Students (Used After First Interview)

Major:

Year:

Gender:

Age:

Race:

Where are you from?

Are you involved in research? If so tell me about it.

1. Tell me what the words "white supremacy" mean to you.

    - where do you think white supremacy comes from?

    - where did you first encounter white supremacy (if you have)?

    - why do you think it exists?

2. Tell me about this organization's/your response to white supremacy on campus (if any).

    - have you discussed it as a group?

    - have you discussed it within your board?

    - is there a guideline for students to follow if they encounter white supremacy on campus?

3. Tell me about your personal response to White Supremacy on campus.

- Do you have a personal plan on what to do when you see white supremacy?

4. Is there anything you think the University can do to help students deal with white supremacy on campus? Should the university take an active role regarding white supremacy?

    - resources?

5. Where do you encounter white supremacy in your life?

6. Tell me about your encounters with White Supremacy online.

    - where do you encounter White Supremacy online?

    - what do you do/how do you deal with it?

7. Is there anything you think social media websites can do to help moderate White Supremacy online? Do you think social media websites should play a role in monitoring white supremacy?

8. Tell me how you feel about the visibility of white supremacy in today's political atmosphere.

    - do you think the government should take an active stance regarding White Supremacy?

    - what do you think larger government institutions should be doing? Anything at all?

9. What does freedom of speech mean to you?

10. Should white supremacy have a space for discourse online/in the media in general?

11. If you could ascribe one emotion to white supremacy, what would it be?

12. Space for any other comments or discussion regarding white supremacy.

DO YOU KNOW ANYONE ELSE WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THIS STUDY?

Appendix B - Interview Schedule for Students (Original)

Major:

Year:

Gender:

Age:

Race:

Where are you from?

Are you involved in research? If so tell me about it.

1. Tell me what the words "white supremacy" mean to you.

    - where do you think white supremacy comes from?

    - where did you first encounter white supremacy (if you have)?

    - why do you think it exists?

2. Tell me about this organization's/your response to white supremacy on campus (if any).

    - have you discussed it as a group?

    - have you discussed it within your board?

    - is there a guideline for students to follow if they encounter white supremacy on campus?

3. Tell me about your personal response to White Supremacy on campus.

- Do you have a personal plan on what to do when you see white supremacy?

4. Is there anything you think the University can do to help students deal with white supremacy on campus? Should the university take an active role regarding white supremacy?

　　- resources?

5. Where do you encounter white supremacy in your life?

6. Is there anything you think social media websites can do to help moderate white supremacy online? Do you think social media websites should play a role in monitoring white supremacy?

7. Tell me how you feel about the visibility of white supremacy in today's political atmosphere.

　　- do you think the government should take an active stance regarding White Supremacy?

　　- what do you think larger government institutions should be doing? Anything at all?

8. Space for any other comments or discussion regarding white supremacy.

Appendix C - Interview Schedules for Administrators

C.1 Interview Schedule for Administrator One

1. What does Diversity and Inclusion mean to you?

2. What are some of the programs that you have implemented at the University to emphasize diversity and inclusion?

3. Can you tell me about the diversity and inclusion training programs the University has? This can be for staff and for students.

4. Was it hard to forge a space for diversity and inclusion at the University?

5. What was it like to first begin working on diversity and inclusion on campus?

6. In your opinion, what is the most important way to foster diversity and inclusion on campus?

7. What steps does the University take when dealing with cases of racial insensitivity on campus?

8. Does the University have guidelines for students to follow if they feel discriminated against?

9. How does the University handle instances of students feeling discriminated against by their professors or other higher administration?

10. How does the University deal with racial insensitivity coming from student organizations?

11. Does the University have an official stance on white supremacy?

12. Does the University have an official definition of racism?

13. Do you think the Trump administration has affected the diversity/inclusion climate on Pitt's campus?

C.2 Interview Schedule for Administrator Two

Some questions redacted for anonymity

1. What does Diversity and Inclusion mean to you?

2. What are the goals you have for Diversity and Inclusion at this University?

3. Do you have any training procedures for your immediate staff about what it means to be inclusive? Cultural sensitivity training? Etc.

4. Do you think the current discrimination policy at Pitt does enough to protect students/faculty?

5. Are there any policy changes related to Diversity and Inclusion or discrimination that you feel the University should enact?

Appendix D - Information Passed Out at Student Organization Meetings

Who am I?

My name is Aryssa Shultz and I'm a senior majoring in Anthropology and GSWS with a minor in Nonfiction. I am currently pursuing a BPhil in Anthropology.

What is my research?

I'm interested in understanding white supremacy (the belief that white people are inherently superior to all other races); i.e. what drives people towards white supremacy? Why does it still exist today? How do systems uphold it? What is its history?

My research itself takes place on the website 4Chan, on a message board called "Politically Incorrect." This is an internet space where white supremacist discourse thrives, so I'm spending time there to try to understand some facet of the ideology. Additionally, I'm interviewing students on Pitt's campus to find out if they are talking about it/have dealt with it/have feelings about it/stories to share/etc.

How do you fit into this?

If you would like to be a part of my research project, I would love to interview you! You don't necessarily have to have experience with white supremacy to participate, but if you have anything you'd like to share, I'd love to hear it. This can include stories, opinions, questions, your thoughts on white supremacy, why you think it exists today, etc. Even things related to white supremacy can be discussed (such as the history of slavery). I understand that these topics can be sensitive, so in the case of your participation, please understand that you have no obligation to

share more than you are comfortable with. Although I can't compensate you for your time, I will keep you informed about my research and share my final thesis with you.

Each interview will last no longer than an hour, and all interviews will be kept anonymous. Interviews will only be recorded with your consent, but extensive notes will be taken no matter what. All interviews are held on a voluntary basis.

If you don't want to be interviewed, but know someone who might, feel free to pass this information along!

If you are interested in participating, send me an email (found below) and we can set up a date and time. All interviews will be held at whatever location on campus works best for you. Additionally, if you have any questions about this research you can direct them to me or my thesis advisor, Dr. Gabby Yearwood, whose information is also found below.

Thank You!

Contact

Aryssa: ALS350@pitt.edu

Dr. Gabby Yearwood (thesis advisor): Yearwood@pitt.edu

Notes

i. Jayne Miller, "What's the Difference Between the World Wide Web and the Internet?" *TeleGeography*, 2016.

ii. Evan Andrews, "Who Invented the Internet?" *History*, 2013.

iii. Peter H. Lewis, "U.S. Begins Privatizing Internet's Operations," *The New York Times*, 1994.

iv. Gabriel Bell, "What is the Difference Between Internet and Cyberspace?" *Quora*, 2018.

v. Monica T. Williams, "Colorblind Ideology is a Form of Racism," *Psychology Today*, 2011.

vi. Lilly Dancyher, "Charlottesville Jury Fines Man $1 for Punching White Nationalist," *Rolling Stone*, 2018.

vii. Matt Zapotoksy, "Charleston church shooter: 'I would like to make it crystal clear, I do not regret what I did,'" *The Washington Post*, 2017.

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