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From Slurs to Science, Racism to Revisionism: White Nationalist Rhetors and Legitimation in the Stormfront Community

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From Slurs to Science, Racism to Revisionism: White Nationalist Rhetors and
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by

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Abstract

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While on the surface mainstream discussions about race appear to encompass the values and ideologies associated with egalitarianism, subtle and at times not so subtle discussions continue to disparage groups and individuals who have been historically associated with the minority. The growing existence of hate groups illustrates that arguments for these extreme ideologies are not only present but for some individuals are gaining in acceptance. For this reason, I perform a critical discourse analysis of the language of one of the most popular and prolific White Nationalist groups on the Internet, Stormfront. In particular, I examine how scientific and revisionist discourse is used throughout Stormfront to create a seemingly rational and legitimate justification for White Nationalist ideology. Focusing on scientific and historical discourses, this analysis identifies the similar argument types, orders of discourse, and styles between mainstream and White Nationalist discourse to show how seamlessly Stormfront discourse draws off of mainstream discourse. Designed to divert the audience from the stigma associated with White Nationalism, Stormfront users have intentionally adopted a mainstream script that follows current social norms. This analysis finds that Stormfront members use current scientific research to advance the White Nationalist ideology through the incorporation of a socially acceptable and mainstream discourse that is granted high status. Similarly, Stormfront members recontextualize authoritative historical discourses and mainstream mediated discourse to recast White Nationalists as the victims of inequality under a guise of legitimacy. Furthermore, both the science and revisionist threads on Stormfront use

similar techniques (hyperlinking, source referral, etc.) and styles (assertions, legitimizing language, modality, etc.) to advance these arguments. Additionally, both threads incorporate external sources to their discourse, and this interdiscursivity gradually begins to chip away at the boundaries between extremist/hate/racist speech and mainstream discourse. These similar discourses are suggestive of a transition from the "extreme" to a more subtle, indirect racism that may have a more persuasive effect when presented under the guise of the socially acceptable.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In 2008, President Barack Obama was elected the first African American President in United States history. Public opinion polls found that 52% of those polled viewed this as a sign for better race relations in the country ("Race Relations," 2012). Ironically, it was also during Obama's first Presidential term that the total number of documented hate groups in the United States reached over 1000 (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2011)- a 54% increase since the year 2000 (Conant, 2009). At a time when public opinion polls showed that 88% of Americans affirmed the principles of religious freedom and tolerance, extreme racist groups began to flourish (Jones, Cox, Galston, & Dionne, Jr., 2011). In fact, so many individuals bombarded the White Nationalist site Stormfront the day after Obama's election that the server crashed (Daniels, 2012, p. xiii). Running contrary to the idealized vision of equality that is associated with a post-Civil Rights United States, hate groups are representative of the systemic racism that is rampant in our country. Maximizing the internet's ability to easily incorporate a large, diverse amount of text from a multitude of authors, Stromfront members draw from the discourses of larger structures, such as the mainstream media and the academy, to advance their argument for racism. Although the use of scientific and historical arguments to support racism is not a new rhetorical strategy, how these arguments are presented, in both form and style, is representative of a new phenomenon made possible by digital technology. Combining personal narratives and pieces of discourse from external sources, the Stormfront ideology becomes hidden under layers of seemingly legitimate argument. That this occurs so easily, with some posts consisting solely of external text, suggests that to claim that

the United States was in a state of post-racism would be to perpetuate a myth of equality and color-blindness. While on the surface mainstream discussions about race appear to encompass the values and ideologies associated with egalitarianism, subtle and at times not so subtle discussions continue to disparage groups and individuals that have been historically associated with the minority. The growing existence of hate groups illustrates that arguments for these extreme ideologies are not only present but for some individuals are gaining in acceptance. For this reason, a critical discourse analysis of the language of one of the most popular and prolific White Nationalist groups on the Internet, Stormfront, attempts to illustrate what arguments are used and how they are (re)produced in society. While prior studies analyze the content of Stormfront and similar sites, there is a gap in the literature regarding what, if any, specific types of discourse are used to perpetuate an ideology that promotes intolerance and hatred. In particular, I examine how scientific and revisionist discourse is used throughout Stormfront to create a seemingly rational and legitimate justification for White Nationalist ideology.

Stormfront

While the majority of Americans may never have heard of Stormfront, snippets of their ideology and discourse exist even in the most mainstream of media discourse. The day after the 2012 Presidential election, Fox News' Bill O'Reilly stated "The White Establishment is now the minority" (O'Reilly, 2012). On that same day, the Stormfront mission changed and incorporated similar language: "We are the voice of the new, embattled minority!" O'Reilly's comments present what is the largest fear of White Nationalists—the loss of white identity and majority power status. Furthermore, these words illustrate that the line between mainstream political and extremist discourse is not

always as clear as a self-proclaiming egalitarian society would assume. Although

O'Reilly is not a White Nationalist, this discourse link between a mainstream cable

network and Stomfront shows that the line separating "extremist" and "mainstream"

discourse is not as clear as one might suppose. This is not to equate mainstream political

discourse with that of the extremist, but rather to call attention to the existence of

overlapping discourses among the racist and the mainstream; overlapping discourses that

exist even when one side is perceived as taboo, irrational, or easily dismissible when

standing alone. For example, it is not uncommon for both mainstream and White

Nationalist discourse to use academic journal articles to bolster their arguments. In some

instances, similar and/or the same discourse will be used by both, and the impact of the

content drastically changes (see image 1).

<div align="center">Mainstream   White Nationalist</div>

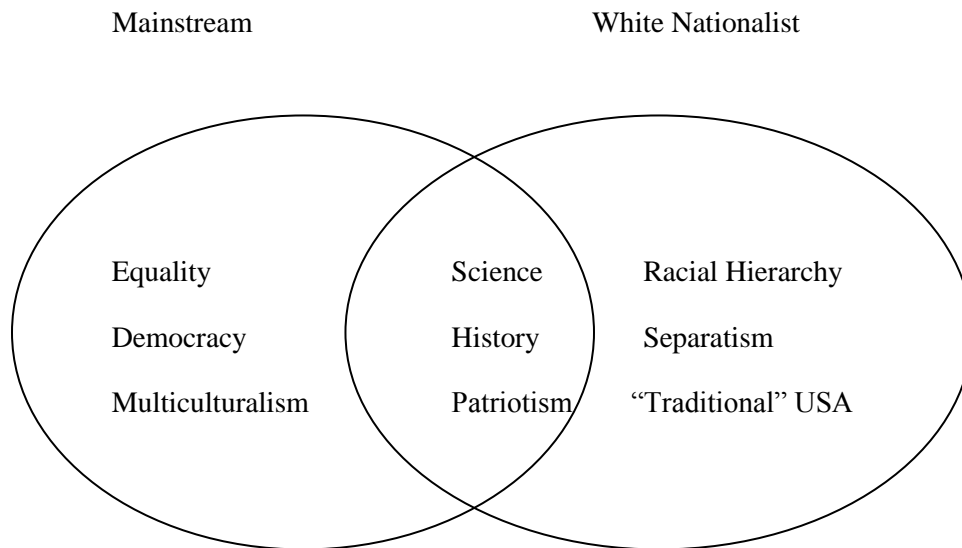| Equality	Science	Racial Hierarchy
Democracy	History	Separatism
Multiculturalism	Patriotism	"Traditional" USA

Image 1: Overlapping Discourses

Stormfront.org: History and Content

    In order to adequately understand the role of Stormfront on society, its history

and subsequent growth are noteworthy. Analyzing Stormfront's progress and rapid

increase in popularity implies that its mission to gain membership and/or support has

been successful. Furthermore, who is speaking, what they are saying, and why these beliefs are so important to White Nationalists must be identified before an analysis of the potential implications of this discourse can begin. Not only does this establish context for the discourse but also identifies the impact of discourse on White Nationalists.

The Web 1.0 version of Stormfront.org was established in 1990 as a computer bulletin board system consisting of three members. Recognizing the power of the internet to unite White Nationalists, it opened to the public in 1994 (Stormfront, 2007). At this point in time, only about 18,000 websites existed at all (Walton, 2006), and Stormfront was the only White Nationalist site (Abel, 1998). With the rapid growth of the internet, the number of White Nationalist websites began to increase; however, only Stormfront has managed to remain with an increasing popularity (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.). Stormfront is labeled as the most popular White Nationalist website as a self-proclaimed "community of White Nationalists" consisting of 269,937 registered members and contains 772,015 discussion threads with 10,045,936 individual posts. In addition to news and ideological and philosophical documents relevant to White Nationalism, Stormfront content includes classified ads, a dating forum, and various types of multimedia including games, a link to stream White Nationalist radio, and music (see Appendix A for a complete list of forum titles available on Stormfront). While anyone can view the content on the forum, except for the 4 locked threads accessible to financial contributors only, in order to post, membership is required. However, the only requirement for membership is an email address. The site consists of discussion boards and represents asynchronous communication between members and non-members; it even offers the option to make the site smart phone compatible. Although the site is based

in the United States and United States citizens make up the majority of its membership, Stormfront has visitors from approximately 18 countries per day (Statscrop, 2012). According to Alexa internet analytics (2013), Stormfront ranks 10,215 in the United States and 19,192 globally out of 30 million on the list of top trafficked websites; approximately 4,000 websites provide links to Stormfront.

Don Black

As founder and creator of Stormfront, Don Black (1953-) has become a figurehead for White Nationalist ideology. According to his biography, even before his emergence in cyberspace, Black had a long history with the White Nationalist Movement beginning at the age of 15 in Alabama when he was exposed to the White Power and Skinhead literature "Our Nordic Race." He then joined the neo-Nazi National Socialist White People's Party. This teenage dabbling soon became part of Black's identity when he become David Duke's second in command and the Grand Wizard for the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in 1980. In 1981, Black and nine fellow Klansmen attempted to overthrow the Caribbean island of Dominica, an attempt to "secure the island against communist incursion," and were sentenced to three years in federal prison. It was here that Black learned to use the internet. After his release from prison, Black left the Klan. Still supporting White Nationalist ideology, Black asserted the Klan was "too violent" and focused his energies on Stormfront, which he defines as a community rather than a racist organization. In fact, Black asserts words like "racist" and "bigot" are "pejorative... meant to stifle argument" (Abel, 1998). To clarify this position, Black writes the following in his "Welcome" to new visitors to the forum: "Our mission is to provide

information not available in the controlled news media and to build a community of

White activists working for the survival of our people" (Black, 2001).

Mission and Ideology

No matter what Black's self-proclaimed definition of Stormfront may be, the

information present on the site represents a mixture of hate groups, such as the Ku Klux

Klan, that Black separated from. Although not an exhaustive list, through a search of the

site's posts, ideological materials supporting the following groups are present: White

Supremacist, Ku Klux Klan, Christian Identity, Skinhead, and Neo-Nazi. While each of

these movements has a unique ideology and history, all promote the belief that the white

race is unique and as something central to their identity. Since this "whiteness" is

inseparable from those who identify with these groups, I will use "White Nationalist" as

an umbrella term for all Stormfront members. My reason for this is two-fold. First, this

site heralds itself as a "White Nationalist Forum." Black purposely chose this term as he

felt that the label "White Supremacist" carried with it negative connotations from which

Stormfront was attempting to disassociate in order to reach a larger audience (even

though the majority of the discourse suggests that the notion of supremacy is central). By

using this term, I hope to keep in the readers' mind the fact that the term itself is a

rhetorical move to reach a larger audience. Second, other terms traditionally used to

describe these movements, such as "supremacist" or "extremist," are either too narrow or

too broad to represent Stormfront members accurately. For example, some domestic

terrorism organizations, such as Christian Identity and certain militia organizations, are

not typically referenced as "supremacist" even if their ideologies imply otherwise.

"Supremacist" is typically associated with those groups, such as Neo-Nazis, that have

historically claimed a racial hierarchy with the Aryan race as superior. On the opposite

end of the spectrum, "extremist" is consistently used as a descriptor of Islam groups,

particularly since the events of 9/11 (Valla & Comcowich, 2008).

<center>**Contemporary Hate Offline**</center>

Stormfront discourse does not rest solely in the virtual world but is a digital

representation of a growing offline culture. Since these groups have a longstanding

history that began long before internet technology existed, I believe a discussion on the

central tenets of White Nationalism and the implications that adopting these beliefs has

on society should occur prior to the discussion of virtual White Nationalism. This is not

to undermine the importance and effect of virtual hate but to emphasize the potential

ramifications of adopting and perpetuating this discourse. It is all too easy to ignore these

discourses as just one of the many millions that are present on the web and assume that

with one click they will disappear. However, when the effects of White Nationalism can

be felt physically and psychologically, the need for continual analysis of these groups is

emphasized.

What it Means to be a White Nationalist

The diverse nature of White Nationalist groups, as is illustrated by the various

descriptive terms used to label such groups, makes quantifying and subsequent analysis

of these groups difficult. This is further complicated by the number of "lone wolves"

present that adhere to White Nationalism without claiming outright membership: " [a

lone wolf is] someone who has a political agenda; is unaffiliated with a group; does not

take directions from anyone; and involves no one else in planning the attack or procuring

weapons for the attack" (Sicking, 2012, para. 10). Without being able to methodically

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and accurately categorize a group, the likelihood of allowing personal opinion and bias to impact the analysis increases. As such, it is necessary to locate the commonalities between the various groups that have been categorized as White Nationalist, White Supremacist, extremist groups and/or hate groups and use these common threads as a unifying factor in research. Furthermore, these groups are fragmented by their differing origins and ideologies and divided into sub-groups such as Neo-Nazi, Skinhead, Ku Klux Klan, and Christian Identity. Although I use the term White Nationalist (for the reasons discussed above), previous research on these groups may use different terms to describe their particular group of analysis. As a result, my subsequent discussion about previous racism may include a variety of terms.

Despite the various names used to describe White Nationalists, research consistently identifies the importance of white identity and extreme prejudiced attitudes, commonly labeled "hate," to their members. Waltman and Haas (2010) assert, and I agree, that while the term "hate" is casually used in society, to the White Nationalist group, "hate" becomes intrinsically bound in their identity and culture. The authors define hate as "extreme negative feelings…more likely to produce deliberate action" (p. 2). Furthermore, the hateful mind is incapable of sympathy and is an emotional state from which one may derive pleasure. Such hate is then expressed discursively and results in what some label as "hate speech." Not to be confused with the legal term, hate speech is the outward expression of hate groups whose ideology is based on the subordination of another group based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or other immutable characteristics. Furthermore, such speech is used to enhance the in-group identity and dehumanize the "Other." In addition to feeling hate for the "Other," Perry (2001) located

six ideological commonalities of contemporary hate groups: Christian Identity, White

Supremacy, Xenophobia, Sexism/Heterosexism, Anti-Statism, and the Racial Holy War.

While Perry's (2001) and Waltman and Haas's (2010) analyses of hate groups

shed light onto the expression of hate in White Nationalism, Dobratz and Shanks-Meile's

(1997) extensive fieldwork gives us insight into how actual members of these movements

define and describe their ideology to those outside of the movement. The authors

attended rallies and interviewed approximately 125 members of the White Supremacist

movement in order to "go beyond the stereotyped images, propagandistic publications,

and our superficial understanding about white separatism" (p. 3). Dobratz and Shanks-

Meile found that the ideology of this social movement was not "mere rhetoric" but is

used to "describe, explain, and justify the ends and means of political action" (p. 89).

This activism is grounded in an ideology that rests on the following unifying tenets. First

and foremost, is the White Nationalist view on race; in particular, race is seen as a

biological construct that is hierarchical in nature and is typically associated with physical

characteristics and intelligence. Furthermore, and what is most significant for the

purposes of this study, is the unique perspective of movement followers on how their

ideology should be classified. As opposed to racist, these followers prefer to be labeled

racialist- a term they perceive as positive and that signifies a love for their own race:

"Loving your own race—our Aryan race—and putting the survival and self-preservation

of our 'folk' above all else" (p. 94). This view on race ties into what the authors found as

a key component of the movement- separatism. Separatism is linked with political

nationalism and is one of the objectives of the movement. To illustrate this, the authors

quote one Skinhead member, "in order to continue our own cultural and genetic

evolution, separatism represents the best interests of our people" (p. 106). In addition to these racist and separatist attitudes, those in the movement consistently perceive Jewish individuals and organizations as an impediment to their cause. The Jewish population is presented as responsible for those aspects of society that are seen as threatening to the white race. For example, typically referenced with the acronym ZOG (Zionist Occupational Government), those in the movement feel the Jewish population hold the economic and political power in the United States and blame "Jew Propaganda" in the media for the societal acceptance of homosexuality and race-mixing.

"Whiteness" is also associated with a heteronormative masculinity that is pervasive within White Nationalism: "racial difference, in particular, is a powerful force for the production of gendered identification and that the latter, in fact, remains incomprehensible, unless understood…as an implicitly racialized term" (Sarvan, 1998, p. 8). From the perspective of those who believe in the biological superiority of the white race, gender and sexuality are also biological constructs that are immutable and hierarchal. Furthermore, in a society where the white male has historically held political, social and economic power, the movement's idealized definition of masculinity is representative of the lost power they strive to reclaim. Abby Ferber's (1998) analysis of White Supremacist literature spanning from 1969-1993 cites how issues of gender continue to intersect with race even amidst the divided sects of White Supremacism. More specifically, since race is perceived as a biological construct, interracial relationships and potential "miscegenation" is heralded as the ultimate betrayal toward racial purity and white privilege. The discourse remains highly gendered keeping the white male at the foreground of the discourse. This masculine discourse has become

increasingly dominant in light of societal and political shifts in a post- civil Rights era. Using Michael Omi's (1991) term "backlash" to describe this discourse, White Supremacists attempt to rearticulate race and gender in hopes of restoring traditional white privilege. To the contemporary White Supremacist, race and gender are viewed from a lens of victimization, and immigration, civil rights, and a ZOG are to blame for - the eventual genocide of the "white, male identity and privilege" (p. 51). This genocide is portrayed as inevitable in a society that continues to accept and praise concepts such as female independence, diversity, and equality. On a Stormfront "Identify the Enemy Poll," one Stormfront poster responded that the enemy consisted of "liberals that avidly promote multiculturalism, homosexuality, abortions, and drug usage." S/he then goes on to state, "the liberal doctrine is a suicidal one for us since it shrinks the population, reduces efficiency and gradually leads to complete annihilation" (Stormfront, 2012).

The psychological research conducted on prejudice offers further insight into the cognitive processes that occur when one adopts White Nationalism. From this perspective, the prejudiced attitudes of White Nationalists are typically characterized as a by-product of in-group attachment. Human beings tend to prefer the familiar over the unfamiliar and place themselves within social groups that hold similar characteristics and value similar beliefs. As a particular in-group increases in social, economic, and political power, its members begin to associate a moral superiority with their group: "when the moral order is seen as absolute rather than relative, moral superiority is incompatible with tolerance for difference" (Brewer, 1999, p. 435). This moral superiority can result in prejudiced attitudes toward outgroups that is exacerbated when an outgroup is perceived as a threat, either real or perceived, to the ingroup. Furthermore, Brewer (1999) suggests

that in the face of a common threat, such as a weak economy or job instability,

competition between in-groups and out-groups may increase as well as the likelihood of

scapegoating and victimage: "when trust is in-group-based, it is easy to fear control by

outsiders" (p. 438). From the perspective of the White Nationalist, out-groups encompass

all those not deemed as "White" and are seen as a threat to their identity, livelihood, and

power.

Katherine Blee's (2004) research on White Supremacists incorporates the social

dimensions of hate into the psychological processes involved in forming prejudicial

attitudes. Blee suggests that in addition to the cognitive elements of stereotyping and

prejudice, social, political, and economic conditions have a similar effect on hatred.

Citing previous work on the sociology of emotions, Blee suggests that hate is a

"boundary mechanism" used to increase group solidarity. In addition to the formation of

an in-group identity and subsequent prejudicial attitudes, this hate is interactional and

learned socially. It is audience driven and may be partially dependent on certain social

issues. Rather than approaching the members of hate groups as monolithic in character,

hate groups have a unique emotional culture that is "constructed or muted by distinct

social influences" (p. 100). Using James Aho's definition of hate as something that is

accomplished, in that it is the outcome of social events, Blee's analysis combines the

individual agency of extremist group members with the larger, structural institutions that

act as a catalyst for the formation of racial identity and as a precursor to the adoption of

extremist racial beliefs. Hate is not solely an individual attitude that reflects certain

psychological characteristics; it is interactional. One learns to hate through his or her

relations with other individuals. The egalitarian and color-blind mentality of American

institutions places individuals in direct contact with an "Other," and through these lived experiences hatred can form. This is illustrated by the discourse of Stormfront members that continuously use personal experiences as a justification for separating themselves from the "Other." For example, one thread entitled "Racially Motivated Attacks against White teachers" consists of 253 posts of individual's experiences with minority groups in the school system as a means to illustrate one race over another while simultaneously exaggerating a level of violence and fear appeals to further encourage a separation of races. Furthermore, this discussion about violence in schools has the potential to appeal to larger audiences that are worried about violence and/or the public school system's impact on their children. Although the discussions following the initial post are geared toward the White Nationalist agenda, the desire to keep schools safe is a concept that has a universal character and could potentially contribute to increasing group membership.

Kimmel's (2005) analysis of far right and Islamic extremist groups supports Blee's position on the impact of societal changes on the construction of hate while contributing to the research on the intersection between extremism and gender. According to Kimmel, globalization has resulted in a downward mobility of lower and middle class men that may result in forming extremely prejudicial attitudes towards those groups deemed responsible. This displacement from the traditional, white male role as patriarch has led to a resurgence of "masculinity" in the ideology and rhetoric of United States and Scandinavian White Supremacist groups. According to the White Supremacist, globalization, an evil concept that is controlled by the ZOG, has allowed minorities and typically disenfranchised groups a place in the societal workforce. As a result, the lower and middle class white male, typically referred to as farmers, shopkeepers, and

tradesmen, have lost their income and their children's future inheritance; they now strive to "take back what is rightfully ours" (p. 606). To accomplish this, members of the far Right use idealized visions of the past to rhetorically construct a vision for the future; a future that necessitates recapturing traditionally masculinity that is no longer present in society. According to members of the far Right, women in the workforce are inappropriately masculine, Blacks are hyper-masculine and thus prone to violence and rape, and Jews are both hypo and hyper-masculine. In all scenarios, the rhetoric of masculinity criticizes particular social groups while simultaneously re-establishing the White male as representative of the epitome of masculinity. This optimal man is depicted in the discourse, and the only way to reclaim economic and political power in society is to re-establish this "true" masculinity. This will only occur once society dispels multiculturalism and notions of gender and sexual equality. Furthermore, to reclaim this power, government entities that stand in their way must be deposed.

Kimmel's (2005) analysis of far Right texts finds an exaggerated discourse of masculinity that has also been used to justify physical violence and crime. For example, Robert Jay Matthews, prior leader of The Order and modern day White Nationalist martyr, presented similar rhetoric of this idyllic white male in his "Call to Arms" in 1984. Mathews' speech was delivered to an audience that consisted of farmers and ranchers of the Pacific Northwest community who were enduring the "Farm Crisis" of the early 1980s. Mathews gave them someone to blame-- the "Jews attempt to neutralize the American farmer." Using certain sub-human terms, such as "vermin" and "weasel," to vilify the Jewish man and the bureaucratic system, Mathews sought to establish credibility and superiority for the Aryan race, most particularly the farmer, merely by

portraying them with human characteristics. The farmer was expressed as the essence of work ethic and masculinity and referenced with masculine terms such as "masculinity," "sires," "large-framed, ruddy-faced man," and "cowboy." Furthermore, at the closing of this speech, Mathews repeated the phrase "stand up like men" to call his audience to action and reinforce the importance of masculinity to economic and social stability. Several members of the audience found this rhetoric persuasive and joined Matthew's cause. One year later, Matthews and fellow members of The Order went on a crime spree in Washington robbing two armored cars and numerous Washington banks to raise money for this cause. In addition to the robberies, The Order murdered Jewish Denver radio host Alan Berg (Kaplan, 1997, p. 64). A *New York Times* article reported one member's testimony that stated Berg's murder was part of a six-step plan to "establish a terrorist group of neo-Nazis and Klan members to wage war on what he said was the 'Zionist occupational government' that controlled the United States." Also on their list to assassinate were Norman Lear, civil rights lawyer Morris Dees, and a Kansas Federal Judge ("Jury Told of Plan to Kill Radio Host," p. 131). When the FBI attempted to apprehend Matthews, a standoff; refusing to surrender and aiming fire at law enforcement officials, Matthews was killed. He is now seen as a martyr among the White Nationalist movement.

Impact of Hate on Society

As the prior discussion shows, contemporary White Nationalists do not fall under the realm of a singular organization; instead, they are united by shared belief systems that frequently overlap with each other. However, this lack of organizational cohesion should not suggest that these groups do not have a significant impact on society. When viewed

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from the lens of contemporary social movement theory, it is mistakenly inferred that these groups do not have what it takes to have a significant impact on society. For instance, even though social movement theory asserts that a particular group "draw(s) on a set of shared knowledge about collective action," which White Nationalists do, it also states that social movements must follow a "specific course of action" (Oliver & Marwell, 1992, p. 255). Contemporary White Nationalist groups differ on the correct and necessary course of action to achieve their overarching goal- the preservation of white identity. Even the goal itself is ambiguous. For example, Adams and Roscigno (2005) found different interpretations of worldviews and perceived efficacy among Ku Klux Klan organizations and Neo-Nazi groups. The Ku Klux Klan advocates societal change through legislative restructuring while the Neo-Nazi groups tend to be more distrustful of the government and desire a new governmental regime. Without a definite plan of action, the perceived power of these groups seems inconsequential. Furthermore, the violent history of these groups and the hatred that lies at the core of White Nationalist ideology make these groups a target of law enforcement and legislative censorship; therefore, the means to achieve this White future is further restricted. Such restrictions affect not only the actions of White Nationalists but also the expression of their mission. Whereas a traditional social movement may call for lobbying, protests, public demonstrations and the like (typically referred to as production technologies) to reach the desired goal, such collective action is more difficult for the White Nationalist. The mission for the White Nationalist runs contrary to the concepts of equality and tolerance that are praised in a democratic society. In order to combat the mission of the White Nationalist, numerous judicial and legislative actions have been created to censor the White Nationalist;

however, in most instances these actions have been deemed unconstitutional. For example, modern hate speech legislation in the United States only finds content constitutionally proscribable if it is likely to incite imminent lawless action: "The mere fact that expressive activity causes hurt feelings, offense, or resentment does not render speech unprotected" (R.A.V v. City of St. Paul, Minnesota, 1992, 505 US 377). While White Nationalist discourse may be granted protection unless it crosses the vague line of "incitement," government agencies are aware of the potential violent implications of this ideology and use enhanced sentencing guidelines to prevent hate speech from turning into a hate crime. If the victim of a criminal act was targeted because of "actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, disability, or sexual orientation," the sentence is enhanced (United States Sentencing Commission, 2012, §3A1.1.). Without a unified mission and with the numerous legislative and judicial restrictions in place, society may adopt the illusion that these groups are inconsequential; however, as the acts of Page and Mathews show, White Nationalism has managed to seep through the cracks.

These legislative attempts to restrict the expression and potential criminal acts of the White Nationalist have not been wholly successful, and White Nationalism as a social movement is progressing. In some instances this results in physical implications in society and the perpetuation of negative evaluations of members of different social groups. For example, Glaser, Dixit, and Green's (2002) interviews with 38 self-proclaimed racists located motivating factors, such as interracial marriage and job competition, that could or would inspire hate crimes against African Americans- a fact that illustrates violence is still advocated even when known to be illegal. Even though the

findings of this report only discuss potential motivating factors and do not suggest an actual crime was committed, hate crimes are not just talked about but do occur. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's hate crime statistics cites 6,222 criminal incidents labeled as a hate crime in 2011 with a total of 7,713 victims; 59% of the identified perpetrators were White (FBI, 2012). While these numbers are shocking, they should also be interpreted with the impediments to reporting and enforcing hate crimes in mind; therefore, the number of actual cases may be more. According to Jenness and Grattet (2005), enforcing hate crime law can be difficult because of definitional ambiguities that affect determining a biased motive and its relationship to the characteristics of the victim. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies must implement departmental policy and training to provide officers with the knowledge needed to appropriately classify and enforce hate crime law. Lastly, studies show that victims of hate crimes are less likely to report these incidences because of the social stigma associated with certain minority groups. It is also important to note here that these numbers are also only reflective of documented hate crimes and do not reflect the numerous instances of public and constitutionally protected speech that is reflective of White Nationalism. While there is no monitoring of these instances, a search of LexisNexis major world publications yields a total of 1,364 articles referencing White Supremacy in the past two years alone. Lastly, these crimes only reflect physical acts of violence and are not representative of the potential psychological effects that may occur as a result from perpetual racism, sexism, and the like.

With this in mind, the presence of hate crime and the media references to White Supremacy in the public sphere illustrate that White Nationalist ideology and surrounding discourse remains a recurring phenomenon in society and should not be ignored. Even

when a perpetrator of a hate crime does not overtly express his or her affiliation with a documented White Nationalist group, the crime is an outward and physical manifestation of White Nationalist ideology and is suggestive of the continuing presence of White Nationalism beliefs in society.

White Nationalist Discourse on the Web: Virtual Construction of the "Other"

The legal issues surrounding White Nationalism, in conjunction with the stigma associated with these groups, makes the White Nationalist transition into the virtual world unsurprising. Although this runs contrary to the stereotypical view of White Nationalists as uneducated and publically outspoken, White Nationalist organizations were early adopters of cyber technology (Gerstenfeld, Grant, & Chiang, 2005). Popular films, such as *American History X* and *A Time to Kill*, depict White Nationalists with outward and overt physical markers of White Nationalism such as brandishing white hoods and swastikas. As such, the White Nationalist image is commonly viewed as something blatant and easily recognizable. However, not all individuals are compelled to be as forthcoming with their beliefs, and the internet provides a virtual place where these individuals can meet and converse: "We have recruited people to our point of view, many people which we otherwise wouldn't have reached. Sites such as Stormfront which are interactive, provide those people who are attracted to our ideas with a forum to talk to each other and to form a virtual community" (Black, 1998, para.10). In addition to providing access to individuals and groups with similar beliefs, the internet is a popular communication medium for White Nationalists as it allows dissemination of content that is relatively inexpensive and is not subject to the gatekeeping processes associated with traditional means of publication. Furthermore, as Gerstenfeld, Grant, and Chiang's (2005)

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content analysis of hate sites shows, an international component is a common feature of hate sites. This finding suggests that the internet's lack of jurisdictional boundaries is one reason it is so popular among hate groups; this is particularly true in the United States where such speech is constitutionally protected. By referencing a larger support base for their ideology, White Nationalists use hyperlinking to imply that their attitudes are representative of multiple voices. Rather than acting merely as a reference, the hyperlink itself acts as a rhetorical device that extends the argument beyond the bounds of Stormfront. This not only lends an air of legitimacy to the site, but also places "Whiteness" in the global arena that "transcends local and regional ties" (Daniels, 2009, p. 42).

In addition to the perceived anonymity and its ability to cross physical and temporal boundaries, research on computer mediated communication has found the internet to have significant impact on individual identity and social psychology. From the interpersonal communication perspective, the anonymity the internet offers allows individuals to engage in behavior that is more self-centered and unbound by societal norms (Bargh & McKenna, 2005). The feeling of being able to communicate freely and openly without the fear of negative social repercussion further impacts individual's group membership. This is particularly significant when public support for a group is as stigmatized in society as is White Nationalism. It is in these instances where being part of a virtual community becomes central to an individual's identity. The format and discussion based character of the Stormfront reinforces its role as a virtual community. Rather than solely granting the power to add and remove content to a site administrator, the public nature of the forum can be viewed as a strategic move to create an essence of

community. Rather than a faceless entity disseminating messages, individual posters play

an active role in Stormfront. Accompanying each post is a self-chosen name, the date, the

time, and in some instances an avatar or a picture. Individuals can set up profiles, contact

other members privately, or search for a romantic partner calling attention to the fact that

actual people are involved and without them there would be no Stormfront. Members of

Stormfront are active participants in this virtual community, and their voices have

meaning and power thus enhancing its appeal.

This exaggerated user presence signifies Stormfront's desire to be seen as a

community as opposed to a mere site of information- a fact that sets it apart from other

White Nationalist sites. To borrow Caren, Jowers, and Gaby's (2012) term, Stormfront

can be viewed as a Social Movement Online Community (SMOC): "A sustained network

of individuals who work to maintain an overlapping set of goals and identities tied to a

social movement linked through quasi-public online discussions" (p.163). This

communal aspect transitions Stormfront into the category of social movements; a

transition that suggests that the discourse that occurs online has the potential to lead to

political activism offline. As a SMOC, Stormfront members, as well as those who support

the ideology but have not yet taken the steps to join, are provided with a space where they

can receive cultural support from those with similar beliefs. The use of a discussion board

creates a space that is "broad based and participatory" and that "allows for a diversity of

participatory forms" (p.165). Furthermore, unlike their offline counterparts, SMOCs are

not limited by geography, time, financial burdens, or the fear of social stigma for

participation. The lack of these limitations, as well as the diverse content available,

carries with it the power to draw in larger audiences in hopes of attracting new members

while strengthening the beliefs of the active and passive supporters that access this site even without becoming a member.

This perception of a collective identity has further implications on the various self-enhancement and self-distinctiveness strategies utilized by the group members. Guided by Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory, Douglas, McGarty, Bliuc, and Lala (2005) analyzed 43 hate sites to determine if their content promoted more levels of social conflict or social creativity. According to SIT, individuals that perceive their group membership as impermeable will utilize social creativity strategies to enhance their group status and maintain this social identity: "groups will engage in intergroup comparisons on unorthodox dimensions that tend to favor their own group" (p. 69). Because of the violent past associated with these groups, the authors anticipated a large level of discourse representative of social conflict. However, the authors found that as opposed to the majority of discourse favoring strategies of social competition, the majority of the groups engaged in social creativity strategies that re-articulated the movement's mission and the White Nationalist relationship with out-groups. For example, ZOG conspiracies were used to establish the white race as victims, and policies of segregation were placed in a Biblical context rather than solely racial. These examples are suggestive of the power of the internet; it gives these groups the means and ability to create their own histories and conspiracies as support for their beliefs. As opposed to outwardly advocating violence, a variety of discourses were used to recontextualize White Nationalism in a society that does not condone violence. This turn to social creativity is a means to justify long-term conflict that is necessary for the maintenance of the group. As the O'Reilly quote states, the belief of a "white minority" is suggestive of an insecure identity. Members of White

Nationalist groups feel their very existence is being threatened, and the only way to secure their existence is to re-define their group and become more appealing, and the internet is the optimal medium to accomplish this.

In addition to the communal aspect of Stormfront, its members have adopted several rhetorical strategies to promote their ideology while attempting to re-define their mission. Meddaugh and Kay (2009) adopt a rhetorical approach to find common themes in Stormfront's portrayal of the "Other." Critical race theory contends that the "Other" is created as a means to create and perpetuate hierarchal social structures and modes of oppression; however, here the authors argue that with the advent of the Internet the "Other" is in a state of "cyber transition." The "Other" that exists in traditional hate speech, as is portrayed by derogatory terms and violent attacks on non-White races and ethnicities, is now presented as "reasonable racism" and as "less virulent and more potable" (p. 253). Even the home page of Stormfront seems to steer away from the overt racism traditionally associated with White Supremacy by comparing its site to more mainstream sites: "We are a community of White Nationalists. There are thousands of organizations promoting the interests, values and heritage of non-Whites. We promote ours" (Stormfront, 2012). According to Stormfront, this site is just one of the many special interest groups in society.

While comparing their organization to other interest groups and establishing an "if they can do it, so can we" mentality, Meddaugh and Kay (2009) find that those producing hate allow its members to be active agents in perpetuating racist discourse through a variety of rhetorical devices. For example, on these sites, variations of the "Other" are presented such as the tyrannical, the manipulator, genocidal, inferior, and the

false martyr. It is these various constructs of the "Other" that create a rhetorical vision

supported by seemingly rational arguments that have the potential to reach and affect

larger and different audiences especially when compared to traditional hate speech.

Analysis of Stormfront text presents support for this rhetorical construction of the

"Other." For example, it is common for Stormfront posters to establish minority groups

as a physical threat to the White race. Although some derogatory language is used,

Stormfront posters are also using links to outside sources to bolster their credibility while

simultaneously providing the appearance of a universal audience with a shared set of

beliefs. Using crime reports, various news sources, and technical language as support,

"attacks on the White race" are highlighted and called to attention in numerous places on

Stormfront. Furthermore, the use of hyperlinking and references to non-Stormfront

sources steers the readers' focus away from the White Supremacist context to other

spheres of discourse giving the illusion of a wider audience that is viewed as less

controversial. The following examples illustrate this "Other" as not only an unstoppable

societal problem, but one that is inborn and immutable and/or can only be stopped with

drastic measures:

1. Initial post titled "Ethnic Crime Report" containing a link to the Orlando
    Sentinel newspaper: "Here is the Orange County, FL mug shots for month by
    month crime…murder rates rise over the last couple of years"

    Response: Negro behavior has flourished for thousands of years in Africa, and
    a dozen generations of them born in America as Americans wont cease their
    natural instincts to kill at-will anything that may be holding something they
    want (http://www.stormfront.org/forum/t631153/).

2. Initial Post: "Family in Jail because of Racism" containing a link to the Daily
    Mail.

    Response: A shame the genes that led to her physical attractiveness are being
    lost to us, but on the other hand, those genes responsible for her self-loathing

and lack of racial preservation are being removed as well. And in the end, that's the most important. Those of us who are naturally and NORMALLY repulsed by such abominations as race-mixing will transmit our inclination to future generations. Not perfectly of course; genetics does not work in such a linear fashion. But over time, racially destructive individuals will be weeded out from our population and we will emerge stronger.

The use of fantasy is also a common technique used by White Nationalists to promote their ideology, especially to those of a younger generation. Using Bormann's Symbolic Convergence Theory, Duffy (2003) finds that extremist groups, including Stormfront, create and share fantasies about their own group and outside groups and thereby build a shared identity. The presence of stories and adaptations of historical information converge with the extremist ideology, and a new fantasy world is created. These fantasies, as is true of many propaganda techniques, are partially based on fact. This further gives the story, or new version of history, some sort of legitimacy. Borman's SCT is based on the assumption that the use of restatements, metaphors, symbolism and jokes by a variety of Internet users on each site have helped to alter reality and create a new fantasy that is adopted by the group as truth (Duffy, 2003). The symbols of smaller groups with similar perspectives converge and become larger and thus more powerful through the use of media: "As people seek to make sense of their environments and events around them they come into contact with fantasies (visions of what were, such as loss of white power) that have chained out. If they are sufficiently compelling and speak convincingly to the individuals 'here and now' problems in dramatic form, the fantasies can be consolidated into a credible interpretation of reality" (Duffy, 2003, p. 293). White Supremacist groups use the presence of historical stories and narratives about their operation to help create this fantasy. For example, Duffy finds that one commonly used technique of Stormfront is the "Plea for Fairness and Justice-- the Racist Double

Standard." Duffy sets forth illustrations from the Stormfront website that illustrate

Bormann's "dramatis personae" (characters), plot lines (action), scenes (setting), and

sanctioning agents, typically societal and educational institutions, campuses, and

churches. One example is the plot of the "Zionist control of the United States Media" and

a "resurrection of the Righteous, God's Chosen People." These stories, although not

based on true, scientific or moral fact, are presented in the way of a typical story and

offer themes of hope and a renewal of justice. Furthermore, the repetition of these themes

through links to similar websites and reiteration helps to strengthen a shared identity and

a sense of "truth" as they appear to be accepted by many. The fantasy has been adopted

and accepted as fact.

These various rhetorical devices begin to redefine what it means to be a White

Nationalist. White Nationalists recognize the power of the internet as a marketing tool

and are taking advantage of this in an effort to rebrand itself. Acknowledging that 78% of

adults and 95% of teenagers use the internet (Zickuhr & Smith, 2012), White Nationalist

sites see the potential for growth. In an interview in *USA Today,* Douglas Myers, founder

of the Keystone State Skinheads, acknowledges the need to redefine his organization to

attract more members. This particular group recognized that one way to do accomplish

this is through a name change (they are now referred to as Keystone United) and to

change their public image: "It's not the footage from the '80s with people burning crosses.

It's a very healthy environment" (Bello, 2008, para. 21). The internet allows these

changes to occur rapidly and cheaply.

While this may appear a simple step, White Nationalists on the web are going

above and beyond a mere name change. Having access and control over the material used

to create and support their ideology and subsequent image, White Nationalists can frame arguments from the perspective of their ideology- a type of "impression management." Adams and Roscigno (2005) analyze popular hate sites to determine "how social movement organizations foster group solidarity by offering an alternative to dominant ideological frameworks" (p. 760). The authors found that "framing grievances in terms of white oppression" was common among both Neo-Nazi and Ku Klux Klan websites; a concept that runs contrary to the common finding that whites "have the lowest sense of racial alienation" (p. 762). Through their textual analysis of these sites, the authors found that the repetitive use of certain terms signifies an attempt by the organization to frame their group as part of a unified group identity. For the Klan and Neo-Nazi oriented groups, this occurred through the use of terms "white" and "nation" (Klan) and "Aryan" and "white" (Neo-Nazi). These terms are used to create a collective identity that is used to bolster support for their organization while distancing these sites from terms like "hate" and "supremacy".

In addition to bolstering the collective identity that supporters of White Nationalism long for, the creators of these sites have the power to not only provide the information that they deem as important but can also provide content that they think potential members would like to access. For example, Gerstenfeld et al. (2005) found that of the 157 sites examined, 49% contained multimedia links and 54% provided the option to purchase merchandise. Recognizing that these are two popular means of internet use, extremist sites incorporate these elements to appeal to larger audiences. This is particularly useful as a recruitment tool among youth. In fact, 7% of the sites had content specifically labeled as a "kid's page." Furthermore, with the ability to manipulate the

domain name of their site, extremists can lure unsuspecting members to their webpage in hopes of recruiting new members under false pretenses. Some "cloaked websites" include IHR.org (The Institute for Historical Review/ a Holocoust Denial site), AmericanCivilRightsReview.com (hate site that presents false narratives of slavery as idyllic), and MartinLutherKing.org (a White Supremacist site) (Daniels, 2012). These actions drive traffic to extremist sites and give the user access to what may be a previously unknown community.

Justification for Research

The previous discussion attempts to show how White Nationalist groups, online and offline, continue to remain a part of society. Regardless of whether an individual seeks out these sites/groups or stumbles upon one by accident, their presence is evidence of a virtual social movement that fuels racial intolerance. Although there are numerous websites devoted to the White Nationalist agenda, this particular analysis focuses on Stormfront as it is the largest in existence and is purposefully geared toward establishing a collective identity that is the precursor for activism. Rather than dismissing the discourse of Stormfront members as the irrational ramblings of a small minority (when compared to the millions that use the Internet), continued analysis of Stormfront discourse will provide insight into what types of scientific and historical arguments are used to support White Nationalism and is a necessary first step in establishing a counter-argument. I base this belief on two points. My first point contends that although the arguments used by Stormfront members are unpopular, taboo, and hurtful, to these individuals they are rational, justified, and in some instances deemed as necessary for the preservation of their identity. This gives them credence and power. Second, Stormfront

discourse does not exist in a vacuum solely among others with the same beliefs. Instead, Stromfront members usurp and manipulate mainstream discourse to support its argument. In turn, these arguments are produced and reproduced in the larger public sphere to which a larger population is exposed and thus increases the potential for harm in society. This being said, the particulars of how these members construct their arguments is just one step in discerning how current members and potential members use communication to advance their ideology.

This becomes increasingly more important when one compares the contemporary White Nationalist arguments with those of the past. Historically, such groups have been associated with overt racist language consisting of racial slurs and epithets that are prima facie evidence of support for racist and extremist ideology. However, as society has changed, so has the nature of modern extremist discourse. Based on the prominently held White Nationalist belief that the white male is subject to erasure, modern White Nationalist rhetors have adapted their discourse to find a niche in mainstream society in hopes of securing their existence to fit into in a self-proclaimed "color-blind" society. It is important to note here that this evolution of racist discourse does not only apply to White Nationalist groups as recent scholarship has yielded similar findings in the analysis of everyday talk as well as the discourse of political institutions and the media. For example, van Dijk's (1993) analysis of parliamentary discourse found the use of positive self-representation and negative other-representation in discourse. Similarly, the discourse may present racist views as part of another, more socially acceptable point of contention, such as immigration, in hopes of steering the audience away from a discussion about race towards one of social policy. In either scenario, the idea of

purposively altering discourse as to not appear racist is now almost commonplace. This is particularly true since racist discourse has "become associated with irrationality, poor reasoning, and unexamined views" (Augoustinos & Every, 2007, p. 127).

This progression from overt racism to "symbolic racism"/ "modern racism"/ "new racism," or whichever term is applied, highlights how discourse coincides with and becomes representative of societal beliefs, values, and the like. Labeling this new discourse as "commonplace" is not to underestimate the potential harm this new discourse can do to society; I write this only to point out that it seems a strategic move on behalf of a speaker to change with society and to attempt to reflect a larger set of beliefs in hopes of appearing compatible with the ideals of an egalitarian society. On the surface, it seems almost counter-intuitive for the White Nationalist rhetor to attempt to appear as anything but an overt racist. While this may have been the case in the past where White Nationalists were relegated to the fringes of society with little or no public presence, the advent of the internet has transformed the playing field. Communication over the internet provides anonymity for the speaker in conjunction with a potential vast and diverse audience that gives White Supremacists a larger voice. As a result, their discourse has changed and in some instances blurs the lines between White Nationalist discourse and more mainstream discourse. Without delving into the creed or ideology behind the particular group which the speaker is affiliated, the audience may find it difficult to discern what group or whose ideology is represented by the discourse. This may result in persuading members of the audience to accept this discourse as true, acceptable, or rational and could potentially lead members of the audience down the slippery slope towards extremism.

Assuming that White Nationalist rhetors are adopting rhetorical strategies used by mainstream discourse, a deeper analysis of which discursive tactics are being used to re-vamp the White Nationalist to fit into mainstream society is needed. Echoing the words of Christopher Josey (2010) who stated that racialized speech is "not merely referential in nature," I assert that it is instead a mixture of deliberate and complex discursive strategies designed to appeal to a larger public in hopes to gain further acceptance and credence. The new White Nationalist relies on more "rational" arguments. While this introduction presents the various discourses used by these groups, the subsequent chapters will focus on two orders of discourse in particular: science and history. These two genres were chosen because of the historical use of science and history as support for White Nationalism and because both are consistently used to yield a rational and credible foundation for ideological formation. Furthermore, by referencing science and history as sources of legitimation, the line between mainstream and extremist discourse is blurred especially when considering the adoption of a digital forum as the main platform for discourse.

White Nationalist Discourse as an Argument

Labeling Stormfront discourse as an argument also plays a pivotal role in my research. I have been forced to acknowledge that in some instances the Stormfront ideology presents similar beliefs that those in American society, including myself, hold dear. Themes such as family, religion, patriotism, the objectivity of science, and the role of history in influencing society are consistently referenced in hopes of swaying the audience to accept Stormfront's ideology. Furthermore, these themes are placed in the midst of the common fears and concerns of mainstream society such as a poor economy,

healthcare issues, unemployment, and the common misperception of increasing crime rates. For these reasons, I believe it is crucial to ground my research in the field of argumentation. More specifically, I am borrowing from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (1969) definition of a "new rhetoric" that acknowledges the importance of the audience in argumentation. Whereas previous theories of argumentation relied on formal logic and syllogistic reasoning, this "new rhetoric" recognizes the role of the audience and their accompanying values and subjectivities in the interpretation and subsequent acceptance of an argument. Recognizing that individuals interpret the world through a lens clouded by their upbringing, experience, emotions, Stormfront members have incorporated various rhetorical strategies into their arguments.

Rather than focusing on a particular audience, a move that has traditionally been associated with sophistry and pandering, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) assert that rhetors also appeal to a *universal audience*- an imagined entity that shares a "unicity" and "unanimity" in beliefs (p. 31). According to this concept, the speaker must address the audience as a single entity with a shared belief system. As a result, "argumentation addressed to a universal audience must convince the reader that the reasons adduced are of a compelling character, that they are self-evident, and possess an absolute and timeless validity, independent of local of historical contingencies" (p. 32). For the White Nationalist, one way to accomplish this is to highlight the similarities between what the mainstream audience views as acceptable and the beliefs of White Nationalist ideology. For example, the White Nationalist rhetor will call upon an imagined, universal audience to adopt their perspective not because a small few are affected by the actions of others but because White Nationalism is founded upon "camaraderie," "strong character" and doing

"all they can to secure the existence of our people and a future for white children"
(http://www.stormfront.org/forum/t789501/). What is presented is a set of shared beliefs,
such as the aforementioned appeals to strong character and family, are equated with fact
and intended to be perceived as accepted by all as the appropriate way to interpret an
argument.

Extremist rhetors appear to have grasped the importance of recognizing the power
of universal values in increasing adherence to their ideology and have extended their
argument beyond calling upon shared beliefs about family and culture. White Nationalist
rhetors also acknowledge the power of using science and history to support their beliefs
as these are subjects that a mainstream audience gives credence. By banking on the
notions of credibility attached to both science and history, I assert that these two
categories of argument are used as rhetorical vehicles with the intention of leading the
audience to accept a racial ideology that is based on areas of scholarship that are
generally perceived as factual by the universal audience. Therefore, as opposed to
viewing extremists from a purely rational perspective and judging their claims through
traditional modes of formal logic, which would fail with the emergence of new scientific
and sociological modes of thought, it is crucial that our perspective shifts to incorporate
the humanistic element in creating, interpreting, and accepting arguments and how
particular strategies are used to persuade the minds of this envisioned audience. We must
recognize that extremist logic is intrinsically bound with values and beliefs or to use
Sharon Crowley's (2006) term "ideologic" - logic is intrinsically combined with
ideology. In turn, in order to adequately combat such discourse, the commonalities in
ideologies must first be recognized.

Overview of Subsequent Chapters

In chapter 2, I provide theoretical background regarding critical discourse analysis. In particular, I include the relevant findings of those scholars who study racist discourse in both mainstream and extremist contexts. Next, I discuss some of the limitations and ethical considerations that arise when studying computer mediated communication. After this theoretical overview, I set forth the specifics of the method used for this analysis.

Following the second chapter's more generalized overview of prejudiced discourse and critical discourse analysis, I present my findings for this research. Chapter 3 begins with a review of the theory of the rhetoric of science and the use of science as a legitimation technique. Once this is established, I discuss how each of the forums and sub-forums were analyzed and which particular themes, argumentation structures, and rhetorical strategies were displayed most frequently by Stormfront members. Chapter 4 is set up in a similar style with revisionism and historical legitimation as the focus of my analysis.

In the final chapter, I summarize the findings set forth in chapters three and four which are most prominent. Using these findings as my guide, I include examples of similar references to science and history in more mainstream discourse in order to highlight the elements of interdiscursivity between both sets of discourse. It is precisely these interdiscursive elements that illustrate the overlapping nature of White Nationalist and mainstream discourse; an interdiscursivity that suggests that White Nationalist discourse has begun to evolve into one more subtle and socially acceptable. This interdiscursivity also calls attention to the ideological work being done by mainstream

mediated discourse. I conclude this chapter by referencing some of the potential real

world implications that could result if this toned-down White Nationalist discourse is

accepted and used as one justification for the perpetuation of hatred.

Chapter 2

Critical Discourse Analysis and Internet Research

In 1998, when only 41% of American adults went online, Don Black recognized how the internet may be used to benefit White Nationalism: "It's been a tremendous boon for us. That's why I dedicate most of my time to this. I feel like I've accomplished more on the Web than in my 25 years of political activism. Whereas before, we could reach only people with pamphlets or holding rallies with no more than a few hundred people, now we can reach potentially millions" (Richardson, 1998, para. 3 and 4). Considering that as of April 2012 the percentage of adult internet users rose to 82% (Pew, 2012), the implications of Black's words hold more weight in an increasingly digital society. Presently, 4,725 sites link to Stormfront, and while writing this, 56,546 guests have visited Stormfront in the past 24 hours (Alexa, 2013). Compared to the websites of organizations combating White Nationalist views, such as the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and the Anti Defamation League (ADL), Stormfront's traffic rank in the United States is 10,215 while the SPLC ranks at 26,701 and the ADL at 39,856 (Alexa, 2013). From these statistics, one could reasonably infer that Stormfront is a popular medium for disseminating White Nationalist ideology, and its discourse more popular even compared to those produced to combat it. Whereas research on White Nationalism has traditionally been conducted as ethnography and/or as an analysis of White Nationalist text, the increasing popularity of the internet and computer mediated communication has opened the doors to a new type of research. While there is ample research on the content of White Nationalist sites, little has been done in regard to how this ideology is discursively constructed among its members. As such, I have chosen

critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the guiding theory and method for this research; two

aspects of CDA to be discussed later in this chapter. More specifically, I present an

overview of the existing literature on the common argumentation techniques and

rhetorical strategies found in racist and prejudicial discourse as these act as the guiding

structures for my methodology. In addition to the particulars of my method of analysis,

the final portion of this chapter is devoted to a discussion on the strengths, limitations,

and ethical considerations of conducting a CDA on internet communication

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Theoretical Overview

At the heart of critical discourse analysis is the belief that language is a "form of

social practice" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). At the macro level, communication

is a means to keep power and dominance or to elicit societal change; from the individual

perspective, it is the means by which individuals make sense of and evaluate the world

around them: "Each individual makes a different set of generalizations, over a lifetime,

based on a different set of experiences with discourse" (Johnstone, 2008, p. 44).

Discourse shapes who we are and is an integral element in social interaction. It is during

this interaction, where individual actors, complete with their own beliefs and attitudes,

build relationships and choose to perpetuate or challenge the larger, structural discourses

embedded within society; what individuals choose to communicate is impacted by the

discourses surrounding them and how these are subsequently interpreted. Because of this

recognition of the power of discourse on both the individual and social levels, Critical

Discourse Analysis (CDA) acts as both the guiding theory and methodology for this

research. Rather than viewing discourse and text as mere data or signs, CDA contends

that text/talk is constitutive of individual attitudes *as well as* larger, structural discourses

that instill inequality in society. Only by discursively challenging the elite discourses of society (media, academia, etc.) can inequality and the conflicting power struggles in society be mitigated.

Cognition

One of the main tenets of CDA is the recognition that discourse plays a role in cognition; it is through discourse that we gain understanding. At the cognitive level, people use argumentation and deliberation to make sense of the multitude of discourses presented to them. On a daily basis, we are exposed through discourse to a variety of conflicting ideologies. Rather than shut down in response to this overwhelming stimuli, individuals may engage in an inner rhetorical debate before choosing what to believe. Billig (1996) states that rhetoric "aims to help the individual thinker to develop a chain of reasoning, in order to build a convincing case" (p. 74). Billig argues that much of our thinking is fundamentally argumentative. Individuals do not continuously and solely act according to a pre-ordained script established by society. Instead, argument occurs within individuals and their particular social contexts. Since both sides of an argument can be reasonable and the counter-claims infinite, the individual uses argumentative deliberation to sort out ideas which are then seen in relation to and spread discursively to others: "Deliberation is more than an uncomfortable state of uncertainty. It is an important thought process which includes imagining future consequences and assessing the desirability of different outcomes" (p. 143). Through this internal rhetoric, the individual is constantly debating one choice over the other until one choice is deemed most desirable. This choice is subsequently acted upon and communicated to others. To use the language of cognitive psychologists, since we are consistently bombarded with stimuli,

our minds categorize similar events. However, our minds are also able to see the differences in these events when responding to a stimulus. As we account for the uniqueness of an event because of context or audience, we also go through a process of particularization. These processes work interdependently and provide the loci of arguments that allow this internal rhetoric to take place. What is important for this research is that this rhetorical perspective acknowledges the importance of the social impact on discourse. What we see is always situated within a social realm that consists of rules, beliefs, values, and norms that alter how we think and what we say.

Billig's rhetorical perspective on cognition runs parallel to the cognitive dimensions of CDA set forth by Teun van Dijk. Grounded in the belief that individuals are active interpreters and creators of information, van Dijk (1987) states that individuals go through numerous mental acts in "understanding, representation, retrieval, and recall of information, thinking and problem solving, or production and action" (p. 182).These mental acts are influenced by and interpreted through the individual's past experiences (episodic memory), prior knowledge and interactions, as well as socially accepted norms and behaviors (social memory). Over time, these memories formulate situation models that guide our behavior and result in a frame and/or script, both individually and socially constructed, that impact how individual cognitions are communicated as well as how they are interpreted. It is through this social memory that groups have and maintain power in society: "managing the mind of others is essentially a function of text and talk" (van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). In some instances, this is accomplished overtly; however, control and dominance are also maintained by legitimating and reproducing inequality subtly through language with variations of style, rhetorical devices, and legitimating techniques.

CDA and Prejudiced Discourse

While CDA has been used as a lens to analyze a variety of discourses, its critical component is particularly suited for the analysis of racist and hate discourse: "the discursive reproduction of ethnic prejudice is neither merely some type of text, nor the individual or solitary activity of speakers or writers, but a form of social interaction between social members taking place in social contexts that are constrained by (interpreted) social structures and cultural frameworks" (van Dijk, 1987, p. 33). The individual processes that produce ethnic prejudice are shared cognitions with other individuals; these "social representations" are then stored in memory, both episodic and semantic. Over time and through a variety of processes, such as generalization, abstraction, and decontextualization, these memories create the frames and schemata, or cognitive networks, which influence how we subsequently represent ethnic minorities through talk (p. 186). These attitudes help individuals process information and to eventually take certain stances that they may deem necessary for the betterment of their in-group while simultaneously providing the foundation for ideological beliefs. For example, van Dijk (1987) uses interviews, focus groups, and media ranging from California to the Netherlands to provide a detailed analysis on how prejudice is maintained and produced in society through discourse. In his analysis, van Dijk found that at the local level certain themes, labeled "Prejudiced Attitude Schemes," arose pertaining to discourse centered on ethnic prejudice: origin and appearance, socioeconomic goals/status, sociocultural differences, and personal characteristics of "others" (p. 59). At the broader level, van Dijk found that much discourse about ethnic minorities was expressed in a narrative structure and/or according to common

argumentation schemata such as creating a position statement, relying on the inference principle, or using perceived "factual" evidence to bolster the speaker/writer's argument. Van Dijk further finds that common semantic moves, such as mitigation and concession, are evident in individual discourse about racial issues and suggestive of the societal norm opposing overt racism. The importance of this local level of analysis illustrates that on the surface prejudiced talk may be presented in such a way that appears to be supported by a larger group, as is the case with stereotypes, or in a manner that is more persuasive on the surface by adopting a narrative approach or common argument structure. At the micro level, van Dijk identified commonly referenced sources of prejudiced talk: "…speakers show that their beliefs are not just private beliefs, but borrowed from reliable sources, or shared with other in-group members" (p. 120). In this particular analysis, the majority of information regarding out-groups was delegated to mass media and everyday talk with others- a further reflection of the impact of larger, social structures on discourse: "People may resort to the common stereotypes borrowed from mass-mediated hearsay, which are semi-legitimate forms of negative talk, and hence, not against the prevailing social norm" (p. 129).

Although overtly racist discourse may no longer be socially acceptable, van Dijk's findings of a pervasive, subtle racism in mediated discourse illustrates that structural inequality and white group dominance still remain in popular discourse and are subsequently reproduced in society. For the case of Stormfront, rather than appearing overtly racist, Stormfront brings in other, socially acceptable discourses and recontextualizes them within the White Nationalist ideology. Prior literature on White Nationalist groups illustrates a large part of their ideology is based on the fear of future

erasure of their identity, and creating the perception of a larger support system through the incorporation of other discourses strives to mitigate this fear. Whether this erasure occurs through Civil Rights legislation and/or the trend of accepting and promoting diversity and multiculturalism, personal identity is a key component of their ideology. This is particularly true when one's personal identity begins to clash with socially accepted norms. Therefore, White Nationalist rhetors have found it necessary to embed their arguments within a broader set of socially accepted discourses in order to promote their ideology. Previous scholarship has found that extremists use deliberate, complex linguistic markers to maintain a "good" white identity while providing a "toned-down" racism that may be more socially acceptable (Josey, 2010). This is accomplished through the use of rhetorical devices and argumentation techniques such as establishing oneself as a "buddy" or "expert" on a particular subject. Recognizing that modern White Nationalist discourse presents a unique and complex blend of both individual and social constructs, CDA offers both a theory and method to locate how such personal discourse relates, both intertextually and interdiscursively, with and within the public sphere. Stormfront discourse represents a blend of both personal and technical discourse. By (re)contextualizing various types and styles of discourse from external sources, Stormfront discourse expands beyond the internet forum.

Rhetorical Strategies in Racist Discourse

This analysis contends that external sources are discursively situated within Stormfront discourse for the purpose of transitioning Stormfront from the level of the "extreme" to one more "mainstream." As such, it is important to recognize the nature of and the discursive strategies used in modern racist discourse. Not only will this act as a

basis of comparison for Stormfront discourse, but it also further reinforces the belief that racist attitudes continue to exist but are depicted in other ways.

Disclaimers, Hedging, Mitigation, and Euphemisms

What scholars have dubbed "new racism" accounts for the all too frequent "I'm not racist but…" disclaimers (Augoustinos & Every, 2010). This new language of racism not only perpetuates inequality through the sentiments expressed but also silences those who wish to openly discuss racial issues in hopes of combating racism. To be openly racist or to discuss matters of race goes against the social norm, and the discourse has evolved to fit into the new socially acceptable protocol. Stormfront's rules for posting explicitly states this is the case: "Keep discussion civil and productive." One way to soften overt racism is through the use of the following rhetorical devices: disclaimers, hedging, mitigation, and euphemisms.

van Dijk (1987) found that one frequent way to tone down racism through speech is through the incorporation of "Apparent Denial" in discourse. Traditionally, denial occurs as a response to a previously stated accusation; however, with prejudiced talk, the denial subtly occurs at the onset to mitigate the likelihood of his/her speech being labeled as racist. It is a preemptive discursive move to stay within the social norm. Mitigation occurs when negative speech is avoided completely, and mitigating language that lessens the absoluteness of the discourse is used ("maybe," some people," etc.). In a similar vein, hedging language allows the speaker to present his/her prejudiced attitudes while simultaneously dissociating the message from that of "real" racists. Lastly, denial, mitigation and hedging protect and/or maintain an individual's identity as well as the identity of the in-group from possible accusations of racism (Condor et al, 2006).

Another means by which a speaker may seek to save face is through the use of the euphemism. Abrantes (2005) writes that euphemisms "provide a compromise between the need to be accurate and the wish to avoid offence" (p. 85). Rather than directly referencing a racial group, the speaker may refer to a group's social status to preemptively avoid subsequently being labeled a racist. For example, "urban" or "inner-city" may be used when referring to African Americans (Schram, Soss, & Fording, 2010). In the case of Stormfront, the "Welcome" section of the forum states the following: "Thousands of organizations promote the interests, values and heritage of non-White minorities. We promote ours." As opposed to the various labels Stormfront administrators could use to define its site, such as the descriptive phrase "neo-Nazi" that is used by its counterparts, it chooses to characterize itself as a special interest group just like any other. Furthermore, the entire Stormfront site takes on a euphemistic character when compared to its historical counterparts. Since historically racial epithets and derogatory language are associated with White Nationalism and similar ideological groups, they have become part of the extremist repertoire. However, this is no longer the case, and Stormfront has codified this discursive trend and taken it a step further by establishing limitations on speech in their forum rules. The number one guideline for posting on Stormfront is "No profanity and avoid racial epithets." Striving to disassociate themselves from the White Nationalist stereotype, racial epithets used to categorize the "Other" are replaced by categorical phrases grounded in scientific terminology (such as genetic groupings) that seek to provide a semblance of rationality while appealing to a larger audience.

Positive Self-Representation in Racist Discourse

While denial, mitigation, and the like are used to hedge a message that could be inferred as racist, in some instances what is not said is equally important. This occurs when the speaker repeatedly emphasizes the positive attributes of a particular group over another and discursively constructs division between two groups without having to overtly make the claim "we are better than you". Such hyperbolic descriptions of the in-group negatively characterize and identify the "Other" and create a categorical distinction between social groups; a categorical distinction that is hierarchical in nature. In his analysis of political discourse, van Dijk (1993) found the following semantic moves used to discursively separate the in-group from the out-group. Positive Self-Presentation in the form of Nationalist rhetoric was positively associated with the in-group while negative descriptors of others were used in addition to the use of subtle, indirect buzzwords: "Instead of categorizing the members of another group as less intelligent, as lazy, or as criminal, white elites may represent them as oversensitive, underachieving, or too demanding" (p. 84). In addition to these semantic moves, van Dijk found argumentation devices used to reproduce inequality. Such argumentation strategies include the combination of negative and positive self-representations and a "For Their Own Good" paternalistic mentality when discussing political actions that perpetuate inequality. Additionally, common to elite rhetoric were phrases that played off the audience fear of increased racism in the form of phrases like "Stop immigration or stop Affirmative Action because otherwise, *we* will get even more racist" (p. 99). This notion of fear in rhetoric is also used by elites in what van Dijk calls "The Numbers Game" that occurs when those in power use apparently objective numbers relating to immigration or the

economy to scare the audience into accepting an inherently racist political ideology. The use of fear appeals discursively separates the in-group from the out-group and places the in-group on the side of the right and moral.

While van Dijk uses CDA to analyze political discourse and "everyday prejudiced talk," a similar trend has been found in hate discourse. Waltman and Haas (2010) use Whillock's (1995) Hate Stratagem to categorize how hate discourse uses positive self-representation of the in-group to discursively disassociate White Nationals from the "Other." Per the steps of the Hate Stratagem, the discourse seeks to 1) Inflame the emotions of the readers; 2) Denigrate the out-group; 3) Inflict permanent harm to the out-group; and 4) Ultimately conquer the out-group. The first step is accomplished by solidifying the in-group mentality and can be accomplished through both discourse and visual rhetoric. For example, images such as a flag or cross or the repetition of words such as community, America, united, etc. create positive associations with the in-group and the out-group is referenced as a threat to in-group solidarity. Step 2 is accomplished by espousing various conspiracy theories regarding the out-group such as a Zionist control of the media and the banking system. Step 3 uses modern media stories to show minority groups in an unfavorable light as a group with no self-restraint and prone to violence. The last step is accomplished by urging members of the in-group to voluntary segregate themselves from the out-group because if they do not violence will ultimately ensue.

Status Conferral and Hyperlinking

In addition to altering language to fit within the realm of the socially acceptable, this rhetoric may be placed within broader texts that bring with them an air of legitimacy.

For example, van Dijk's reference to the "Numbers Game" consistently comes with statistics from a seemingly independent, objective source. The source, in conjunction with the irrefutable quality that is commonly associated with statistics, creates a seemingly legitimate and rational argument. However, statistical figures are only one means by which credibility is established. Speakers may also reference either their own credibility (ethos) by setting forth their education, experience, and the like, and/or they may bank on the credibility of others. In the virtual world, this is expanded through the use of hyperlinking, and line between White Nationalist discourse and mainstream discourse is blurred.

By clicking on a link the user has the option to create their own "information path" based on his or her interests and motivation for continued research. However, one study found that when eight links were offered, the average user opened only 1.12 of the links available (Amachai-Hamburger, Kaynar, & Fine, 2007). It is in these instances that the domain name present in the link may be the only cue used to assess credibility, and the receiver bases their support of the message on the name alone without receiving all of the information: "they have Ph.D.s backing their assertions up" (Weatherby & Scoggins, 2006, p. 19). To use the language of persuasion theorists, the use of "experts" is one means of heuristic processing that makes minimal cognitive demands on the receiver" (Chen & Chaiken, 1999, p. 74). For example, in the Stormfront forum "Evidence that Racial Groupings Match Real Genetic Profiles" the following excerpt from an FBI document is posted with an accompanying link:

> A human hair can be associated with a particular racial group based on established models for each group. Forensic examiners differentiate between hairs of Caucasoid (European ancestry), Mongoloid (Asian ancestry), and Negroid (African ancestry) origin, all of which exhibit microscopic characteristics that

distinguish one racial group from another
(http://www.stormfront.org/forum/t182050/).

When the link is clicked, the following message is presented "This page does not seem to exist." Because of the nature of the Internet, it is possible that this link is broken for a variety of reasons or the link may have been altered accidentally; however, it is also possible that the Stormfront poster manipulated or fabricated a link to bolster the credibility of the message- a message that on the surface asserts evidence of genetic racism and phenotyping that is the basis for White Nationalist ideology. Although the original source may not have been created with this intent (the FBI link states this is purely an "investigative tool" with limitations), the end result is the same. Since the FBI is perceived to be a highly reputable organization, the perceived credibility of the message increases. In addition to links to government organizations, Stormfront forums are filled with links to a multitude of sources that are just as likely to be perceived as credible. In the first ten messages of the previously mentioned forum, there are a total of 64 links present to outside sources including academic journals and well known news organizations such as the BBC, *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times*. Considering that website credibility studies have found news sites to be perceived as the most credible (Flanagin & Metzger, 2007), it can be inferred that these links were strategically chosen and included to increase credibility and to illustrate a majority consensus with the messages.

Style and Web Design

Discourse Analysis frequently references the persuasive impact of message style. In particular, the narrative style has been found to have particularly persuasive elements. Using Edwards (2008) definition of narrative discourse as "a performative domain of

social action" (p. 227), the narrative is where the individual begins. Summarizing

Kenneth Gergen's criteria for the narrative, Edwards states that a well-formed narrative

has the following components: 1) An end-point; 2) Order of events; 3) Stable identities

for the characters; 4) Causation and explanation; and, 5) Demarcation signs. As such, the

narrative style offers the path of least resistance; it sets forth clearly the hero and the

villain with little need to exert much cognitive effort.

The forum structure of Stormfront urges the narrative style through the use of

discussion. Members contribute to the ongoing conversation through their discourse, and

this is typically in a narrative style. This is a common feature among similar sites. For

example, Lee and Leets (2002) analysis of persuasive storytelling on hate sites found that

adolescents perceived high-narrative messages to be persuasive initially. Furthermore,

"high-narrative respondents were more likely to focus on the content than low-narrative

respondents, who were more likely to focus on the issue or source" (p. 949) suggesting

that the narrative style can be used to persuade the audience without overtly discussing

the issue at hand. Duffy (2003) found a similar trend through her analysis of extremist

sites. Using Symbolic Convergence Theory, Duffy found the frequent use of idealized

rhetorical visions centered on the following themes: "The Plea for Fairness and Justice"

and "The Natural Order and the Resurrection of the People." In each instance, a narrative,

complete with characters, plot and setting, was used to instill within the audience a vision

of hope for the future that corresponds with the White Nationalist ideology.

Just as the narrative structure of the forum contributes to the persuasive effect of

the message, certain elements of web design lend an additional air of legitimacy.

Flanagin and Metzger (2007) analyzed the impact of message credibility, site credibility

and sponsor credibility on users overall perceptions of websites of varying genres. Finding that special interest groups, as Stormfront claims to be, were perceived as less credible than news sites, establishing credibility can be accomplished through various design and rhetorical techniques. While sponsor and message credibility can be gained through the status conferral tactics discussed above, site credibility focuses more on the technical aspects of the website. For instance the following characteristics were used to gauge site credibility: professional, attractive, colorful, organized, involving, bold, interactive, and sophisticated. While issues of familiarity with the site and user demographics did impact their findings, the authors did find that in the instance where the user was unfamiliar with the sponsor and/or messages presented on the site, these attributes instilled a certain level of credibility: "design elements can potentially boost perceptions of site credibility to levels equal to those for familiar sponsors" (p. 334). While the visitors of Stormfront may have already used their previously held ideological beliefs to lend credence to the site, for those who are unfamiliar with Stormfront the site contains many of the aforementioned characteristics that lead to attributions of site credibility. As such, the web design, as well as the messages posted, is used strategically to sway others to adopt White Nationalist sentiments.

Internet Research Methods

In addition to the style and type of discourse, the context of the discourse is of paramount importance to CDA. Although the prior discussion references how the digital nature of Stormfront impacts the nature of the discourse, the virtual nature of Stormfront demands further discussion in regard to methodology and ethics. My decision to use the internet as the site of my research stemmed from a multitude of factors. First and

foremost, previous research on similar groups cites the popularity of internet use among White Nationalists and acts as the driving force for this research; however, the internet was chosen for additional factors that impact not only my method but also bring with them ethical considerations. As one could imagine, researching a cultural group or phenomenon of which one is not a part comes with a unique set of limitations. This is particularly true when the group is viewed by mainstream society as "taboo." Furthermore, studying a group that has a violent past and promotes hatred, both virtually and offline, could place the researcher in a dangerous situation. For these reasons, access was a critical concern in my research. Limited in time, geography, and finances, it was neither practical nor feasible to attend rallies or interview members of these organizations. Considering that these are the very reasons Stormfront creator Don Black praises the internet and its ability to reach a larger audience, I felt it appropriate to use the internet to gain access.

The anonymity that the internet offers, as well as the ease in which individuals can find others that share similar worldviews, allows individuals and groups to expand their social network while transcending physical and temporal barriers. For example, in addition to providing access, Hara and Estrada (2005) suggest that the internet has become a useful tool in socio-political mobilization by "capitalizing on knowledge, interpersonal interactions, identity support, and the building of credibility and legitimacy" (p. 504). Additionally, prior research has found that anonymity in computer-mediated communication may increase the amount of self-disclosure in communication when compared to face to face interaction (Joinson, 2001). The reasoning for the increase in "hypersensitive" information may be because of the anonymity offered, more time to

formulate responses in an asynchronous environment, and a feeling of shared socialization with others in similar scenarios that the internet provides (Joinson, 2005). Taking these factors into account, Stormfont makes available discourse from a previously unrepresented culture that has potential to impact the offline world. Furthermore, as the prior discussion suggests that discussion about certain topics can violate social norms inherent in offline society, the study of computer-mediated discourse may provide a more accurate portrayal of individuals' beliefs through the increased amount of self-disclosure that Joinson acknowledges.

However, such unprecedented access to human discourse brings with it numerous concerns. While the ethical guidelines for face-to-face research concerning human subjects are clearly defined, the guidelines for internet research are less clear. With the lack of explicit regulations, internet research has become increasingly researcher subjective and question dependent. One reason for the rise in methodological and ethical issues in internet research is the result of the very thing that makes the internet such a popular form of communication (anonymity, disclosure, lack of boundaries, etc.) (Joinson, 2001; Mann & Stewart, 2000).

The internet acts as a site/repository for social interaction. As such, internet research involves the study of human communication. However, the question remains as to whether the internet is to be viewed as a repository of published texts (space), and should be viewed similar to a traditional written text, or if it is virtual place where human participants interact (McKee & Porter, 2009). This space/place dichotomy affects how the researcher can ethically collect data and the researcher's interpretation of the discourse. For example, if it is purely seen as a text, then this may ignore the social

realities of the internet and skew the research by undermining the importance of discourse as an ongoing social practice: "The social reality of online culture is an ongoing accomplishment of conversation. We begin to exist as a persona when others respond to us; being, in this sense, is relational and dialogic" (Markham, 2004, p. 6). Rather than viewing Stormfront merely as a published text, as I believe this diminishes the significance the messages have in the offline world, I have adopted Christine Hine's perspective that asserts the internet has become both a *cultural artifact* as well as a *culture* (Hine, 2005, p. 9).

The forum nature of Stormfront makes it impossible to separate the written text from the individual speaker. Although the text found in the forum can be defined as published text in a broad sense, it is also the ongoing interaction of a social group and is highly personalized. It is precisely this level of personalization that makes the discourse so emotionally charged and persuasive. To many Stormfront members, White Nationalism is not simply something practiced or that he/she occasionally dabbles in; it is also integral to their identity and perpetuated in hopes of finding others that feel the same way. Furthermore, the discourse is an expression of individual beliefs that is situated among those with similar beliefs and part of a private cultural group. The anonymity offered allows these members to express their views without fear of social repercussion and with like-minded individuals. In a post-Civil Rights society, expressing support of White Nationalism goes against the culturally engrained principles of equality that a democracy rests on; thus, the content on Stormfront is of a highly sensitive nature. From a research perspective, this impacts how the data is collected and reported. Using prior internet research as a guide, as well as the norms established from professional

organizations, I have taken into account the context of Stormfront discourse, the

established norms set forth by the Stormfront community, and my perception of the

participant's intentions in this research: "the notions of public and private are not binary

but 'indexical signs' and must refer to the context in which the discourse appears"

(McKee & Porter, 2009, p. 78). In order to determine the privacy expectations of the

users, I took note of the administrative requirements set forth for access. For example, as

creators and users of particular sites may instill numerous ways to create some semblance

of privacy, the harder the discourse is to access, the more a researcher could infer an

expectation of privacy where informed consent by the participants is needed. Such

restrictions to access include the creation of required membership to post and/or view the

discourse, the ability to post anonymously or with a pseudonym, and/or through the

creation of guidelines posted by the site administrator discussing privacy. Depending on

the level of restricted access, the researcher can logically infer whether or not the speaker

intended for their post to be public or private: "Different forums operate by distinctive

customs and particular conditions of use shaped by such factors as community norms,

participant intentions and expectations, and the sensitivity of the information being

shared" (McKee & Porter, 2009, p. 77). In the case of Stormfront, the only requirement

for membership is an email address. All information is open to the public, with our

without membership. Before an individual posts, he or she opts to create a member name

from which identifying features can be excluded. While there are some posts that are not

available to the public, only those who have provided certain financial contributions can

access these posts, I have not used nor do I have access to this information. However,

even if on the surface the discourse is posted in a public forum, the nature of the text

must be considered. Since the expression of White Nationalist sentiments could have

negative repercussions, it could be considered to be sensitive in nature.

I do recognize that the material is sensitive, and I will omit any personal

identification markers from quoted material. However, I will continue to use direct

quotes from the public forum even though this increases the chances that the reader may

be able to locate the text on Stormfront and subsequently identify the speaker through his

or her avatar and/or screen name. My reasoning here is two-fold. First and foremost, on

the forum's home page, the following is posted:

> Before you post ***anything***, remember that words have consequences, both for you
> and others. This is true even if they're posted pseudonymously on a discussion
> board. Don't post anything you wouldn't want attributed to you in a court of law,
> quoted on the front page of the *New York Times*, or read by your mother. Don't
> come back in a few months or years and ask us to delete all your posts because
> you can't take the heat or you've "changed your mind." It wouldn't make much
> difference anyway, since public posts are cached by search engines and recorded
> by countless other people with varying motives. (Stormfront, 2012)

Given that this forum is explicitly labeled as such, I take the stance that the text on

Stormfront is public information. Second, one of the core missions of Stormfront is to

increase their audience in hopes of recruiting new members. In order to do this, any and

all publicity is welcome. Although the majority of the public may disagree with

Stormfront's ideology, this exposure may reach a potential future member. While this

does diminish an expectation of privacy, it also creates a moral dilemma from the

standpoint of the researcher. While my audience may be small, it feels almost unethical to

bring more attention to this group for this is exactly what they want. However, hopefully

the end result creates more in the way of opposition than it does shed unnecessary

attention on White Nationalism.

Method

Although White Nationalists use a multitude of rhetorical strategies to bolster their support, for the scope of this project I only focus on the scientific and historical arguments presented to support White Nationalism. I have chosen these themes as they have consistently been used as support of racial hierarchy and extreme ideology. Furthermore, the use of scientific and technical arguments "become embedded in a social controversy…and become open to rhetorical (re)framing by citizens, politicians, and scientists" (Stewart, 2009, p. 126). The fact that both scientific concepts as well as historical revisionism each have their own thread on Stormfront is illustrative of how these arguments have been recontextualized by the lay public; they have become socialized and popularized by Stormfront in order to legitimate White Nationalism. Additionally, from the CDA perspective, scientific and historic discourses reflect elite discourse that can be used to perpetuate inequality and social dominance. I use the following research questions to guide my analysis:

> RQ1: What types of scientific arguments are White Nationalists using to provide a rational justification for their beliefs?
>
> RQ2: What portrayals of pseudo histories are presented that provide an alternative supportive climate for White Nationalist ideology?
>
> RQ3: What types and how are sources referenced to add credibility to these arguments?

Sample

Because of the large and diverse amount of discourse found on each thread, I have chosen a purposive, theme based approach to locate my samples. Accompanying each of

these threads is a rating (0-5 stars), a sticky widget (meaning that the administrator has

selected particular posts to remain at the top signifying their importance), and the number

of replies and views for each post. I have chosen those posts with top ratings, most views,

and/or those that have been deemed a sticky thread. Since many of these posts vary in

content, I have then only chosen those whose titles incorporate the following themes and

are open to the public: Science, Technology, and Race→genetics and identity;

Revisionism→ Holocaust Denial, Murder, and Confederacy. According to this

breakdown, the following posts have been selected:

Science, Technology, and Race

- Evidence that Racial Groupings Match Real Genetic Profiles (5 star rating, Sticky thread with 80,488 views and 223 posted replies)
- Contrasting White Racial Identity in American and Eurasian Contexts (5 star rating, Sticky thread with 95,913 views and 202 posted replies)
- European Jewish Genetics (4 star rating, most viewed at 381,341 and 2,656 posted replies)

Revisionism

- Top 10 reasons why the holocaust didn't happen (Sticky Thread with 151,895 views and 593 posted replies)
- Bombing of German Cities During WWII (4 star rating with 143,722 views and 784 posted replies).
- Confederate States of America (5 star rating with 105,789 views and 1,291 posted replies).

From this purposive sample, I then randomly selected texts from these sections yielding a

total of approximately 100 posts per segment. Next, I use Critical Discourse Analysis to

determine what common themes emerge through this discourse. In order to more

accurately categorize these findings, I inserted each piece of text into the Dedoose

computer program and subsequently coded each excerpt according to the following

guidelines.

My analysis of these threads begins at the micro level by first locating commonalities between individual posts in regard to word choice, grammatical structures, voice, modality and the like, to determine if certain argumentative structures are common among extremist rhetors. In particular, I use previous scholars' findings on the discursive techniques of racist discourse to guide my analysis. Such findings include the following:

1. Positive Self and Negative Other Representation through word choice and/or rhetorical devices such as hyperbole and/or the use of narrative (van Dijk, 1993).

2. Reason and Rationality: Do particular lexicalization choices exist suggesting a rhetoric of factuality? Are particular rhetorical devices used to appeal to reason such as the consensus warrant or the loci of quantity/"the Numbers Game" (van Dijk, 1993)?

3. Is the discourse deracialized through the use of scientific/historical terms? For example, is "race" presented in genetic terms or from a purely historical context? What type of nominalization is used to categorize other groups?

4. Are any techniques used to suggest agency such as the use of passive or active voice?

For those posts that do not fit into these categories, new categories are created and presented at the thematic level. Next, I locate which types of sources are drawn into the discourse through the use of referencing and hyperlinking (interdiscursive layer) and how these are presented to the audience. More particularly, I ask the following questions:

1. What types of hedging language are used as introduction for these sources?

2. Does any ideational language accompany the link(s) signifying certainty or reliability?

3. Are these sources framed from a scientific or historical perspective or more from a personal perspective?

4. Are quotations used? Does the use of quotations shift the focus from the particular speaker to a third person?

Last, I will discern which, if any, ideological or hegemonic discourses are perpetuated and/or created though the discourse. Because of the ideology of White Supremacists, I anticipate the use of language and sources that support the white, heteronormative hegemony that has been historically associated with and criticized as pervasive in United States' culture. In order to provide a more accurate depiction of the discourse, I separate my analyses by thread and present the particular findings for each thread. I then discuss the commonalities between the threads as a whole.

Because of the digital nature of the forum, my data pool is not only large but also lacks the boundaries associated with more traditional types of research. This is especially true when analyzing the hyperlinks available on each post. In order to provide some type of limitation to the seemingly neverending and boundless world of the internet, when a hyperlink is present, I will only go so far as the link takes me in one click. Although my research will be strengthened by acknowledging the pervasive presence of these links in a larger network, this is beyond the scope of this project. Furthermore, since my focus is on the use of links as legitimation devices Stormfront, I do not wish to steer too far from the original forum to more mainstream racialized discourse.

Conclusion

A critical discourse analysis (CDA) of Stormfront uncovers the types of arguments used to bolster White Nationalism. Furthermore, my analysis strives to locate the existence of similar argument types, orders of discourse, and styles between mainstream and White Nationalist discourse. These similar discourses are suggestive of a transition from the "extreme" to a more subtle, indirect racism that may have a more persuasive effect when presented under the guise of the socially acceptable.

The subsequent chapters will relay the results of this analysis and ends with a general overview of this research in its entirety. However, since context is integral to a comprehensive CDA, before the results are presented, I provide the relevant theoretical background of the rhetoric of science and historical revisionism. It is only by recognizing the historical roots of these two overarching themes that the significance of their continued presence in discourse can be understood. Scientific and historical justifications for inequality are not concepts that society has moved beyond; the discourse is just different.

Chapter 3

Science and Stormfront

Discussions on race bring with them a unique set of difficulties. First and foremost, the historical maltreatment of certain races has created a divide in society that has yet to be repaired. As such, emotions run deep and discussions tend to veer in a multitude of directions with each speaker carefully choosing his or her words as to not offend another or be labeled "racist." This term has become one of the worst forms of disparagement and rightfully so. As a preemptive measure to avoid accusations of racism, discourse that could be perceived as racist is frequently preceded with overt denials of racism (van Dijk, 1992) and/or is deracialized (Augostinos & Every, 2007). This makes open and honest discussions on race difficult, and in some cases it is easier to ignore the topic altogether. Second, even the term "race" itself has varying definitions, and two speakers could hold opposing definitions of the term while thinking the other was on the same page. Therefore, any attempt to overcome these hurdles and strive to reach the egalitarian virtues our society claims to uphold must begin with a deeper look into how the term "race" began and has evolved. One way to accomplish this is to dissect the discourse of those individuals, such as the members of Stormfront, whose identity and attitudes are racial to the core. Using the discourse of self-proclaimed racists as the site of my research, I attempt to place this discourse within a larger public sphere; this discourse does not exist in isolation. In an effort to expand their membership base and to disassociate themselves from the stigma association with this ideology, Stormfront users attempt to move beyond overt expressions of racism; additionally, this disassociation seeks to add legitimacy to an ideology using mainstream discourse to recreate and re-popularize the antiquated tenants of scientific racism. Stormfront discourse does not exist

within a vacuum but instead appropriates snippets of discourse and various topoi from mainstream media and politics. The Stormfront discussion forum offers a glimpse into how particular types of discourses are recontextualized from a racialized perspective in order to support an ideology thus blurring the lines between Stormfront discourse and that of another. I use critical discourse analysis to locate the common discursive genres, themes, and styles that are present within Stormfront discourse and mainstream discourse. Focusing on the use of mainstream scientific texts and how these are recontextualized within Stormfront, such an analysis seeks to illustrate how Stormfront uses a particular order of discourse, scientific text, to legitimate White Nationalist ideology and minimize the racist elements of the discourse giving it the appearance of a more "socially acceptable" discourse.

I begin this chapter with a brief introduction into the origin and evolution of the term "race." More specifically, I discuss how race originated as a scientific term and gradually became viewed by some as a social construction. Despite this change in perspective, aspects of scientific racism (also referred to as genetic racism and biological racism) remain in modern discourse, and debates still continue over which perspective is accurate. Since White Nationalism relies heavily on the acceptance of scientific racism, the rhetorical power of science becomes a substantial part of its discourse and is additionally discussed in this section.

To more clearly illustrate this, the remainder of this chapter is devoted to addressing how Stormfront references the tension between scientific racism and race as a social construction with the ultimate goal of re-establishing scientific racism as the dominant paradigm for understanding race. To accomplish this, I have chosen to analyze

three sub-threads from the forum "Race, Science, and Technology:" "Evidence that Racial Groupings Match Real Genetic Profiles;" "Contrasting White Racial Identity in American and Eurasian Contexts; and "European Jewish Genetics." Separating my findings by sub-thread, I then present the particular strategies and techniques used to advance the scientific racism argument and to delegitimize social constructionism. Such strategies include the exaggerated use of hyperlinking and source referencing linking to present day, mainstream support for scientific racism and examples of phenotyping by institutions of authority. Furthermore, the discourse suggests that all those who have fallen victim to the "myth" of race as a social construction are merely pawns in an overarching liberal and academic conspiracy designed to destroy the white race.

Origins of Scientific Racism

Living in a society that asks an individual to voluntarily self-identify one's race to apply for a social security card, employment, college enrollment, etc. makes it difficult to imagine a society where the term "race" did not exist. This is not to say that an "Us" verses "Them" mentality did not exist prior to the invention of race; however, racial classifications were not a basis for the differences in human beings (Porress & Plan, 2008). Race is a fairly modern concept that emerged in the 17th century while biology was in its infancy and technological advancements made it possible for individuals to explore new lands and discover new people. Beginning as a biological classification system, the definitions of race become intertwined with a normative dimension subject to the creators' own personal biases and prejudices. As society gradually began to accept these definitions, scientific racism became a "rational" justification for the perpetuation of inequality.

Francois Bernier, a French traveler and explorer, developed a classification system consisting of four races based on observations of phenotype (external characteristics) and geography. Subsequent elaborations of this model attributed personality traits as well as particular skills to each race. Carl Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae* (1735) used phenotype and geography to separate races into the following sub-species: *americanus, europaeus, asiaticus, and afer.* In the 10th edition of this work, Linnaeus included descriptive characteristics of each race that he presented as scientific. Social scientists now view these classifications as scientific racism, reflecting hegemonic biases. For example, the sub-species *europaeus* was described as "white, optimistic, muscular, gentle, active, very smart, inventive, and covered with close vestements;" while the *afer* were described as "black, slow, foolish, relaxed, crafty, indolent, negligent, and were people who anointed themselves with grease" (Cameron & Wycoff, 1998, p. 280). In 1775, Johann Blumenbach placed races in hierarchical order with the Caucasian race at the top- a reflection of European progress at the time (Cameron & Wycoff, 1998).

In 1835, illustrating its integration into mainstream society, the term "race" appeared in *Dictionnaire* and defined as "a multitude of men who originate from the same country, and resemble each other by facial features and by exterior conformity" (Hudson, 1996, p. 247). Almost 20 years later, Count Arthur de Gobineau published his *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Race* which asserted not only that races biologically different and hierarchal, but also that civilized society depended on maintaining racial purity: "The purer a race keeps its blood, the less will its social foundations be liable to attack" (Gobineau, 1854, p. 89). This type of traditional scientific racism continued to be the dominant paradigm until the early 20th century;

however, some argue that scientific racism has not been fully discredited but merely re-invented. The last of the remnants of this type of scientific racism was Social Darwinism. Social Darwinism asserted the following: 1) Biological laws govern the whole of organic nature, including humans; 2) Population growth would lead to scarcity and a competition for resources; 3) Genetically inherited physical and mental traits can provide advantage; and, 4) "cumulative effects of selection and inheritance over time account for the emergence of a new species and the elimination of others" (Claeys , 2000, p. 228). This theory was used as justification for the Holocaust and various international eugenics programs.

From its inception, "race" reflected the established white, masculine cultural norms of the time. During the 17th century, the processes of mathematical generalization and empirical demonstration gradually "assumed privileged positions" within the scientific field and intellectual communities. Soon after, research that was based on these methods began to take on an air of validity and authority (Porres & Plan, 2008). As advances in travel and communication expanded, the research's potential audience and these findings and their accompanying privileged status soon became part of a larger discourse. Businesses began to recognize the positive implications scientific research could have on society, and certain social groups saw evolution as an answer and means of empowerment "for those disillustrated by the harsh effects of capitalism and for religious figures who denounced science and atheism" (Schwartz, 1999, p. 376). Furthermore, publications such as the *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal* (1832) and *Nineteenth Century* (1869) emerged popularizing science for the general public in hopes of establishing science as a necessity for a progressive culture (Schwartz, 1999). As scientific theories

and findings became utilized by society, the technical began to merge with the social. Science became part of various types of discourse (technical, social, political, economic, etc.) because of its universal relevance and its potential to provide great benefit. However, as non-specialized or scientific entities began to incorporate scientific research in their discourse, the likelihood that it could be misinterpreted, and/or recontextualized in such a way as to alter its meaning, increases. Furthermore, and as is the case with Stormfront, the popularization of science paved the way for for individuals and groups to use certain scientific findings, or their interpretations of these findings, for harmful ends. This said, as science continues to advance and its relevance and authority remains, locating the normative dimensions of science, an aspect that sometimes too easily goes unnoticed, is of critical importance.

Race: A Social Construction

Responding to the atrocities of World War II and becoming more cognizant of the severe implications of biological racism, biological racism was eventually discredited by the scientific community. Social science perspectives on racial theory shifted from a biologically determined trait to a social construction. Race theory began to analyze race as a factor engaged to secure white prestige and inhibit the progress of others. The existence of race as a justification for public policy and political action suggested it was less about biology and more about power relations within society. For example, the economic and political implications of slavery became the focus of the discourse and dispelled the oft used arguments asserting slavery was biologically and religiously mandated (Cox, 2009; Myrdal, 2009). This shift in the discourse is not only relevant to

slavery but can be found within a variety of contexts where one group is attributed a higher, normative value based on gender, sexuality, and other immutable characteristics.

The continuous struggle for equality has created a discourse that attempted to redefine how society categorizes individuals and what is deemed socially acceptable in regard to discourse about race. This was later exacerbated by the events of World War II, when the contested definitions of race came to the forefront of American consciousness. In the United States, the influx of immigration and remnants of the institution of slavery urged sociological theorists to understand the role of political and economic institutions in defining race (Winant, 2000). Processing of "racialization" indicate that "race" is constantly changing with social and political shifts, is open to interpretation, and is discursively and structurally bound. In turn, racial discourse is in a persistent state of flux as it represents a multitude of competing identities and social structures all while trying to fit into the niche of socially acceptable norms (Winant, 2000).

Civil rights legislation is frequently cited as evidence of attaining a "post-racial" society. However, as Winant (2000) and other contemporary scholars have addressed, "racial injustice became less visible as a result of these reforms" (p. 178). Subsequently, discourse about race began to be perceived as unnecessary and inappropriate; race is no longer a pivotal part of the political landscape that is outwardly discussed in the mainstream media (Smith & King, 2009). However, this change in the discourse may not accurately reflect individual beliefs about race; instead, this change has created a new and acceptable script for society's discussion on race. For example, Bobo and Smith's (1998) analysis of survey data on American race attitudes from 1942 to 1985 found that although support for racial principles of equality remained on the rise, there was little increase

showing support of policies to help implement such change. These contradictory findings between what people say they believe and the policies they support to enact these beliefs highlights the presence and salience of a desire to appropriate discourse to fit within the socially acceptable. No longer having science as a crutch to justify racist sentiments, if an individual outwardly expresses views that could be deemed "racist" then this is a reflection of his/her personal belief system; it is subjective and violates the norms expressed by a "post-racial" society. While contemporary sociological theory, media, and politics *appear* to have landed on the side of the social constructionists in the debate about race, a tension between these two perspectives continues to exist and is present in mainstream discourse; even though this exact terminology may not be used and scientific racism may not be outwardly supported, the end result remains the same. White Nationalists appear to have recognized this and use such discourses to undermine social constructionism and to re-affirm an ideology based on genetic superiority.

Rhetoric of Science

Taking into consideration that the primary goal of Stormfront is to recruit and solidify their existing membership base, it stands to reason that these speakers deliberately chose to discuss science in conjunction with racism. Considering the wide range of reasons available that people have used to justify racism, grounding the discussion in science seems a conscious and strategic move made by each Stormfront poster. The rhetorical power of science lends an air of credibility to an ideology many view as irrational. By placing the realm of the irrational into the logical, rational realm of science, the extremist ideology is presented through a seemingly legitimate lens.

This concept of legitimation has been most clearly established by Jurgen

Habermas' (1975) *Legitimation Crisis.* In this work, Habermas defines legitimacy as "a

political order's worthiness to be recognized. This definition highlights the fact that

legitimacy is a contestable validity claim; the stability of the order of domination (also)

depends on its (at least) de facto recognition" (p.178). In order for a claim to be perceived

as "legitimate" it must appear rational and deemed worthy. This is necessary for its

perpetuation. Since the process of legitimation is created through discursive practices,

argumentation can be used to strengthen or weaken legitimizing claims. Tom Tyler

(2006) states that people view institutions and authorities as more legitimate when their

processes represent fairness and procedure. For this reason, the legal system and

mainstream government are viewed as legitimate. However, this psychological view of

legitimacy can also be extended to other realms. For example, the scientific method by

definition sets out to be free from bias and is highly dependent on accuracy in procedure

and methodology. Furthermore, for scientific research to get published and popularized, it

is reviewed with a high level of scrutiny to ensure its objectivity. For these reasons,

science has historically been given a high level of credence and may lead the audience

"to feel personally obligated to defer to those authorities, institutions, and social

arrangements" (p. 376). Taking these statements into consideration, the prominence given

to scientific organizations in society suggests that the accompanying research and

findings have been validated. It must be emphasized that this does not occur outside of

the rhetorical. If this were the case, all scientifically established "truths" would be self-

evident. The scientific method would not be needed as a means to persuade others to

believe its validity. However, the use of rhetoric in science contradicts the very

"objective" definition inherent in science, and it is easy to ignore the use of persuasion in the "interpretation of nature" (Harris, 1991, p. 284). Walter Weimer (1977) asserts that the very nature of science and logic is a rhetorical construction and is "dependent on the argumentative function of language" (p. 2). It is generally acknowledged that for science to have any force or weight it must be acknowledged by the scientific community and/or the public. For this to occur, it is necessary for science to take on what Weimer labels its "injunctive" nature. Science does not merely describe; it makes commands. In return, the audience either accepts or rejects these commands after they have been so rhetorically engaged (Weimer, 1977). In reference to scientific racism, the very concept originated from the application of the historically applicable scientific method *and* seen through the lens of the socially dominant belief system. It was ideological to the core and was subsequently accepted by the public rhetorically.

Current Research

Although the idea of race as a social construction has gained acceptance, competing definitions of race continue to exist. If one was to use the government and/or scientific opinion to define race, it has been recently (2010) presented as far removed from any type of institutionally created or supported definition. For example, the United States Bureau Census explicitly states the following about race:

> The racial categories included in the census questionnaire generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country and not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. In addition, it is recognized that the categories of the race item include racial and national origin or sociocultural groups. (United States Bureau of the Census, 2012)

In the scientific community, advancements in human genetics show that human beings share 99.9% of their genes regardless of race. Additionally, scientific research has

consistently reaffirmed that behavior is "strongly influenced by nongenetic factors" (Jorde & Wooding, 2004, p. 532). However, just because the government and science appear to deny racial inequality, at least superficially, this does not necessarily reflect the private attitudes of the public. For example, the 21st Century Americanism Survey, found that 80% of the respondents expressed that liberalism was integral to American identity- a number that opposes any expressions of racism (Schildkraut, 2007). However, the Associated Press implicit racial attitudes test (2012) found that 56% of the respondents expressed anti-black sentiments, and 57% expressed anti-Hispanic sentiments. These findings show that racist attitudes continue to permeate within and outside of groups like Stormfront, but they are less likely to be openly expressed. Expressing these sentiments is not tolerated, at least not publicly: "a new way of talking about racial issues in public venues – a new *racetalk* – has emerged" (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000, p. 52). From a research perspective, this makes is increasingly difficult to locate discourse that openly expresses racist views. It is for this reason that I have chosen Stormfront as the site of this research. Isolating the discourse of a cultural group whose ideology is founded on racism and locating the subtle discursive tactics that are used to justify this ideology provide insight into a subject that many feel a post-racial society has moved beyond. Race has become something you discuss in private and is not suitable for public discourse. However, internet technology blurs the line between public and private discourse. In particular, it is now possible for discourse to be consistent with acceptable ideologies about race and yet recontextualized in a way that perpetuates racist attitudes. Stormfront acts as a window into a world of discourse that is being ignored. As such, there is little to

challenge it, and it continues to gain in momentum and expands beyond one, isolated Internet group.

Current research on expressions of racism has found that when race is referenced, it is in the form of a preemptive denial ("I'm not a racist, but…) or accusing the other of being a racist (van Dijk, 1992; Augustinos & Every, 2007; Bonilla-Sliva & Forman, 2000). This discursive act contradicts other research that suggests issues of race continue to be a point of concern for many Americans. This raises the questions as to what happens to the discourse of those who do not ascribe to the norms of a self-proclaimed egalitarian society, and what may be the result? One result of this absence of racialized topics in open, public discourse is an increase in this type of discourse in other forms of media, such as the Internet. Prior research illustrates that race is integral to the ideology of groups like Stormfront and is a means by which its members form their identity. This being said, it is unlikely that its members will discontinue racist discourse. However, since such discourse runs contrary to what is perceived as socially acceptable, I find that these members realize that in order to recruit new members, it may be necessary to create a new type of discourse that is more palatable to those outside of this social group while continuing to reinforce the beliefs of its current membership. The Internet acts as an optimal medium where these views can be freely and openly discussed. Furthermore, the Internet allows for the appropriation of other types of discourse to be used easily, cheaply, and without limitation in regard to the original author's intended context or audience. Through the lens of critical discourse analysis (CDA), it becomes possible to begin to identify where these private and public discourses intersect and how they are subsequently reproduced and recontextualized to a larger audience.

CDA asserts that hegemonic power relations are created, reproduced, and challenged discursively. Through strategic discursive processes, various modes of discourse emerge that reproduce these power relations and thus contribute to and legitimate social inequality (van Dijk, 1993). While there exist many social structures that play an integral role in the perpetuation of racism, this research specifically focuses on how science, as an academic and political institution, is used to justify racist sentiments. I chose science not only because of its historical relationship with issues of race but also because of how it is perceived by society. Society has lent science credibility and power that disguises its rhetorical power. The perception that science is "objective" provides it with a universality that suggests it is not only legitimate and free from bias but also is accepted by all. The characteristics of science expand Stormfront's use of scientific discourse from the personal to the social while perpetuating white dominance through everyday speech.

In order to illustrate how scientific discourse is used by Stormfront members, I have chosen as my data the following three threads that fall under the broader forum "Science, Technology, and Race": Evidence that Racial Groupings Match Real Genetic Profiles, Contrasting White Racial Identity in American and Eurasian Contexts, and European Jewish Genetics. There are ten posts per page of each thread, and these are presented in chronological order. These threads were purposively chosen because of their popularity (as determined by a star rating and/or its locked status) and because of their direct relevance to racial identity and genetics. Furthermore, the European Jewish Genetics thread was chosen to illustrate the importance of expanding the racist discourse beyond that of a black/white dichotomy and to emphasize the prominent role of anti-

Semitism in Stormfront discourse. For the first two threads, Evidence that Racial

Groupings Match Real Genetic Profiles (225 posts) and Contrasting White Racial

Identity in American and Eurasian Contexts (202 posts), I coded every post. However, to

make the data from the 3rd thread manageable and roughly equivalent in number to the

prior posts, I coded every sixth post until this totaled 218 posts. I then copied these posts

and entered them into the Dedoose software program (January 2013). After an initial

screening of the text, I located the emerging themes and discursive themes. These were

coded as follows:

1. Reference to External Source
    a. With link and/or presence of bibliographic information?
    b. Type of Source? Academic (designated by .edu domain name and/or academic publication); Newspaper/Magazine (determined by clicking on the link or searching the title to determine type of publication); Other (those sources that do not fall under the other categories including organizations and blogs.)
2. Presence of direct quote from external source.
3. In addition to the link, were the external source(s)' credentials referenced?
4. Presence of Medical and Genetic Language through the inclusion of the following terms: "genetic(s)", "DNA," "evolution," "haplotype" and "hereditary"
5. Expressions of Affirmation: For example, "I agree," "well said" and "so true".
6. Presence of hedging language: For example, "maybe," "some," "I'm not sure…".
7. References to medical defect: For example, referring to a particular race's predisposition to a disease.
8. Presence of language presenting theory of racial evolution:
    a. Refers to a common ancestor between races
    b. Refers to a unique, "pure" Aryan ancestry
9. Examples of Phenotyping: Reference to outer, physical characteristic to determine race.
10. References to Race Mixing and "purity"
11. Presence of language suggesting the existence of an academic, liberal, and/or Jewish conspiracy: For example, the incorporation of terms such as "Academentia," "ZOG," or "true scientist".
12. Positive Self-Representation/Negative "Other" Representation

While each of these codes was present in every thread, the following discussion presents

those findings that were most prominent and are presented by thread. All direct quotes

were taken directly from the accompanying Stormfront post. This includes those that are direct quotes from external sources. Stormfront text is identified with either a quotation mark and/or is in block quote form. Citations and poster names were removed to protect the privacy of the poster.

"Evidence that Racial Groupings Match Real Genetic Profiles"

      Hyperlinking and the medical defect. As the name suggests, this discussion thread asserts that genetic racism is not only real but is also factually supported. Consisting of 225 replies (7 of which had material removed by the moderator either completely or to a more applicable thread), this thread is given a 5 star rating and has received a total of 91,319 views. Analysis shows that Stormfront users rely heavily upon external sources as justification for the White Nationalist ideology. Rather than using personal narratives to bolster their arguments and create the "Negative Other Representation" CDA scholars, such as van Dijk, have found to be common in racial arguments, Stormfront users steer the focus away from an individualized and subjective perspective to one that appears objective on the surface. To accomplish this, rather than narratives about difference, narratives adopt a scientific word choice that is rooted in the language of genetics. Difference is presented as an unalterable characteristic of DNA. For example, 7 of the 14 instances of personal narratives within the 218 coded discussion posts occurred after a discussion about genetics with an accompanying quote of or hyperlink to an external source. Thus, even the very minimal personal discourse is incorporated into a larger discussion that shifts attention away from a purely biased opinion to one that is more generalizable and externally referenced.

Referencing non-Stormfront sources was the most common theme among this particular forum. Of the 218 posts, 164 (75%) individual posts provided links and/or full bibliographic references for external, supporting material. Additionally, 42 of these posts had multiple links present thus creating a total of 244 references that are broken down into the following source types: Academic (75), Newspaper and Magazine (102), and Other (67). Academic sources typically referred to scholarly, genetic journals such as the *American Journal of Human Genetics* and *Genome Biology*, and the Newspaper and Magazine sources referenced local news stations as well as regional and international news sites such as BBC, *New York Times*, and MSNBC. While the "Other" category did include less credible sources, such as blogs and lesser well-known organizations, government bodies and their subsequent published information such as that of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Food and Drug Administration also fell under this category. It is also important to note here that none of these links were to other White Nationalist or ideologically similar sites. Furthermore, 52 of these posts directly quoted the source material into the Stormfront discourse, and 39 re-emphasized the external author's credentials. The following is a direct post of one such quote available on this thread:

> Beverly Campbell, director of the Unrelated Bone Marrow Donor Registry at CBS, says that increasing the diversity of possible donors is key. The need is especially great for groups such as aboriginal Canadians, whose genetic pool is distinct from any other group in the world. It tends to be difficult to find a match for someone of mixed race, and Canadians of African, Asian and East Indian descent could also be better represented in the registry. Campbell stresses that an ongoing and sustained approach is needed to reach potential volunteers.
> http://medstat.med.utah.edu/kw/osteo...sics/race.html

This post, along with those that have a similar structure, have no accompanying text that is unique to the actual Stormfront poster. If taken out of context the information seems trivial and innocuous. Taken individually, each quote hints at a minute genetic difference between races; however, when combined and taken together, these snippets present a vast array of medical differences grounded in genetics giving the concept of genetically distinct races a more robust foundation.

Of the 52 direct quotes found within this section, 36 reference some type of genetic marker that is associated with a medical defect or negative condition based on race, none of which are attributed to the "White" race. For example, African Americans are stated to be genetically prone to higher rates of HPV, breast cancer, stroke, and obesity; Hispanic women are genetically predisposed to premature births, and Asians possess a common genetic link to Parkinsons. Ignoring the remainder of the original article and/or the context which may suggest other non-genetic factors at play, these quotes establish the presence of a direct causal link between race, genetics, and subsequently medical abnormalities that indirectly suggest the non-affected race are genetically predisposed to be superior. This hyperlinking to external sources lends an air of credibility to the Stormfront post that may not have existed beyond the realm of the White Nationalist community. While the authors of the hyperlinked material most likely have no knowledge of their words being used in this context, the mere fact that the Stormfront poster believes these words to support the White Nationalist ideology enough to reproduce them is of critical importance. When a quote is used or a reference given from a reputable publication, the status of that publication is conferred upon the accompanying discourse with little regard for the original context. To the casual reader or

a curious newcomer, it is not beyond possibility that these "facts" may be interpreted to justify a hierarchy of races. This may be particularly true if the reader does not have the education or desire to critically assess each article and wade through the foreign and extremely technical language of medical articles.

Academentia and the liberal conspiracy. While the majority of this thread's discourse is a reproduction of material created by non-Stormfront users, it is not wholly without user metadiscourse. However, the Stormfront additions to this thread fall under two categories that further perpetuate the presence of legitimacy in the entire discourse. The first category, "Personal Affirmations," consists of catch phrases that signal the Stormfront user's approval of post material and is present in 32 individual posts. Affirmations range from a simple "I agree" to "enough said," to my personal favorite: "Of course there is. Only some extreme left wingers will tell you otherwise, no matter how much overwhelming facts and information is raised." In addition to creating an exaggerated consensus for the information, these phrases signal an end to the discussion. There is nothing left to discuss, and the argument is over. If you do not agree, you have shifted to the minority.

The second category, "Academentia and the Liberal Conspiracy" perpetuates the notion that to go against genetic racism means you are either suffering from mental deficiencies and/or have fallen victim to a grand conspiracy. You have become a pawn in the liberal game. The Academentia posts suggest that the deconstruction of race taught in schools is another way to spread the "evil seed of multiculturalism" or is one part of "ethnocentric activism":

1. "What absurdity results when scientists bow to political pressure and come up with such nonsense as 'race is a social construct."

2. "The truth has been quite possibly skewed and corrupted in an attempt to yield politically-motivated acceptable outcomes, the purpose naturally being to refute the existence of race entirely."
3. "The academic world is more rigged than ever as well. I do get the impression that some scientists and professor's teaching curriculum is governed by the 'powers above'."

These quotes assert that scientists and academics have succumbed to political pressure and produced results that are detrimental to the notion of white supremacy. Entities that suggest more commonality between races, such as the Human Genome Project, are called "cowards," "con artists" and part of "anti-white politics." It is only when work comes out of the academy that Stormfront users view as "fact" and supporting of their beliefs are the academics "true scientists":

> "They don't teach anything good like this in college only in grad schools and certain schools back in the East. Could it be they're trying to hide the true sciences? They're hiding proof of real racial differences and instead just keeping dumbing down the college curriculum for negroe and mestizo and promoting the lie of racial equality to brainwash most whites."

As these quotes suggest, science and the academy are not solely to blame for the perpetuation of what Stormfront users call the "race lie." It is also deeply intertwined with politics and the media. More particularly, liberal politics and the liberal media:

> Liberals are so far done, they claim to be open-minded but that's just a front. I don't know how many times I've tried to present them with pacts about ethnic crime etc. and they just call me a nazi without even reading a word.

Here not only does the speaker call into question the objectivity of political groups but also simultaneously presents himself as the victim. S/he has been conducting the research and trying to educate the masses but was cast aside. Instead, Stormfront users see the "propaganda in the brain of the reading "sheeple" that is presented to the lay public from the "Jew York Times."

"Contrasting White Racial Identity in American and Eurasian Contexts"

Just as the previous thread attempts to establish support for genetic racism, this thread seeks to set apart the white race from others through scientific reasoning. However, rather than presenting a negative depiction of an "Other" through the use of external sources, these posts delineate the races through phenotype and racial evolution; this is reflected in the language used. Furthermore, contrary to the prior thread, this thread attempts to establish a scientifically constructed white race that is different between regions with the American white race being the purest of them all.

Phenotype and race-mixing. Of the 202 posts in this forum, roughly 50% reference using outer, physical characteristics to determine race. Outer characteristics such as skin color, hair, nose width, and cranial size and facial structure are used as identifying markers to delineate between races. Furthermore, these characteristics and behavioral characteristics are inherited biologically. Whereas the majority of modern scientists in a range of fields (anthropology, biology and the like) do not find these racial distinctions as reliable or significant (Smedley & Smedley, 2005), this is not what is portrayed on the Stormfront thread. Instead, races are presented as having particular attributes that externally show which race s/he belongs to. For example, one Stormfront user writes "White people have white skin," to which another member responded "ONE RACE, ONE COLOR, ONE PEOPLE." However, the discussion does not end here; in fact, it is merely the beginning in a long discussion about the varying degrees of "whiteness" and how this impacts ones membership to a race. Contrary to some other facets of White Nationalist ideology, Odinism for instance, many Stormfront users recognize evolutionary theory. While this seems reasonable, as it would contradict the

majority of the genetic arguments discussed in the prior thread, it contradicts the concept of Aryan purity that is traditionally associated with White Nationalism. While all those whose skin falls under the category of "White" are to be included in the cause if they so desire, many Stormfront posters do not deny generations of intermarriage between various ethnicities and that the idea of a pure, White ancestry is a fallacy. In order to support this belief, 75 posts are devoted to providing historical excerpts of migratory patterns and conquered civilizations to illustrate the origin of the present-day White race.

Two themes emerge from this discussion on the origin of the White race. The first theme is centered around the belief that while the root ancestors of the White race may not have been the pale skinned, blond haired, blue eyed, super Aryan that has been ideolized in White Nationalist culture, this is the epitome of the "superior white race." Furthermore, these traits are only those that could have evolved from the white ancestors that did not interbreed with other populations:

> But what separates us from the rest of the world is that we evolved faster than anyone else did. We are the furthest evolutionary step from our primate cousins of all the five human "master races." (Caucasian, Sub-Saharan African, Middle Eastern, Indian and Oriental)

Even if there may be no pure white race, only white people could have evolved so far as to have produced and reproduced these traits. Those that do not wholly ascribe to the idea of a non-White root ancestor believe the modern White race evolved from a pure, White race from the Scandanavian region that did not interbreed with neighboring cultures. This notion of diluting the purity of the White racial bloodline is one that is hyper-exaggerated in each post. Whether it be in unique discourse or a re-post of another Stromfront user, terms relating to race mixing were referenced a total of 130 times within the 202 posts: "mixed" (68), "interbreed" (12), "inbred/inbreed" (2), "mixing" (35), and more crudely

"mongrel" (13). From my interpretation of the discourse, this fascination with race

mixing serves two purposes. The first being to perpetuate and uphold what White

Nationalists call the 14 words: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future

for White children." This commonly used phrase among White Nationalists is a direct

referent to the fear of a loss of identity that has become integral to their ideology. The

second reason for referencing race mixing is to highlight the differences between white

Americans and white Europeans. While there appears to be a consensus that all are white

for the purposes of White Nationalism, the white American is presented as the purest of

the two. A purity that stems from years of segregation:

> The situation on Eurasia is thus the reverse of the situation in America. Here, we
> have a White race that was (until the era of recent fast migration) slowly
> differentiating itself from neighboring populations. But the "myth" remains one
> that we inherit from American experience- one of a pure White race threatened by
> mixing. This myth is a fundamental handicap when it comes to dealing with the
> racial history of Eurasia.

Because of the relative newness of America, as well as it being geographically and

culturally segregated at the onset, being white in America is a unique experience that may

have stemmed from a less pure White ancestor; however, the White Nationalist perceived

that a racial purity can result if white Americans do not mix with other races and

ethnicities. This is the major foundation for the re-emerging battle cry of White

Nationalists: "Separation not Supremacy."

What was further surprising about this thread is the inclusion of a biocultural

definition of race as a means to make up for European mixed heritage:

> But in a European context a racial definition isn't quite enough- it must be
> supported by a cultural definition. The European culture is (was) simply the
> "Christian world," Christendom, the civilized areas not conquered by Islam. In a
> pure, racial biological view this might of course not be 100% satisfactory,
> considering that many "Turks," Northern Africans, Iranians, etc. could be

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considered White. But to Europeans "Whiteness" isn't simply enough- it doesn't have any fixed limits; it could go all the way to Calcutta- therefore a biocultural definition is needed. So what Americans call Whites I would rather call European Descended People.

This addition of a cultural element is repeated throughout the discourse through different definitions of what it means to "act white." Since elements of purity have come into question, in fact, 36 posts adamantly disagree with the idea of racial evolution and accuse those in favor of being multiculturalists, the vague idea of "acting white" sidesteps the issue of genetic purity by adding a behavioral element: "If he looks white, acts white, and has no obvious physical distinctions from being white- then he is white. Period." According to Stormfront members, to act white means the following:

1. Have a "heightened sense of community responsibility, artistic expression and communication."
2. Has the "gift of the divine."
3. Is the "most talented musically;"
4. And is "civilized."

As the prior discussion on the Genetics thread illustrates, referencing outside sources suggests the majority of Stormfront discourse does not blatantly diverge from ideas that are found in the mainstream discourse about race. A similar phenomenon occurs in this thread. The fact that some of the members have discarded the antiquated White Nationalist idea of a "pure" white ancestor is one sign that Stormfront posters realize it is useless to argue something when science has proven otherwise. Considering the importance of the credibility of science in maintaining a biological racism, to contradict it now from an evolutionary aspect would be counter-productive. Instead, the Stormfront user accepts evolution, in particular racial evolution; however, this is done with a White Nationalist spin. Racial evolution is thoroughly discussed complete with maps illustrating genetic migratory patterns over time and 25 hyperlinks to references.

Races are presented as genetically different, and it is only through race-mixing that the lines have become blurred. Furthermore, the more this mixing occurs, the more inferior the race becomes. Racial identity and the fear of erasure continue to be a running theme throughout the discourse. One way Stormfront discourse seeks to mitigate this fear is through the use of evolutionary science to illustrate that white racial identity can be preserved if proactive steps are taken in the steps of voluntary segregation from the "other" races that are characterized as "mixed" or less pure and thus inferior.

"European Jewish Genetics"

This particular thread represents one of the most common topics of discussion for White Nationalists- the Jewish people. Its popularity is reflected by the high number of posts (2,656) and its appeal to the viewers (to date it has received 399,282 views). Furthermore, the thread has been locked which means no material can be removed. In order to make the number of posts more manageable, I analyzed the discourse in every 6th post until I had a data pool of 218 posts.

At the center of this discussion is the presence of a "Jewish Gene," and the implications it has on White Nationalism. With 25% of the posts referencing external sources, particularly Jewish authored genetic publications, the central theme revolves around the presence of a particular genetic marker that is present in Ashkenazi Jews:

> Recently published research in the field of molecular genetics—the study of DNA sequences—indicates that Jewish population of the various Diaspora communities have retained their genetic identity throughout the exile. Despite large geographical distances between the communities and the passages of thousands of years, far removed Jewish communities share a similar genetic profile. This research confirms the common ancestry and common geographical origins of world Jewry.

According to the Stormfront interpretation of Jewish genetic studies, there exists a genetic marker that is hereditary from father to son in Jewish population; although being Jewish is traditionally conferred through the maternal side of a family, this particular genetic marker evolved from a rabbinic sect that was all male. While issues of migration and the emergence and conquering of civilizations throughout history has led to an interbreeding between European (white) women and Jews of Middle Eastern descent, the Jewish culture is depicted as less apt to reproduce with other cultures which has led to a high level of consanguinity. In order to further illustrate this, Stormfront posters reference illnesses and disease that are only present within Jewish communities (ex. Tay-Sachs) and the presence of physical characteristics that have been perpetuated by Jewish stereotypes (eyes and nose shape). In an ironic twist, Stormfront users also use this "Jewish gene" as a partial justification for the above average IQ attributed to Jews. However, even what would commonly be a positive characteristic is, at times, transformed into a conspiracy that suggests genetic research, currently used to test for hereditary illnesses, is being used to advance IQ among Jewish couples. Also, the higher level of intelligence is portrayed as being inherited from the European side of the Ashkenazi Jews:

> The Ashkenazi jews are a race, a mixed race. The Ashkenazi race appear to be a mix of Germanics and Mongolians. Which is why many Ashkenazi Jews have oriental eyes in some way. Ashkenazi jews are dangerous because of their half Germanic ancestry, so that they can disguise themselves as typical Germanics, which they are not. Ashkenazi jews represent about 80% of the Jews today, and most of the Zionist jews are Ashkenazi.

The idea of a Jewish eugenics and the presence of the Jewish gene are additional weapons in the White Nationalist conspiracy arsenal. Typically referred to by White Nationalists as the Racial Double-Standard, Stromfront posters express the belief that if

the white race was to claim outright in major academic and media publications that they were genetically distinct they would be labeled racist. Furthermore, this Jewish gene is seen as no more than an attempt to reclaim power in Israel and to reclaim land which they feel is rightfully theirs: 'The Zionist elite is planning to refuse a person the right to settle in Israel if they do not have 'Jewish genes.''

Of the three threads examined, this thread had the highest amount of controversy. As one would imagine, acknowledging common genetic ancestry with the Jewish people goes against the antiquated White Nationalist belief that Jews are inherently evil. In fact, the moderator of the thread is harshly criticized in 20 posts. In these instances, race is viewed not from a genetic standpoint but from outer characteristics. While this is not a significant number, and the majority of the discourse veers in the other direction, it does call into attention how deeply engrained and important the idea of racial purity is to the White Nationalist. However, the shift from purity to a majority opinion accepting the idea of similar genetic trait between Jewish and non-Jewish people signals an evolving ideology in White Nationalism that is justifying its beliefs on their interpretation of genetic and scientific advancement.

The most important and significant characteristic of this thread is the essence of factuality presented through word choice. There is relatively no hedging language accompanying the discourse from either the majority view (presence of a Jewish gene with similarities to the white race) or the minority view (absence of genetic similarities between both races). There either is or there is not. The fact that there may even be a debate appears to only exist within the Stormfront community itself, and those that disagree with the majority perspective are ridiculed and condemned. They are labeled

"mentally insane," in "denial" or a "White hating Jew loving troll." These forceful

assertions reflect that while the core ideology of White Nationalism may be evolving, it is

not occurring quietly thus exaggerating how important race is to the White Nationalist

identity.

For this research, I have no way of knowing if the majority of the members of

Stormfront have the ability to adequately comprehend or filter the scientific messages

provided. However, this is less important than their being scientific in nature. Even those

that may have comprehensive background in science and genetics, this is still understood

through a White Nationalist lens. Viewing science from the rhetorical perspective, it is

useful to see what may result when science is accepted as "truth" even if the reality may

not be so. As these findings illustrate, Stormfront uses certain types of scientific

arguments to establish difference. The use of science may appeal to a larger audience

who may lack the scientific background and knowledge to assess the information, and in

turn may "actively contribute in the production of a new, common knowledge and

opinions about science and scientists" (Caslamagia & van Dijk, 2004, p. 371). What can

result is an inaccurate understanding of scientific research that can persuade by providing

a "cloak of objectivity" (Fairchild, 1992, p. 209). The practical use of scientific discourse

places a large emphasis on the ethos of the speaker and or scientific community that

produces the knowledge: "To inspire confidence in claims advanced discursively, a rhetor

must display the qualities of intelligence, moral character, and good will that are held in

esteem by an intended audience" (Prelli, 1997, p. 87). In regard to scientific racism,

White Nationalists can use the credibility of such scientists and/or institutions to bolster

their own credibility even without understanding the science themselves. Furthermore, by

banking on another's findings, Stormfront users are able to deny their own prejudice by transferring the blame to another.

Conclusion

"I prefer direct genetic studies please…"

The words of this Stormfront user are reflective of the overarching theme of these threads. Whereas the previous literature on White Nationalist discourse has found obvious negative descriptions of the "Other" typically characterized through masculine language and entrenched in Christian values, there is little place for those discussions here. What the Stormfront users want is direct support from credible sources grounded in science. Of the total 638 posts, genetic terms ("genetic(s)", "DNA," "evolution," "haplotype" and "hereditary") were used a total of 1,743 times. As a basis for comparison, "God" was referenced only a total of 33 times in all of the posts combined. This runs contrary to the common notion that beliefs of racial superiority automatically reflect an individual's religion (Christianity) and/or personal biases. While prior research on White Nationalist discourse finds religion as a predominant theme, this move away from religion to the scientific further emphasizes a discursive shift from the subjective and personal to the objective and technical.

This onslaught of scientific discourse moves the discussion away from individual prejudice. While bias is shown in the quotes used, how they are presented, and what context they are removed from and/or placed in, the individual discourse reads less like a personal narrative and more like a science or history textbook. The language used, while dated in some parts, is not overtly racist. The most commonly used derogatory term was "Negroe/Negroid," used a total of 35 times in all the threads combined and was typically

used when referencing older scientific classifications for race. The two times a blatantly racist term was used, the moderator and audience requested that everyone refrain from using such language and an apology was issued by the poster to the audience.

While the word choice and verbiage used is significant in the delivery of White Nationalism, what the overall themes suggest is most important. When references are used and statements made that suggest disease, negative characteristics, and abnormalities are the result of genetic markers subject to each race, the White Nationalist is no longer solely to blame for (re)producing racist attitudes. The reason for inequality is shifted to science and is a result of evolution. Not only does this suggest that racism is some naturally occurring phenomenon that evolves over time but also removes any semblance of agency on behalf of those of non-white races. This is not a new phenomenon or rhetorical strategy in regard to racism. However, this strategy is significant as it runs contrary to common perceptions of White Nationalists. As opposed to its ideological predecessors, current Stormfront users recognize common genetic traits between the races. Of course, all positive traits stem from the white race and all others a byproduct of race-mixing. What is most important is to acknowledge the ''whiteness'' one does have and to be vigilant in keeping it as pure as possible for future generations. These Stormfront posters appear to realize that to suggest an absolute purity would oppose science, and because of its universality, they *need* science. What results is a recontextualiation of science distorted to support their agenda. That current scientific research has found trends to vary among different races is what is presented to the reader. How minute the difference may be, the validity of the study, or if intervening factors (such as environment) play a role does not matter. All that matters is that a difference can

be stated and superficially supported by another entity. These differences and by these sources are what the Stormfront user is calling to the readers' attention because it is precisely these genetic differences that establish their identity. Now the speaker does not have to come right out and say they are different, better, superior, et cetera; it becomes a scientific "Truth" and is presented as such. Scientific discourse is used as another weapon to provide justification for the infamous 14 Words, and biological separation is seen as the only way to protect what is left of the white genetic identity.

While it may be easy to dismiss this discourse because of the ideology of the speaker, this does not negate the fact that the universal values attributed to science are used in this manner. These are values that are not unique to the White Nationalist but are accepted by the majority and hold significant weight. This is what is harder to accept. It is by no means easy to acknowledge that your beliefs may coincide with an individual whose ideology you find abhorrent. However, this acknowledgement is necessary before any attempt at combating these arguments can even begin. This does not suggest that science should ignore race in research, nor do I intend to portray that Stormfront's use of scientific discourse as a reflection of the scientific community. Instead, I present these findings to call attention to a phenomenon that many choose to ignore, but that is gaining in popularity; Stormfront's use of linking and referencing mainstream, authoritative sources is a strategic attempt to show that aspects of scientific racism exist everywhere and not just by White Nationalists. The presence of science within a variety of mainstream discourse is reflective of the status and legitimating power attributed to science by the majority of society despite their differences in ideology. Striving to disassociate White Nationalism with its negative past, Stormfront members incorporate

science into their discourse to construct a bridge between White Nationalism and mainstream political ideologies. However, reclaiming the popularity of scientific racism is only one part of the discourse. For Stormfront, the (re)contextuatlization of outside discourses extends beyond the realm of science and reaches across different orders of discourse. As the next chapter intends to show, Stormfront members incorporate elements of history as another attempt to place the White Nationalist ideology within a broader context in hopes of garnering increased support.

Chapter 4

History and Stormfront

On March 30, 2013 approximately 75 members of the Loyal White Knights and other various Klan and Aryan Nations group members protested the renaming of the Nathan Bedford Forrest Park in Memphis, Tennessee. When asked for the justification for this rally, Imperial Wizard Chris Barker stated this rally was the necessary response to the City Council's attempt to "erase white people out of the history books" (Bryson, 2013, ¶15). While, thankfully, the rally only brought in a small number of self-identified White Nationalists, these sentiments do not exist in isolation and are vehemently expressed in Stormfront discourse. In particular, Stormfront discourse portrays a revisionist version of history, a pseudohistory, that recasts the white race (or at least those who accept this) as the historical victim and is subsequently used to justify racism. While the "pseudo" prefix denotes a false account of history, it is important to understand for my purposes that to the White Nationalist these histories are accepted and presented as legitimate. Because of the nature of history and the inability to confirm certain events in the past through direct experience, Stormfront members present their own revisions of history as fact. Using the façade and narrative language associated with historiography, Stormfront members use historical discourse to present particular historical events to support their ideology or to allege that mainstream society has misunderstood White Nationalism. More specifically, Stormfront's reinterpretations of the Civil War and World War II cast the white race as the victim of a Jewish conspiracy. These interpretations, reinforced with "legitimate" sources, are accompanied with affirming language establishing the discourse as the "truth," and the frequent referencing of

external sources, once again, shifts the focus from the Stormfront context to one more acceptable. Through the application of critical discourse analysis, I find that particular thematic elements occur within Stormfront's revisionist histories as a means to redefine white identity in a multi-racial society. I begin this chapter with a discussion on the current research on pseudo history as a legitimation technique and the impact of history on individual identity. Included in this discussion is the recent scholarship on the common pseudo histories espoused by White Nationalists such as Holocaust Denial and the existence of a ZOG (Zionist Occupied Government). After this theoretical overview, I present the results of the current research that examines the following three Stormfront threads: "Top 10 Reasons Why the Holocaust Didn't Happen;" "Bombing of German Cities during World War II;" and "Confederate States of America." The results of my analysis are then broken down into the strategies and themes most prominent in each thread. Using a style similar to the previous chapter, these revisionist links also include frequent linking and referencing to external sources that exist outside the White Nationalist community. Additionally, the tone and word choice found used in the discourse is not only authoritative but also instills the sense that to argue with it would be ridiculous. Leaving little room for discussion, these revised interpretations of history are produced and reproduced throughout each thread to create a new historical narrative in support of White Nationalism. By discursively situating the white race in the role of the victim, the White Nationalist becomes a noble character in a historical tale- a tale that is presented as the "truth" but that runs contrary to the evaluations of history that are socially acceptable in American society.

Revisionism and Pseudo History

Allchin (2004) defines psuedohistory to be when one "uses facts selectively and so

fosters misleading images" (p. 180). This notion of selectivity reinforces my belief that

these pseudo histories are used purposively and intentionally. In a similar vein,

Melleuish, Sheiko, and Brown (2009) assert that pseudo history consists of the following:

1. an appeal to evidence that is conjectural, impossible to verify and/or based on documents that are dubious
2. a speculative approach to this evidence that allows arguments and narratives to be constructed that would seem to defy what would best be described as a 'reasonable' interpretation of the evidence. (p. 1484)

What the mainstream audience defines as pseudo history, based on the above parameters,

from a White Nationalist perspective, these historical accounts have evolved into

histories that are accurate representations of the past. Instead of dismissing these pseudo

histories as creations of a paranoid mind and as conspiracy theories, insight into how

these histories are communicated will aid in a deeper understanding of how, why, and

when they are most persuasive and to whom they are aimed.

Pseudohistory as Legitimation

The incorporation of revisionist historical narratives is unsurprising considering

the important role history plays in individual and group identity. Pierre Nora (1989)

writes that "history is how we organize the past" (p. 8). In other words, it is how we make

sense of things. Historical events become the basis for future action and inaction: "with

the advent of society in place of the nation, legitimation by the past, and therefore by

history, yields to legitimation by the future" (p. 11).   Being cognizant of the past

provides an individual or group with a basis of comparison by which future decisions will

be made. For example, history textbooks present accounts of the past that become part of

our national or cultural identity. Furthermore, historical scholars have incorporated a technical methodology and scientific method that reinforces the findings validity and power: "And science, of course, like the stars above, was true and eternal, as Newton and Laplace had demonstrated to the satisfaction of all reasonable persons everywhere" (McNeill, 1986, p. 2). This being said, history, and its reproduction in society, can be associated with a universal authority that was and is generally accepted by society as an accurate reflection of events that occurred in the past. However, like science, history also has the potential to succumb to the imperfections of man, and the result may be a depiction of history interpreted and reproduced through an ideological lens. Rather than viewing history as "what happened in the past" (Davidson & Lyttle, 2000, p. xvii), it should be viewed as something probable not certain: "History is not some inert body of knowledge 'out there' in the past, but a continual act of construction whose end product is being reshaped and made anew every time someone ventures into the archives" (p. ix).

This said, it is necessary to acknowledge the influence social structures have on the creation, production and transmission of such knowledge. This is particularly true given the legitimacy attributed to history. In cases where a historical event is uncontroversial and/or the audience perceives this account as favorable to their in-group, the legitimacy of the account is rarely called into question. However, when the events may depict a subject in a negative light, its accuracy may be questioned. Kendrick Oliver (2006) addresses this concept in his account of the My Lai Massacre of 1968. While reading this text, I was not sure which of the following shocked me the most. First, I was horrified to learn that American soldiers committed horrendous acts of murder and torture. These are actions I have historically attributed to "other" nations during war.

After chastising my own bias and ethnocentrism, I then questioned why I had never heard of this before. In my numerous prior history classes, of which a large part of the subject matter was the Vietnam War, this topic was omitted. Lastly, through Oliver's text, I realized I was not alone in my feelings. After the actions of Lt. William Calley and his unit were made public, the media of the time found that of those interviewed many did not believe the accounts of the My Lai Massacre presented in the media. Even more shocking was that after a significant amount of media coverage Lt. Calley was viewed as a victim rather than the perpetrator of crimes, and over time the My Lai Massacre became erased from American consciousness. Oliver asserts that this erasure was the result of a society that was already divided over Vietnam and to question the actions of one of their own would go against the Doctrine of Exceptionalism prevalent in American culture.

Subsequent research has found similar accounts in the history textbooks of other cultures. Peled-Elhanan's (2010) analysis of Israeli school books showed that the Din Yassin, Kibya, and Kaffer Kassim massacres of Palestinian citizens and refuges after the establishment of the Israeli state were depicted as "successful military operations" or "routine battles" (p. 378). Using van Dijk's view on legitimation as "attributing acceptability to social actors, actions and social relations within the normative order," Peled-Elhanan suggests one of the reasons for using certain speech acts to justify these actions is to protect the normative order of the Jewish majority as the victors. The massacres became trivialized as routine military actions used to protect Jewish citizens and rationalized as part of a war that was necessary for the betterment of the Jewish people.

From the perspective of social psychology, a group's national history is influential in gaining collective support. Smeekes, Verkuyten, and Poppe (2011) found that history plays a part in the creation of a collective identity, and when new narratives surface that threaten this identity the information may be discredited as it runs contrary to the individual need for "self- continuity" (p. 267). In a similar vein, Sonnenberg (2011) found that individuals tended to downplay and/or reconstruct the negative history of a group in order to maintain a positive sense of identity. When this is not possible, an individual's self-esteem is negatively affected. Taking this into account, a revised version of a group's history may be seen as a psychological vehicle to justify ones identity and actions. Lastly, in addition to maintaining a positive identity, history may be used as a symbol of an idealized past that an individual or group may wish to reclaim. Melleuish, Sheiko, and Brown (2009) argue that history is used as a reference point for modern concerns, "concerns can include national identity, fears of global catastrophes or perhaps a desire that the world should be a more wondrous and magical place than it actually is" (p. 1485).

From the White Nationalist perspective, a revised history may be one vehicle used to construct the rhetorical vision of an idealistic, white society that White Nationalists so eagerly yearn for. On the other hand, pseudo histories are also created as a means to frame a political ideology in a favorable light. For example, the common White Nationalist belief of a Zionist conspiracy, or a Jewish controlled conspiratorial government (typically referred to by White Nationalists as ZOG), is history reinterpreted through a White Nationalist lens and is used to help promote fear among potential future and current White Nationalists. White Nationalists create their own history of certain

historical events in order to mitigate the atrociousness of their past actions in hopes of weakening the stigma mainstream society attributes to White Nationalism. Raphael Cohen-Almagor (2008) writes of one such action: Holocaust Denial. Cohen-Almagor claims that Holocaust Denial is more than just denying a particular reality: "Holocaust denial assumes a form of legitimacy to racism in an evil manifestation, under the guide of the pursuit of truth…it speaks of an international Jewish conspiracy to blackmail Germany and other nations to exploit others and to create Israel" (p. 216). John C. Knechtle (2008) cites the two types of rhetoric found in Holocuast Denial: Negationists and Revisionists. Negationists assert that the Holocaust never happened, while Revisionists accede to its existence; however, its scope is called into question. No matter which view is presented, each depiction casts the Jewish race in an unfavorable light, a gross understatement, and continues to value one race or group of individuals in a place of superiority. Shermer and Grobman's (2002) state that with internet access so many individuals are allowed to speak for the past that the lines of fact and fiction become blurred. The result becomes a transmission and acceptance of a false history that can lead to enhancing extremist, racist ideology (p. 5). The effortless ability to transmit knowledge has allowed false histories to be associated with the traditionally accepted definition of history as objective fact.

Deborah Lipstadt (1994) provides a detailed account of the evolution of Holocaust denial and presents some examples of how and why it evolved. According to Lipstadt, after the atrocities of World War II and the Holocaust, neo-fascists recognized the stigma that was associated with the term Fascism. For this reason, holocaust denial became a tool to strengthen their ideology: "If the public could be convinced that the

Holocaust was a myth, then the revival of national socialism could be a feasible option"
(p. 104). Denial became a tactical move to gain publicity in hopes of strengthening their
ideology. However, this denial became so entrenched in White Supremacist ideology,
that the lines have become unclear as to which "truth" is historically accurate. One of the
ways in which Holocaust denial became popular was through the publication of literature
that was published under seemingly authoritative and legitimate sources. One of the most
popular, Richard Harwood's *Did Six Million Really Die? The Truth at Last* was published
in the scholarly style and falsely claimed a connection to the University of London.
Harwood's work sold over a million copies. Although after the publication was found to
be based on fraudulent information and Harwood's credentials were rebuked, this work
and similar versions remain as legitimating authority for Holocaust deniers.

While Holocaust Denial is a major component of White Nationalist revisionist
discourse, it is not the only one. However, the argumentation techniques present in Denial
discourse can be used as a guide for alternative revisionist narratives. Techniques such as
citing "legitimate" sources, countering the evidence with alternative pieces of proof, and
re-evaluating the key actors in history, all become mainstays of revisionist rhetoric. In the
following analysis, I will discuss Holocaust Denial and other, common White Nationalist
historical interpretations to locate these common threads running through revisionist
discourse.

Current Research

Two historical events can be viewed as the major catalysts for White Nationalism:
the Civil War and World War II. Although other historical events have played a role in
the formation of this ideology, both of these wars are violent representations of what can

occur when a large group, nation, or the like overtly expresses support for the inequality and oppression of another group. Furthermore, these wars resulted in a gradual change toward equality in the political and social landscape. The Civil War marked the end of slavery, and World War II brought the concepts of xenophobia and genocide to American consciousness. In both instances, the countries involved have taken strides to enact legislation to make amends for these actions; monuments and museums have been erected as a symbolic apology to the victims and as a reminder of the catastrophic consequences that can result from inequality. While this has taken longer in some areas of the country, in particular the South where Civil War history becomes engrained in Southern identity, society is aware of the negative connotations that are associated with these events. In both instances, a clear hero and villain, and good and evil are present. No longer accepting its role as the villain, the White Nationalist continues to (re)produce their interpretations of past events.

Using these two historical events to guide this research, I located the most popular and relevant Stormfront threads as my units of discourse: Top 10 Reasons why the Holocaust didn't Happen (5 star, sticky thread with 678 posts and 213, 608 views); Bombing of German Cities during WW II (4 star, sticky thread with 784 posts and 140, 705 views); and Confederate States of America (5 star, sticky thread with 1,291 posts and 109, 727 views). These threads are presented in a similar format as the others with ten posts per page. For each thread, I took a sample of approximately 200 posts and conducted a Critical Discourse Analysis of each.

As with the field of science, historians strive for a similar objectivity and accuracy in the reporting of actors and events in the past: "historians are said to succeed if they

bring back the facts without distorting them or forcing a new perspective on them"

(Davidson & Lytle, 2000, p. xvii). These facts are then presented to society, typically

through a textbook and in an educational institution, and accepted as fact. While such

diligence and precision is to be commended, the very nature of history as something in

the past prohibits the creation of the wholly unaltered historical narrative. Furthermore,

since textbooks provide the basis for most of society's historical knowledge, the

information is limited. The whole story is not given, and as with any narrative genre is

prone to revision and may succumb to social and political structures to present history in

such a way as to favor an individual, group, nation or the like. Considering that history,

like science, is designed to hide its ideological and socially constructed nature,   CDA

acts as an effective method to locate the various social and individual cognitions present

in historical discourse.

      As for my methodology, I analyzed these threads in a manner similar to that of the

previous chapter. After inserting a selection of each thread's posts in the Dedoose

program (March 2013), I analyzed each text to determine the presence of any overarching

themes and/or discursive strategies. Once these became apparent, I coded each post for

the following:

1. Reference to External Source
    a. With link and/or presence of bibliographic information?
    b. Indirect reference: Inclusion of author and/or title
    c. Type of Source? Government/Official? Academic (designated by .edu domain name and/or academic publication); Other? (determined by clicking on the link or searching the title to determine type of publication); Promoting White Nationalism ideology?
2. Expressions of alternative arguments/evidence
3. Expressions of Affirmation: For example, "I agree," "well said" and "so true".
4. Presence of language asserting credibility: "evidence," "fact," "proof," etc.
5. Presence of language negating credibility: "lie," "hoax," "swindle," "alleged," "scam," etc.

6. Presence of language suggesting the existence of an academic, liberal, and/or Jewish conspiracy: For example, the incorporation of terms such as "true historian" or "Holohoax"
7. Presence of language suggesting government conspiracy: For example, the use of terms such as "ALLies,", "Butcher Harris" and/or "Federal Beast"
8. A tone of absurdity: The incorporation of phrases such as "That's ridiculous/illogical/false" and/or the presence of language suggesting a gross exaggeration of the evidence presented

The text within quotation marks and in block quotes represents the Stormfront discourse verbatim. Names and identifying text was removed to protect posters' privacy.

"Top 10 Reasons why the Holocaust didn't Happen"

Official Sources, Lack of Evidence, and the Ridiculous. As the name suggests, this thread consists of the Holocaust Denial discourse that research has found popular among White Nationalists. However, this title may be a misnomer. To the White Nationalist, it is a matter of semantics. More specifically, the members of this thread do not deny that any Jewish people were killed during World War II; the crux of the matter is the term Holocaust:

> I've never come across any serious person that denies that Jews died in Nazi custody, what many people on this side of the ideological divide dispute is the systematic murder of millions of Jews on what could be termed an "industrial" scale, the available evidence and plain common sense refute the notion of a genocide. What offends me is the fact that White people who are remote from these allegations both in terms of time passed and their lack of historical participation in the European war are forced to accept on blind faith alone the self serving viewpoint of the Holocaust "historians".

According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Holocaust "was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime" and was named from the Greek word meaning to "sacrifice by fire" (http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005143). While this may be the popular definition for the atrocities that occurred during World

War II, the White Nationalist vehemently contests the number of victims. By reducing the number of victims, the White Nationalist seeks to downplay the genocide to mere casualties of war.

In order to legitimate this belief, 41% of the posts discuss a lack of physical or scientific evidence for the Holocaust. Although this takes a variety of forms, including questioning the lack of teeth and bone in remains, the crux of the argument surrounds the use of cremation in Nazi Jewish extermination. Of these posts, 40 posts call the readers' attention to the purported impossibility of German ability to cremate this number of people in the time allotted. As basis for their support, these posters link to and reference information found on modern crematorium websites. For example, one author states the following:

> Let's visit that 1,900 jews a day figure again. That breaks down to 1.3 jews per minute, minimum. If you look here http://www.funeralassistant.com/cons...tion.htm#Crem3 or here http://rukfuneralhome.com/qa/cremationfaqs#howlong you will see that in a modern day, highly efficient crematory that runs on natural gas with an afterburner, it takes anywhere from 2-5 hours to cremate a single corpse. Using the low side of 2 hours, they would have needed a minimum of 93 cremation muffles running 24/7 for 14 months. But wait! They didn't use 'ovens' at Treblinka, they burned 800,000 bodies on outdoor 'roasters' like this http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/...gl1model32.jpg Try taking a standard oven rack and put it on cement blocks stacked 3 high on each side, hell go for 6 high for a 4' fire pit. Then stack about 10 bone-in hog legs on it and see not only how much wood it takes you to burn them to ash, but how long it takes.

This post is reminiscent of other posts discussing cremation in two ways. First, it is common for each post to present a mathematical breakdown of bodies per minute in the modern cremation process. The detail and accuracy of the methodology situates the discussion in a seemingly objective and rational context. Furthermore, inserting terms

like "modern" call the readers' attention to time of the Holocaust and reinforce the White

Nationalist belief that to carry out such an extermination would be impossible.

While funeral home references were popular, the most popular references

occurred indirectly and through hyperlinks and were attributed to some type of "official"

source. Source referrals occur in 38% of the posts and fall under two categories:

Governments and/or governing structures and outside sources that promote Holocaust

denial. In order to bolster the White Nationalist argument citing a lack of evidence for the

Holocaust, posters used the silence found in governmental reports to strengthen their

denial:

> The IRC had access to ALL the German camps (Our valiant Soviet ally denied
> them access to ANY of theirs). The report goes into excruciating detail. It even
> reports the exact number of packages delivered. As I recall, it was nearly TEN
> MILLION packages, and the IRC gives the exact number. Not round off to the
> nearest thousand, or the nearest hundred, but the EXACT number. That report
> says the total number of deaths from all causes in the camps was less than
> 300,000,the majority occurring in 1945, after the allies had destroyed the
> Germans transportation system, making proper care of the prisoners impossible.
> Several years ago, the International Red Cross, succumbing to the power of the
> victorious jews, released a statement repudiating the post war report. People who
> weren't even born at the time of the report said that the people who had actually
> lived and worked in the camps got it all wrong. Now, that, my friend is POWER!

This report is frequently referenced throughout the posts and seeks to shed light on a lack

of witness testimony as well as suggesting a larger conspiracy behind what the White

Nationalist calls the Holocaust Myth. In a similar vein, 16 posts reference the omission of

gas chambers in World War II texts by Allied Leaders Winston Churchill, Charles de

Gaulle, and Dwight Eisenhower. A fact to which one Stormfront responder wrote:

"Which seems typical of our people today, they just can't consider ideas that are in

contradiction to their PC programming, not even to save their lives they just can't do it."

As this quote suggests, not only is the Holocaust a lie with no evidentiary basis, but it is also just another way the media has manipulated society to perpetuate white guilt.

A sort of lie by omission, Stormfront posters assert that what is not being said is the most important. For this reason, several Stormfront posters reference external White Nationalist and Holocaust Denial sources 28 times in their attempt to reveal the "truth." Only one of these sources was explicitly stated as Holocaust Denial source through its domain name: http://www.holocaustdenialvideos.com/. In order to determine that the remaining sources were biased, I had to navigate to each source. In some instances even these were not obvious, and I had to conduct further research about the organization involved. It is important to note here that only by having conducted prior research on White Nationalism was I able to determine the apparent bias on these sites. To an unsuspecting audience, a casual observer, or one who does not take the time to click on each link, these would not be obvious. Thus, each source reference has the potential to hold significant weight as it appears to represent a larger support base for Holocaust Denial.

Stormfront users appear to use these "official" sources, official in that they have a tangible object documenting their findings, as a means to combat the eyewitness testimony that is consistently used to support Holocaust extermination. Aware of the fact that Holocaust survivors provide much of the narrative present in modern Holocaust discourse, Stormfront posters recognize the need to delegitimize these sources by denying their credibility. Occurring in 26 posts, Stormfront users discredit, and in some instances mock, survivor and World War II soldier narratives that testify to the extermination of the Jewish people: "Ever notice how you can't swing a dead cat without hitting someone

whose grampa liberated one of the camps-- but never ever do you meet anyone whose

loved one fought in the war and has stories to tell about certain other events that

occurred?"

To discredit these sources, Stormfront discourse relies on the argument that it is

impossible for anyone to witness 6 million people die:

> The toughest barrier I've come into contact with in the discussion of the holocaust
> being a hoax is that everyone seems to have a relative who 'saw it'. This is
> illogical. No one man was capable of seeing nine trillion jews die, nor could any
> have ever seen anything worse (in the form of "extermination") than inmates
> being shot, but one must sympathize -- in that environment, seeing those images,
> the mind just tries to find a way to cope and perhaps the simplest remedy is to
> believe a common fib that is distributed in hopes that one can put the events
> behind them. As a result of this psychological trauma, the events can appear
> ruthlessly truthful to someone who liberated a camp. The condition of the camps
> were hell at the end of the war and I pity anyone who had to witness those
> conditions. There's a generalization that old people are set in their ways and there
> are definitely events, that some of these heroes have seen, that they would prefer
> to keep compartmentalized in the recesses of their minds, than rather relive those
> horrors. It's a conundrum, as this requires that for the relative of this hero to see
> the truth, they must second guess the wisdom of an aged loved one, which is a
> very uncomfortable thing to do.

Disregarding the time table and the means by which the extermination took place, this

illogical line of reasoning is repeated throughout the posts and further highlights the

significance of the number of victims in Holocaust Denial. Once again, this was not

genocide, but a consequence of war. These posts do not deny the existence of

concentration camps, but these are presented as prisoner of war camps. The deaths that

did occur, numbers ranging from 100,000 to 1 million victims, occurred because of the

scarcity of resources during the war and the spread of disease. The only burning that

occurred during this time was of blankets, clothes, and the like to stop the spread of

disease. To take it a step further, these posts suggest it is not the German people who are

to blame for the deaths in the concentration camps, but the Allied Powers whose bombings blocked the railways preventing resources to get to the concentration camps.

The Stormfront "evidence" is presented with an assertive tone, and the word choice is one of absolution. There is an exaggerated presence of authoritative language in the discourse supporting Holocaust Denial For example, the posts reference "fact," "truth," "evidence," "proof," and "legitimate" a total of 187 times. What occurs more frequently, however, is the overuse of terms striving to undermine Holocaust discourse. For example, the term "lie" is used 301 times, "hoax" 22 times, and when supporting Holocaust evidence is presented, it is presented within quotation marks. Posts also illustrate a need to minimize the historical importance of the Holocaust by altering its name and those associated with it with derogatory and mocking terms. To name a few, I found each of the following present in this thread: "Holocash," "Holohoax," "The Big Lie," "The Great Swindle," the Holyhoax," the "Holyco$t," and "Anne Frank Liary."

As these pejorative terms for the Holocaust suggest, the majority of these posts are dedicated to presenting "objective" facts and alternative reasons for deaths in the attempt to redefine and discredit the Holocaust (73%). Further seeking to discredit the Holocaust, there is a high amount of mocking and ridicule in this thread. This occurs through these types of name changes as well as speech acts that suggest it is preposterous to believe in the Holocaust. In these posts, Stormfront users use phrases such as "that's nonsense," "Why in the world would they do that," or "You are kidding, right? as a means to urge the reader to question his or her beliefs by placing them in the realm of the ridiculous. For example, what follows is a conversation between one poster (out of the two) that attempted to oppose the arguments of this thread and another Stormfront user:

Initial Post: My grandfather himself flew B-17's in World War 2 in Germany, so don't try and say the holocaust never happened. there are people alive today who survived it and have their stories to tell. Don't say they read a ****load of propaganda to say this stuff, because they were there.
Reply: I flew aircraft over the Arctic, so I tell you: SANTA CLAUS IS REAL!

Other examples include the following:

1. But hey, maybe nazis used superheated plasma to burn the victims?
It would take less than a second for each victim.
Reptilian and grey aliens were working with the nazis and gave them this technology along with flying saucers. Anyone remember the story about the "Electric conveyor belt" that instantly vapourised human beings? I don't have a source for that one but I believe it may have been mentioned in One Third Of The Holocaust.
2. They did not happen, because they could not have happened. It's cow jumped-over-the-moon preposterous, and every single crematory operator on the planet will tell you this.
3. Why would the Germans brand people who they intended to exterminate? Or cut their hair, for that matter? They needed the hair for uh...Submarine booties.
Or women's mattresses. Or sweaters, depending on which eyewitness you believe.

Government Conspiracy, White Guilt, and the Jewish Victim. In the legal world, there are two parts to every crime: the action and the intent. Whereas the previous analysis questions the legitimacy of the evidence and actions that occurred in concentration camps, this section illustrates what Stormfront users believe to be the motivation behind the "Big Lie." One hundred and forty-three posts (71%) allude to a Holocaust conspiracy that suggests Zionist controlled governments and leaders exaggerated the Holocaust as a means to divert society's attention away from their role in World War II:

At the end of the war, everybody was talking about the huge numbers dead civilians who had been trapped and cooked by the saturation firebombings by Britain and the US, of the cities of Germany. The incendiary bombs, (precursers to napalm), followed by so-called "Blockbuster Bombs", (precursers to the MOAB), and finally, the peppering of civilian targets by timed-explosives. There was just no way to shut up all the talk of the concept of mass burning, (holocaust),

of defenseless civilians by allied bombs, except by quickly inventing a "Nazi-Holocaust" to cover it. The idea was to convince everyone that the civilian populations of the Axis Powers only got what they deserved and it was OK to slaughter them, no matter how gruesomely.

Furthermore, these posts suggest that the Holocaust is a means to instill White guilt and promote the Zionist agenda. As one Stormfront user writes, "Only the Jew won World War II."

This shocking statement is repeated in various forms throughout the posts. Stormfront discourse suggests that the Jewish people have over-exaggerated the Holocaust, in particular the gas chambers, in order to build sympathy and instill guilt. The main reason for this is to gain power:

> As a result of the West German reparations program, wrote Jewish historian Walter Laqueur: The ships laden with German capital goods began to call at Haifa regularly and unfailingly, becoming an important -- ultimately decisive -- factor in the building up of the country. Today (writing in 1965) the Israeli fleet is almost entirely "made in Germany", as are its modern railway equipment, the big steel foundry near Acre, and many other enterprises. During the 50's and early 60's about one third of investment goods imported into Israel came from Germany...In addition to all this, many individual Israelis received restitution privately.

In addition to casting doubt through the perpetuation of conspiracy theories, these posts posit that governmental recognition of the Holocaust manipulates the public into succumbing to white guilt. When this occurs, it is not the Jewish population that is the victim, but those who have accepted the brainwashing of the government. As one Stormfront user writes, "Only the victors can write the history books." This language of victimization occurs throughout these posts and is only used when referencing non-Jewish individuals. When not referenced directly as a victim (27 instances), these posts incorporate elements of pity and manipulation in the discourse. For example, 57 posts

suggest that those who accept the Holocaust are the victim of a lie that is used to weaken

white identity:

> White folks who no longer have an identity of their own, adopt another, becoming
> wiggers, meth-heads or even judeo-christians.
> White Guilt teaches self-hatred and must be augmented by a positive focus on
> another, unreachable, group identity. If I believe I am inherently bad, then I will
> try to make amends by embracing someone or something good. The culture of
> what we are led to believe is the culture of a jew or a bantu, for instance.

Holocaust believers are further described as "brainwashed," part of a "hysteria" and/or

have fallen prey to "PC programming."

In addition to the government and the "Jewish Mafia" held accountable for this

victimhood, 16 posts state the lack of "true historians" to blame and 7 blame the schools

for not presenting all of the "facts." For example, one Stormfront mother writes the

following:

> Anne Frank. Most people have heard about Anne Frank. Well it's BS. Anne Frank
> and her father were chosen to work in Auschwitz. However Anne Frank caught
> Typhoid in Spring of 1945. She remained at Auschwitz, when the Germans
> abandoned the camp. She was left behind in a hospital wing, where she died. She
> was not killed in a gas chamber. Now Her father Otto Frank, also believed to be
> killed in the gas chamber, was actually transferred to another camp, when the
> Germans abandoned. He died in Switzerland of old age, in the year 1980.This is
> the biggest lie we are taught in schools. They teach us this, because children will
> align themselves with Anne Frank, as she was only 14 or 16 when she died.
> Children will think, she was only a few years older than us, when the Nazis
> exterminated her. If the school system told the truth, children wouldn't be as
> interested, and would not care about this subject.

The story of Anne Frank is taught to many. It not only provides a first-hand, historical

account of the Holocaust but also has a character many young readers can relate to

emotionally. However, after reading this post, it is not improbable that an uninformed

reader would view this passage as a sign that school systems are emotionally

manipulating young adults. Lastly, the idea of an intentionally falsified history goes

hand-in-hand with references to the intentional silencing of those who attempt to speak the "truth." In order to accomplish this, Stormfront users reference existing legislation that criminalizes Holocaust Denial as another piece of evidence. In the mind of the Stormfront user, if there was nothing to hide, why would such a law exist?

> Why is the history of the Jewish Holocaust the only thing in the western world that has legislation that throws people in jail for, not denying it, but even just revising it? Why are certain books banned? Why do we have museums commemorating it in countries where it did not take place? Is there no other event in history that has the same effect, especially in the case of other genocides!?

As can be found on other Stormfront threads, when separated and read in isolation, each post seems almost insignificant. However, when taken together each of these minor justifications for Holocaust Denial, no matter how trivial and/or absurd, gain in momentum. There is no hedging language; there is no open-ended discussion. When direct questions are asked, they are in regard to other posters' references only. Since these are typically accompanied by a "thank you" and "great post" this is presumably so the reader can advance their Holocaust Denial repertoire. In the two instances where one poster dared to contradict the ideology of the thread, 25 posters immediately bombarded them with their "facts" and "evidence." This was followed by ridicule and/or labeling the poster a troll, noob, or anti and took on a more aggressive tone. As such, there is little room for questioning; even to do so would risk social isolation from the Stormfront group. This lack of room for negotiation makes is all the more important to dissect what discourses are being used and how they may be persuasive.

"Bombing of German Cities during WWII"

This thread continues the revisionist attempt to transfer victim status from the Jewish people to the white man; more specifically, it strives to alleviate the "White guilt"

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that Stormfront members view as the ZOG attempt to have power. While the previous

thread seeks to undermine the Holocaust by calling into question the "evidence," this

thread (re)constructs the World War II narrative by asserting that the real victim of World

War II was Germany. In a style similar to the prior thread, this discourse uses the

Stormfront interpretation of World War II events to play the "Numbers Game." As with

the Holocaust discourse, this thread focuses on the number of casualties of the war for the

purpose of transferring blame and arousing pity from the audience.

   Innocent German Civilians: "Dresden is the real Holocaust." Throughout the

200 posts coded in this thread, the most prominent theme by far was the focus on

"unnecessary violence" toward German cities in World War II. Of the 200 posts, 104

referenced unnecessary violence toward Germany by Allied forces. While there is

acknowledgement throughout the discourse that the intentional, unnecessary destruction

of cities occurred on both sides of the War, this discourse vehemently asserts that the

Allied powers used unnecessary force and participated in "dishonorable" and "cowardly"

actions:

> Once Britain Declared war on Germany, refused all of the many almost fawning
> peace offers from Germany (most not revealed until recently), had begun terror
> bombing of German civilians en mass, Germany, which had strictly prohibited
> such activities previously, went into the terror business itself. Even then, with the
> weapons you mention, the amount of explosives delivered by these rather
> expensive means were very small compared to Britain's terror campaign which
> had increased to a crescendo against a beaten enemy by war's end. Dishonorable.
> Well, when Fleet Street Jews and their accomplices are running the country and
> poisoning minds, what else could one expect?

The majority of the references to unnecessary violence center on incidences of Allied

bombings that targeted German cities and civilians. These posts unanimously agree that

Hitler refused to bomb Allied cities with a large citizen population, and it was only once

Britain began their "terror campaign" that Hitler was forced to retaliate. The most prominently referenced attack is the Dresden attack that occurred on the night of February 13 until the morning of the 14th in 1945. Although research from the Air Historical Branch and the Air Ministry War Room Monthly Summary of Bombing Command Operations shows that the Dresden bombings only ranked 10th for incendiary bombs and had fewer casualties than Hamburg or Tokyo in a single night, the discourse of Stormfront references Dresden 157 times calling it "the real Holocaust."

What are perhaps the most significant points made in the Dresden references are the number of civilian victims and the loss of cultural heritage. For example, one Stormfront poster writes:

> Who wages war like that and pretends it is honorable? How can you defend it? Nobody claims the Germans were faultless! However, even by your reasoning, does one crime deserve another crime of equal or greater magnitude? If your rotten neighbor runs down your dog, do you wait until he's gone and blow up his house with his wife and kids in it to "get even" and then make up an excuse to make it sound like you are a hero? So Germany bombed Rotterdam and Poland therefore England just had to destroy every vestige of Germany's cultural history, no, Europe's cultural history?

Although in scholarly sources the number of the victims ranges from 20,000 to 250,000, the Stormfront users consistently reference the highest number given and attribute these findings to David Irving's published book *The Destruction of Dresden* (Biddle, 2008). Not surprisingly, David Irving is also a prominent historian of Holocaust Denial. Of the sources cited, Irving is referenced 14 times and is heralded as the authority on the subject. In fact, when a poster interjects and questions the severity of the British bombing of Dresden with the German bombing of Warsaw, one poster responds: "Not according to David Irving, forgive me for not being a historian but I trust him more than I trust you."

Although the number of German victims is frequently referenced (at one point it was up to 10,000,000), what is most significant is the discourse that accompanies the posts. In the true narrative fashion, the discourse depicts this night in Dresden in the form of an avoidable tragedy brought about by a ruthless bully. It is a tale of the British villain verses unsuspecting women and children; it is a cowardly act of revenge upon a helpless country; it is dishonorable overkill. In six instances, Stormfront posters even insert YouTube hyperlinks to add a visual element to this narrative. While Dresden is the most popular of the German bombings discussed, similar narratives are incorporated into the discourse of the bombings of Lubeck, Hamburg, and Berlin. The focus of the discourse being the intentional "murdering" of innocent civilians.

At the lexical level, Stormfront posters use highly charged, emotional and normative language to describe the Dresden raid. For example, the Allied Forces (sometimes labeled the All-lies) are referenced as "murderers" 27 times. Various forms of "to kill" are used 108 times. Rather than using the military language of "assaults," "casualties" or "victim", the Stormfront discourse shifts the perspective from one of war to an intentional massacre where the British and American forces used unnecessary brute force. To further foster this image of a brutish Britain, the discourse refers to the victims as "civilians" 188 times. These are also not just civilians, but mainly children (42 references), women (31 references) and the elderly (3 references). Furthermore, these women and children were not just "murdered" but burned alive: "Unextinguishable phosphorus, napalm and incendiaries were dropped on women, children, old men and refugees. These innocent people were burned alive or cooked to death." Lastly, Stormfront posts also include the non-human victims of the German bombings- animals.

While these references are minimal, four posters discuss the destruction of the Berlin zoo.

What can be inferred as an attempt to arouse sympathy is further used to emphasize the

Stormfront interpretation of a barbaric, uncivilized Allied force:

> One of the most horrifying had to be the Berlin zoo story... which I have to say is
> one of the most repulsive examples of psychological torture that I have ever heard
> of. Since times were rough and food scarce the community worked together to
> make sure that the much loved zoo animals managed to still get enough to eat.
> Children would walk along railroad tracks hand picking armfuls of grass and
> families would save various scraps which could be fed to the animals. Well, the
> German peoples love and dedication towards their zoo animals infuriated the
> enemy so much that one night in the dead of winter they purposely fire bombed
> the zoo just to punish the people and further attempt to break their spirit. Some
> animals trapped in their cages roasted alive while others who managed to escape
> bolted into the streets screaming in agony and running as their burning skin and
> flesh fell from their bodies. Soldiers had to be called in to shoot the animals as
> crying parents desperately tried to hold back their hysterical children.

This incorporation of pathos does not end with the living victims. In addition to

this death toll, Stormfront posts cite the destruction of Germanic culture and White

heritage as another inexcusable act of the Allies. Having already noted the importance of

a White identity to White Nationalists, this is unsurprising. To the Stormfront poster, this

cultural heritage is what sets their race apart from the others. It is why they deem

themselves superior. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for this discourse to allude to a

past that is now destroyed; a past that White Nationalists yearn for and struggle to

reclaim by furthering separatism between the white race and non-whites and "race

traitors." Of the Stormfront posts coded, 41 refer to a loss of culture and heritage. For

example, when one of the two individuals that attempt to claim that other cities received

similar destruction because of "gratuitous" bombing, this reply was made:

> What about the intentional destruction of European culture? Nürnberg, Bayreuth,
> the centuries old castles, cathedrals, medieval villages and ancient libraries, one
> after the other... Bach's, Goethe's and Durer's birth houses, Martin Luther
> landmarks, Leipzig's ancient book district? Only three medieval German cities

remained, for the most part, undestroyed at the end of war. 190 others were lost. "Mistakes"? The "bombers just weren't that accurate then"? Any of those other excuses and justifications never awarded to German bombing runs but always to Allied terror bombing?

In this instance, the reply not only shifts the conversation back to the thread's original intent, to claim Germany as the "true" victim, but also alludes to notable and admirable German figures whose contributions are well known and loss would presumably be missed.

The Allied Conspiracy: All-lies and the "Butcher" Harris. In a further attempt to solidify this sense of "white victimization," Stormfront posters situate certain historical events within an overarching Jewish conspiracy. Pfau (2005) defines conspiracy as "the secret cooperation for the achievement of some base design" (p.1). Using this definition as a guide, Stormfront discourse is fraught with conspiracy discourse. To the outsider, this discourse seems to embody what Richard Hofstadter labels the "paranoid style." The Stormfront poster forcefully expresses the belief that conspiracy not only exists but seeks to eliminate white identity. To the poster, this is not an irrational fear. It is justifiable. And, more importantly, to fight it is a righteous and worthy cause.

While conspiracies and paranoid ramblings exist in all types of discourse, what I find to be the most prominent feature of Stormfront discourse is not the conspiracy itself. In this thread, there are 71 references to conspiratorial, intergovernmental dealings between the Allied parties. In some instances the intentional fraud of the Allied governments is presented subtly though word choice. For example, the Allies are referred to as "All-lies" or labeled with other normative terms such as "evil," "deceitful," or "war criminals." The word "lie" is used 272 throughout these posts. In other instances, this deception is presented through the narrative of a peaceful Hitler and power hungry Allied

force. In these posts, it was Hitler that desired peace; it was the Allies who not only

started the war but did so for economic gain and power regardless of harm to civilians:

> In short: England declared war, bombed German cities first, really started bombing German cities when the LW was slowly knocking out the RAF airfields, England then claims Germany bombed other nations cities first, so it's Ok to target cities, Germany responds and hits back at English cities. What makes the bombing of Germany so criminal is that it was the aim of certain leaders to kill as many civilians as could be killed. These were bright, racially aware people, that in itself is a great tragedy. You will not find any orders from Germany that told the LW to only target areas that would kill as many people as possible. It was only late in the war when so many tens of thousands of Germans (even French, Belgium, Holland, Norway, and Italians who also were killed in allied bombing) that Germany really ok bomb/rocket attacks on civilians. So cry all you want about those bad evil nazis, tell us how they foamed at the mouth trying to kill babies and old people. Tell us how Hitler planed to eradicate England and kill everyone, tell us how Germany started it all and only got what she deserved. Tell us how Germany was the bully and poor little England was only defending our rights and freedom (we haven't heard that one before) by standing up to big bad ol naziland. Keep the beat going, all the while Europe is overrun by our enemies all brought about by the all-lied victory.

The key actors in this grand conspiracy to destroy white heritage and perpetuate world

"Jewry" were Winston Churchill and British Commander in Chief Sir Arthur Harris.

Churchill is called a "lunatic would drop naplam on his mother's relatives" and Harris is

referenced as the "Butcher." Besides being described as violent sociopaths, Stormfront

posters assert that these men, and other members of the Allied forces, intentionally lied to

the public about Hitler's desire for peace in order to secure financial power no matter the

cost. Furthermore, despite the Holocaust, 16 of these conspiracy posts suggest that the

Jewish banking system backed the war in order to secure reparations in the future while

simultaneously annihilating white heritage:

> The rise of National Socialism in Germany alarmed the Jewish community on a global basis, Jewish leaders have a long history of taking out even the slightest threat to their people, take a look at the Czar and his family in Russia, they were murdered by the Jewish invaders of Russia in an event popularly known as the Russian Revolution. The Czarist powers ruled Russia for centuries, but the Czars

were anti-Semitic in the eyes of the Jews so they took action against them. Adolf Hitler was no exception to this rule, the Nazi party pushed Jews aside in Germany and this made Jews all over the world to lobby other Western bodies of political power to attack Germany on behalf of their fellow Jews. In fact, world Jewry declared war on Germany before any anti-Jewish laws were enacted in Nazi Germany. In conclusion, world war II was for the Jews and the barbaric behavior against the native European population was a result of the nature of Jewish hate for the West for centuries of anti-Semitic activities.

As with prior threads, the overall language in the discourse is one of absolution. There is no hedging. The history that the public is given is not that of a "true historian"- a concept referenced 39 times. Although outside sources are referenced, either indirectly or directly, only 43 times in all 200 posts, the text is similar to that of a history textbook. Written in the narrative style traditionally associated with historiography, the events are detailed and presented with an air of accuracy. The language is assertive and unwavering. The facts are presented as definitive proof of another history that is intentionally suppressed: "The truth about history has to be told so White Europeans can rise up from the chains of Judeo-brainwashing."

Lastly, this thread continues the use of accusations of the ridiculous for all those, whether present or not, that disagree with the arguments of these posts. In a highly sarcastic manner, 15% of the posts assert that it was not only impossible for Germany to have defended itself during the Dresden bombings (thus, it was murderous overkill) but also ridiculous to believe that. One of the most common ways this is accomplished is through the repetition of mocking questions. Frequently used to pre-empt a rebuttal, these posts include questions such as "As if they were still a threat" and "Do you see this?" In the instances when questions are not used, the posts present sarcastic commands in an attempt to immediately discredit any opposition:

1. Enjoy. Again. By the way, a great deal of my figures and facts also came directly from your RAF bomber command (http://www.raf.mod.uk/bombercommand/oct44.html) which you are free to peruse. Aw, shucks. That's no fun at all. So I'll throw in another example of RAF overkill. There are a few hundred. Just whistle if you want more.
2. Tell us all how they hated White people and culture, they started the war, they killed millions of our race. Tell yourself that as the Continent that our holy blood comes from is swarmed over by the east and the south. Blame Germany for it all too, maybe it was Hitler's (the devil) plan to start the war to kill as many whites as he could so Europe could turn into the new Middle East.

"Confederate States of America"

This thread, aptly named for its support of the Confederacy of the Civil War, is not as situated in the past one would think when reading the title. Although the primary focus is a revisionist interpretation of historical narratives, these narratives begin in the past and are carried to the present. These posts claim that the legitimacy of the Stormfront historical account of the Civil War is further proven by the fact that these problems still exist today- something that would not have occurred if the Confederacy had been victorious. If society had only believed the Confederate claims that the Union and Abraham Lincoln were fighting not on moral grounds but to gain economic and political power, then the Federal government would not have so much power today. A power the White Nationalists feel threatens their very identity.

The Federal Beast. There is a militaristic "us" verses "them" theme that runs throughout this thread. However, the "them" in this scenario is not what most would believe. To the mainstream student of history, the Civil War was about the North verses the South or the Union verses the Confederacy. The Stormfront discourse, on the other hand, paints a more complicated picture.

When perusing the AP College Board's teacher and student guides, I never saw some of the arguments presented on this Stormfront thread. Having lived in Tennessee

and South Carolina, I am not unfamiliar with the oft stated Confederate claim that the

Civil War was not about slavery but about states' rights. Although the States' rights

argument is presented in the text (at several points individual posters state that only 5%

of the South owned slaves), it was only during this analysis that I had ever heard that

slavery was part of a Jewish agenda. Additionally, Stormfront posters feel this agenda is

one that has become so entrenched in our society that a second secession must occur.

Of the 202 posts coded, 45 (23%) alluded to some type of Jewish conspiracy or a

"Zionist Occupied Government" (hereinafter referred to as ZOG) behind the Civil War.

Using phrases such as the "Jewish Union" and the "Global Elite" as the true instigator of

the war, these posts suggest that the Civil War, as was World War II, was a ploy to

eliminate white Southerners, physically and culturally, in order to achieve economic

prosperity:

> The American Civil War, in a very real sense, was the continuation of the
> Revolutionary war fought by our Founders against the Bank of England. The
> Civil War was planned in London by Rothschild who wanted two American
> democracies, each burdened with debt. Four years before the war (1857)
> Rothschild decided his Paris bank would support the South, represented by Sen.
> John Slidell, JEW, from Louisiana; while the British branch would support the
> North, represented by August Belmont (Schoenberg) JEW, from New York. The
> plan was to bankroll, at usurious interest rates, the huge war debts that were
> anticipated, using that debt to extort both sides into accepting a Rothschild
> central-banking system similar to the one that had bled (and is bleeding) the
> nations of Europe, keeping them in conditions of perpetual war, insolvency and at
> the mercy of JEW speculators.

Even the presence of the words "Jew" and/or "Jewish" in the threads, used a total of 104

times, greatly exaggerates the presence of an Semitic conspiracy in the Civil War: "Fact:

the decent white majority NEVER wanted slavery; it was forced upon them by greedy

psychopaths among us and among the Jew merchants."

Contradicting mainstream interpretations of Civil War history, this added element

gives the discourse what it needs to connect the Confederate ideology with the present.

The ZOG becomes a major reason for the loss of white heritage both during the Civil

War and at present. For those posts that do not have similar accompanying narratives

about a Jewish conspiracy and the Civil War, the discourse contains words and phrases

that White Nationalists commonly used to represent anti-Semitic ideology. While on the

surface these code words and phrases on the surface appear to blame non-racial entities

for the ills of society, they have a racial component. Entities such as the media and the

Federal government become the reason for the problem and not a particular race or races.

However, when one delves into the history and ideology of these groups and places these

words and phrases within the context of the discourse, the racial element reveals itself.

For this thread, the most commonly used phrase was the "Federal Beast." While this

phrase is not solely used by White Nationalists, it is also used by Conservative

Republicans, and its presence in the discourse of this thread contextualizes it within a

racist context. Used 18 times, the "Federal Beast" alludes to the crimes committed by the

federal (Union) government during the Civil War; crimes that continue to be committed

today:

> As far as I can tell, Lincoln considered each and every one of us the property of
> their Union Government, with the same going for every tree and blade of grass!
> For the sake of our Children, we must be free of the Federal Beast! We left their
> Union long ago, we must demand our Liberty and Self Determination. If we
> remain under the Iron Heel of their Union, our People will be utterly replaced by a
> flood of blood thirsty primitive savages. If we do not reclaim our Southern
> Homeland, where will our Children live? Until..and if and when we actually DO
> get a chance to reclaim our heritage..(since the Southrons have been demonized
> since long before the invasion by the north) the only recourse is to do as our
> ancestors requested of us.. That being to stay alive, keep our family's from being
> 're-constructed' and do what we can to beat the Feds at their own game.

In this instance, the "Federal Beast" represents a scapegoat that runs from the Civil War to the present. Additionally, it provides a justification for the White Nationalist desire for present day secession- protecting the children and securing white heritage. Throughout the thread, the term "children" is used 28 times. "Culture" and "heritage" are used 11 times and 17 times, respectively. The rhetorical importance of these terms is two-fold. On one hand, it shifts the justification for a new Confederate States of America from one seeped in racist history to one more altruistic—it is for the children. On the other, it provides a platform by which the speaker can manipulate the emotions of the audience in hopes of persuading another to adopt the White Nationalist cause.

Southern Affinity, the Evil Union, "Ape Lincoln," and the True Historian.
Unsurprisingly, the CSA thread is filled with Southern pride. Discourse about Southern heroes, the beauty of the Confederate flag, and individual posters inclusion of their Southern lineage appeared in 71 posts. General Robert E. Lee even received a shout out on his birthday from several posters. However, in addition to these simple praises of Southern tradition, the Southerner is depicted as a white, honorable, moral, and guided by principles *even in the face of death*:

1. The C.S.A. is one of the most honorable endeavors ever made by white Americans. It produced many White heroes, men who stood true to their principals, their race, and their God, and chose death before dishonor.
2. And that the Dixie flag is not about slavery or racism, but about historical pride in our folks, their bloodshed for independence and honor.
3. George Washington was a Southerner, a man of honor, a man of his word, just as any good Southerner.

These declarations of Southern affinity are further exaggerated when placed in opposition to the "Evil Union" discourse present in 45 posts. In a similar fashion to the evil Allied forces discourse in other threads, the Union soldiers represent the most dishonorable men

in society. Fighting not for freedom and/or moral reasons, the Union only fought because of greed and political power:

> Northern tyrants enslaved their own and immigrants alike to work in there factories for little or no pay in conditions far worse than any black slave could have subjected to, but they called that freedom? The war was started for one reason and one reason only, power mongers and greedy politicians wanted control.

Furthermore, the "evil Union" soldiers mistreated the women and children of the South, unnecessarily destroyed and stole Southerners' property, and mistreated Southern prisoners- the worst crime of all.

For this thread, the Union and Abraham Lincoln are synonymous. Lincoln is referenced in 32 posts, and he is not portrayed as the American hero and promoter of equality one may assume. According to Stormfront, Lincoln planned to ship all slaves back to Africa, and he only enacted the Emancipation Proclamation because he needed their support in the war effort. For example, the following are a few references found in the posts:

1. So, whenever I hear someone touting about our wonderful 'rights' and how the structure of the relation of states to the federal government, I have to say..."Well...it depends on where you lived, when Lincoln was king"
2. Obama with those huge feet and hands looks like Ol Abe II. Both ugly. Both destructive and Big Government. Both recently from Illinois, but not originally. Maybe he's "Ape" Lincoln reincarnated?
3. Lying Lincoln had his Federal Troops shoot down about 400 lawful protesters in those New York Draft Riots. He really did not care who he killed or what lies he told.
4. I read an article that Ape Lincolns last name was really Enlo or Enloe. I've also heard that his real father was a Jew.

In a similar fashion to the Jewish conspiracy discourse, these expressions of Southern pride and a dislike for the Union and Lincoln creates an "Us" verses "Them" binary that continues to exist in the mind of the Stormfront poster. However, it is important to

acknowledge that those expressing a Southern affinity were not all from the South.

Several of the posts were written by Northerners who sympathize with the Confederacy

because s/he feels oppressed by the "Federal Beast" and an "evil Union":

1. So long as folks down South understand that most of us Northerners aren't the same "Yankees" they crossed swords with in the late 19th century, and in truth we are brothers in the struggle to rid America of non-White influence and presence, I don't see why there needs to be a single bit of strife or conflict between us.
2. I live in Michigan and I am just as oppressed by this Federal Government as any Southerner. Believe it, Dixielanders.

This continuous opposition spurs the desire for re-establishment of the CSA and is

further supported by referencing outside sources and the "True Historian." Sixty posts

reference outside sources either through a link and/or bibliographic information with the

majority falling under two categories: newspapers and historical texts. In regard to the

newspapers sources, several link to present day articles whose subject matter consists of

political groups or individuals seeking to destroy Southern heritage (Confederate flag

removal from public buildings, license plates, etc.). The remaining newspaper articles

come from Civil War era Southern newspapers that recount horrible acts committed by

the Union forces. As for historical texts, the United States Constitution and books like

Thomas J. DiLorenzo's "The Real Lincoln" and "Lincoln Unmasked" are cited to

legitimate the actions of the CSA and to dispel the "Lincoln myth."

Attempting to expand their support base beyond the realm of White Nationalism,

the Stormfront posters of this thread continue with the reproduction of "true historian"

discourse. The idea of a "True Historian" is presented in 28 posts. These references

suggest to the reader that they are being duped by larger, structural forces, and the only

way to be free and secure their existence is to allow the "truth" to be exposed.

Furthermore, this theme of a "True Historian" adds credence to the idea of a

Federal/Jewish conspiracy because these are the groups responsible for disguising real

history for selfish gains at the expense of the white children:

1. I want those who claim to be aware to at least admit that the whole thing was a sham..and that history belongs to the victor..Look at how they are handling the history of the holocaust. Same thing. Same exact thing.
2. If you let your kids go to public school, it's a roll of the dice. it's possible to raise them with the truth..but it's a fight.
3. My daughter's wear the colors..(one has a Stars and Bars bedspread) and actually can repeat the truth if required to..I guess I am a fortunate man, because there are many whose children's minds have been 'captured' by the enemy. When I see one, I do my best to break them out and offer them the best chance at a sense of honor and heritage I can.

Just as in the other historical threads analyzed, these posts are written with an

authoritative tone. Rather than hedging the discourse (only found in one post), this is the

"true" history and to ignore it has immediate and dangerous implications. In fact, there

are conceptual similarities that further emphasize the importance of revisionist history to

the Stormfront poster. For example, the CSA thread compares the Confederacy to World

War II Germany 28 times. The Confederacy and Germany were both defeated and both

representative of honor and courage. Both were bullied by immoral forces to the

detriment of culture and future children. Both are misunderstood because of an evil,

political conspiracy. Neither is racist or full of hatred, and if society would open its eyes

this "truth" will be revealed.

"History is written by the victor." Historical discourse, no matter if it is a

popular textbook, a work of nonfiction, found on a website, or part of a discussion forum,

is always going to have gaps. In some instances, historical knowledge may create more

questions than it seems to answer. This is not to discredit history but only to call attention

to its particularities. Particularities that exist simply because of something it is-
something that happened in the past.

Acknowledging these characteristics of history, it is unsurprising that these threads had less outside source references and was more narrative in format. As something of the past, history is less likely to evolve as is science. The events already happened; they are not continuing to happen. However, just like science, historical data is collected in a similar method that asserts objectivity. Just like science, history seeps into other elements of life. It becomes part of our identity and how we identify others. It is impacted by the ideology of the researcher, society, and political pressure. This being said, before it is received as authoritative and as something proven, one must recognize what history is and how this brings forth certain limitations.

In this analysis, I find that the Stormfront poster not only recognizes the power of history and its role in garnering power and support but also recognizes the impact of negative history on a belief system. It is because of this power that these threads strive to mitigate, and in some instances erase, the negative histories associated with White Nationalism. Referencing outside sources depicts a seemingly larger support base. Conspiracy theories and the notion of a "true historian" suggest society has fallen prey to the baser instincts of certain groups. The villains are part of these groups, not White Nationalist; the White Nationalists are the good, the righteous, and the moral. If you do not believe this, just come and listen to this version of the story. I have proof, too. If you love your children, your culture, and respect your ancestors, you will. If you do not, then you are ridiculous.

Conclusion

For chapters 3 and 4, the overarching goal of Stormfront remains the same in spite of the differences and particularities between these sets of discourse. In an attempt to divert the audience from the stigma associated with White Nationalism, Stormfront users have adopted a mainstream script that follows current social norms. In chapter 3, science is used to advance the White Nationalist ideology through the incorporation of a socially acceptable and mainstream discourse that is granted high status. In chapter 4, authoritative historical discourses and mainstream mediated discourse are recontextualized to recast White Nationalists as the victims of inequality under a guise of legitimacy. Furthermore, both the science and revisionist threads use similar techniques (hyperlinking, source referral, etc.) and styles (assertions, legitimizing language, modality, etc.) to advance these arguments. Additionally, both threads incorporate external sources to their discourse, and this interdiscursivity gradually begins to chip away at the boundaries between extremist/hate/racist speech and mainstream discourse. In the next chapter, I will discuss how this blurring of the lines could impact society both online and off.

Chapter 5

Intertextuality: Setting the Stage for a Shared Language

"We must not forget that by listening to someone we display a willingness to eventually accept his point of view" (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, p.17).

In 1995, when only 14% of American adults used the internet, Stormfront creators recognized the internet's potential to reach a larger audience (Zikhur & Smith, 2012). As early adopters of internet technology, these individuals created what is now the most popular White Nationalist internet forum. No longer restrained by the temporal, economic, legal, and geographical limitations that accompany other mediums of communication, Stormfront users are able to create and re-create a seemingly infinite amount of information to spread their ideology. When combined with the other advantages that come with computer mediated communication (anonymity, collective identity, community building, etc.), that White Nationalists have chosen the internet as a preferred platform for communication is unsurprising.

As computer mediated communication became more popular, researchers in a variety of academic fields began to study the effects of the internet on a wide array of social phenomena *and* as a new site of research. Those studying White Nationalism were now able to easily analyze individuals and groups that had previously been harder to access and provided new insights into White Nationalism in the digital world. I conducted this analysis of Stormfront's discourse in hope of adding another element to White Nationalist scholarship. Considering that White Nationalist ideology is grounded in structural inequality and power relations, I chose critical discourse analysis as my guiding theory and method as it recognizes how such inequality is produced and

reproduced through text and talk. Focusing on the elements of intertextuality in Stormfront discourse, I find that what was once easily identifiable as White Nationalist discourse has become less so as types, themes, and styles of discourse blur the boundaries between the mainstream and the extreme. In the following sections, I provide further examples of these overlapping discourses as well as the potential negative impact that could result if such discourses are persuasive.

When an individual enters the Stormfront forum, the purpose and agenda of Stormfront are explicitly stated. It is unsurprising that the discourse on the site is used to promote White Nationalism. What is surprising is the type of discourse used and the interconnectivity represented. The same fragments of one text can become part of a potentially infinite number of discourses each with a unique context. While the wording of the text may be the same, its purpose and meaning may be drastically altered. Text that would appear relatively harmless in an academic journal or in a newspaper article takes on a new significance when placed within a Stormfront post. What I argue here is that the use of these external discourses expands the breadth of Stormfront and calls attention to the prominence of particular types and styles of discourse, such as the academic, in crafting and supporting arguments in other contexts. As such, Stormfront's incorporation of these types of discourse is one rhetorical strategy by which White Nationalists seek to disassociate themselves from the "extreme" to one more mainstream.

Hyperlinking

The digital structure of Stormfront increases its potential to move beyond an individualized internet community to one that incorporates the discourses of many. This is achieved both by its structure and its content. Stormfront's forum structure allows

anyone to post with an email as its sole requirement. Although some areas are restricted to system administrators and/or financial contributors, these areas represent only a minute number of threads when compared to the overall site. This almost unlimited public access creates a platform for a potentially infinite number of voices to express their sentiments on White Nationalism and moves the discourse from one situated in the local to the global. For those that choose to listen to these voices and adhere to Stormfront's message, the audience now has the opportunity to join in the conversation. With 3,973 inbound links to Stormfront, it is reasonable to infer that this is a possibility. Furthermore, it is not only White Nationalist organization that link to Stormfront; these links also come from individual blogs and expand the White Nationalist network beyond the political to the personal (Alexa, 2013; Statscrop, 2013).

Stormfront's forum structure and open-access also places very few restrictions on the content of the posts (no promoting violence, no use of racial epithets, post in appropriate forum, etc.) with the only repercussion being deletion. This lack of restrictions allows posters to include a variety of content including links to other websites through hyperlinking transforming Stormfront into an entity similar to mainstream aggregate news sites. Snippets of an entire article are placed on Stormfront, and the user can opt to read the full article or move on. Hyperlinking provides easy access to external source text(s) that creates an appearance of external, non-ideological support for some of the core ideological components of White Nationalist ideology. More importantly, hyperlinking allows the Stormfront poster to incorporate different texts into the argument regardless of the original source's intent. These texts can then be recontextualized and manipulated in a way that separates them from their original context and subsequently

manipulates their purpose and meaning. When a user chooses not to incorporate a

hyperlink, s/he may opt for a more indirect form of source reference (bibliographic

information, author name and credentials, etc.). This analysis found both types of source

referral prevalent in the posts analyzed. Of the total 1,208 posts analyzed, 356 individual

posts referenced a non-Stormfront source (29.4%). Furthermore, this number is not

representative of those posts that contained more than one reference.

Source referrals do more than lend a seemingly rational credibility to Stormfront

ideology. By locating where and how these discourses intersect, the existence of

overlapping boundaries between what many label as "extreme" and "mainstream"

becomes more apparent. To quote Caleb Mason (2012), the internet obscures the original

framing context of discourse: "When you go to a political rally and listen to a speech,

there is a readily identifiable framing context, a set of shared publicly observable

background facts that inform your interpretation of the speaker's statements" (p. 45). It

now becomes more difficult to decipher what types of discourse are inherently malicious

from those that are deemed socially acceptable. Digital technology allows information

and arguments to be manipulated, and their persuasive abilities enhanced. Information

and research created by social institutions, such as the academy, the politic, or the media,

can now be "enacted between and across different institutions" (Solin, 2004, p. 269).

Overlapping Discourse

Content. The importance of this illusion of widespread White Nationalist support

should not be underestimated simply because those who choose to access Stormfront

already show a predisposition to adhering to Stormfront ideology. While this is important

as the site's content could reinforce White Nationalist identity, this intertextuality is also

representative of the commonalties in arguments that exist between White Nationalists and those who are not White Nationalists. By this I do not mean to claim that those sources referenced are supporters of White Nationalism. However, these multiple layers of discourse represent the complex relationships between various genres of discourse. In some instances, this overlap represents a subtle inequality present in mainstream discourse. Take the following quote as an example:

> RACIAL GROUPINGS MATCH GENETIC PROFILES, STANFORD STUDY FINDS
> Quote:
> Checking a box next to a racial/ethnic category gives several pieces of information about people - the continent where their ancestors were born, the possible color of their skin and perhaps something about their risk of different diseases. But a new study by researchers at the Stanford University School of Medicine finds that the checked box also says something about a person's genetic background.
>
> This work comes on the heels of several contradictory studies about the genetic basis of race. Some found that race is a social construct with no genetic basis while others suggested that clear genetic differences exist between people of different races.
> http://med.stanford.edu/news_releases/2005/january/racial-data.htm

In this instance, the Stormfront poster references a distinguished academic institution to support genetic racism. Although the original publication (Tang et. al, 2005) includes the impact of environmental and sociological factors on the risk for disease, this is not specifically mentioned in the Stormfront post *or* the link to the Stanford press release (Adams, 2005). Instead, this press release, specifically the title, claims that there is a genetic difference. Although it is hedged with the inclusion of "contradictory" and "social construct," this language is only used to present the opposing argument which suggests a higher level of uncertainty for the social construct theory. The information has been recontextualized in a way that is inherently ideological. Content from the original

research article is chained out into subsequent discourses and embedded into new genre formats; it evolves from a scholarly article, to a press release, to a forum post (Fairclough, 1992). During this process, the message changes and diverts the audience's focus from the authors' original intent for the message (to advance medical studies) to one more malicious. While the content meaning may change, the authority of the source does not- hence, the frequent inclusion of bibliographic information. What results is a snippet of information that carries with it an air of legitimacy and credibility but is manipulated to promote inequality. While this is more apparent when read in the context of the Stormfront forum, it is less so when posted on the Stanford University website even though both portray identical content.

A similar trend is found among the Stormfront references to non-academic sources such as the media or government documents. The majority of non-academic sources referenced in the "Science, Race, and Technology" thread direct the reader to various newspaper and media websites. Typically referencing stories that are characteristic of Van Dijk's (1987) "Negative Other Representation," these posts present the reader with narratives of a minority genetic predisposition to disease for the purpose of suggesting genetic inferiority. For example, the following are examples of the titles of some of the news stories referenced: "Genetic variation increases HIV risk in Africans" and "Mexican Americans Carrying Haplotype H6 Of The CYP2E1 Gene Have A Greater Risk Of Alcoholism." Depending on the context in which one reads these titles, either on Stormfront or on the site of a mainstream news organization, the tone abruptly shifts. Within the context of a news site, these titles present a more subtle racism that many may interpret as nothing more than a trivial piece of information. However, when

placed within the Stormfront forum, the importance of the message becomes more significant as it provides further credence to the White Nationalist belief of biological racism. Furthermore, Stormfront's recontextualization of the discourse calls attention to the ideological bias present in news media and/or press releases. The media's inclusion of particular content reinforces its legitimacy and simultaneously reproduces white group dominance (van Dijk, 1993).

While direct referencing and hyperlinking were more prevalent in the "Science and Technology" sub-forum, indirect references were more prevalent in the "Revisionism" forum—a fact to be expected as revisionist subject matter is based on the past and less likely to appear in present day newscasts with links available. For this forum, the majority of actual hyperlinks fell under two categories: News stories related to current events that threaten White Nationalist identity (such as discussions about proposed changes to Confederate landmarks) and other White Nationalist sites. Those posts that strive to expand their argument through outside links typically use indirect references to government documents or well-known historical figures. For example, institutions and government documents such as the British Rearmament and the Treasury, Principal Assistant Secretary at the Air Ministry, and the United States Strategic Bombing Survey are cited and subtly shift the context of the information from Stormfront to one more legitimate and official. Even in those instances when the references are inherently biased and included as direct support for White Nationalism, this inclusion illustrates the prevalence and relevance of similar types of discussions beyond the boundaries of Stormfront. Lastly, the inclusion of news stories whose content revolves

around Confederate history illustrates that this historical period is still relevant to many and has remained part of present day discourse.

In some instances it was the subject of the discourse that connected Stormfront and mainstream discourse. In both threads, Stormfront posters use conspiracy rhetoric and defamatory language to establish the government as the enemy. In numerous instances, the government represents a larger conspiracy enacted by the Jewish race to persecute the white race. While the use of anti-government discourse, by White Nationalists and mainstream organizations alike, is common during times of turmoil or change, its linkages to racism are typically less overt. Within the context of Stormfront, anti-Government discourse becomes synonymous with anti-Semitism and anti-liberalism. However, this discourse is not unique to this organization, and the incorporation of similar terminology further represents the discursive similarities between White Nationalists and those considered more mainstream. These instances, what Ruth Wodak (2012) calls a type of "anti-Semitic language behavior," are found in contemporary political and mediated discourse and are suggestive of an almost unconscious acceptance of inequality. One of the most explicit examples of an overlap in White Nationalist and mainstream discourse can be seen with the "Federal Beast" metaphor. This metaphor, originating in the 1970s and made popular during the Reagan administration (Bartlett, 2010), is consistently used by Conservatives when referencing government spending. In response to "Obamacare," the opposition declared that it was "Time to Tame the Federal Beast" (Napolitano, 2012).   With the use of this metaphor, the intent of the speaker becomes less important than its presence in various genres and styles of discourse. No matter the intent, its frequent and current use leaves little room to doubt the very

existence of a "Federal Beast." The beast exists; it has been given a name. Depending on an individual's political leanings, it also provides a common enemy. In this instance, an individual or group may find that a group they may perceive as the enemy (the White Nationalists) may hold beliefs that are similar to their very own.

Style. Considering that the average web user spends less than a minute on a webpage (Neilson, 2011), not all content of the page may be examined critically. For this reason, the style and tone of the overall message adds another level of perceived credibility (Kim, 2010). When these sources are incorporated into the Stormfront discourse, they are presented in styles similar to that of academic publications and journalism. As opposed to instances of hedging, denial, disclaimers, and mitigation found in racial discourse in everyday discourse (Van Dijk, 1987), the Stormfront user presents their argument as an assertion. There is no "may be" or "perhaps" terminology included when weaving external texts into the Stormfront narrative. In these instances, biological racism *does* exist, Germany *is* the victim of World War II, and the ills of the world *are* a result of anti-White enemies. This style removes any existential questions about the content. To ignore the existence of these "truths" would be irrational, or worse, ridiculous. Such an assertive style while only presenting part of the argument ignores the dialogic nature of language and silences divergent voices: "the most dialogic option would be to explicitly attribute representations to sources, to 'voices,' and to include much of the range of voices that actually exist" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 46). In the case of Stormfront, the inclusion of scientific and "official" arguments silences those opposing discourses that counter the concept of biological racism and/or revisionism. That these

arguments can also be found in mainstream mediated discourse further perpetuates this silence as their validity appears universally accepted.

The "Embattled Minority" and the Scapegoat

Stormfront's use of mainstream discourse to bolster their argument additionally gives its users the support they need to justify their overall mission- to take back what they see as rightfully theirs. In the United States, whites have historically held higher social, political, and economic status. Traditionally justified by antiquated science, religion, and/or pure greed, this heteronormative whiteness has been engrained in society, and groups who fall under "minority" categories have been the victims of inequality and injustice. To quote Feagin (2012), America has taken on a "worshipful stance toward a supposed white superiority in knowledge, markets, technology and political institutions" (p. 147). This superiority does not only refer to racial minorities but to all "Others" that do not ascribe to the white, masculine, and Christian hegemonic norm. Although conditions have improved and legal protections have been enacted to ensure equality, to claim we are now part of a "post-racial" society would be a stretch. As a result of this inequality, countless social movements, interest groups, community organizations, and the like have been formed in order to celebrate and enhance the representation of these historically silenced groups. Considering the past mistreatment of these individuals, these actions are typically viewed positively and reflective of a progressive society. However, as this analysis shows, this progression has fallen victim to unintended consequences. The cultural landscape is becoming increasingly more inclusive toward "Others," and White Nationalists are adamantly opposed. In turn, White Nationalist discourse adopts new strategies of argumentation opposing multiculturalism and the "liberal agenda."

Stormfront discourse strives to re-categorize the white race as the victim rather than the oppressor. Using science and revisionism as a seemingly rational basis for this transformation, Stormfront discourse undermines the historical significance of equality movements by adopting a similar style of argument with similar content. Just as the Port Huron Statement desired to "re-energize American values," Dr. Martin Luther King eloquently portrayed his desire for the country to live up to the promise of the "American Dream", and LGBT movements call for "first-class citizenship" (Hall, 2010), Stormfront users ground their argument in the same ideas and language albeit grossly misconstruing the true spirit behind these words.

Stormfront's mission to promote the interests of "the new, embattled White minority" reflects its members' belief that the white race has lost its power to the "Other". In order to reclaim this power, Stormfront has rebranded itself as a special interest group seeking to promote their heritage: "Thousands of organizations promote the interests, values and heritage of non-White minorities. We promote ours" (Stormfront, 2013). When one examines recent polls on racial attitudes in the United States, it appears that White Nationalists are not the only individuals that oppose the new changing face of America. Even when not stated explicitly, these polls show that a large number of Americans oppose political policies that are steeped in racial and minority issues. For example, one Pew Research Center (2013) poll found that 43% of respondents felt immigration "threatens traditional American customs and values" and 44% oppose same sex marriage. Another poll from the same organization found that 65% of the respondents disagreed with the following statement: "we should make every effort to improve the position of blacks and minorities, even if it means giving them preferential

treatment" (Pew Research Center, 2009). Even if poll findings are not persuasive, one only has to examine the legislative history of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (proposed in 2004 and still pending) to recognize that strides toward equality take time and are often met with hostility (Feder & Brougher, 2013).

Recognizing that a large portion of society still holds bias against minority groups, or at least is not actively trying to create equality, Stormfront users have altered their discourse in response to this prevailing attitude. Not only does the discourse actively strive to fit within a larger set of discourses (the academic, the media, etc), but it uses these discourses to reposition the White race as the minority. As prior research has found, this White Nationalist "threat of extinction" is a commonly used fear appeal. Grounded in Tajful and Turner's (1986) Social Identity Theory, some scholars suggest this is a socially creative way to "enact social identity in ways that help to achieve long-term goals and to bolster group cohesion" (Douglas et al., 2005, p. 75). As opposed to advocating social competition, these threats present a "socially creative redefinition of social reality" (p. 74). McNamee et al. (2010) state these are used to evoke feelings of duty to protect the white future. Agreeing with these various interpretations, this begs the following question: What may happen when the White Nationalist no longer sees its race, its identity, as the majority?

While the fear of the loss of white identity remains, it has been exacerbated and altered because of the changes in the American demographic. To the earlier White Nationalist, the fear rested on the belief that if society continued to change the white race would continue losing power and would no longer be the powerful majority; the goal was to prevent this from happening any more than it already was. Now, according to the home

page of Stormfont and its mission, this power has already been lost; the goal is now to reclaim it. This perceived loss of power exacerbates an already existing intergroup conflict. With this shift in perspective, the discourse has been altered to include language that expresses this element of social competition. Furthermore, this change in the discourse is a fairly recent phenomenon. It was as recent as November 2012 that Stormfront's home page changed to include "White minority" language. This language comes from the same man who 18 years prior stated that celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday was "an example of a government that no longer represents the interest of the majority of its people" (Abel, 1998, para. 6).

When this research is read within the context of the new Stormfront mission, the inclusion of scientific and revisionist arguments could be viewed as more than a strategic attempt to appear more socially acceptable or for the legitimacy traditionally associated with these types of discourse. Science and history have historically been part of the White Nationalist argument for these very reasons; however, it is only recently that these discourses have been recontextualized to rhetorically construct this notion of the "white minority" and to justify actions to reclaim majority status. For this argument to be persuasive, it must ring true. Furthermore, it must appeal to mass audiences and follow the style and norms deemed acceptable by society. To accomplish this, Stormfront arguments are grounded in the culturally accepted notion that science and history are correct, and the inclusion of experts as ideological justification creates the illusion of a "public moral argument" (Fisher, 2005). The argument now appeals rational and is presented for altruistic reasons.

Scientific Argument

The majority of the scientific research referenced on Stormfront revolves around notions of racial, biological difference. The triviality of the findings does not matter; the discourse does not seem concerned with the magnitude or importance of the research findings. Contrary to what one may expect, the discourse even supports the commonly accepted belief in a significant, genetic commonality between races; to oppose this would weaken the argument. What does matter is that difference does exist; it is scientifically "proven." And with each posting of these random and innocuous scientific findings, the Stormfront user subtly delegitimizes equality. Digitally bombarding the audience with links and references to well-known and reputable publications, mainstream media sites, and organizations that contain similar discourse creates an overall appearance of universal support of these little differences. Now, it is not just the irrational White Nationalists who appear to espouse genetic racism, but the majority. It is only if these differences are accepted and acknowledged as true that the White Nationalist can provide the justification necessary to reclaim their lost identity. It is in these differences that the White Nationalist can claim superiority; this superiority is now based in "fact." These differences are the reasons that the White Nationalist has the *right* to reclaim their power.

In addition to being another weapon in the Stormfront justification arsenal, biological racism becomes one of the main reasons for the white shift from majority to minority. It is because of biology that "Others" are inferior physically, mentally, socially, etc. It is because society has ignored these differences that the white race has lost its status. Stopping interbreeding and race-mixing now become part of the larger White

Nationalist plan to re-purify their race and reclaim their lost power. To quote one

Stormfront poster:

> You can't deny the fact that it's elements within our own races self-serving elements who hold power, influence, money...from teachers who deny the very existence of race to business owners who hire illegals to the power elite who worship their $$ god and last but not least the pretty white girl next door who CHOOSES to be defiled by negro's.... they've all basically turned their backs on their racial kin and that (I feel) is far worse crime to what any jew has done. Multiculturalism/diversity is a euphemism for less whites.

Revisionism

As for the revisionist portion of this analysis, the element of victimization further

reinforces this minority construct, and now there is *someone* and *something* to blame. As

expected, the discourse follows the White Nationalist norm and uses the "Jew" as the

scapegoat. This is not unexpected considering the influence of Adolf Hitler on White

Nationalism. As Kenneth Burke (1941/2005) stated, the selection of the Jew as the

scapegoat allowed "the international devil [to be] materialized, in the visible, point-to-

able form of people with a certain kind of 'blood'" (p.190). This scapegoat has carried

over in modern White Nationalist discourse and has merged with structural institutions

(the media, the government). These institutions become synonymous with liberalism and

multiculturalism and are personified as the United States government.

In chapter 4, I presented the numerous ways Stormfront posters vilify

government. Although the concept of a ZOG (Zionist Occupied Government) is a phrase

continuously used by White Nationalists to combine Jews with a political institution, it is

not the only way. Through both sub-forums, Science and Revisionism, there are frequent

references to the "liberal agenda." Stormfront posters assert this agenda is responsible for

brainwashing Americans into buying into a false idea of equality among races and

groups. Presented with typical conspiracy theory rhetoric, "Others," most notably the Jewish population and "race-traitors," use institutions to succeed with their mission; academia, politics, and the media are all used to advance ideas of equality. These "Others" do this not for altruistic reasons but for their own personal gain. The Holocaust was exaggerated to gain sympathy for the Jewish people and to perpetuate White guilt; the Americans and British were responsible for World War II and acted dishonorably for no other reasons but greed and revenge; the Federal Beast used the Civil War to destroy Southern heritage and advance Union and Jewish wealth. To the White Nationalists, it is because America has allowed these entities to take over that they have been delegated to minority status.

Technical Language and Public Deliberation

While this discussion is centered on online discourse, it is important to remember that its impact does not cease to exist when the user signs off; it extends beyond the digital and can manifest itself in the physical world in negative ways. Even as an individual who has been regularly exposed to this type of discourse, there were times when I began to question why I had chosen to study a topic that represents one of the more, if not the most, negative aspects of humanity. Besides kicking myself for not choosing something less depressing, I forced myself to look at the bigger picture. I had to perpetually remind myself that these words had a power that extended beyond an internet community. On one hand, Stormfront discourse is representative of one of the United States' most democratic principles, the freedom of speech. On the other, such discourse perpetuates inequality and stifles deliberative discussion and subsequent participatory democracy. When Stormfront posts incorporate outside discourse, no matter the type, its

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content begins to evolve from one grounded in the individual and personal to one more technical. Even when the repeated discourse comes from a non-official source, it still uses the language and style providing the sense of an origin in the technical. Considering ours is a society where such technical arguments are given credence, presumably because of the benefits research has to offer, this discourse is lent legitimacy and veracity.

Such deference to technical arguments has the potential to manifest itself in public policy and social group relations within a society. For example, the scientific community's findings suggesting a relationship between race and genetics could lead to changes in medical practices and could potentially have both positive and negative results. Under the guise of "public interest" these findings could advance genetic studies and potentially lead to new treatments and preventative measures for disease. This is undoubtedly a positive result that should not be discredited. However, on the opposite end of the spectrum, genetic links to race could also lead to healthcare exclusions (representative of both private and governmental interests) and perpetuate racial inequality grounded in science. Before deferring to the technical as the ultimate authority, when academic research is publicized in the news, legitimated through public policy, and disseminated to the public at large, the creator, subsequent reproducer, and reproducer the audience must recognize that the information they are receiving may only be a fragment of the discourse.

Stormfront: An Emerging Social Movement

While stifling open debate on minority relations in society is a potential consequence of Stormfront discourse, this is by no means the only one, nor do I want to portray that one is more or less important than another. As history has shown, negative

depictions of the "Other" have resulted in both physical and psychological harm to minority groups. Both individual actors, labeled "lone wolves" by fellow White Nationalists, and cultural groups have been the perpetrators of these actions. I do not desire to dismiss the ramifications of lone wolf actions; however, for the purpose of this research, my focus is on the communal aspects of White Nationalism especially when this sense of community has evolved into the category of a social movement. Stormfront has a unified mission and imparts information by which an individual can become part of a larger, social group. Repeatedly emphasizing the collective and genetic white identity as the crux of its ideology, Stormfront members argue that this identity is under siege by "Others." In order to repair white identity, it is crucial for the Stormfront reader to acknowledge racial difference and the concept of white victimization. Since both of these concepts run contrary to popularly accepted social norms, the use of external sources to support White Nationalism helps to alleviate this dichotomy. It is no longer simply White Nationalists going against the norm when these arguments are placed within a wide variety of contexts, some socially acceptable and some not.

Shifting the labels of "extreme" to "social movement" is more than just a meaningless lexical change. These labels move Stormfront from the fringes of society to one more inclusive and representative of larger population. Polletta and Jasper (2001) define collective identity as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection within a broader community, category, practice or institution" (p. 285). For Stormfront, this collective identity is bound in race. The narratives and symbols repeated on the site are expressions and celebrations of white identity. Whereas race may be a component of individual identity in a broader context, for Stormfront race is the backbone of the

group's ideology, and the perception of a loss of this identity becomes the catalyst for collective efforts to reclaim white representation in a multicultural society.

On the surface, defining Stormfront as an emerging social movement contradicts the positive evaluations typically associated with social movements. Social movement research has historically focused on movements (Suffrage Movement, Civil Rights Movement, Nuclear Disarmament Movement, etc.) that have resulted in reform that is consistently evaluated as positive; their outcomes resulted in a progression towards equality. However, rather than defining a group as a social movement from an outsider prospective, it is necessary to view the world from the eyes of the White Nationalist. Their primary directive is encompassed by the 14 words: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children." For one to enact these words, it becomes crucial for Stormfront to create a shared set of beliefs among its members. Benford and Snow (2000) use the term "collection action frames" to describe this phenomenon: "collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization" (p. 614). The use of mainstream science and revisionist discourse reinforce a shared understanding of race and history among White Nationalists. Additionally, such discourse reframes Stormfront content to one more palatable to a larger audience.

To evolve from an ideology to a social movement based on that ideology, the movement must be "action oriented." It is not enough to have similar beliefs; these beliefs should instill a sense of agency, a feeling that its members recognize a problem, have located its source(s), and can act towards a remedy. In the case of Stormfront, biology is the sole contributor to the downfall of society. Everything from crime,

unemployment, and disease are direct results from a group's genetic inferiority. From the historical perspective, a Jewish agenda, the government, and multiculturalism are responsible for the loss of white privilege. The white man is now the victim, and the individuals of Stormfront call for change. Once the problem and source have been defined, the audience is able to act.

Call to Action

The argumentation strategies used to reinforce a shared identity within and beyond the Stormfront boundaries are the first step toward mobilization. If this discourse is interpreted as persuasive, if the end goal of garnering support is met, the Stormfront forum provides the information needed to act. For example, the main home page of the forum typically posts reminders to upcoming, major White Nationalist events. Presently, the 3rd International Seminar the "Great Smoky Mountain Summit" is advertised. However, this is only one of many posts relating to activism. Further down the page is an "Activism" thread that contains the following sub-threads: Events, Strategy and Tactics ("Promoting White Rights though local organization"), Local and Regional ("Contact information for those who want to work together in their communities"), eActivism and Stormfront Webmasters ("Promoting White Nationalism through the Net"), Multimedia, and Legal Issues ("Criminal and civil law affecting activists"). In these threads, the audience can find the location of local rallies and upcoming leadership, business and economic seminars; the audience can sign petitions in support of White Nationalist ideology (ex. Ending affirmative action), become versed in the law, and even donate to fundraisers to aid in White Nationalist legal defense. For those individuals who opt for a more passive approach, there are links to merchandise to display White National pride

and homeschooling texts to educate youth. It is even suggested that the 15th of every

month be "White Defense Day" and all supporters are asked to wear white clothing.

Clicking on these links, it is apparent that the overarching goal is to go beyond mere talk

to action. The following a partial mission statement for a past White Nationalist business

conference:

- Our purpose is to build on and expand the "Network".
- Our goal is to foster local solidarity, leading to national cooperation, with the ultimate goal of establishing a worldwide economic and social assistance network.
- This "Network" actively seeks to establish new business opportunities, seek-out and exploit housing opportunities, and advise and assist it's members with any problems they encounter.
- This "Network" is focused on making sure that we are economically strengthened by our friendships within the network. If a brother or a sister slips, we will be there.
- Folks willing to put their heads together and come up with workable real world solutions to some of our issues. Namely, the pooling of resources and focusing them in a concerted effort to help our Own get a "leg up" on our enemies and in some way help to keep those resources "in house".

  It is often said in the business world, "you find what works and then you duplicate it, and you keep duplicating it." The momentum for these economic conferences is growing, and growth=life. In all matters of life, stagnation=death. No matter what it is we're talking about. A body at rest, that stays at rest...soon dies. A business that runs out of fresh ideas soon finds its revenues decreasing. A town, a business, an organism, all things must grow, expand, lest they become stagnant, and die.
  (http://www.stormfront.org/forum/t749722/)

This conference is just one way that Stormfront users have created to begin their revival.

Rather than suggesting the use of violence to combat their opposition, Stormfront users

have moved to more mainstream and legal avenues to expand their political agenda. In

addition to playing off the fear of economic loss, the use of networking can be interpreted

as part of an overarching legal strategy to avoid liability for White Nationalists. As one

attendee writes:

"No group. No "organization". No one leader. So, true-to-form as laid out in the PLE Prospectus, we have what is referred to as "confused liability". There is nothing our enemies can do "pin us down", or label us, nor try to hem us up in some silly lawsuit as there is no one to sue. No one person "responsible". If anything were to ever happen to anyone of us anyway, the network carries on.

These examples are mundane when compared to the psychological harm and violence carried out in the name of White Nationalism. As stated in chapter 2, hate crime continues to exist contradicting the high status our country places upon equality. Minority groups still struggle for legislation to reflect their rights as first-class citizens. There appears to be a disconnect between what our country says it stands for and what actually occurs. Although there are countless reasons why such hatred continues to exist (psychological, economic, sociological, etc.), maybe one piece of the puzzle lies in the discourse.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Potential for Future Research

Wherever there is difference, words will have the power to divide or bring together. It is through discourse that individuals form their identity, and it is through discourse that individuals interact with others. To grant something that much power comes with a certain amount of responsibility. This applies to all parties involved: the speaker, the audience, and those various other discourses that seep into everyday talk. When this responsibility is ignored, either consciously or subconsciously, such talk can be manipulated and lead to harmful results.

It is always easier to ignore that which we find unpleasant or unsettling and hope that it will go away eventually. This does not appear to be the case with White Nationalism. In reality, it is unlikely that Stormfront members will mobilize with enough force to become a significant political threat; however, their discourse still has profound

effect on American culture. Its members also appear well-versed in the legal implications of their actions and attempt to remove themselves from situations where Stormfront could be held liable. Since there is no viable legal remedy to combat Stormfront, one way to weaken its power is to continue research.

Within the field of communication studies, most of the research on digital extremism consists of content analyses (Gerstenfeld et al., 2005; Zhou, Reid, Qin, & Chen, 2005) and/or the various persuasive techniques used for recruitment (Duffy, 2003; Lee & Leets, 2002). More recently, scholarship has begun to recognize the impact of the internet on extremist organizations and focuses on the community building aspects of these groups (Bowman-Grieve, 2009; de Koester & Houtman, 2009) and on the use of particular themes of discourse in identity formation (Adams & Roscigno, 2005). However, there is a gap in the literature on the precise types of discourse used to advance the White Nationalist argument. Additionally, while numerous studies do reference science and revisionism as ideological components of White Nationalism (presumably based on their use in the past), there is little discussion on how these components are discursively constructed by modern White Nationalists. Lastly, there are relatively few studies on Stormfront, and none to date that have been conducted after the aforementioned change in its mission as the voice of the "minority." As such, this analysis attempts to fill in one part of this gap, and shedding light onto Stormfront's argumentation style is one way to do this. Not only does the incorporation of scientific and historical discourses suggest the re-emergence of past White Nationalist discourse, but this inclusion also highlights the importance of these types of discourses for legitimation purposes as well as their critical role in identity formation. The internet

provides Stormfront users with the capability to seek out and subsequently recontextualize and reproduce mainstream scientific and historic arguments that re-affirm their belief in a superior white identity. That this study finds this intertextuality so prominent could be useful for scholars of both intergroup communication and the rhetoric of science.

When Stormfront users draw from other sources, strategically mimic a style, and/or recontextualize mainstream scientific and historical discourse to perpetuate their argument, the ideological component of the message is hidden under a socially acceptable façade. Drawing from the language and style used in scientific and historical discourse, it is now more difficult to discern the extreme/hateful speech from what is considered mainstream. This does not suggest that both sets of discourse are created with the same intent, but rather that similar arguments and argument styles exist among both. It is these similarities that create a link between White Nationalists and non-White Nationalists. Recognizing this link goes against the personal beliefs and value systems of many. Many do not wish to acknowledge these commonalities for several reasons. For some, to acknowledge this goes against a deeply engrained belief system that values equality. For others, such acknowledgement would make them a racist and would have social repercussions. However, without these shared beliefs (the value of science, history, family, etc.) as a link there would be no way to counter the White Nationalist argument. You would be essentially speaking a different language.

Researching a group from the outsider perspective always comes with its own limitations. There are parts of White Nationalism that are incomprehensible to me because of my beliefs, morals, traditions, and value systems. My personal beliefs,

combined with the violence that sometimes is associated with White Nationalism, guided

my decision to choose the internet as the site of my research. As such, I am limited to

only what is placed on the Stormfront forum. I have no way of knowing if the poster is

actually a White Nationalist or merely a curious adolescent, an outsider with a desire to

provoke, or even a fellow researcher. On the other hand, I feel the anonymity also has the

potential to create a more open, robust discussion about a topic considered taboo. It is

because of this anonymity that I am able to analyze a culture that otherwise would be

inaccessible.

Research on an internet forum creates additional limitations because of its

seemingly endless capacity for storage. With over nine million posts, what I was able to

analyze is only a fragment of the overall site. Stormfront also represents numerous facets

of White Nationalism each with its own unique set of beliefs. This said, I believe this

research could be reinforced by analyzing other threads on the Stormfront forum as well

as similar forums to see if and how these arguments continue in other locations.

Additionally, as a large part of my research discusses the intertextual elements of

Stormfront, I feel it would be beneficial to locate and categorize the external links placed

within the entire Stormfront community providing a larger, network analysis of these

overlapping discourses. Lastly, I believe further analysis on the use of hyperlinking as a

rhetorical tool would be useful in determining the persuasiveness of links on Stormfront

and similar sites.

More importantly, the subject matter itself imposes a unique set of limitations for

this research. Violence and illegal actions have been carried out in the name of White

Nationalism. As it should be, laws and regulations have been enacted to prevent recurring

harm. Stormfront and similar organizations are aware of these laws and are aware of the legal limitations imposed on their discourse. What I am able to see is only part of the White Nationalist narrative. However, I feel we should take advantage of what we are allowed to see, and the breadth of Stormfront provides a fruitful site for all types of future research from all disciplines.

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Stormfront Content (as of November 6, 2012)

Forum	Number of Threads
Sustaining Members	7858
Stormfront Core Support Group	75
Lifetime Members	78
Third Annual Practical Politics Seminar	15
Announcements	75
Guidelines for Posting	1

News	Number of Threads
Newslinks & Articles	155812
Politics and Continuing Crises	8041

General	Number of Threads
Ideology & Philosophy	11322
Culture & Customs	6635
Theology	10784
Trades & Skills	583
Nature & Environment	300
Poetry	5416
Quotations	2191
Revisionism	9359
Science, Technology, & Race	12577

Privacy, Network Security & Encryption	4359
Money Talks	5541
Self Defense, Martial Arts, & Preparedness	9437
Health & Fitness	6727
Homemaking	4949
Education & Homeschooling	2642
Youth	6831
Graphics	4842
Music & Entertainment	17280
Lounge	74617
For Stormfront Ladies Only	1294
Classified Ads	3074
Text Messages	3132

Open Forums (Open to Guests)   **Number of Threads**

Questions About This Board	6333
General Questions & Comments	11819
Opposing Views Forum	25816
The Truth about Martin Luther King	766

Suggestions for this Board & FAQ   **Number of Threads**

Suggestions for this Board	2445

Activism   **Number of Threads**

Events	2849
The Keystone State	330
Strategy & Tactics	3475
Local & Regional	3836
eActivism & Stormfront Webmasters	1736
Multimedia	1990
Legal Issues	1121
Advance Scout	1578

White Singles	**Number of Threads**
Talk	5833
Dating Advice	1274

International	**Number of Threads**
Stormfront Europe	7732
Stormfront Italia	8341
Stormfront en Espanol y Portugues	12541
Stormfront Croatia	1175
Stormfront Britain	86382
Stormfront Canada	11943
Stormfront Downunder	14658
Stormfront en Francais	14647
Stormfront Ireland	5559
Stormfront Nederland & Vlaanderen	27574

Stormfront Baltic/Scandinavia	3652
Stormfront Srbjia	9472
Stormfront Russia	4629
Stormfront South Africa	5083
Stormfront Hungary	872