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## "Hail Hydra": Marvel's Captain America and White Nationalism in the United States

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## Introduction

In 2016, Captain America brought comic books to the forefront of national discussion with a single phrase: “Hail Hydra” (fig. 1). These two words proclaimed Captain America’s allegiance to Hydra, one of the most recognizable villains in the Marvel Comics canon and an allegory for the Nazi Party. The moment incited a riot among comic book super fans and casual onlookers alike, many arguing that by aligning Captain America with Hydra, the comic’s author Nick Spencer had disrespected the character’s origin story.<sup>1</sup> Captain America was originally written by Jewish American authors Joe Simon and Jack Kirby in 1941. These original comics were filled with political commentary urging the United States to join World War II and condemning Nazi Germany.<sup>2</sup> Readers of Spencer’s *Secret Empire* storyline argued that he had disregarded the character’s history and given potential fuel to the growing Alt-Right movement in the United States.<sup>3</sup> This moment was not, however, the first time that Captain America had aligned with a politically charged villain. In 1979, Captain America was briefly brainwashed into joining the National Force, an organization which acted as a clear allegory for the various white nationalist movements gaining power in the United States at the time. While Hydra and the National Force are in many ways comparable villains, the lenses that the writers of both storylines presented them through were responsive to their understanding of white nationalism in the United States at the time. By comparing the way each group is written and the extent to which each author allowed Captain America to be co-opted by white nationalist organizations, it

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<sup>1</sup> Abraham Riesman, “That Time Captain America Said ‘Hail Hydra’ and Geekdom Imploded,” *Vulture*, last modified April 28, 2019, <https://www.vulture.com/2019/04/marvel-hydra-captain-america-nick-spencer.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Bradford Wright, “Captain America,” in *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture*, ed. Thomas Riggs (Detroit: St. James Press, 2013), 507.

<sup>3</sup> Riesman, “That Time,” *Vulture*.

is clear that comic book creators were influenced by their social and political landscape as white nationalism moved from a largely condemned movement to a powerful and politically viable group, and that comic books are a useful tool in understanding this shift.

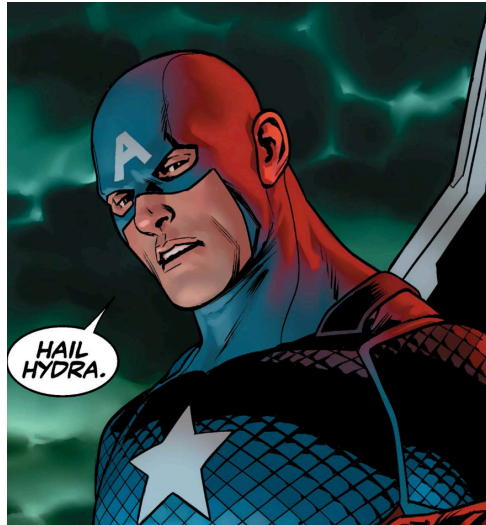


Figure 1. Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers #1* 32, (Marvel Comics) 2016.

### Historiography

For much of their history, comic books have been disregarded as a “young boy’s medium,” resulting in a limited scholarly inquiry.<sup>4</sup> Recently, this understanding has begun to shift, and scholars have started to analyze the medium itself as a way to understand the social and political climates in which the issues were published. In one of the first major scholarly works published on comic books, *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America*, Bradford Wright argues that comic books represent a “crude, exaggerated, and absurd character of the American experience.”<sup>5</sup> This idea was refined by Matthew J. Costello, who claimed that

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<sup>4</sup> Angela Ndaljian, “Why Comics Studies?,” *Cinema Journal* 50, no.3 (2011): 113.

<sup>5</sup> Bradford W. Wright, *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), xxiv.

[as] a disposable commodity, comic books have generally operated on a slim profit margin, and thus the industry tends to be uniquely responsive to cultural trends among its readership. A medium with relatively wide circulation (at least for young and late adolescent males) during most of its history, and one that is highly responsive to cultural trends, the comic book provides a unique window in American popular culture.<sup>6</sup>

As a result of the quick turn over rate of comic book publishing and the young target audience, comic books have responded to the world they were created with an almost immediate speed.

While the point of a comic book was rarely to make a distinct political point, writers included aspects of their current political culture in order to make their content more relatable to their young audiences. This appeal now makes them a valuable source in evaluating and understanding an era's political climate.<sup>7</sup>

### **Captain America and White Nationalism in 1979**

Roger McKenzie wrote five issues for *Captain America (1968)* in 1979 which followed Captain America as he fought the National Force.<sup>8</sup> This storyline was the National Force's first appearance in the Marvel Universe. While they appear to be a legitimate entity at the outset of the comics, it is later revealed that the National Force is little more than part of recurring villain Dr. Faustus's latest plan to destroy Captain America and the United States.<sup>9</sup> When Sharon Carter, a S.H.I.E.L.D. agent and Captain America's girlfriend, disappears in connection with the group, Captain America's investigation leads him to Dr. Faustus's apartment where Dr. Faustus uses his mind control power to brainwash Captain America into supporting the National Force.<sup>10</sup> He then uses Captain America as a propaganda piece for the National Force until Captain

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<sup>6</sup> Matthew J. Costello, *Secret Identity Crisis: Comic Books and The Unmasking of Cold War America* (New York: Continuum, 2009), EBook, 4-5.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> Roger McKenzie, *Captain America (1968) #231* (New York: Marvel Comics, 1979) 14.

<sup>9</sup> Roger McKenzie, *Captain America (1968) #233* (New York: Marvel Comics, 1979) 14.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 15-18.



America regains his consciousness and spends the rest of the issues attempting to defeat Dr. Faustus and ultimately destroying the National Force.<sup>11</sup>

The National Force created a direct allusion to white nationalist groups in the United States by appropriating the imagery and language of the Ku Klux Klan. Dating back to the late 1800s, the Ku Klux Klan is the oldest and one of the most recognizable American white nationalist groups.<sup>12</sup> By the time McKenzie's storyline was published in 1979, the power of the Klan had begun to dwindle, and they were largely condemned in the public sphere following a powerful resurgence in the 1960s.<sup>13</sup> Despite the ebb and flow of the Klan's membership, they remained a recognizable symbol of white nationalism within the United States, making the imagery of the organization an easy way for McKenzie to create a villain which could easily be associated with domestic evils. The first time that the reader sees the National Force is on the cover of *Captain America (1968) #231 Aftermath!* which shows Captain America standing in front of a man in a white body suit standing on a stage in front of a burning cross (fig 2).<sup>14</sup> When fellow S.H.I.E.L.D. agent Peggy Carter later explains the National Force to Captain America, she reveals the name of their leader as well, saying "Their platform is *hatred*, Cap – and their spokesman is a mysterious stranger who calls himself the *Grand Director*."<sup>15</sup> The imagery and language used drew on some of the most recognizable aspects of the Ku Klux Klan as an organization: their all white robes to disguise the identity of their members, the use of burning crosses to terrorize marginalized communities, and the name "Grand Dragon" to denote a high

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<sup>11</sup> Roger McKenzie, *Captain America (1968) #234* (New York: Marvel Comics, 1979) 6, 18.

<sup>12</sup> Laura Lambert, "Ku Klux Klan," in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Terrorism*, ed. Gus Martin (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011) 333.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 334.

<sup>14</sup> McKenzie, #231, 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

ranking member.<sup>16</sup> While the Klan may have been declining, readers would have still been familiar enough with their imagery and language to know what McKenzie was referencing immediately upon reading the issue. By connecting the National Force to an image as recognizably evil as the Ku Klux Klan, McKenzie created an easily recognizable domestic villain.



Figure 2. McKenzie, *Captain America* (1968) #231 1, (Marvel Comics) 1979.

Despite the similarities between the two organizations, the National Force was not a direct representation of the Klan and instead acted as a composite of the multitude of white nationalist groups within the United States. While the Klan may have been shrinking, white nationalism was not. Instead, white nationalism had begun to manifest in new groups such as the neo-Nazis and Skinheads.<sup>17</sup> In a response to a fan letter regarding the comic, editor Roger Stern reveals that McKenzie “got the idea for the National Force from reading accounts of neo-Nazi

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<sup>16</sup> George Hawley, *Making Sense of the Alt-Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017) 23.

<sup>17</sup> Mitch Berbrier, “White Supremacy,” in *Encyclopedia of Social Problems*, ed. Vincent N. Parrillo, Vol. 2 (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2008) 1032.

marches in the Midwest over the past year.”<sup>18</sup> In addition to the clarification provided by the editor, the connection between the National Force and neo-Nazi was clear in some of the imagery used in the illustration of the National Force. All members of the organization wore red armbands with swastikas on them over their white bodysuits.<sup>19</sup> The National Force also used typical white nationalist rhetoric, claiming “The only way to insure America’s *strength* is to make her *pure*! Because a *white* America is a *strong* America” (fig. 3).<sup>20</sup> Through the use of neo-Nazi imagery and rhetoric, the comic speaks to the historical era and inspiration, providing an accurate reflection of the state of white nationalism in the United States at the time.



Figure 3. McKenzie, *Captain America* (1968) #231 15, (Marvel Comics) 1979.

The responses of other characters in the series to Captain America’s affiliation with the National Force reveal how white nationalism was regarded by the U.S. general public. When Roger McKenzie’s comics were published, white nationalism was seen as a fringe movement in the United States and major political parties attempted to distance themselves from any

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<sup>18</sup> Roger McKenzie, *Captain America* (1968) #236 (New York: Marvel Comics, 1979)

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<sup>19</sup> McKenzie, #231, 14.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

association with the movement regardless of their political leaning.<sup>21</sup> When one of Captain America's friends Daredevil's sees the National Force ad with Captain America "[urging] all true Americans to join the National Force" while holding up his shield, the usual red white and blue design replaced by a flaming swastika, he assumes that Captain America is in trouble (fig. 4).<sup>22</sup> When he breaks into the National Force's headquarters to try and rescue Captain America, he finds that Captain America has become fully convinced of the National Force's message and is unwilling to accept any help. In his attempt to help Captain America realize his true nature, Daredevil tells him "I don't know how they've twisted you -- what kind of drugs or treatments they've used -- but you've got to snap out of it! You were always an inspiration to us...it can't end like this."<sup>23</sup> At this time, the idea that a figure such as Captain America who reflects American idealism and is supposed to represent some level of American morality would join the National Force was inconceivable. Daredevil believes wholeheartedly that Captain America would not have joined the National Force on his own and is willing to put himself on the line to prove it. Since the National Force was connected to white nationalist movements taking place in the United States, Daredevil's disbelief when confronted with Captain America's change in ideology can be read as a reflection of the lack of political viability of white nationalism on a grand scale at the time.

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<sup>21</sup> Betty A. Dobratz and Stephanie L. Shanks-Meile, "*White Power, White Pride!*" *The White Separatist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997) 46.

<sup>22</sup> McKenzie, #234, 7.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

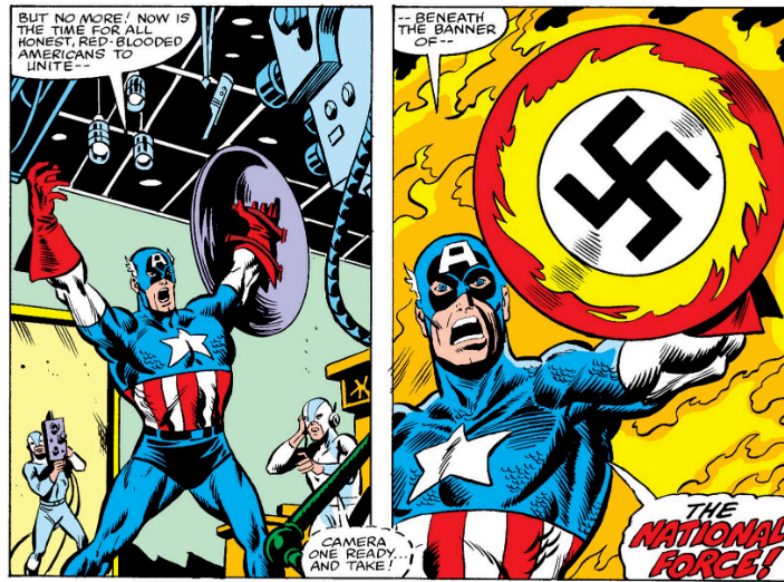


Figure 4. McKenzie, *Captain America* (1968) #234 6, (Marvel Comics) 1979.

While Roger McKenzie's storyline with Captain America may have used the imagery and ideas of white nationalism, the comic did little to validate the movement. Captain America's role in the National Force lasted a single issue out of the five. In this brief period, the comic focused on Daredevil and his attempts to save Captain America rather than Captain America himself.<sup>24</sup> This choice kept the National Force as the clear villain rather than focusing on the ways the group was using Captain America's image. As soon as Daredevil found Captain America, their battle with Daredevil knocked over an oil barrel in the warehouse, spilling oil onto Captain America's shield and causing the swastika that the National Force painted on it to run. The sight of his true shield reversed Dr. Faustus's brain washing and Captain America was transformed into his true self (fig. 5, fig. 6). From then on, he rededicates himself to fighting the National Force.<sup>25</sup> Since the National Force remained the primary villain throughout the story, there was

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 7-17.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 18.

little room for interpretation of the group. For McKenzie, there was no way to read a white nationalist group such as the National Force other than as evil.

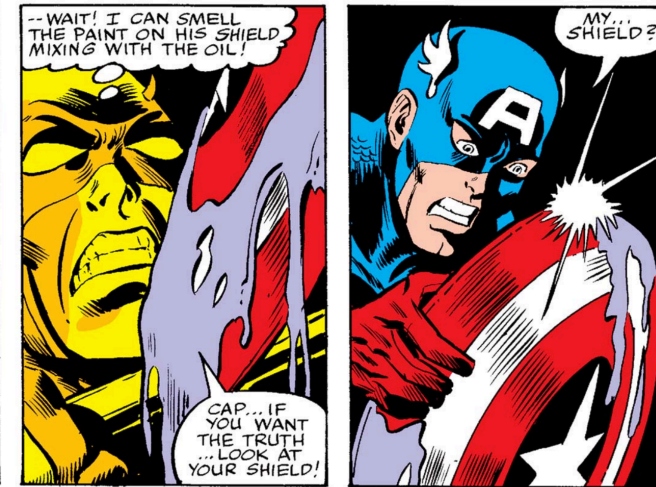


Figure 5. McKenzie, *Captain America* (1969) #234 17, (Marvel Comics) 1979.



Figure 6. McKenzie, *Captain America* (1969) #234 18, (Marvel Comics) 1979.

### ***Secret Empire* and the Political Strength of White Nationalism in 2016**

Nick Spencer's *Captain America: Steve Rogers* was released in 2016 as the first part of a larger storyline featuring multiple character's stand-alone comics and the ten issue series *Secret Empire*, all of which imagine a world in which Captain America has been working as an undercover member of Hydra. The series begins by revealing that Captain America's nemesis the

Red Skull has resurfaced and has begun recruiting for Hydra in the United States.<sup>26</sup> While on a mission to save abducted S.H.I.E.L.D. agent Dr. Selivg, Captain America reveals he is a member of Hydra as he takes control of the abductor's ship.<sup>27</sup> As the storyline progresses, it is revealed that Captain America's memories have been rewritten by Kovik, the anthropomorphic manifestation of the Cosmic Cube, a powerful, otherworldly item which gives whoever wields it the power to alter reality, that the Red Skull has been raising.<sup>28</sup> Captain America's rewritten memories not only tell him that he has been a member of Hydra since he was a child, but that he is destined to replace the Red Skull as the organization's Supreme Leader.<sup>29</sup> Over the course of the storyline, "Hydra Cap," the name used to refer to the Captain America Kovik created, takes over leadership of S.H.I.E.L.D. and ultimately the entire United States before being defeated.<sup>30</sup>

The way that those around Captain America respond to his change in identity reflected the growing viability of white nationalism in 2016. Many Americans had believed that after the election of Barack Obama in 2014, they were now living in a post racial America.<sup>31</sup> Donald Trump's 2016 campaign, however, showed many Americans that white nationalism still wielded considerable political power in the United States.<sup>32</sup> Donald Trump never claimed to directly support white nationalism, but the racist rhetoric he used created a "symbiotic relationship" in which the ideas of white nationalist movements were emboldened by someone running, and

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<sup>26</sup> Nick Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers #1* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2016) 9.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-32.

<sup>28</sup> Nick Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers #2* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2016) 20-21.

<sup>29</sup> Nick Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers (2016-2017) #6* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2016) 18.

<sup>30</sup> Nick Spencer, *Secret Empire (2017) #10* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2017) 33.

<sup>31</sup> David R. Morse, *Divided We Stand: Racism in America from Jamestown to Trump* (Rochester: Paramount Market Publishing, 2017) 134.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 311.

eventually winning, a viable presidential campaign.<sup>33</sup> With this win came the rise of the Alt-Right movement, a white nationalist group which recruited through the internet and their frequently violent rallies.<sup>34</sup> The political and social normalization of white nationalism was reflected in Nick Spencer's *Secret Empire* series. While 1979 saw Daredevil respond to Captain America's change in identity with disbelief, when Sharon Carter finds out that Captain America has always been a member of Hydra, she believes him immediately.<sup>35</sup> When she does try to convince Steve Rogers to renounce his role in Hydra or to stop his violent leadership, she relies on attempting to appeal to his character rather than trying to convince him he was brainwashed at Daredevil had, telling him "He'd be proud of you, you know. The *Red Skull*" (fig. 7).<sup>36</sup> Given the history behind Captain America's relationship to Hydra and its leader, his role in the organization should have been even more shocking than his role in the National Force. Carter's rapid acceptance of Captain America's history reflected the shift that occurred in America's understanding of white nationalism. While the ideology was not broadly regarded as acceptable, its continued presence and the growing strength of associated organizations cemented its strength as a reality for many Americans.

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<sup>33</sup> Vegas Tenold, *Everything You Love Will Burn: Inside the Rebirth of White Nationalism in America* (New York: Nation Books, 2018) 162, 171.

<sup>34</sup> Hawley, *Making Sense*, 57.

<sup>35</sup> Nick Spencer, *Secret Empire (2017) #0* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2017) 29.

<sup>36</sup> Nick Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers #19* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2017)



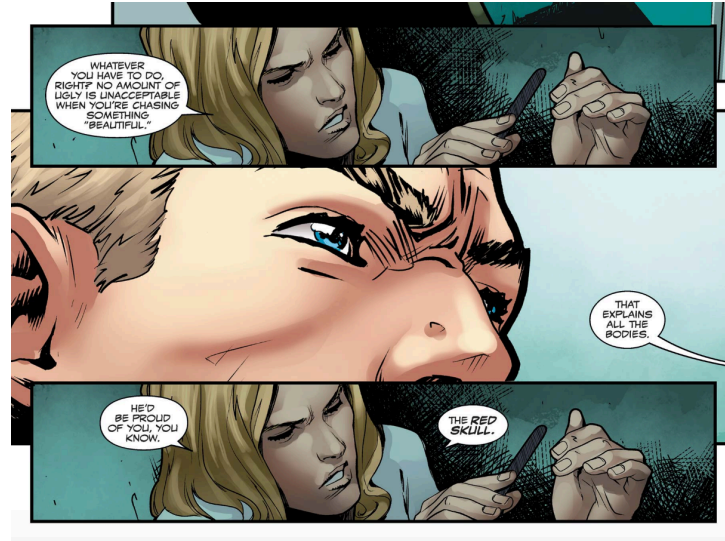


Figure 7. Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers #19* 18, (Marvel Comics) 2017.

The growing normalization of white nationalism is further seen in the power that Hydra Cap wields and the damage he is able to do before he is unseated. As Donald Trump continued to sit in office, his political moves and rhetoric went hand in hand with an increase in violent white nationalist organizations.<sup>37</sup> In 1979, brainwashed Captain America never rose to prominence in the National Force and was instead briefly used by the organization as a propaganda piece and as soon as he “outlived [his] usefulness” Dr. Faustus and the Grand Director tried to dispose of him.<sup>38</sup> Hydra Cap, however, was able to gain extensive power. By the end of his reign, he had killed one of the Avengers, ordered the execution of one of his friends, bombed the entire city of Las Vegas, and completely taken control of the U.S. government.<sup>39</sup> Unlike in 1979, when white nationalism had limited viability, Nick Spencer felt that he was able to ask his audience to imagine a world where Hydra was able to take absolute power. The extent to which Spencer

<sup>37</sup> Tenold, “*Everything You Love*,” 248.

<sup>38</sup> McKenzie, #234, 18.

<sup>39</sup> Spencer, *Secret Empire #10*, 33-35.

allowed the figure of Captain America to be co-opted by a white nationalist group is a testament to the growing presence of white nationalism in the United States.

Spencer's avoidance of Hydra's historical roots demonstrated America's hesitancy to name white nationalism as it emerged. As political culture in the United States has changed, racism has not gone away but rather adapted. Now, many white Americans are what Bonilla-Silva describes as "color-blind" racist, meaning they are unwilling to admit their own racism but continue to blame minority groups for the political problems they face.<sup>40</sup> This has extended into an inability to name racism or to talk about race.<sup>41</sup> In writing *Secret Empire*, Spencer went to great lengths to distance Hydra from the organization's history with the Nazi party.

Traditionally, Hydra's history in the Marvel Universe began during WWII when villains Baron Von Strucker and the Red Skull revived the ancient organization as a way to guarantee their power in the event of Hitler's loss.<sup>42</sup> Spencer uses flashbacks of Captain America's new memories to reintroduce Hydra as a neighborhood development group that young Steve Roger's mother was involved in (fig. 8).<sup>43</sup> Readers eventually learn that the neighborhood development part of Hydra was a front for a larger organization vying for world domination which chose to back the Axis powers merely as a means to an end.<sup>44</sup> Spencer and Marvel continued to reiterate the differences between Hydra and the Nazis, drawing on Hydra's ancient history. Following the release of the comics, Spencer's Twitter account was full of arguments with fans, including the

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<sup>40</sup> Morse, *Divided We Stand*, 332.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

<sup>42</sup> Marvel, "In Comics Full Report," *Hydra*. <https://www.marvel.com/teams-and-groups/hydra/in-comics>

<sup>43</sup> Spencer, *Steve Rogers #1*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> Nick Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers (2016-2017) #8* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2016) 13.

exasperated tweet “...And for the millionth time, Steve is not a Nazi.”<sup>45</sup> Spencer’s refusal to name white nationalism as the source of Hydra’s violence in the Marvel Universe reflected the American public’s inability to name the ideology of organizations such as the Alt-Right, influencing the acceptance of white nationalism.



Figure 8. Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers #1* 30, (Marvel Comics) 2016.

*Secret Empire* also reflected the growing global reach of white nationalism distinguishing the era and comic from its predecessor. In the 2000s, Europe experienced a reemergence of white nationalism and fascism, seen in the rise of violent crimes and groups targeting Jewish communities, particularly in formerly communist countries such as Poland.<sup>46</sup> In *Secret Empire*, the fictional European country of Sokovia has struggled to rebuild following a period of unrest and limited aid from the west (fig. 9). The country is ruled by a dictator commonly referred to as “The Butcher,” and his violent leadership created a vacuum in which citizens were willing to support Hydra in their attempt to overthrow The Butcher and “overlook any ideological

<sup>45</sup> James Gerbey, “How Marvel Has Responded to the Nazi Captain America Controversy,” *Inverse*, April 17, 2017. <https://www.inverse.com/article/30458-captain-america-hydra-nazi-marvel-nick-spencer-response-secret-empire>.

<sup>46</sup> Eric Arthur, “The Rebirth of Radical Nationalism: Welcome back to the ‘30s,” *Turning the Tide* 26, no. 1 (2013): 6.

differences in the meantime.<sup>47</sup> While Sokovia may not be a real country, the fictional implications of political instability are reflective of the real life power that white nationalist and fascist groups have been able to gain throughout Europe. This moment in the comics is further proof of the ways in which the comic reflected the state of white nationalism when it was published by revealing the increasingly global political power of white nationalist groups, an issue McKenzie's comics never interacted with.



<sup>47</sup> Nick Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers (2016-2017) #7* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2016) 8-9.

Figure 9. Spencer, *Captain America: Steve Rogers #7 8*, (Marvel Comics) 2016.

The *Secret Empire* storyline has ultimately helped to create new symbols for rising white nationalist movements in the United States. As white nationalist movements grew in the United States, the imagery that they used adapted to reflect more modern popular culture. Memes and other easily recognizable figures adopted hidden meanings within the white nationalist world, particularly within the technologically advanced Alt-Right movement.<sup>48</sup> Many critics of the comics have cited this phenomenon in their commentary of *Secret Empire*, arguing that moments such as Hydra Cap picking up Thor's hammer while battling the other Avengers with the caption "They were *stronger*. They were more *powerful*. In that moment -- -- they were *worthy*" could easily be pulled for white nationalist propaganda.<sup>49</sup> While Captain America remained a popular character in the Marvel Universe after *Secret Empire*, there were instances of white nationalist groups using items such as the character's shield in their protests.<sup>50</sup> A direct link between the *Secret Empire* comics and this development is difficult to draw conclusively without a statement from the Alt-Right, the comics came at a time where the white nationalist movement was particularly emboldened in both their position in the United States and their use of popular media, ultimately creating another symbol for the group to co-opt.

Spencer's willingness to allow Captain America to become a member of a white nationalist group was not reflected in the response of the general public, reflecting a level of dissonance in the way that the United States has understood white nationalism in the face of its

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<sup>48</sup> Hawley, *Making Sense*, 71-72.

<sup>49</sup> Andrew Dyce, "Evil Captain America Claim's Thor's Hammer," *Screen Rant*, May 8, 2017, <https://screenrant.com/captain-america-hydra-thor-hammer/>.

<sup>50</sup> Sigrid Ellis, "Marvel Comics has given Captain America's shield to real-life white nationalists," *Thinking Too Much*, May 7, 2017, <https://sigridellis.wordpress.com/2017/05/07/marvel-comics-has-given-captain-americas-shield-to-real-life-white-nationalists/>.

growing power. *Secret Empire* is largely regarded as one of the most controversial comics that Marvel has ever published. While comic book fans have always been vocal about their opinions on issues, *Secret Empire* caused a new level of outrage in the comic book world. Fans were not only upset that their favorite character had been rewritten, they thought that Spencer's reimagining of Captain America was a disservice to his legacy and creators.<sup>51</sup> Twitter users argued with Spencer almost incessantly, and even other comic book writers voiced their frustration with the storyline.<sup>52</sup> This response revealed that, despite the indisputably growing power of white nationalist groups, they do not hold the dominant political narrative. While the groups may have experienced a growth in their political power recently, they do not represent the opinions of the large portion of Americans who continue to dispute their presence.

## Conclusion

Despite being a largely disregarded medium in historical study, the Captain America comics provide a valuable way to trace how conceptions of white nationalism have shifted over time in the United States. With Roger McKenzie's 1979 storyline, the work actively condemned the National Force and any real life white nationalist group alongside it by showing the other character's rejection of Captain America's new identity within the National Force and giving limited attention to Captain America while he is brainwashed, reflecting the greater public denouncement of white nationalism at the time. In 2016, however, the narrative shifted and white nationalist groups became more politically powerful. Nick Spencer's *Secret Empire* comics

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<sup>51</sup> Aliza Weinberger, "Marvel Comics has taken this Nazi Captain America thing too far," *Mashable*, April 25, 2017, <https://mashable.com/2017/04/25/captain-america-hydra-nazi-marvel-comics/>.

<sup>52</sup> Kaila Hale-Stern, "All the Best Responses to the Captain America Was Always Evil Reveal," *The Mary Sue*, April 21, 2017, <https://www.themarysue.com/responses-captain-america-evil/>.



demonstrated this change in the amount of coverage that Hydra Cap receives as he gains power and the response of characters close to him such as Sharon Carter who did not challenge his assertion of his new role. Through this reading, the value of comic books and their role in society as a historical record to understand white nationalism becomes clear.

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